Violating the feminine land, body, and spirit in Western American literature

Gregory Alan Wright
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

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VIOLATING THE FEMININE LAND, BODY, AND SPIRIT
IN WESTERN AMERICAN LITERATURE

by

Gregory Alan Wright

Associate of Arts
Snow College, Utah
1996

Bachelor of Arts
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
1996

Master of Arts
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
1999

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Gregory Alan Wright

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Dean of the Graduate College

Examination Committee Member

Examination Committee Member

Graduate College Faculty Representative
ABSTRACT

Violating the Feminine Land, Body, and Spirit in Western American Literature

by

Gregory Alan Wright

Dr. P. Jane Hafen, Examination Committee Chair
Professor of English
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

The literature of the American West, much like the history of this region, is replete with images and stories of violence. Although pop culture (i.e. popular Westerns, film, television, etc.) has inculcated the idea that the West is synonymous with violence, the origins of this supposition begins with the arrival of Europeans to the New World, which, at the point of discovery, signified the West. European conquerors and colonists brought with them, along with their hopes and dreams for a fresh start on the new continent, the Judeo-Christian cultural values and traditions of the old continent. This ideological position condoned violent interaction with and subjugation of the wilderness that lay before them, which Europeans invariably gendered female. As commercial, political, and religious interests moved the frontier westward across the continent, from the Atlantic seaboard, beyond the Great Plains, over the Rocky Mountains, and to the Pacific Coast, a wake of broken, tamed, and violated feminine bodies followed. The works of Frank Norris, Sarah Winnemucca (Northern Paiute), and Terry Tempest Williams detail and examine the means, motivations, and implications of violence on the feminine-gendered
land and in the lives of women. As Norris, Winnemucca, and Williams demonstrate, violence committed against the feminine does not have simply regional ramifications but cultural and global consequences as well.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION: MASCULINE "MIGHT MAKES RIGHT": THE HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXTS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST THE FEMININE IN WESTERN AMERICAN LITERATURE

The literature of the American West, much like the history of this region, is replete with images and stories of violence. While the dime novels of the 1800s, the contemporary pop Westerns of Louis L'Amour and Max Brand, the television serials of the 1950s and 1960s like Gunsmoke and The Lone Ranger, and the Westerns of John Ford, Sam Peckinpah, and Clint Eastwood further inculcated the idea that the West was synonymous with violence, the origins of this concept began with the arrival of Euro-Americans to the New World, which, at the point of discovery, signified the West. The European conquerors and colonists brought with them, along with their hopes and dreams for a fresh start on the new continent, the Judeo-Christian cultural values and traditions of the old continent. This ideology condoned violent interaction with and subjugation of the wilderness before them, which Europeans invariably gendered female.¹ As commercial, political, and religious interests moved the frontier westward from the Atlantic seaboard, across the Great Plains, over the Rocky Mountains, and to the Pacific Coast, a wake of broken, tamed, and violated feminine bodies followed. The works of Frank Norris, Sarah Winnemucca (Northern Paiute), and Terry Tempest Williams detail and examine the
means, motivations, and implications of violence on the feminine-gendered land and in the lives of women. As Norris, Winnemucca, and Williams demonstrate, violence committed against the feminine does not have simply regional ramifications but cultural and global consequences as well.

The formation of an American identity and culture originated as Europeans differentiated their experiences in the New World from what they had experienced in the old. According to historian Richard Slotkin, the crux of American identity can be found in its most dominant myth: "The Myth of the Frontier is our oldest and most characteristic myth, expressed in a body of literature, folklore, ritual, historiography, and polemics produced over a period of three centuries" (Gunfighter 10). Slotkin is not alone in pointing to the "Myth of the Frontier" being America's national myth nor was he the first. In 1893 at a meeting of the American Historical Association in Chicago, Frederick Jackson Turner presented "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," his definitive thesis on the evolution of American identity and history. The central theme of Turner's thesis posits that the frontier acted as the catalyst in the formation of the essential American character:

The frontier is the line of most rapid and effective Americanization. The wilderness masters the colonist. It finds him a European in dress, industries, tools, modes of travel, and thought. It takes him from the railroad car and puts him in the birch canoe. It strips off the garments of civilization and arrays him in the hunting shirt and the moccasin. It puts him in the log cabin of the Cherokee and Iroquois and runs an Indian palisade around him. Before long he has gone to planting Indian corn and plowing with a sharp stick; he shouts the war cry and
takes the scalp in orthodox Indian fashion. In short, at the frontier the environment is at first too strong for the man. He must accept the conditions which it furnishes, or perish, and so he fits himself into the Indian clearings and follows the Indian trails. Little by little he transforms the wilderness, but the outcome is not the old Europe, not simply the development of Germanic germs, any more than the first phenomenon was a case of reversion to the Germanic mark. The fact is, that here is a product that is American. (3-4)

Henry Nash Smith, in *Virgin Land: The American West as Symbol and Myth*, applied Turner's frontier thesis to his examination as to how the frontier condition shaped American literature and social thought and reasserted that "the doctrine that the United States is a continental nation rather than a member with Europe of an Atlantic community has had a formative influence on the American mind and deserves historical treatment in its own right" (4). With the advent of the "new Western history," historians and cultural theorists began to see the complexities of American identity and the frontier's place in its formation. As historian Patricia Nelson Limerick has argued, "[T]he apparently unifying concept of the frontier had arbitrary limits that excluded more than they contained. [...] Frontier, then, is an unsubtle concept in a subtle world" (21, 25). For Limerick, Turner ignores the economic, religious, gender and ethnic complexities that came with living in the New World and discounts the violence inherent when cultures come together: "Conquest forms the historical bedrock of the whole nation, and the American West is a preeminent case study in conquest and its consequences" (Limerick 27-28). Turner's thesis never acknowledges the violence employed by Europeans in westward expansion;
rather, he participates in the romanticization of violence and rationalizes its use in the "taming" of the American wilderness and its Native inhabitants.

The employment of violence was inevitable in the attainment and realization of European economic and religious goals for the New World, yet Slotkin contends that, through violence, creation and regeneration occur. While he acknowledges "that myths reach out of the past to cripple, incapacitate, or strike down the living," blinding Americans "to the consequences of the industrial and urban revolutions and to the need for social reform and a new concept of individual and communal welfare," Slotkin also asserts that the "Myth of the Frontier" becomes more complex and integral because the character and the form that violence takes in American culture create metaphors that largely define their identity (Regeneration 5). Frequently, violence may be considered a destructive force; however, in Regeneration Through Violence: The Mythology of the American Frontier, 1600-1860, Slotkin finds that, although violence continues to be destructive, it provides the means for reformation and renewal. "The first colonists," according to Slotkin, "saw in America an opportunity to regenerate their fortunes, their spirits, and the power of their church and nation; but the means to that regeneration ultimately became the means of violence, and the myth of regeneration through violence became the structuring metaphor of the American experience" (5). Along the frontier, whether in the forests of New England, the deserts of the Great Basin, or the fertile valleys of California, Europeans, and almost exclusively men, could refashion a new identity with new prospects, divorced from the values and traditions of the Old World. Invariably, their re-imagination came at the expense of the landscape and the Native peoples they encountered.
The arrival of the Puritans at the Massachusetts Bay and the Pilgrims at Plymouth signaled the formation of a Judeo-Christian paradigm for understanding the American wilderness. Although the Spanish, Portuguese, and French carved out a presence in the New World prior to the English's whole-hearted colonial effort, their interests remained primarily commercial and political, as they saw the wild landscape before them to be an obstacle to negotiate for the purposes of trade or to be a source of precious minerals and valuable resources to exploit. The early presence of Franciscan, and later Dominican, missionaries served primarily to pacify indigenous peoples and to gather them into Christianity in order to aid in the process of European colonization—the salvation of their souls being secondary to commercial and political aims. While the economic and political ambitions of the English should not be discounted, the Puritan arrival in New England indicates a broader sense of purpose: the reenactment of biblical history and type.

In a review of Thomas Mann's tetralogy *Joseph and His Brothers* (1948), Willa Cather assures her audience that the German novelist's work is accessible and familiar to them since "the Book of Genesis lies like a faded tapestry deep in the consciousness of almost every individual" and conveys the fact that American identity, culture, and values stem from Judeo-Christian traditions (*Not Under Forty* 102). Whether cognizant of the Judeo-Christian influence in their lives or not, Cather argues that on some subconscious level her audience has been subjected to its cultural-shaping force:

We have all been there before, even if we have never crossed salt water. (Perhaps this is not strictly accurate, but even the Agnostic and the Behaviourist would have to admit that his great-grandfather had been there.) The Bible countries
along the Mediterranean shore were very familiar to most of us in our childhood. Whether we were born in New Hampshire or Virginia or California, Palestine lay behind us. We took it in unconsciously and unthinkingly perhaps, but we could not escape it. It was all about us, in the pictures on the walls, in the songs we sang in Sunday school, in the "opening exercises" at day school, in the talk of the old people, wherever we lived. And it was in our language—fixedly, indelibly. The effect of the King James translation of the Bible upon English prose has been repeated down through the generations, leaving its mark on the minds of all children who had any but the most sluggish emotional nature. (Not Under Forty 101-02)

The latent and passive Judeo-Christian cultural hegemony that Cather refers to in her review rose to dominance through the application of violence, which took on various forms (e.g. physical, spiritual, cultural, linguistic, etc.) despite the existence of other ethnic and cultural worldviews. Sacvan Bercovitch, in his work The Puritan Origins of the American Self, argues persuasively that American self-hood, or the concept of "Americanus" resides in the ontological, epistemological, and hermeneutical assertions of the Puritans:

Colonial Puritan hermeneutics [...] evolved through an essentially symbolic interaction of perceiver and fact, thus allowing for different kinds of perceivers and a variety of historical contexts. The perceiver had to identify himself as a regenerate American, but since the meaning of America lay in an act of will and imagination, he could claim that his interpretation embodied the only true America. The desert-paradise allegoria remained constant, but since the source
of meaning lay in the American landscape, the terms of signification could change with changing national needs. What for [Cotton] Mather had been the purifying wilderness, and for Edwards the theocratic garden of God, became for Emerson's generation the redemptive West, as frontier or agrarian settlement or virgin land.

(186)

Bercovitch echoes what Cather implies in her review of Mann's four-part novel: Puritan thought and the New World landscape forged American identity. The Puritan belief in personal and communal progress justified the use of violence against non-Whites, non-Protestants, and the non-civilized wilderness, which Puritan rhetoric characterized as outside of and apart from their divinely appointed mission.

A brief examination of early Puritan thought reveals the violent underpinnings that served to construct and to order the concepts of American individuality and community in relation to the New World. Slotkin calls "the English Puritans who settled British America" the exemplars of the "European approach to the New World" (Regeneration 37). Believing that spiritual corruption had infested the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of England, the Puritans sought to purify and to cleanse the church of wickedness and impurity. Two distinct groups emerged from the Puritan impulse: the Separatists, who wished to establish their own churches without any oversight from and influence by the Church of England, and the non-separating Puritans, who believed that the Church's original foundation was firm and that reformation was required from within to return it to its initial pure constitution. The Separatists, who came to Plymouth and are commonly known as the Pilgrims, and the non-separatist Puritans, who founded the Massachusetts Bay Colony, had the same objectives for the New World despite their differing ideas as to
how to restore God's church. The desired result for both the Pilgrims and the Puritans in New England was to replicate God's "visible church" in the New World. Edmund S. Morgan explains that the concept of a "visible church" comes from St. Augustine's City of God:

There were, according to Augustine, two churches. One was pure but invisible; it included every person living, dead, or yet to be born, for whom God had predestined for salvation. The other was visible but not entirely pure; it included only living persons who professed to believe in Christianity. Not every member of the visible church was destined for salvation, for not every man who professed belief would actually possess the true belief, the saving faith necessary for redemption. The visible church, operating in the world of time and human corruption, must inevitably contain sinful men. It was holy, but not completely so, not withstanding many spots and wrinkles.

(3)

The Puritan reformers believed they had found the ideal situation and location for their "visible" church in the unmolested wilderness of the New World. The establishment of God's "visible" kingdom on Earth served as the most important unifying purpose for colonizing New England. Bercovitch explains that the Puritans saw themselves as a "peculiar people, a company of Christians not only called but chosen, and chosen not only for heaven but as instruments of a sacred historical design. Their church-state was to be at once a model to the world of Reformed Christianity and a prefiguration of New Jerusalem to come" (American 7-8). Being Christians who believed they had been called and chosen for a divine purpose, the Puritans became "visible saints." Thus, the methods
and actions they used for the foundation of New Jerusalem could only be pure and righteous, regardless of how violent or destructive they may be. In the example of the Puritans, the aphorism "might makes right" is reinterpreted and reversed: "right makes might."

To create and sustain God's "visible" church in the New World, the Puritans needed to bring order out of chaos, taming the wilderness and establishing civilization, while insisting that the American landscape was a veritable Garden of Eden. The rhetoric found in the journals, tracts, and sermons of the Puritan and Pilgrim forefathers, as Peter N. Carroll suggests, is highly ambiguous: "The wilderness continent meant different things to different people, and Puritan views of America ranged from a paradise to a wasteland" (5). The Reverend John Cotton addressed John Winthrop's group on the Arbella in Southampton in 1630, preaching and alluding to 2 Samuel 7.10: "Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israeli, and I will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their owne, and move no more" (qtd. in Carroll 9). While to some New England was indeed a land flowing with milk and honey, many others found an alternative Old Testament metaphor to describe the land. Writing of the Pilgrim's first sight of the New World in 1620, William Bradford does not see the promised paradise of the Israelites but the wilderness they wander for forty years:

Besids, what could they see but a hidious and desolate wilderness, full of wild beasts and willd men? and what multituds ther might be of them they knew not. Nether could they, as it were, goe up to the tope of Pisgah, to vew from this wilderness a more goodly countrie to feed their hops; for which way soever they
tumed their eys (save upward to the heavens) they could have little solace or content in respeete of any outward objects. (96)

Like the Israelites, whom God caused "to go forth out of the land of Egypt, and [. . .] into the wilderness," the Puritan and Pilgrim reformers fled from the corruption found in the Protestant churches and states of Europe and found, depending upon their perspective, an edenic garden or a "hideous and desolate wilderness" (Ezekiel 20.10). With Cotton's and Bradford's comparisons, a Puritan typology emerges, according to Roderick Nash:

The Puritans, especially, understood the Christian conception of wilderness, since they conceived of themselves as the latest in a long line of dissenting groups who had braved the wild in order to advance God's cause. They found precedents for coming to the New World in the twelfth-century Waldensians and in still earlier Christian hermits and ascetics who had sought the freedom of deserts or mountains. As enthusiastic practitioners of the art of typology (according to which events in the Old Testament were thought to prefigure later occurrences), the first New Englanders associated their migration with the Exodus. (34)

Carroll echoes this same assertion, arguing that "the Puritan vision [. . .] focussed [sic] sharply upon religion and God. Everything in this world had theological ramifications, and nothing possessed meaning aside from God. Thus the Puritans believed that political, social, and economic affairs reflected, in some way, the mind of God" (16). The result of Puritan typology of the American wilderness figured prominently in how European colonists conceived of the character and purpose of the wilderness in the creation of a uniquely American identity and epistemology.
As Nash has noted, Puritan typology is firmly rooted in Old Testament imagery and rhetoric. The Puritans understood their relationship to the environment as God had manifested it in ancient scripture. After God fashions the earth and all things upon it, He gives man authority over all of His creations:

And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. (Genesis 1.28)

Because God creates man in His image, unlike the fish, the fowl, or any other creature, the Judeo-Christian creation story immediately separates "god-like" man from all other "natural" creations. Although God uses natural elements to form the body of man from "the dust of the ground," He also infuses the body with "the breath of life," which gives man a soul and serves to distinguish him from all of God's other natural creations (Genesis 2.7). Because man has received "the breath of life," his first thoughts should be to the caring for and nurturing of the soul, according to St. Augustine, and not to the other wonders of God's creations: "Yet men go out and gaze in astonishment at high mountains, the huge waves of the sea, the broad reaches of rivers, the ocean that encircles the world, or the stars in their courses. But they pay no attention to themselves. [...] They are not inside me themselves but only their images" (Confessions 216). Augustine argues that the soul, which resides only in man, has priority over all other creation and stands higher on the hierarchical scale of creation. In his essay, "The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis," Lynn White Jr. points to this separation of man from nature, which creates the man/nature dualism, as one of the fundamental rationales for Judeo-Christian
subjugation of the natural world: "Christianity [...] not only established a dualism of man and nature but also insisted that it is God's will that man exploit nature for his proper ends. [...] Christianity made it possible to exploit nature in a mood of indifference to the feelings of natural objects" (1205). The Puritans, in exercising dominion over the earth, saw the landscape of the New World as a wilderness needing to be subdued for their political, commercial, and theological purposes.

Further establishing and compounding man's dominance over the earth occurs as God grants Adam the power to name all of the creatures of the earth. After "God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air," He brings his creations before Adam and allows him to name them, thus participating in the creative process: "and brought them [the beasts of the field and the fowl of the air] unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof" (Genesis 2.19). White asserts that the Christian-held belief of man's authority over the natural world originates in the naming process, arguing that "[m]an named all the animals, thus establishing his dominance over them. God planned all of this explicitly for man's benefit and rule: no item in the physical creation had any purpose save to serve man's purposes" (1205). Adam's naming of the creatures of the earth establishes man's precedence over nature, but, more importantly, it situates man as the final participant in the creation of the earth and further inculcates the man/nature dichotomy. As Paulo Freire notes, "to speak a true word is to transform the world. [...] To exist, humanly, is to name the world, to change it. Once named, the world in its turn reappears to the namers as a problem and requires them a new naming" (75-76). Winona LaDuke (Ojibwe), in discussing the recovery of ecological and cultural identity and integrity for
Native Americans, concurs with Freire's assessment of the creative and transformative power of naming: "There is power in naming, in renaming. [. . .] Many communities struggle with the names given to them by others, and the deconstructing of the categories and borders placed on identity" (132). Freire warns that "[b]ecause dialogue is an encounter among men who name the world, it must not be a situation where some men name on behalf of others. It is an act of creation; it must not serve as a crafty instrument for the domination of one man by another" (77). While Freire and LaDuke speak to the issue of naming as it concerns ethnic, socio-economic, political, religious, or racial identity, their arguments may be applied to other communities of flora and fauna. In naming God's creations, Adam establishes nature's "identity and how [it would] be reflected in the dominant society" (LaDuke 148). The natural world becomes an object in the Judeo-Christian worldview to be used and exploited according to the purpose and will of its namer.

Man's dominion in Eden extended beyond the plants and animals he had named to include woman. After Adam's creation, God gives him a "help meet":

   And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof;

   And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.

   And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. (Genesis 2.21-23)

The language of Genesis underscores that woman is not a separate and distinct individual but rather a derivative and bound subject. Her flesh is not her own. Her bones are not
her own. Her physical existence belongs, according to Judeo-Christian scripture, to man. Furthermore, like the natural world, she is not allowed to define or name herself. Her name, like her body, becomes an extension and possession of man. Indeed, Susan Brownmiller points to the codification of spiritual and moral law in the Ten Commandments as an example of a woman's status in the Hebraic world:

When Moses received his tablets from God on the top of Mount Sinai, "Thou shalt not rape" was conspicuously missing from the Ten Commandments, although Moses received a distinct commandment against adultery and another, for good measure against the coveting of thy neighbor's wife, bracketed this second time around with thy neighbor's house, his field, his servant, ox and ass.

(10)

After Eve partakes of the forbidden fruit, God further solidifies her existence as property and her place as subordinate in the patriarchal hierarchy, telling her, "thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee" (Genesis 3.16). Despite its schism with Judaism over the interpretation of scripture, theology, and spiritual law, Christianity carried the Old Testament view of women as objects and subservient to men. The Apostle Paul taught that "the head of the woman is the man" and reminded the Corinthians that "Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man" (1 Corinthians 11.3, 9). Like the natural world, in the Judeo-Christian worldview, woman becomes an object to be used and controlled in order to achieve the purposes of man.

The traditional coupling of woman and nature, while not unique to Judeo-Christian epistemology, emerges from the Old Testament, providing a further layer of typology for
the early American Puritans. Environmental historian Carolyn Merchant points out that, while "[i]n both Western and non-Western cultures, nature was traditionally feminine," the nature/feminine construction in Western culture maintains more power, since many Western language systems contain inherent gender markers: "In Latin and the romance languages of medieval and early modern Europe, nature was a feminine noun, and hence, like the virtues (temperance, wisdom, etc.) personified as female. [...] The Greek word *phasis* was also feminine" (Death xxiii). In the Judeo-Christian worldview the construction of nature as feminine also finds its basis in Genesis. Adam has dominion over both nature and woman, suggesting that they are equal in their inferiority to man. In examining the idea of the Garden of Eden in Western culture, Merchant explains that Eve's connection to nature stretches beyond the creation story:

Associations of Eve with nature go back to the Genesis stories. Eve, more than Adam, is closely identified with nature in the form of the Garden of Eden itself and its trees, fruit, and serpent. As virgin Eve, she is untouched and unspoiled like the Garden and the two trees at its center. Eve, rather than Adam, communicates with nature in the form of the serpent. Eve, rather than Adam, is the first to ingest the fruit produced by nature on the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. In the process, she becomes one with nature and knows nature, gaining her knowledge from the tree's fruit. The tree symbolizes fertility, and Eve herself become [sic] fertile and bears fruit in the form of children after the Fall from the garden. As mother Eve ("mother of all the living"), she is a fruitful womb to be harvested and enjoyed or conversely to be exploited and made to pay in sorrow for her sin. After the Expulsion, initiated by Eve's tasting of the fruit,
the ground is cursed and brings forth thorns and thistles and Adam is forced to "till the ground from which he was taken." Fallen Eve is a desert, a dark disorderly wasteland waiting to be reclaimed. (Reinventing 117-18)

With the creation story, Judeo-Christian theology and culture establish character traits and parameters by which men can understand the essence of the natural and the feminine. Man's dilemma exists in possessing woman and nature without being destroyed. They are both necessary and desirable, yet they also lead to temptation and death.

The association of woman to nature presents numerous complexities and contradictions. Nature, in its untouched pristine state, is virginal yet seductive. She is a Mother, granting life to "all the living," but is a destroyer, allowing for disease, earthquakes, and tempests. While these contradictory images exist, according to Val Plumwood, they have the same effect and purpose—to confirm masculine power and authority (20). Plumwood argues, "That woman's inclusion in the sphere of nature has been a major tool in their oppression emerges clearly from a glance at traditional sources" (19). By placing women in the "sphere of nature," Judeo-Christian tradition makes women less than human. This tradition equates women to nature and man to culture, creating an archetypal dichotomy. For Western cultures, this dichotomy legitimizes the subjugation of woman and nature. As Merchant explains, the nature/culture dualism drives much of European and American cultural positions towards women and nature:

Nature-culture dualism is a key factor in Western civilization's advance at the expense of nature. As the unifying bonds of the older hierarchical cosmos were severed, European culture increasingly set itself above and apart from all that was symbolized by nature. Similarly, in America the nature-culture dichotomy was
basic to the tension between civilization and the frontier in westward expansion and helped to justify the continuing exploitation of nature's resources. Much of American literature is founded on the underlying assumption of the superiority of culture to nature. [. . .] In early modern Europe, the assumption of a nature-culture dichotomy was used as a justification for keeping women in their place in the established hierarchical order of nature. (Death 143-44)

The construction of nature as feminine informs initial Puritan interactions with the New World and its indigenous inhabitants and manifests itself in American political and economic praxis. Furthermore, American writers from the Colonial period to the present demonstrate an awareness of and a willingness to incorporate the woman/nature and man/culture dualism in their work.

From the first accounts of the New World landscape, American writers like Thomas Morton and James Nelson Barker have gendered the land feminine and justify the sexual exploitation and subjugation of the earth. In his prologue to The New English Canaan (1637), Morton genders the New World landscape feminine and imagines the wilderness he encounters to be both lover and mother:

Like a faire virgin, longing to be sped
And meete her lover in a nuptiall bed
Deck'd in rich ornaments t'advaunce her state
And excellence, being most fortunate
When most enjoy'd: so would our Canaan be
If well imploy'd by art and industry;
Whose offspring now, she was that her fruitfull wombe,
Not being enjoy'd is like a glorious tombe,
Admired things producing which there dye,
And ly fast bound in dark obscurity:
The worth of which, in each particuler
Who lift to know this abstract will declare. (9-16, p. 114)

The landscape of Morton's "New English Canaan" is fertile and virginal, awaiting the arrival of "civilized" men to bed and impregnate her, yet simultaneously, the earth fills the role of a mother who wants to bless man's "art and industry" with "admired things" rather than see them die in her "glorious tombe." The imagery of the land as lover became more explicit in post-revolutionary texts that wanted to capitalize on the few stories that represented the mythic American character. James Nelson Barker's 1808 stage-melodrama The Indian Princess or, La Belle Sauvage recounted the by-now-familiar Pocahontas story and the founding of Jamestown but also cast the New World landscape as a "goodly land [. . .] fring'd with the summer's rich embroidery" (118).

After a storm that "like the ever kindly breath of heav'n" sends John Smith, John Rolfe, and the other English colonists to shore, they experience the new land in a state of sexual arousal: "In this free atmosphere and ample range / The bosom can dilate, the pulses play, / And man, erect, can walk a manly round" (118-19). While depicting the "untamed" wilderness as a willing partner in "civilized" man's sexual conquest, Barker's play conveys and reinforces the understanding that divine forces led Euro-Americans to, as Smith declares, "[A] noble stage, on which to act / A noble drama" but also provides justification for American imperialism and expansionism (119). Furthermore, The Indian Princess provides a subtext which formulates Native American women in an equally
erotic and sexually exploitive position and justifies American policies of extermination and assimilation and the frequent accompaniment of sexual violence on Native women in their enactment. Early American writers expressed a conflicted and ambivalent relationship between themselves and nature and, as The Indian Princess's rhetoric indicates, themselves and indigenous peoples. In so doing, they most frequently imaged the land in feminine descriptors, creating rhetorical images that continue to persist in American literature.

Annette Kolodny applies the term "pastoral impulse" to the manner in which early Americans came to know and to respond to the landscape as feminine (Lay 8). The impact and employment of the "pastoral impulse," evident in Morton's poetry or Barker's melodrama creates, as Kolodny argues, a uniquely American myth:

America's oldest and most cherished fantasy: a daily reality of harmony between man and nature based on an experience of the land as essentially feminine—that is, not simply the land as mother, but the land as woman, the total female principle of gratification—enclosing the individual in an environment of receptivity, repose, and painless and integral satisfaction. (Lay 4)

The impact of this typology, nature as both lover and mother, creates both "personalized and transpersonalized (or culturally shared) expressions of filial homage and erotic desire" (Lay 22). John Gatta argues that early colonial writers celebrated the land and conveyed their desire to embrace it in language consistent with Puritan sensibilities and their perceived sanctified mission: "The land itself must be colonialized—as a vitalizing obligation, but also as a deed of rightful pleasure" (30). However, the eroticism inherent in depicting the land as lover and mother produces a sexually violent subtext with the
colonists committing incest with the land. The ambivalence that early American tracts like Morton's *The New English Canaan*, Sir Walter Raleigh's *The Discovery of Guiana* (1595), and John Smith's *A Description of New England* (1616) demonstrates towards the land provides European colonists with a framework where sexual violence against the earth may be morally questionable but is still permissible.

All too frequently, women have kept the images and dualities that sustain Judeo-Christian cultural values and propagate violence against the feminine landscape. Theoretical approaches like feminism have attempted to liberate women from the woman/nature duality and have offered alternative means of explaining the natural world, yet, as Ynestra King explains, feminism has encountered problems in trying to find a unifying epistemology:

Because ideas reinforcing the relationship between women and nature have been used to limit and oppress women in western society, feminists have looked to social constructionism. They are understandably wary of any theory that appears to reinforce the woman/nature relationship as biological determinism by another name. At the same time, ecologists have been busy reinforcing the humanity/nature relationship and demonstrating the perilous situation of life on earth brought about by human attempts to master nature. This has led other feminists to assert that the feminist project should be freeing nature from men, rather than freeing women from nature. (118)

Before feminism can suggest alternative imagery, theoretical approaches, and distinct epistemologies, as King argues, it must first "try to understand what it has meant for [...] women to be represented as closer to nature than men in a male-dominated culture that
defines itself in opposition to nature" (118). The result of the initial response to the Judeo-Christian model is ecofeminism, which Cheryll Glotfelty defines as a "philosophical discourse and social critique that calls attention to the links between the treatment of women and the treatment of nature" (162). The articulation of ecofeminism and its application to texts that are of importance to feminists and environmentalists alike has not yet eradicated the tendency to associate nature with the feminine. Escaping the woman/nature association proves difficult even for ecofeminists, according to Maureen Devine:

In ecofeminist writings that concentrate on ecological and environmental issues, there is still an age-old tendency to portray nature in images that are feminine, and the metaphors reverse back onto nature, casting not only woman as attuned to nature, but nature as helpless, as exploitable, and as victimized as traditional woman. (64)

Despite the continuing portrayal of nature as feminine, the dichotomy still elicits critical discussions on ecofeminist ideas and national debates on responsible land use and protection of wilderness. Some writers, like Terry Tempest Williams, embrace the nature/woman metaphor and employ it to subvert the traditional constructions of nature in the Judeo-Christian tradition, yet theorists like Plumwood would argue that Williams participates in the further subjugation of women and the environment: "[T]he colonized are appropriated, incorporated, into the selfhood and culture of the master, which forms their identity" (41). The evolving discussions of the male/culture and female/nature dualism, as well as the relative infancy of ecofeminism and its approach to the Judeo-Christian rhetorical tradition, reveal a theoretical system still trying to define itself.
Numerous critical studies exist that examine the varying ways American writers depict a subjugated, gendered landscape. In his important study *The Machine in the Garden*, Leo Marx traces the incursion of technology into the idyllic, pastoral American landscapes of Nathaniel Hawthorne through those of F. Scott Fitzgerald. He notes that the "machine," frequently depicted as a locomotive by writers as diverse as Hawthorne, Thoreau, and Norris, "is associated with crude, masculine aggressiveness in contrast with the tender, feminine, and submissive attitudes traditionally attached to the landscape" (29). Like Marx, Smith also explores the garden trope in American culture but expands the discussion to demonstrate how the New World landscape, more specifically the American West, acted out several fantasies for European colonists and American pioneers. The "virgin" land represented the prospects of an agrarian utopia for Thomas Jefferson and J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, yet to others Western lands served as a "safety valve" for the adventurous, the poor, and the criminal; it represented "a place where afflicted humanity raises her drooping head; where conscience ceases to be a slave, and laws are no more than the security of happiness" (129-30). Nash's work, *Wilderness and the American Mind*, follows the evolving constructions of wilderness in American thought from the Old World, pre-colonial period to the present day. Although interaction with the land has moved from exploitation to conservation and now to preservation, Nash notes that American rhetoric continues to construct nature in opposition to man, giving the land "an almost conscious enmity toward men, who returned it in full measure" (27-28). Marx, Smith, and Nash, along with many others, recognize the important role that the landscape plays in the American consciousness, and, while many critics and
historians acknowledge the violent, physical acts upon the land, most either gloss over or simply ignore the implications that such violence has on the feminine body and spirit.

Female critics offer a different perspective on landscape than their male counterparts despite having to navigate and to address the nature/woman and culture/man dualism. Kolodny's work, *The Lay of the Land: Metaphor as Experience and History in American Life and Letters*, takes up the metaphor of land-as-woman and examines the dangerous consequences that follow from this practice. Kolodny contends that the delineation of manhood in American, and in particular Western American, literature drives the cultural response to the landscape:

> Our continuing fascination with the lone male in the wilderness, and our literary heritage of essentially adolescent, presexual pastoral heroes, suggest that we have yet to come up with a satisfying model for mature masculinity on this continent; while the images of abuse that have come to dominate the pastoral vocabulary suggest that we have been no more successful in our response to the feminine qualities of nature than we have to the human feminine. (147)

Kolodny hopes that "we have [not] lost our capacity to create adaptive symbols for ourselves" and recognizes that "the archetypal polarities, masculine and feminine, are now undergoing radical alterations in the ways they are imaged and perceived" (158). In her later study *The Land Before Her: Fantasy and Experience of the American Frontiers, 1630-1860*, Kolodny moves from masculine depictions of the landscape to explore how English-speaking, colonial women created meaning in the New World. "The psychosexual dynamic of a virginal paradise meant [. . .] that real flesh-and-blood women—at least metaphorically were disposed of paradise," according to Kolodny, and
that, during their first years on the continent, the Euro-American woman "seems to have been the unwilling inhabitant of a metaphorical landscape she had no part in creating—captive as it were, in the garden of someone else's imagination" (3, 6). The first defining image of the American wilderness for women then, as Kolodny contends, is that of a confining and stifling space, which women invariably expressed through the Indian captivity narrative tradition. To overcome the "psychology of captivity," Kolodny argues that women eventually began to recast themselves, in relation to the land, as gardeners and stewards (6). In the end, women's imaging of the land as a domestic space counterbalances the sexual and exploitative masculine constructions more prominent in the Judeo-Christian tradition.

Following the example of Kolodny in focusing on women's perceptions of the land, Vera Norwood and Janice Monk, in The Desert is No Lady: Southwestern Landscapes in Women's Writing and Art, have compiled eleven essays that examine how the Southwestern landscape informs the work of female writers, photographers, and painters. Norwood and Monk compiled and edited the essays to respond "in part to the broad scholarly arena of landscape study," and because "[l]andscape provides the necessary context and background for life" (3). They found in their review of existing scholarship that the overwhelming majority of studies looked exclusively at men's interactions with the landscape, and women's experiences were often found in "lesser-known works of literature and art, folk forms such as weaving, pottery, embroidery, and quilting, and women's diaries, journals, reminiscences, and oral histories" (4). Furthermore, Norwood and Monk chose to focus on the Southwest, because "the region is one of the few areas of the United States in which three cultures have overlapped while maintaining strong
internal integrity," which allows for a more complex and rounded discussion, since most critical scholarship on women and their perceptions of the American landscape, including Kolodny's two studies, focus on the Anglo-American woman's experience (4). In their book, Norwood and Monk add to the field of landscape study and expand the discussion to include the previously over-looked and ignored voices of non-Anglo women and their perceptions of how the land gives meaning to their lives.

Unfortunately, the work of these critics has not offered alternative means of understanding the land and has overlooked the correlation between violence committed against the land and violence against the female body and spirit. While Kolodny, Norwood, Monk, and Nash recognize that the land acts as more than a metaphoric body upon which Judeo-Christian fantasies are played out, they continue to reify the land as object and contest only the popular images of a feminine landscape. Ironically, the Puritan belief in a "visible" and an "invisible" church, which they had adapted from Platonic theory and St. Augustine's application to Christian theology, offers another avenue for perceiving the land. In the permanent realm where all forms are eternal, including God's "invisible" church, the land must also exist in an eternal and spiritual form. If it has both a physical and a spiritual form, the land becomes more than an object layered with anthropocentric metaphors, whether those images are phallocentric or gynocentric. The violence committed against the land is physically destructive, but it is also spiritually destructive. In regarding the land as fully vested with physical and spiritual properties, a more defined parallel emerges between the earth and the female body and spirit. While Kolodny and other critics have examined and subverted the traditional male/female and culture/nature dualities in American culture and literature,
they have not adequately addressed the spiritual violence committed against the land, nor have they extended their arguments to explore how, in the Judeo-Christian worldview and literary traditions, violence against the earth is often frequented with violence against the female body and spirit.\textsuperscript{10}

In John Steinbeck's \textit{East of Eden} (1952), Lee, the Trask family's Berkeley-educated, Chinese cook/housekeeper, and the novel's intellectual, philosophical, and scriptural voice, explains to Caleb Trask that neither he nor his family are specifically and individually disposed to evil but that Judeo-Christian cultural values have made Americans, in general, susceptible to violent tendencies and actions:

\begin{quote}
We're a violent people, Cal. Does it seem strange to you that I include myself? Maybe it's true that we are all descended from the restless, the nervous, the criminals, the arguers, and brawlers, but also from the brave and independent and generous. If our ancestors had not been that, they would have stayed in their home plots in the other world and starved over the squeezed-out soil. (570)
\end{quote}

Steinbeck's perception of the role violence has played in the formation of the United States and American cultural identity is astute. Furthermore, Steinbeck places the novel and its action in the West, the region of the country most frequently associated with individualism, ambition, masculinity, and violence. The literature of the American West most fully explores the intersections of these Western ideals. In the masculine and violent space of the American West, the "feminine," which in this dissertation denotes all things assigned female qualities and values, is frequently marginalized and subjected to male, physical and sexual violence.
In the American canon, critics and scholars often classify Western American as a minor regional literature at best and as a form of trash fiction at worst, yet the literature of the American West is representative of the American canon, and many scholars argue it is the formative force behind all American literature. Kathleen Boardman, in her essay "Western American Literature and the Canon" expresses the dilemma in which Western writers and readers find themselves, when critics like David Brooks, in his 1988 Wall Street Journal article "From Western Lit to Westerns As Lit.," mock Western American literature and its place in the canon:

In the either-or world captured by this phrase, western American literature disappears. In this world, "western lit" is not Cather, Stegner, and Waters, nor is it Silko, Abbey, and Rivera. It's Virgil, Shakespeare, and Milton—or perhaps Hawthorne, Emerson, and Faulkner if the American canon is to be the focus. At the other extreme, the western writer (someone who lives in or writes about the American West) collapses into the western writer (someone who writes cowboy stories). (44-45)

In Unsettling the Literary West: Authenticity and Authorship, Nathaniel Lewis argues persuasively that the trivialization of Western American writings results from "the pursuit, production, and marketing of the 'real west'" (1), yet he does not acknowledge the formative role that frontier literature played in the creation of a uniquely American literary tradition. As Edward Watts and David Rachels explain, "the west produced significant literary and cultural texts whose significance is not limited to their immediate geographical environs but which must also be considered as contributing to the diverse cultures of the antebellum United States as a whole" (xiii). Although Watts and Rachels
recognize the importance of Western American literature in the American canon, they do
not also acknowledge its formative force. The first examples of Western American
literature may be found in the writings of the first colonists who sailed west and arrived
in a New World with forbidding landscapes and indigenous cultures. Early American
colonial writings demonstrate how Euro-Americans negotiated the new landscape and the
indigenous population while creating an American literature and identity akin to, yet
ultimately separate from, their continental forefathers. Perhaps, no other writer better
exemplifies this process than James Fenimore Cooper in his *Leatherstocking Tales*. In
the form of Natty Bumppo, Cooper creates the ideal American man and the first western
hero. He carries the mantle of "civilization" into the wilderness only to be refined
through a return to the "primitive." His identity is neither continental nor indigenous but
a fusion of two cultures—superior to both. Cooper's frontier romances also inculcated
dominant typology: in *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826), Chingachgook acts the "noble
savage," while Magua displays the "bloodthirstiness" of the "savage." Furthermore,
Alice Munro represents the vulnerable Anglo woman, who does not belong in Cooper's
masculine space. Western writers, from Cooper to Cormac McCarthy, have resisted and
marginalized the presence of the "feminine" in the West. Whether conceptions and
images of the feminine in Western American literature appear as the fertility of a virgin
landscape, the impotence and inexperience of the Eastern tenderfoot, or the whore with a
golden heart, violence has been the primary method Western writers have used to
negotiate and to limit the presence of the feminine.

Frank Norris, Sarah Winnemucca Hopkins, and Terry Tempest Williams are three
Western writers whose work portrays the employment and implications of violence on
the "feminine." Each of these three writers presents and examines how violence shapes the American and Western experience. Norris, Winnemucca, and Williams demonstrate how violence in the American West was commonly directed towards the "feminine" and was frequently sexual in nature. The sexualized, violent rhetoric of the Puritans in describing their relationship with the New World landscape transferred easily to the national program of manifest destiny. The violence committed against the feminine-gendered landscape, needed to tame the wilderness and to make "the desert [. . .] rejoice, and blossom as the rose" (Isaiah 35.1), however, created a climate that allowed for and justified the commission of violence against the female body and the female spirit. The works of Norris, Winnemucca, and Williams show that violence against the land accompanies and mirrors violence against the "feminine." As a writer deeply concerned with the loss of American masculinity at the end of the nineteenth-century, Norris exults in the conflict between masculine and feminine as they unfold in the tenements of San Francisco or in the wheat fields of the San Joaquin valley. Winnemucca, writing only a few years before Norris, offers a Native American and tribal account of violence that counters and inverts Judeo-Christian images of Native peoples and the New World landscape. Almost a century later, Williams describes how violence against the land affects the peoples, especially the women, who live upon it. Norris, Winnemucca, and Williams have not received as much critical attention as other Western writers like Willa Cather, John Steinbeck, or Wallace Stegner, and for this reason, they are the focus of this dissertation.

Chapter 2 discusses the ways in which Frank Norris constructs "masculinity" in violent opposition to the "feminine" in his novels McTeague and The Octopus. Norris,
the father of American literary naturalism, had a short yet prolific career, dying, as he did, at the age of thirty-two. His writing reflects the concerns of a Western American society that was leaving a romantic period of frontier expansion and entering a new urban, industrial age. Within this cultural flux, Norris depicts the violence that the American male encountered and committed as he attempted to find a place in an evolving society. McTeague epitomizes this conflict: a man born and raised in the mining country of Placer County who reverts to the violent tendencies of the frontiersman when confronted by his obsessive and demanding wife. In The Octopus, Norris's frontiersmen and miners have become wheat farmers in the San Joaquin valley, where they rape the earth and violently contend with the Southern Pacific Railroad for control of the valley's fertile fields. A critical reading of Norris's work reveals a reliance on Judeo-Christian, patriarchal imagery that condones violence against the feminine-gendered landscape as well as sexual violence against the female body.

Chapter 3 examines the connections between the feminine landscape and the female body and spirit as understood from the perspective of Sarah Winnemucca Hopkins. Winnemucca published Life Among the Piutes: Their Wrongs and Claims, what many consider to be the first autobiography by a Native American woman, in 1883. Her text outlines the abuses the Northern Paiute suffered at the hands of Euro-American colonists, who moved into the Great Basin after the discovery of gold and silver in the Sierra Nevada mountains in 1849, and challenges the claims of Euro-American and Judeo-Christian moral superiority. Winnemucca writes from a tribal perspective; thus, her text, as well as her depiction of the land and the role of women, does not conform to traditional Western images and theoretical positions. Reading Winnemucca's tribal...
narrative, with Northern Paiute history and culture as a foundation, opens possibilities that Western critical approaches often ignore or dismiss. Instead of seeing individual acts of violence against the feminine, Winnemucca conveys the idea that singular violent acts have communal consequences for her people.

Chapter 4 looks at the work of Terry Tempest Williams, a contemporary environmental writer, who argues for the interconnectedness and sanctity of all life. Refuge: An Unnatural History of Family and Place traces various threads of masculine violence against the feminine land, body, and spirit, demonstrating how they are interwoven. As patriarchal institutions—government, industry, and religion—either commit or condone acts of violence against the land, the results of their actions suppress the feminine spirit and destroy life. Williams demonstrates how nuclear testing not only destroys the landscape of the Nevada desert but also destroys the lives of the women in the Williams and Tempest families, who contract breast and ovarian cancer and die as a result of nuclear fallout. Williams argues that the conceptualizations of the feminine, so firmly rooted in Puritan tradition, persist into the twenty-first century. The Judeo-Christian imperative to improve the land and to put self before all else governs economic and political policy as well as religious theology.

Chapter 5 offers some concluding comments on how violence against the feminine manifests itself differently in the works of Norris, Winnemucca, and Williams, looking specifically at how images of the feminine change or endure—over the course of time, from Western to Native cultures, and across gender lines. These Western American writers provide representative examples of how masculine violence impacted the New
World landscape as well as the women who made it their home, yet they also offer alternative avenues for addressing the problem of violence in the American West.

Finally, this dissertation and the connections made between violence and the feminine-gendered landscape and the female body and spirit in Western American literature are far from exhaustive. The connections made in this dissertation may be easily applied to the works of Willa Cather, who, for example, presents numerous female characters (e.g. Alexandra Bergson in *O Pioneers!* [1913] and Ántonia Shimerda in *My Ántonia* [1918]) who display an understanding and connection to the landscape of the Great Plains but whose lives are scarred by both physical and spiritual violence. John Steinbeck's novels brim with violence against nature, most notably *To A God Unknown* (1933), and explore the repercussions of such violence in the lives of both men and women. The entire body of Wallace Stegner's work reveals a writer who struggles to find his own sense of place in the West and to come to terms with the brutal violence of his father and the premature death of his mother. Other Western writers as diverse as Virginia Sorenson, Rudolfo Anaya, James Welch, and Norman Maclean also illuminate the ways in which Americans construct and negotiate the Western landscape and femininity. While studies like Kolodny's or Merchant's address violence against the land, further work needs to be done in exploring the relationship between the feminine land and the female body and spirit.

Gatta notes that the first and the quintessential American literary hero, Natty Bumppo, who Cooper patterned after the real life Daniel Boone, takes life mercilessly:

> But one dare not forget that Natty becomes and remains a killer. First he becomes a deer hunter, then a warrior-scout who is highly adept at killing people, and
finally in old age (as presented in The Prairie [1827]) a mere trapper. To a striking degree, killing remains a primary occupation throughout his career. [...] Despite Natty's reverence for life, much of his connection to nature arises from his participation in violence and death. He achieves his baptismal renewal not through the usual Christian medium of water but by shedding "redskin" blood to acquire his name. (81)

Natty Bumppo becomes the archetypal American hero, and his precise and merciless use of violence is an essential characteristic of his identity. The prevalence, and sometimes primacy, of violence in the American literary character and in the formation of American identity has had damaging and destructive effects on a land that Western, Judeo-Christian culture poses as both virgin and whore. Likewise, the violence visited upon the American landscape allows for and encourages the violation and subjugation of women, who impede patriarchal progression and aggression.
At the end of the nineteenth-century, Frank Norris confronted an American cultural identity that had become effeminate and hyper-civilized. With the United States Census of 1890 and Frederick Jackson Turner's presentation of his paper "The Significance of the Frontier in America" to the American Historical Association at the Chicago World's Columbian Exposition in 1893, the American Western frontier had been declared closed. With this symbolic closure, young American men found themselves increasingly confined to urban and industrial spaces, where they were more European than American, having no access to the frontier—the place Turner identified as the breeding ground for American masculinity. Norris lamented this fact, acknowledging that the "Frontier has become so much an integral part of our conception of things that it will be long before we shall all understand that it is gone" ("Frontier" 1183). The frontier was the sole place, according to Norris, "where there was action and fight, and where men held each other's lives in the crook of the forefinger" (1183). The closure of the frontier signaled a complete "civilizing" of the American continent and of the American man. Norris saw how the rise of Howellsian Realism paralleled the emasculation of the American man. Instead of stories about "everyday life, things that are likely to happen
between lunch and supper, small passions, restricted emotions, dramas of the reception-
room, tragedies of an afternoon call, crises involving cups of tea" ("Zola" 1106), Norris
demanded and wrote stories that insisted on traditional, Anglo-Saxon masculine identity:
"Give us stories now, give us men, strong, brutal men, with red-hot blood in 'em, with
unleashed passions rampant in 'em, blood and bones and viscera in 'em" ("Opening"
1113). Richard Slotkin places Norris, along with Hamlin Garland, Jack London, and
Owen Wister, in the "red-blooded" school of American literature, since "they
systematically link the myths of regenerative violence to an ideology of class and race
privilege" (Gunfighter 160). Although Slotkin astutely points to the importance of class
and race in the "red-blooded" tradition, and in the novels of Norris, he overlooks how the
myths of regenerative violence concern a feminine gendered landscape and the female
body and spirit. As a practitioner of the "red-blooded" tradition, Norris certainly
demonstrates hostility toward peoples not of Anglo-Saxon ancestry in his literature, but
equally important, in his novels McTeague and The Octopus, Norris evinces revulsion for
femininity and condones violence against a feminine gendered land and the female body
and spirit.

Although most scholars and readers credit Norris as the founder of American literary
naturalism, his sense and understanding of place equally informs his writing. Norris was
born on March 5, 1870 in Chicago to Benjamin Franklin Norris Sr., a wealthy jeweler,
and his wife Gertrude Doggett, a once promising actress. Little is known of Norris's
early childhood, but according to Joseph R. McElrath Jr. and Jesses S. Crisler, his
family's move to San Francisco in 1884 and his parents' subsequent divorce in 1894 "was
one of those accidental developments of the kind emphasized by literary naturalists as a
determinant of the course of individual lives" (65). Instead of being known as a novelist associated with Chicago or even New York City, where he moved in February 1898, he is almost exclusively known as a novelist whose primary backdrop is the American West and more specifically San Francisco. As a result of his father's wealth and his mother's artistic inclinations, Norris had the means to explore numerous artistic fields. He enrolled in the San Francisco Art Association's school in 1886, where he studied painting. He later moved to Paris to study at the Académie Julian under the tutelage of William Bouguereau, whose painting privileged the technical and the realistic, which stood in contrast to the emerging school of Claude Monet's French Impressionism. During his two years in Paris, Norris spent as much time writing as he did painting, leading his father to order him home. He had become fascinated with the Middle Ages and medieval armor, attempting a large historical painting titled "Battle of Crécy," and composing a novelistic manuscript, which no longer exists, titled "Robert d'Artois." After the two years in Paris, Norris returned to San Francisco and enrolled at the University of California in 1890 but failed to earn his degree because of his inability to meet the mathematics requirements. He attended Harvard from 1894-1895 and trained to become a writer under the direction of Lewis E. Gates. While the nascency of a major American novelist was formed at Harvard, Norris first found work as a journalist, working for the San Francisco weekly The Wave. He wrote local color pieces about California and later traveled to South Africa to detail life there for the San Francisco Chronicle. The popularity and the quality of his articles led him to work for McClure's, where he reported on the Spanish-American War. While working as a journalist, he met Jeanette Black at a dance in 1896 and carried on a courtship with her until they married on
February 12, 1900. In January 1902, Jeannette gave birth to their only child, a daughter named Jeannette Williamson Norris. During his courtship and marriage, Norris wrote at a frenetic pace, writing numerous reviews, essays, short stories, and novels. His premature death on October 25, 1902 cut his career short: he died of peritonitis, the result of a burst appendix.12

Despite his early death, Norris produced a large body of work. Norris placed his first article, titled, "Clothes of Steel," for publication in the San Francisco Chronicle when he was twenty-two. The next year he published a verse romance, titled Yvernelle (1892), which followed in the tradition of nineteenth-century romances. Over the next six years, while studying at Harvard and writing for newspapers, Norris wrote the beginning drafts of many of his most important novels, yet he found that the Victorian reader approved of more staid and conventional fare. The high seas adventure Moran of the Lady Letty: A Story of Adventure off the California Coast (1898), serialized in The Wave, and Blix: A Love Idyll (1899), serialized in Puritan Monthly, contain plots and characters that appeal to a genteel audience wanting adventure and romance. McTeague: A Story of San Francisco (1899), which Norris began writing at Harvard and finished in 1897, finally found a publisher in Doubleday & McClure. Recognized by most scholars as his opus, McTeague manifests Norris's definition and interpretation of naturalism. Norris took the elements of adventure and romance from his earlier works and infused them with social determinism. In A Man's Woman (1900), Norris attempted to return to the "healthy and clean and natural" love story, but as he wrote to the editor Isaac Marcosson, "it's [A Man's Woman] the last one that will be, if you understand what I mean. I am going back definitely now to the style of [McTeague] and [will] stay with it right along" (qtd. in
Crisler 67, 93). Early in 1899, as Norris explained to Howells, he had decided to "do some great work with the West and California as a background [...] a big Epic Trilogy [...] made out of such a subject, that at the same time would be modern and distinctly American [...] so big that it frightens me at times" (qtd. in Crisler 73). The Octopus: A Story of California (1901), the first novel in the trilogy, follows Norris's ideal American subject, wheat, as it is planted, harvested, and shipped to the Far East for consumption. The Pit: A Story of Chicago (1903), published posthumously, tells the story of Curtis Jadwin, a commodities trader who tries to corner the market on wheat. Norris did not complete The Wolf before his death, which would have shown the consumption of the wheat in Eastern Europe. His final novel Vandover and the Brute (1914), which he began writing during his freshman year at the University of California. The novel depicts the life of a San Francisco painter, who, because of his primal passions devolves from a wealthy, civilized young man into a beggar who suffers from bouts of lycanthropy. When Vandover utters "a sound, half word, half cry, 'Wolf—Wolf!'" and runs "naked, four-footed" around his apartment, Norris echoes humanity's reversion to animal passions and functions found in French naturalistic novels like Emile Zola's 1890 novel La Bête Humaine (310). In the course of eleven years, Norris wrote eight novels, a collection of short stories, A Deal in Wheat and Other Stories of the New and Old West (1903), and numerous essays that would come to define American literary naturalism and to assert the prominence of the West in American culture and literature.

Apart from his first novel, the medieval romance Yvernelle, which drew heavily on his reading of early nineteenth-century historical romances and his captivation with medieval armor, Norris's fiction demonstrates the rhetorical possibilities when the
deterministic philosophical position of European naturalistic writers, the stringently accurate methods of American realists, and the romance of the American Frontier. Upon discovering the novels of Zola and learning under the tutelage of Joseph LeConte, his geology and zoology professor at the University of California, Norris took the principles of French Naturalism and fused them with the evolutionary idealism of LeConte, which attempted to "reconcile Darwinism with Christian doctrine" (Frank Norris 123).13 His work demonstrates a fidelity to "a theory of fiction wherein things are represented 'as they really are,' inexorably, with the truthfulness of a camera" ("Zola" 1106), yet he equally esteems the romances of Sir Walter Scott and James Fenimore Cooper. Realism, which, according to Norris, "is minute, it is the drama of a broken teacup, the tragedy of a walk down the block, the excitement of an afternoon call, the adventure of an invitation to dinner," could not address the full complexities of human life ("Plea" 1166). The writers of Romance could explore "the unplumbed depths of the human heart, and the mystery of sex, and the problems of life, and the black, unsearched penetralia of the soul of man" ("Plea" 1168-169). When Norris combined the most desirable elements of Realism and Romance he had a blueprint for the naturalistic tale: "Terrible things must happen to the characters of the naturalistic tale. They must be twisted from the ordinary, wrenched out from the quiet, uneventful round of every-day life, and flung into the throes of a vast and terrible drama that works itself out in unleashed passions, in blood, and in sudden death" ("Zola" 1107). Norris's synthesis of these ideas, according to Donald Pizer, is a theoretical and aesthetic movement that defined a uniquely American form of naturalism: "Naturalism, in short, abstracts the best from realism and romanticism—detailed accuracy and philosophical depth" ("Frank" 122). Although other writers like
Stephen Crane and Theodore Dreiser used naturalistic techniques in their fiction, as McElrath and Crisler explain, "[a]t the turn of the century, Norris was the 'father' of the American school, and—strange to say, perhaps—he was the only early American practitioner who theorized at length about naturalism and promoted it as the signature of the 'modern' in literature" (18-19). Norris uses the American West as the backdrop for his depiction of the "modern"—the West serving as the best place for men to explore the "mystery of sex" and to exhaust their "overplus of energy to [the] subjugation," conquest, and death of the female-gendered landscape and the female body and spirit ("Frontier" 1185-186).

Despite his deference to the conventions of naturalism, Norris's work invokes a strong humanistic and moralistic tone, indicative of a familiarity and understanding of Judeo-Christian cultural values. Zola's naturalism eliminates the possibility of the supernatural, basing human events solely on the factors of heredity and environment, and, while Norris espouses the basic tenets of naturalism, his writing suggests that he cannot ignore the presence of deity. Although critical studies of how Norris's religious convictions shape his fiction are rare, several noted scholars have examined Norris's accepted incongruity between naturalism and spiritualism in his work. In his 1962 study Frank Norris, Warren G. French argues that Norris shares an affinity with many of the ideals of the early American Transcendentalists. Pizer, in his 1966 work The Novels of Frank Norris, outlines how LeConte's melding of the natural and the supernatural may explain the moralistic resolution at the end of The Octopus:

Falseness dies; injustice and oppression in the end of everything fade and vanish away. Greed, cruelty, selfishness, and inhumanity are short-lived; the individual
suffers, but the race goes on. Annixter dies, but in a far distant corner of the world a thousand lives are saved. The larger view always and through all shams, all wickednesses, discovers the Truth that will, in the end, prevail, and all things, surely, inevitably, resistless work together for good. (Octopus 651-52)

For Pizer, the conclusion of the novel demonstrates how Norris's interpretation of LeConte's evolutionary idealism insists that social determinism and supernatural elements like "Truth" may coexist—social determinism may govern the fate of the individual but the supernatural intervenes on behalf of humanity. Fusing the theoretical approaches of both French and Pizer, Paul Civello asserts that LeConte's evolutionary Christianity acts as a transcendental catalyst in Norris's depiction of the wheat fields in The Octopus; Norris's descriptions of a loving, fecund Mother Earth attempt to move "Christianity back to its pagan origins, back to its closeness with nature and natural cycles" (53). While French and Pizer find metaphysical and deistic elements in Norris's writing, only Civello advances the import of Judeo-Christian ideology to those works.

More recent studies of metaphysical and religious undertones in Norris's work have focused on ideals advanced and espoused by specific Christian sects. In a reading that borrows heavily from Roman Catholic theology, Nan Morelli-White reads McTeague as Norris's update of a morality play with McTeague playing the role of "Everyman." She argues that McTeague and Trina "fall victim to two of the traditional Seven Deadly Sins, lechery and avarice" and that the "psychomachic struggles of [the] characters are played out in terms familiar from the morality play" (5). Ultimately, Morelli-White argues that "the grim reality that the novel presents is inextricably bound up with Norris's ethical judgment of the modern human condition" (9). Instead of seeing the roots of Roman
Catholicism in Norris's canon, Torsten Pettersson argues that Calvinist theology complemented the tenets of naturalism and prepared its adherents for the deterministic ideals present in a post-Darwinian age: "[N]aturalism found a parallel in Calvinism, whose emphasis on Predestination and Original Sin prepared for an acceptance of determinism and the influence of heredity factors" (87). Pettersson reads the conclusion of The Octopus as a parallel of Calvinist theology, observing that "the novel vacillates between determinism and an appeal for deliberate reforms, the Calvinists believed in absolute divine predestination, but on the other hand zealously, promoted virtue and battled against vice as if human efforts nevertheless made a difference" (88). Lastly, in his article "'One Thing One Did Not Question': The Christian Perspective of Novelist Frank Norris," McElrath favors a reading of Norris's membership in the Episcopal Church as a basis for analysis. McElrath notes that Norris's writing is littered with scriptural references from the Bible, quotations from the Book of Common Prayer, and "infusions of Christian ethical concepts" (45-46). In discussing The Octopus, The Pit, and Vandover and the Brute, McElrath suggests that in two ways readers can "entertain the possibility that [Norris] was a conventional believer":

First, in these three novels he fashioned situations and characterizations that give rise to theological significations inviting both interpretation and evaluation. Second, while Norris remains the detached narrator suppressing any desire he may have felt to hold forth in the manner of didactic writers [...] he could not wholly conceal the fact that he was neither an amoral observer of life nor a writer devoid of spirituality as his French mentor, Zola. (55)
Whether Norris's Episcopalianism or any specific religious theology implicitly shaped his theoretical and rhetorical positions remains a subject for further study and debate, yet the textual evidence, as McElrath argues, reveals that "Norris fashioned works in which he manifested a two-tiered mentality—as a hard-headed rationalist who also accepted gladly the benefits attending belief in religious truths" (55-56). These accepted "religious truths" expressed in Norris's work, however, justify subjugation of and violence towards the feminine land, body, and spirit.

Regardless of the specific roots of Norris's Judeo-Christian belief system, they affect the way he depicts the relationships between man and woman as well as man and nature. For Norris, male and female were the two most important and powerful forces in existence: "[T]he two world-forces, the elemental Male and Female, locked in a colossal embrace, at grapples in the throes of an infinite desire, at once terrible and divine, knowing no law, untamed, savage, natural, sublime" (Octopus 131). In this description of the sowing of the vast wheat fields in the San Joaquin Valley, Norris alludes to the divine ordering of male and female found in Genesis. With the first appearance of man and woman in Judeo-Christian texts, God sanctions a patriarchal relationship that intends to exemplify all male/female relationships. After creating the Earth and all things on it, God declares that Adam should "have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth" (Genesis 1.26); thus, Man becomes the sole patriarch over the land and all its inhabitants, including Woman. Man's governance and power over Woman is illustrated in God's creation of Woman from Adam's rib and, just as important, Adam's authority to label and define his "help meet": "And Adam said, This is now bone
of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman because she was taken out of Man" (Genesis 2.23). With a few short verses, Man's relationship to Woman becomes ingrained and institutionalized in Judeo-Christian belief systems and cultural values. As T. Walter Herbert notes in his study Sexual Violence and American Manhood, "men get locked into a style of manhood that visits abuse on women" because of strong traditions that condone the commodification and subjugation of women: "The story of Adam and Eve captures the patriarchal situation with a minimum of fuss: the woman's body is made from man" (7). Working in a patriarchal culture that espouses these values, Norris invariably transmits such ideas through his work; however, Norris's depictions of the interrelations of men and women go beyond descriptions of masculine dominion and authority—his writing demonstrates a fear of the feminine and condones violence against a female-gendered landscape and the female land and body.

Norris's "assault, so violent as to be veritably brutal" on the feminine in his body of literature can be attributed to the shifting economic practices and cultural values in the United States at the end of the nineteenth-century but, more importantly, it may be ascribed to the perceived conquest and closing of the American frontier (Octopus 130-31). In her discussion of American masculinity at the end of the nineteenth-century, Amy Kaplan notes that "[n]ationhood and manhood have long been intimately related in American history through the dynamic of territorial expansion" (661). Indeed, Norris argues the same sentiment when discussing the 1898 invasion of the Philippines and the movement of the frontier further westward (yet in a sense eastward as well): "The race impulse was irresistible. March we must, conquer we must, and checked in the Westward course of empire we turned Eastward and expended the resistless energy that
by blood was ours in conquering the Old World behind us" ("Frontier" 1185). The emerging frontiers for Americans were no longer geographic but rather economic. Instead of men taming the wilderness and working the land, they became subject to larger capitalistic hierarchies and began to lose their identity. Furthermore, as American manhood became more corporate, cosmopolitan, and elitist, it also became more artistic. Norris, who was trained as a painter and whose father was a successful businessman, felt the need to distance himself from "the perceived 'feminization' of American manhood" (Bower 41). While many young men his age looked to careers in business, law, or medicine, Norris felt that he could best change the "feminization" of American manhood through his writing. McElrath and Crisler explain that Norris criticized examples of the effeminate while offering masculine alternatives in his work:

In his writings he derided or lampooned effeminacy as he saw it manifested by males in social life and the arts. He exalted manliness as it was traditionally defined, and he self-consciously exercised the "masculine" voice and literary methods that he admired in the writings of Robert Louis Stevenson, Rudyard Kipling, and—as he termed him in 1896—the "Man of the Iron Pen," Emile Zola. He became in short, one of the late nineteenth-century American literary artists whose program it was to rescue literature from the feminine realm. (121)

In this reassertion of masculinity, Norris sets the majority of his novels in the West, the traditional setting for American men to find, explore, and express their manhood, and creates a hostile tone towards the feminine. Herbert more forcefully argues that "[Norris's] novels explore the social arrangements that produced the cult of primordial manhood and trace out the logic through which redemptive barbarism becomes
redemptive rape" (133). Herbert, in echoing Slotkin's theories on the regenerative and redemptive power of violence in American culture, insists that the male characters in Norris's fiction bear out the idea that they can escape the "hyper-civilized," effete definition of manhood and return to their primordial, masculine roots through violence.

In McTeague and The Octopus, Norris defines American manhood at the end of the nineteenth-century in his depictions of the violent exploitation, subjugation, and destruction of the female-gendered landscape and the female body and spirit.

With the publication of McTeague, Norris offers his interpretation of the brutality and determinism of Zola's naturalism while rendering a story that realistically depicts life in the American West at the end of the nineteenth-century. In this first serious novel, Norris represents man as mostly animal rather than human, living out the majority of life in "the performance of purely animal functions": "[T]he idealists will close their eyes to the fact that men and women are after all only human. Even this word 'human' is misleading. Is it not even truer that so-called humanity still is, and for countless generations will be, three-quarters animal, living and dying, eating and sleeping, mating and reproducing even as the animals" ("Theory" 1104). Indeed, the characters of the novel can be seen doing, according to Norris, exactly as nature. Yet, in his essay "Theory and Reality: An Old Author and a New Writer Consider the Same Problem," which discusses Mrs. J. R. Jarboe's and William Dean Howell's treatment of the "very delicate sex problem" in their novels, Robert Atterbury (1896) and A Parting and a Meeting (1896) respectively, Norris does not discuss the role of violence in "purely animal functions" nor does he connect the frequent presence of brutality with the "delicate sex problem." While Norris does not shy away from discussing human sexuality like Howells, his depictions of human sexuality
revel in brutality, cruelty, and sadism. Sexuality is "the force that moves forward the plot [of McTeague]," but, in Norris's writing, it loses its humanity and becomes the object by which McTeague, Zerkow, and Marcus can assert their masculinity and suppress any feminine presence (McElrath and Crisler 244).

The issue of sexual violence in McTeague has not gone unnoticed by critics, yet most have dismissed, rationalized, or justified the actions of McTeague and Zerkow. Pizer believes "McTeague is in part a tragic novel" because its protagonist "becomes a victim of Trina's avarice," and he is "ultimately [...] a human being in distress, [...] a figure of some significance despite his limitations—as a man, in short, whose fall contains elements of the tragic" ("Nineteenth-Century" 90-91). Instead of containing elements of tragedy Mary Beth Werner argues that "Norris employs the subject of domestic violence as a vehicle for humor" (1). On the other hand, critics like Philip Cavalier argue that the sexual violence towards women in McTeague should be read symbolically:

Throughout McTeague, gold replaces the female body as the object of male sexual desire. The female body functions instead as a barrier which men such as Zerkow and McTeague, whom Norris figures as miners, penetrate and mutilate in order to reveal and take possession of golden hidden from them. (127)

None of these critics, however, have examined how Norris's theoretical approach and cultural values assert patriarchal gender roles and condone sexual and domestic violence.

The horrific murder of Trina McTeague by her husband results from McTeague's insatiable desire to possess and to control her physically and sexually. In the character of McTeague, Norris creates the archetypal brute that cannot maintain his civil virtues and must succumb to his animalistic desires. The simplicity of his life is interrupted with the
appearance of Trina Sieppe in his dental parlor. While McTeague initially feels disdain for Trina, who like the other young girls "disturbed and perplexed him," he becomes more comfortable with her because she was not feminine, "almost like a boy, frank, candid, unreserved," since "the woman in her was not yet awakened; she was yet, as one might say, without sex" (17). As Trina visits his parlor for more dental work, the primal desires in McTeague arouse; however, McTeague awakens not to Trina as an individual woman but to the feminine as an object of sexual lust:

It was not only her that he saw and felt, it was the woman, the whole sex, an entire new humanity, strange and alluring, that he seemed to have discovered. [. . .] It was dazzling, delicious, charming beyond all words. [. . .] Everything had to be made over again. His whole rude idea of life had to be changed. The male virile desire in him tardily awakened, aroused itself, strong and brutal. It was resistless, untrained, a thing not to be held in leash an instant. (19)

With the birth of McTeague's masculinity and virility in the presence of Trina, a woman "without sex," he manifests the need to effect the awakening of her sexuality and to possess her physically and sexually. Indeed, after his initial surgery on Trina, McTeague keeps "her little tooth that he had extracted [. . .] wrapped in a bit of newspaper in his vest pocket" (20). When he takes the tooth out of his pocket to fondle it, holding it in "the palm of his immense, horny hand," McTeague is "seized with some strange elephantine sentiment, wagging his head at it, heaving tremendous sights [sic]" (20). The animalistic and sensual arousal that McTeague experiences when holding and seeing this treasure derives from McTeague's physical possession of Trina, even if it is only her decayed
tooth. The gratification found in the procurement and the control of Trina's body is short-lived, as McTeague's need to sexually possess her grows.

As his own sexual desire stirs, McTeague finds himself needing to control and to dominate Trina's blossoming sexuality, which threatens to disrupt the comfort and stability that exists in his uncomplicated, bachelor life on Polk Street. McTeague's routine of eating at the "car conductors' coffee-joint," drinking steam beer at Joe Frenna's saloon, smoking his pipe, napping in the afternoon, and playing of "six lugubrious airs [...] upon his concertina" indicate, according to the narrator, that "McTeague's mind was as his body, heavy, slow to act, sluggish [...] stupid, docile, obedient" (5, 6). While McTeague's almost slavish routine reflects the evolutionary determinism inherent in naturalism or what Karen F. Jacobson diagnoses as obsessive-compulsive disorder, the continuance of the natural order of things cannot resist "the strange, vexing spasm" of "all things feminine" (17, 20). The ensuing conflict between the orderliness of masculinity, as the narrator suggests, and the chaos of femininity creates a crisis for McTeague, who must now find a way to restore order in his life. For McTeague, the most practical means to accomplish this is to possess Trina and to subsume her identity into his. The process by which McTeague seizes Trina, physically and sexually, is inherently violent, and one he originally resists. Yet after the course of numerous sittings in his chair, where "his hands touched her face, her cheeks, her adorable little chin," he can no longer suppress his need to have her:

Suddenly the animal in the man stirred and woke; the evil instincts that in him were so close to the surface leaped to life, shouting and clamoring.
It was a crisis—a crisis that had arisen all in an instant; a crisis for which he was totally unprepared. Blindly, and without knowing why, McTeague fought against it, moved by an unreasoned instinct of resistance. Within him, a certain second self, another better McTeague rose with the brute; both were strong, with the huge crude strength of the man himself. The two were at grapples. There in that cheap and shabby "Dental Parlor" a dreaded struggle began. It was the old battle, old as the world, wide as the world—the sudden panther leap of the animal, lips drawn, fangs aflash, hideous, monstrous, not to be resisted, and the simultaneous arousing of the other man, the better self that cries, "Down, down," without knowing why; that grips the monster; that fights to strangle it, to thrust it down and back. [ . . . ]

Dimly he seemed to realize that should he yield now he would never be able to care for Trina again. She would never be the same to him, never so radiant, so sweet, so adorable; [ . . . ]

He turned to his work, as if seeking a refuge in it. But as he drew near to her again, the charm of her innocence and helplessness came over him afresh. It was a final protest against his resolution. Suddenly he leaned over and kissed her, grossly, full on the mouth. (21-22)

McTeague takes what he wants, a kiss, because Trina cannot resist him while she is under the anesthetic and, upon waking her, attempts to take full possession of her by immediately proposing marriage. Cavalier calls McTeague's kiss "a violation of Trina's body" that "differs from rape only in degree [and] sets up a pattern of behavior that will continue throughout their courtship and married life" (134). While Cavalier's reading of
the text may be astringent in his construal of McTeague's kiss being a form of rape, this scene foreshadows the violent events that follow and also illustrates McTeague's consuming desire to possess Trina fully.

Whereas McTeague's first proposal induces "the intuitive feminine fear of the male" and "a fit of vomiting," he does not allow Trina to refuse a second time as his sexual assaults become more violent (22). After weeks and months of frustrations, McTeague finally has the opportunity to force Trina into his possession: "Suddenly he took her in his enormous arms, crushing down her struggle with his immense strength. Then Trina gave up, all in an instant, turning her head to his. They kissed each other, grossly, full in the mouth" (50). Under the immense strength of McTeague, Trina struggles and pleads with McTeague to stop, but it is only after he has possessed her that he releases her out of disgust:

McTeague released her, but in that moment a slight, a barely perceptible, revulsion of feeling had taken place in him. The instant that Trina gave up, the instant she allowed him to kiss her, he thought less of her. She was not so desirable, after all. [...] Perhaps he dimly saw that this must be so, that it belonged to the changeless order of things—the man desiring the woman only for what she withholds; the woman worshipping the man for that which she yields up to him. With each concession gained the man's desire cools. (50-51)

Like the first episode in the dental parlor, McTeague takes Trina suppressing her free will and desires, yet he believes that she has given herself up to him despite her attempts to free herself from his grasp and her pleadings for him to stop. This passage, as Herbert discusses, represents the elemental rape fantasy: the rapist seize his victim against her
will believing that she secretly wants to be raped. McTeague's sexual assault of Trina encapsulates Herbert's definition of "rape as redemption": in McTeague's mind, he becomes a "man of extraordinary ability" and "his self-respect increase[s] enormously" because he demonstrates his masculine prowess in taking the object he desires (51). McTeague declares, "I got her, by God! I got her by God!" and, like a lottery prize, thinks that "[h]e had won her" (51). However, since McTeague has forcibly taken Trina sexually, their relationship and marriage cannot survive because, as a rapist, McTeague no longer sees Trina as an object of value. The sexual assault makes Trina "seem less desirable in his eyes" (53).

Trina's winning the lottery also does not make her more desirable to McTeague, rather her possession of $5000 in gold coin threatens McTeague's sense of dominance and control over her. While most readers can see that Trina's uncontrollable and insatiable lust for gold and her unwillingness to part with it depicts the naturalistic and deterministic elements that Norris was striving for in his novel, McTeague's eventual murder of Trina is a result of the patriarchal demand for dominion over the feminine. According to Karl Marx, money is the source of all identity: "What [...] money can buy, that is what I the possessor of the money am myself. My power is as great as the power of money. [...] what I am and what I am capable of is by no means determined by my individuality" (Early Texts 178). Winning the lottery stands as the focal moment in Trina's growth, or degeneration, of her identity. Trina's appearance and actions change as she hoards her gold pieces, becoming animalistic in her greed: "She grew thin and meagre; her flesh clove tight to her small skeleton; her small pale mouth and little uplifted chin grew to have a certain feline eagerness of expression; her long narrow eyes
glistened continually, as if they caught and held the glint of metal" (194). In her zealous and manic pursuit of more wealth, Trina violates God's commandment that she should "cleave" unto her mate and "be one flesh" (Genesis 2.24-25). Instead, Trina takes her gold pieces as her sole and constant lover (198). Although McTeague believes that Trina's good fortune will allow the couple to live in relative comfort and style, Trina discovers a sense of independence with her new wealth. Where Judeo-Christian cultural values dictate that a woman's property belongs to her husband, Trina asserts that the five thousand dollars is hers: "All my money, all my little savings—deserted me. He's gone, my money's gone, my dear money—my dear money—my dear, dear gold pieces that I've worked so hard for. Oh, to have deserted me—gone for good—gone and never coming back—with my gold pieces" (191). As Trina refuses to meet patriarchal traditions and threatens McTeague's sense of masculine identity, his rage grows as he feels increasingly impotent.

Norris provides the reader a subplot to demonstrate and to foreshadow the violent results that may occur to women, like Trina, who challenge Judeo-Christian cultural values and threaten the primacy of masculinity. The Zerkow and Maria Macapa plot finds a woman with wealth (albeit imaginary) and a husband who wants to control it and, by process, his wife. Maria's demented retelling of her family's "gold plate" and lost fortune makes for amusement among many of the Polk Street tenants, yet Zerkow takes Maria's raving seriously. Zerkow's "consuming desire" to find and to own Maria's "lost" fortune becomes so great that he takes possession of the closest thing to that fortune and his only clue: Maria (29). As long as Maria is able to recount the story of her family's presumed millions and the gold service, Zerkow endures the misery of not having such
wealth; he is content being "near someone who had possessed this wealth. He saw someone who had seen this pile of gold. He seemed near it" (30). Once Maria gives birth to her child, and subsequently loses that child, she is liberated from her dementia. The birth and death of Maria's child and the loss of her tale of gold plate should not be viewed as distinct or coincidental events according to Sarah E. Quay, who asserts, "Maria's inability to procreate—either a healthy, living child or her history—results in the loss of her self" (224). No longer in control of his wife or her possible wealth, Zerkow sets out to tame and harness her. Zerkow views Maria not as another human being, but as a beast of burden. Zerkow takes a "whip from his junk wagon and thrashed Maria with it" (137), as one would do to a draft horse or a mule. Even after the ineffective beatings and whippings, Maria cannot remember her previous stories, believing now that the tenants on Polk Street that have heard her tale are those suffering from insanity. Unable to control his wife, Zerkow exacts the ultimate form of control and violence. In murdering his wife, Quay argues that Zerkow takes such a violent course of action because Maria "fails to contribute to his own pursuit of identity and mobility" (224), yet Zerkow's murder objectifies Maria also, as he takes possession of what he believes is rightfully his: her body. In cutting Maria's throat, Zerkow engages in the ultimate form of dominion and extinguishes the voice that had given rise to the tale of Central American wealth and "gold plate."

Just as Zerkow feels unable to possess and to control Maria and her gold, McTeague recognizes the same dilemma in his marriage with Trina, yet instead of whipping and thrashing his wife, he reverts to the mindset of his childhood, where the miners of Placer County forced their will upon the land and violently extracted its wealth. McTeague's
atavism dictates that he must exercise his dominion over Trina, as he has seen the miners do with their mining claims. Cavalier insightfully connects the violent murder of Maria as well as the sexual assaults on and murder of Trina to the mining practices and techniques in fin de siècle California, suggesting that "one of the novel's central tropes [is that] whether in its purest form or alloyed with other metals as currency, gold is like blood. According to the logic of this trope, extracting all the gold from a mountain vein would be like draining all the blood from a person's veins: it would lead to the death and transform the body into waste" (128). The initial means McTeague takes to force Trina to comply with his wishes and to wrest money from her resembles the machinery employed to crush rock in the mining of gold. He pinches and bites Trina on her shoulders and arms until she gives him a half dollar, while ignoring her cries of pain:

"Give me a little money," answered the dentist, grinning, and pinching her again.

"I haven't a cent. There's not a—oh, Mac, will you stop? I won't have you pinch me that way."

"Hurry up," answered her husband, calmly, nipping the flesh of her shoulders between his thumb and finger. [. . .] Trina wrenched from him with a sharp intake of breath, frowning with pain, and caressing her shoulder. "Mac, you've no idea how that hurts. Mac, stop!"

"Give me some money, then."

In the end Trina had to comply. She gave him half a dollar from her dress pocket, protesting that it was the only piece of money she had.

"One more, just for luck," said McTeague, pinching her again; "and another."
"How can you—how can you hurt a woman so!" exclaimed Trina, beginning to cry with the pain. (169)

The physical abuse McTeague exerts on Trina is effective and his violence only escalates as he finds more useful and forceful means of pulling gold out of her, much like he used to pull teeth from patients. McTeague would "box [Trina's] ears or hit her a great blow with the back of a hairbrush, even with his closed fist" to assert his dominance over her (171). In the end, McTeague finds biting Trina's fingers to be the most effective and sadistically pleasurable means of hurting her:

The people about the house and the clerks at the provision stores often remarked that Trina's finger-tips were swollen and the nails purple as though they had been shut in a door. Indeed, this was the explanation she gave. The fact of the matter was that McTeague, when he had been drinking, used to bite them, crunching and grinding them with his immense teeth, always ingenious enough to remember which were the sorest. Sometimes he extorted money from her by this means, but as often as not he did it for his own satisfaction. (171)

The biting, grinding, and crushing of Trina's fingers result in their amputation and Trina's disfigurement. Her physical body comes to resemble the deformed and scarred body of the earth after the miners have exhausted every ounce of gold. As Cavalier notes, "The way [McTeague] treats [Trina] resembles the way the miners, with their machines, treat the mountains at the Big Dipper mine," leaving behind "an unrecognizable pulp" (129, 132). The destructive atavism that McTeague displays, in returning to the "instincts of the old-time miner," epitomize the devolution of man to brute, yet it also typifies the
Judeo-Christian patriarchal values, which call for man to exert dominion over woman and the land.

McTeague's final murderous act comes after Trina sells his concertina to a second-hand store, essentially selling or disposing of the last of his possessions and the last of his identity, and reveals his total reversion to primal, brutish masculinity. Since the loss of his dental practice to a licensed, educated professional and the rapid progression of Trina's obsessive and compulsive need to accumulate and to hoard money, McTeague senses that he is less and less of a man and more like a beast of burden: "I got to work like a dray horse while she sits at home by her stove and counts her money" (203).

Although the circumstances in American political and economic culture at the end of the nineteenth-century denied McTeague his profession, standing, and purpose in the larger culture of San Francisco, he regards these circumstances to be the manifestations of the "feminization" of American culture and manhood. In this new world, Trina becomes his master and owner, choosing where they will live, how much money to give him, how he will spend it, and which of his possessions he may keep. McTeague sees his place becoming smaller and more insignificant. In the moments before he murders Trina, he tells her, "You ain't going to make small of me this time" and then begins to reassert the power and masculinity that he believes she has taken from him (205). Trina's murder takes place off stage as it were; the narrator only says, "Then it became abominable" (206). In later manuscript pages that were published in 1928, Norris gives a more detailed account of McTeague's brutality and violence:

Then it became abominable. McTeague struck and battered as though his arms would never tire, beating blindly upon her head, her arms, or her body wherever
his fists happened to fall, striking now with alternate fists, now with both together and now kicking with his heavy shod boots. He spoke never a word. He uttered no sound. Through it all he was absolutely silent, now and then drawing a deep breath through his nostrils. (206 n. 4)

While these more descriptive passages reveal even more of McTeague's brutality, they still exclude the sexual element that Norris originally intended to accompany the physical ferocity of the murder. As McElrath and Crisler point out, "In the 1800s spousal physical abuse per se was not neglected. But the now openly discussed notion of violence against women having something to do in some cases with male sexual arousal was not standard fare in Victorian America" (163-64). Interestingly, in the themes he produced for his writing classes at Harvard, where the genesis of McTeague began, Norris does not separate physical violence from sexual violence. In "Theme 23," McTeague begins by beating Trina and ends by raping her:

If she resisted he brought her down with a blow of his immense bony fist between the eyes.

Often these brutalities inflamed his sensual passions and he threw her, bleeding and stupid from his fists across the bed and then it was abominable, bestial, unspeakable. (qtd. in McElrath and Crisler 164)

This rape scene, according to Norris's writing instructor at Harvard, Herbert V. Abbott, went too far, and Norris chose not to include it in the finished novel, yet the murder of Trina and her excluded-from-the-novel rape are in accordance with the assertion that "human sexuality is the force that moves forward the plot" (McElrath and Crisler 244).
McTeague's domination over Trina is complete, having violated and consumed her body and spirit.

After his murder of Trina, McTeague reverts back to his pre-civilized, San Francisco existence becoming like the gold miners in the Sierra Nevadas and moves on to another feminine body to violate and subjugate—the California landscape. Susan Prothro McFatter argues that "Norris, in a distinctively West Coast setting, utilizes both the American cityscape and the surrounding landscape to mirror the moral and psychological demise of McTeague" (130). Eric Gary Anderson, in discussing McTeague's role in the "turn-of-the-century American movement toward cautiously aesthetic deserts," acknowledges the relevance that the wild landscape plays in the latter part of the novel: "A distinction must also be made between the urban deterioration [. . . and] the later, more 'rural' scenes, set in 'untamed' landscapes that the dentist enters as a fugitive from, among other things, that deterioration" (93, 101). Mary Lawlor, who examines the literature of the American West and its interplay with the conventions of naturalism, believes the "Berkley and San Francisco landscapes in the 1890s helps to give a geographical context to the tensions in the fiction of Frank Norris" (71). Norris creates this anxiety, Lawlor argues, by picturing the West, not as a wide open frontier of endless opportunity but rather as a confining space: "Thus, in the naturalist mode the West was pictured as a limited often limiting geographical space that lacked the psychological and ideological colorings of a truly open frontier and cast regional identity as the product of material 'forces' rather than of the individualistic enterprise" (2). The psychological impact of the varied environments in which McTeague finds himself cannot be overstated; he has not succeeded in San Francisco but "the instincts of the old-time car-
boy" come back, allowing him to feel prepared as he returns to his mining roots (207). In the mines of Placer County, McTeague has had success taming and subordinating the feminine-gendered landscape.

The "surrounding landscape" of Placer County and Death Valley, however, also mirrors McTeague's attempts to control and possess his "help meet" and her wealth. For Euro-Americans moving into the New World, and later into the interior of the American West, the only proper uses for land were activities that required the removal of the earth's fruits: ranching, farming, and mining. Hernán Cortés and Francisco Pizarro overran and enslaved the Aztec and Incan empires, respectively, in order to secure their large stores of gold and silver and the mines that produced the precious metals. After three hundred years, the lust for gold and silver continued to drive Euro-American colonists in their search for wealth, power, and independence. For Marx, the discovery of gold in California was "the most important thing that has occurred [in America]" and symbolized the most powerful image of greed in history ("Global Consequences" 14). With large discoveries and quick profits, word reached other countries, and immigrants came to California to strike it rich. This greed, however, had overreaching effects. Gold fever caused adverse consequences, as Stanford M. Lyman notes, to the environment of the land: "The migrants might have thought they were marching to utopia, but California's gold fever [...] had set in motion a process of desecration, perhaps beyond redemption" (259). Such activities become uniquely Euro-American in scope, as ranchers, farmers, and miners undertook their labors on such a grand scale. While Euro-Americans moved West into lands they believed held the key to wealth, opportunity, and the American dream, they practiced a systematic campaign of extermination and assimilation of the
indigenous cultures that possessed Western lands. The forced removal of Native Americans from their land, for Euro-Americans, was justified, since Indians did not use the land in the prescribed manner of the Judeo-Christian patriarchy. Native American cultural practices have advocated a symbiotic relationship between the earth and their people. Although subsistence patterns for most Indian tribes are based upon hunting and gathering, many Native peoples also practiced agriculture on a small scale. Native Americans did not find or see a necessity to harness and tame the land as Euro-Americans did.

With the charge of taking dominion over all things, Judeo-Christian Euro-Americans sought to use the land as God meant it to be used. Norris, who believed there was "no more splendid achievement than this conquering of the wilderness that began with Lewis and Clark" ("Literature" 1177), perpetuates this cultural belief in his description of Placer County and the thousands of men who came in droves to California during the Gold Rush. In his depiction of Placer County and its numerous mining camps, Norris connects the dominion over women and the subjugation of the land by using traditional, feminine markers to gender the Placer County landscape: "The entire region was untamed. In some places east of the Mississippi nature is cosey, intimate, small, and homelike, like a good natured housewife. In Placer County, California, she is a vast unconquered brute of the Pliocene epoch, savage, sullen, and magnificently indifferent to man" (208-09). The "good-natured" housewife, eastern lands, is seen as the ideal, since Euro-American settlers have already tamed and harnessed its brutishness. The miners that flood into Placer County have the charge to bring along a similar result for "the unconquered brute" of California. The men "like lice on mammoth's hides" fight with Mother Nature and her
mountains, "boring into the vitals of them, or tearing away great yellow gravelly scars in the flanks of them, sucking their blood, extracting gold" (209). Norris describes each of the three mining techniques that were prominent in his day—hydraulic mining, vein mining, and placer mining—and uses the brutality of each of these methods to mirror the horrific nature by which McTeague mines Trina for her gold pieces. As Trina loses her fingers from the "unnatural" biting of McTeague and the toxicity of her paint, Mother Earth also suffers violent loss in the barbaric mining techniques that miners used.

Hydraulic mining, vein mining, and placer mining caused heavy losses of vegetation, diversion of natural water sources, displacement of animal species, depletion of mineral resources, and pollution, not only around the mines and camps, but as far reaching as San Francisco Bay. Norris understands this environmental destruction as a deterministic force, the means to a justified end. As a result of mining, the environment is recreated, no longer in its natural state, as Man changes it to suit his purposes and his own cultural values.

Norris carries the themes of sexual violence towards the female body and spirit and the female-gendered landscape, even expanding on them, in the first book of his "Trilogy of the Epic of the Wheat," The Octopus. After publishing two minor novels, Blix and A Man's Woman, Norris addressed the nonexistence of an American epic. He chastised early American writers, and Eastern writers in particular, for their failure to write an epic fitting of the American experience:

The plain truth of the matter is that we have neglected our epic—the black shame of it be on us—and no contemporaneous poet or chronicler thought it worth his while to sing the song or tell the tale of the West, because literature in the day
when the West was being won was a cult indulged in by certain well-bred gentlemen in New England who looked eastward to the Old World, to the legends of England and Norway and Germany and Italy for their inspiration, and left the great, strong, honest, fearless, resolute deeds of their own countrymen to be defamed and defaced by the nameless hacks of the "yellow back" libraries. ("A Neglected" 1203)

Instead of great literature about the American West, readers could only learn of an exaggerated and inauthentic history from George Beadle's dime novelists. In 1899 Norris took it upon himself to write the "neglected epic," telling Howells that he had already formulated in his mind a great "Epic Trilogy":

I think there is a chance for somebody to do some great work with the West and California as a background, and which will at the same time be thoroughly American. My Idea is to write three novels around the one subject of Wheat. First, a story of California (the producer), second, a story of Chicago (the distributor), third, a story of Europe (the consumer) and in each to keep to the idea of this huge Niagara of wheat rolling from West to East.

I think a big Epic trilogy could be made out of such a subject, that at the same time would be modern and distinctly American.

The idea is so big that it frightens me at times but I have about made up my mind to have a try at it. (qtd. in Crisler 73)

Norris eventually completed the first two novels of the trilogy but died while in the process of researching for the third novel, The Wolf. Although neither The Octopus nor
The Pit achieved recognition as an American epic, Norris did present a more realistic portrait of Western hopes, concerns, and frustrations than the romances of Cooper.

For many of the reviewers and critics of The Octopus, Norris's "Epic of the Wheat" failed because of its lack of coherent structures and themes and its perceived departure from naturalism. Stephanie L. Sarver finds the novel to be "a muddle of plots and subplots, a mess of details trivial and significant that seem to defy a coherent reading" (76). McElrath and Crisler arrive at a similar comparison when they compare The Octopus to The Pit: "[T]he sprawling, character— and subplot—crowded Octopus appears unruly when compared to its compact, tightly structured successor" (398). Conversely, Pizer finds the novel to be Norris's attempt at a more sophisticated rhetoric than the conventions of naturalism would allow:

The thematic confusion attributed to Norris in The Octopus was, I argued, the product both of a critical disposition to seek out only "naturalistic" themes in the novel and thus to view any productive or benevolent role of nature and any affirmative view of man's capacities as anomalies, and of a failure to grant Norris, because he was a naturalist, any technical sophistication. [...] his means of rendering his themes were far more complicated than could be accommodated within a conventional notion of the heavy-handedness of the naturalistic novelist ("Study" 4-5).

As a result of Norris's "thematic confusion," critics have read the novel and have focused on themes that speak to various theoretical positions. Nicolas S. Witschi uses a new historical approach to demonstrate how Norris responded to the dime novel tradition and the fading local color movement in the West. The important gun battle between the
wheat ranchers and the dummy buyers of the railroad, a fictional recreation of the Mussel Slough Incident of 1880, Witschi argues, illustrates Norris's sophistication since the scene demonstrates "Norris's most sustained parody of the dime-novel Western" (98). Many analyses of the novel concern themselves solely with the intertwining of economic and political motivations on the parts of the ranchers, railroads, and politicians. For example, Adam H. Wood argues that the economic and metaphysical force of the wheat on its farmers, transporters, and consumers stands at the center of the novel and at the heart of Norris's purposes and intentions for The Octopus:

The characters that populate the novel are secondary to the power of the wheat because they are subject to its power. [...] The Octopus is not, then, a text about the individuals and events surrounding Mussel Slough; it is less about the characters who work the crops as it is about the crops that work the characters.

(112)

In a similar Marxist reading of the novel, Walter Benn Michaels's study, The Gold Standard and the Logic of Naturalism: American Literature at the Turn of the Century, goes further, suggesting that the novel is "much less concerned with its presumed subject (production) or even with its titular subject (the railroad, hence distribution) than with the final stage in Norris's economic cycle—consumption, the imagination of an appetite for American wheat" (184-85). Taking a cue from Michaels, Leigh Ann Litwiller Berte examines the socio-economic importance of the wheat against a "naturalist geography" and an ever-increasing spatial scale. With this approach Berte argues that Norris foresaw an economic globalization and an interconnected, global citizenry: "[T]he end of the novel becomes about neither American imperialism nor abstract nature mysticism, but
about meditating on the global parameters of modern citizenship" (220). Bert Bender, following in the footsteps of Pizer, examines the influence of LeConte on Norris's understanding of love and uses the underpinnings of psychoanalysis to distill "the mystery of sex" and the repression of sexual instinct in *The Octopus*. Among the many themes and avenues for exploration in the novel, no critics have extensively considered the parallel rape plots and the sexual violence committed against the feminine-gendered land and the female body and spirit.

In the first volume of his "Epic of the Wheat," Norris removes the miners of *McTeague* from their abandoned claims, mines, ghost towns, and scarred tracts of mountain range and situates them where the next opportunity to achieve wealth and to exercise dominion over the land exists: the fertile San Joaquin valley. The craze and fervor surrounding the California Gold Rush had begun to fade, and as Witschi notes, "by 1902, the figurative representational landscape of the American West was changing, as turn-of-the-century westerners began to reconsider the usefulness of gold mining as a foundational narrative for literary realism" (85). The new landscape of economic and geographic importance in the American West, the vast tracts of land dedicated to agribusiness in the fertile California valleys, replaced the exploited, spent, and disfigured hills and mountains picked over by individual and corporate mining enterprises. California's valleys represented a new commercial venture, and the miners who arrived came with a keen knowledge and understanding of how to squeeze every possible dollar out of the land. As California historian Kevin Starr notes, "The Gold Rush had taught Americans to employ technology to extract wealth from the land. The technology, infrastructure, and attitudes of the mining era led easily to the headlong, often ruthless
wheat era that followed in the 1870s" (xiv). In the ranchers of the San Joaquin Valley and the railroad barons that control the transportation of the wheat, Norris presents his reader with the next evolution in the exploitation of the feminine.

The most apparent example of miner turned rancher is Magnus Derrick, the owner of the great Los Muertos Rancho and leader of the Grand Settlers's League. Derrick, like the other ranch owners, represents the rearguard of American frontiersmen, who arrive to tame the land and to bring complete civilization to the primitive. Derrick senses that he is part of a great movement, marching westward with other explorers, profiteers, and heroes:

He saw only the grand *coup*, the huge results, the East conquered, the march of empire rolling westward, finally arriving at its starting point, the vague, mysterious Orient. He saw his wheat, like the crest of an advancing billow, crossing the Pacific, bursting upon Asia, flooding the Orient in a golden torrent. It was the new era. He had lived to see the death of the old and the birth of the new; first the mine, now the ranch; first gold, now wheat. Once again he became the pioneer, hardy, brilliant, taking colossal chances, blazing the way, grasping a fortune—a million in a single day. All the bigness of his nature leaped within him. (320-21)

Norris, following the conventions of naturalism, wants his reader to note that Derrick recognizes the "bigness of his nature," yet he fails to acknowledge that his "nature" is not "the crest of an advancing billow" nor "a gigantic engine, a vast cyclopean power, huge, terrible, a leviathan with a heart of steel, knowing no compunction, no forgiveness, no tolerance" (577). Instead Derrick tries to exert his force on the land, working "his ranch
much as if he was still working his mine. The old-time spirit of '49, hap-hazard, unscientific, persisted in his mind. Everything was a gamble—who took the greatest chances was most apt to be the greatest winner" (65). Annixter explains to Presley that Derrick is a fool for running Los Muertos so hard and not allowing the land to rest:

I suppose Derrick thinks he's still running his mine, and that the same principles will apply to getting grain out of the earth as to getting gold. Oh, let him go on and see where he brings up. That's right, there's your Western farmer," he exclaimed contemptuously. "Get the guts out of your land; work it to death; never give it a rest. Never alternate your crop, and then when your soil is exhausted, sit down and roar about hard times. (28-29)

Even the thought of improving the quality of the soil, thus improving the quality and quantity of the wheat, offends Derrick's sense of land stewardship: "The idea of manuring Los Muertos, of husbanding his great resources, he would have scouted as niggardly, Hebraic, ungenerous" (65). Having received dominion over all the land, the wheat ranchers of the San Joaquin use the land for their own benefit and, according to the dictates of their patriarchal culture, and ever-evolving capitalistic/consumerist culture, care nothing for the future well being of the land. Mother Earth is an object to be possessed and exploited:

It was the true California spirit [...] the spirit of the West, unwilling to occupy itself with details, refusing to wait, to be patient to achieve by legitimate plodding; the miner's instinct of wealth acquired in a single night prevailed, in spite of all. [...] They had no love for their land. They were not attached to the soil. They worked their ranches as a quarter of a century before they had worked
their mines. To husband the resources of their marvellous San Joaquin, they considered niggardly, petty, Hebraic. To get all there was out of the land, to squeeze it dry, to exhaust it, seemed their policy. When at last, the land worn out, would refuse to yield, they would invest their money in something else; by then they would all have made fortunes. They did not care. (298-99)

Just as McTeague moves from his mining of Trina on towards the Morning Star and his capitalistic mining venture with Cribbens, Magnus Derrick and the other wheat ranchers of the San Joaquin leave behind the once booming mining industry and stake their fortunes on the lucrative wheat market. They suffered no consequences in their treatment of their mining claims and the surrounding environment during their mining years and see no reason why their vast exploitation of the San Joaquin valley should prove any different. The wheat ranchers believe they have a divine right to their treatment of the land, and with the culturally conditioned need for great wealth, what little caring for the land that might appear in Judeo-Christian morality is expunged in the name of profit.

While much has been made of the great planting scene in The Octopus, most critics have looked at the naturalistic elements of the planting. In an early review (May 1901), Frederic Taber Cooper of the Bookman complained that the novel was not realistic enough and instead stood as "a sort of vast allegory, an example of symbolism pushed to the extreme limit, rather than a picture of life" (qtd. in Starr xi-xii). Indeed the novel presents the cyclical planting of the wheat in the San Joaquin valley as an aspect of a larger, uncontrollable force that is both natural in its element and unnatural in its volume. The wheat, along with the railroad and the law of supply and demand, comes to stand as an unassailable force that can crush "out the human atom standing in its way, with
After the Grand Settlers's League has been crushed and most of its members killed, Hilma's miscarriage, Dyke's imprisonment, Minna Hooven's turn to prostitution rather than starve, Mrs. Hooven's death from starvation, and S. Behrman's drowning in one of the Swanhilda's holds, the wheat remains, and natural processes continue:

*But the WHEAT remained.* Untouched, unassailable, undefiled, that mighty world-force, that nourisher of nations, wrapped in Nirvanic calm, indifferent to the human swarm, gigantic, resistless, moved onward in its appointed grooves. [. . .] Falseness dies; injustice and oppression in the end of everything fade and vanish away. Greed, cruelty, selfishness, and inhumanity are short-lived; the individual suffers, but the race goes on. (651-52)

Norris's contention follows that despite individual degradation, death, and loss, humanity moves forward as a whole. Individuals may struggle against and resist natural forces, but they are mere cogs in the larger naturalistic machine—"a gigantic engine, a vast cyclopean power, a leviathan with a heart of steel" (577).

Norris makes a distinction, however, between the wheat and the land that gives birth to it. The feminine-gendered landscape does not exist in and of itself as a "force" but the space where "force" (i.e. the Wheat) is created. The fertile valleys of California serve only as the canvas for Norris's epic or as Sarver terms it, "the 'scroll' on which he inscribes his epic" (102). A few critics like, Mark Seltzer, acknowledge the importance "Mother Earth" plays in the naissance of "force," but they continue to read the creative powers of the land to be passive and dormant, requiring the actions of men to plant, nurture, and deliver her fruit. Seltzer argues, "Norris's image of the earth-mother is
centrally obstetrical—the mother 'delivered,' after the pains of labor—this delivery, by the iron 'knives' of the steam harvester” (Bodies 28). As men constitute "mother-earth [as] ultimately a species of obstetrics," they usurp the traditional mid-wife role accorded to men and justify the violent means they use to extract her resources, whether gold or wheat (Bodies 35). While Sarver and Seltzer recognize the objectification and subjugation of the land in the harvesting process, neither examines the more violent and brutal insemination process—the rape of the land.

Norris's description of the sowing of the wheat fulfills the male sexual fantasy. In McTeague, the reader never hears the voice of the land, as the miners bore into and tear away the mountainsides in search of gold, yet, in The Octopus, Norris's prose allows the reader to experience all of the land's viscera. In his descriptions of the land during the planting cycle, Norris allows his reader to become both a voyeur of and a vicarious participant in the rape of the land. The reader hears the thoughts and voice of the land, smells her pungent essence, and feels her throbbing as the planting season approaches. Initially, the narrator describes the land as a willing partner, desiring to be impregnated with the wheat seed:

One could not take a dozen steps upon the ranches without the brusque sensation that underfoot the land was alive; roused at last from its sleep, palpitating with the desire of reproduction. [...] thrilling with passion, vibrating with desire, offering itself to the caress of the plough, insistent, eager, imperious. Dimly one felt the deep-seated trouble of the earth, the uneasy agitation of its members, the hidden tumult of its womb, demanding to be made fruitful, to reproduce, to disengage the eternal renascent germ of Life that stirred and struggled in its loins. (127)
What follows this description, however, is not the willing union of two bodies, but the systematic rape of the Earth. The plowing of the fields is not loving and tender but rough, harsh, and extremely violent. The "thousand ploughs" with their "tens of thousands of shears" stand like a "great column of field artillery" (127-28). They take the earth forcibly, possessing her, while brutally ripping and tearing into her flesh:

Steadily the hundred iron hands kneaded and furrowed and stroked the brown, humid earth, the hundred iron teeth bit deep into the Titan's flesh. [...] It was the long stroking caress, vigorous, male, powerful, for which the Earth seemed panting. The heroic embrace of a multitude of iron hands, gripping deep into the brown, warm flesh of the land that quivered responsive and passionate under this rude advance, so robust as to be almost an assault, so violent as to be veritably brutal. (128, 130-31)

The conflicting language in these passages implies that deterministic forces are at work, but Norris's suggestion that the land is a willing partner in its insemination is clearly dubious. Instead, while asserting the preeminence of natural determinism, Norris participates in the reification of the rape fantasy: despite "prolonged cries of agony [and] sobbing wails of infinite pain," the land wants to be violated (49).

Not only do the wheat farmers possess the land, but the railroad as well. Leo Marx, in his work The Machine in the Garden, asserts that The Octopus contains the archetypal image of the encroachment of technology in the pastoral world: the locomotive. Indeed, as McElrath and Crisler note, "Norris was never more enthusiastic then when describing the wonders wrought by mechanical engineers" (13). As a result of this fascination for the mechanical, the presence of the Southern Pacific Railroad in the San Joaquin valley
and the unnatural disturbance it creates, shattering the quiet and peacefulness of the edenic landscape, should come as no surprise. Norris describes the railroad as a "leviathan with tentacles of steel," a "soulless Force," an "iron-hearted Power, the monster, the Colossus, the Octopus," a product of Man that also clutches deep into the soil (51). Marx correctly observes that the locomotive is a phallic symbol and is always described in masculine terms: "Most important is the sense of the machine as a sudden shocking intruder upon a fantasy of idyllic satisfaction. It invariably is associated with crude, masculine aggressiveness in contrast with the tender, feminine, and submissive attitudes traditionally attached to the landscape" (29). The locomotive roars through the San Joaquin valley, destroying the peacefulness of the night, Presley's reveries, and Mother Earth's flocks. While Norris's land cries in ecstasy for fertilization, the earth, speaking through the dying flocks of the land, cries out in pain and terror. The contradiction in language and philosophy in displaying the farmers' and railroad's use of the land further reveals Norris's deep-seated Judeo-Christian morality. Jefferson envisioned a nation spreading from coast-to-coast with the majority of the population anxiously engaged in agrarian economics, building the great American democracy. Derrick, Annixter, Osterloh, and the other wheat farmers are acting out this Judeo-Christian vision of paradise and prosperity, unlike the corrupt, land-grabbing railroad. Norris fails to see that no difference exists between either group. Both wish ruthlessly to possess and to control the land for their own exploitative purposes. The earth's voice is lost and ignored and the rape continues nonetheless. For the ranchers, the railroad, and most importantly to Norris, the Earth is saying no when she really means yes.
Two voices, however, express regret for the land and farming policies of the wheat ranchers. It should come as no surprise that women would question the treatment of the land. Annie Derrick, an educated woman, without ties to mining or the West, understanding the patriarchal culture that advocates the suppression of women and the land, feels akin to the earth. As a young girl growing up on a farm in Ohio, Derrick experienced a more benign agriculture: "[F]ive hundred acres, neatly partitioned into the water lot, the cow pasture, the corn lot, the barley field, and wheat farm; cosey, comfortable, home-like; where the farmers loved their land, caressing it, coaxing it, nourishing it as though it were a thing almost conscious" (59). On the other hand, since arriving at Los Muertos, ten years earlier, she has felt a sense "of uneasiness, of distrust, and aversion" at the manner in which her husband controlled his land (59). Instead of understanding the land as a "thing almost conscious," Magnus Derrick looks on the land as something to be used up, which disgusts and troubles Annie:

[T]his new order of things—a ranch bounded only by the horizons, where, as far as one could see, to the north, to the east, to the south and to the west, was all one holding, a principality ruled with iron and steam, bullied into a yield of three hundred and fifty thousand bushels where even when the land was resting, unploughed, unharrowed, and unsown, the wheat came up—troubled her, and even at times filled her with an undefinable terror. To her mind there was something inordinate about it all; something almost unnatural. The direct brutality of ten thousand acres of wheat. [...] There was something vaguely indecent in the sight, this food of the people, this elemental force, this basic
energy, weltering here under the sun in all the unconscious nakedness of a sprawling, primordial Titan. (60)

Lawrence Hussman argues that Annie Derrick's aversion to the sprawling landscape and fields of wheat is a derivative of her eastern effeness and her desire for refinement: "Annie Derrick abhors her surroundings and longs for Italy and the Bay of Naples" (138). Hussman, however, does not consider the female connection to Norris's gendered landscape. The mistreatment of the land resonates within Derrick as they share common experience: the reproductive process and male subjugation. Similarly, Hilma Tree also finds solace in the landscape and feels the close tie that binds the women in The Octopus to their surrounding landscape. Crisler and McElrath describe Norris's depiction of Hilma as "an idealization of the feminine [. . .] Western American womanhood at its best [. . .] a veritable earth-mother figure, a Ceres when she does not recall Persephone" (89). She has the "original, intended and natural delicacy of an elemental existence, close to nature, close to life, close to the great, kindly earth" (85). As a companion to Annixter, Hilma softens him, "[t]he hardness and inhumanity of the man [. . .] fast breaking up," while transforming him into a man who is "tolerant and generous, kind and forgiving" (497-98). Her closeness to the land "civilizes" Annixter. Once the railroad destroys her now weakened husband, as Norris would lead his reader to believe, and takes possession of Quien Sabe, Hilma leaves for San Francisco, her ties to the land severed:

She detested the city. Already she was miserably homesick for the ranch. She remembered the days spent in the little dairy-house, happy in her work [. . .] She recalled with infinite longing the solitary expanse of the ranches, the level reaches between the horizons, full of light and silence [. . .] She had been so happy in that
life! Now, all those days were passed. This crude, raw city, with its crowding houses all of wood and tin, its blotting fogs, its uproarious trade winds, disturbed and saddened her. There was no outlook for the future. (402)

Although Annie and Hilma are present as their husbands get the "guts" out of their land, they do not condone their husbands' actions in mistreating the land. Rather, like Hilma, they attempt to show their husbands a different and gentler way to work the land. After Magnus is left in ruin and Annixter is killed, Annie and Hilma recognize that the railroad will continue the great rape of the land and that the subjugation of the earth and the feminine is complete.

As a parallel to the rape of the earth, Norris includes the Vanamee/Angèle subplot, which follows Vanamee's search for his lost love Angèle, who was brutally raped and died while giving birth to the child conceived during the rape. This subplot, as Norris wrote to Marcosson, "is the most romantic thing I've yet done" and represents "pure romance [. . .] even mysticism, if you like, a sort of allegory—I call it the allegorical side of the wheat subject" (qtd. in Crisler 123). Early in the novel, Presley encounters the nomadic Vanamee, who he describes as a man "[I]iving close to nature, a poet by instinct" and a man with "a great sensitiveness to beauty and an almost abnormal capacity for great happiness and great sorrow; he felt things intensely, deeply" (36). Presley explains Vanamee's romantic nature and its genesis, recounting the sad tale of his lover's rape and death. Vanamee comes each night from his work in the fields to find his young lover, Angèle, in the quiet grove behind the Mission San Juan de Guadalajara. The two lovers, however, violate the Judeo-Christian standard of possession and dominion, as they love in the long shadows of the Catholic mission. Their love is "one of those legendary
passions that sometimes occur, idyllic, untouched by civilization, spontaneous as the
growth of trees, natural as dew-fall, strong as the firm-seated mountains" (36). The
unnamed "Other" rights the transgression of Vanamee, seeing Angèle as the patriarchy
constructs her: an object, needing to be controlled. Thus, the "Other" comes to Angèle,
who believes him to be Vanamee, and takes her, raping and impregnating her. The entire
county searches for the "Other," but he has "withdrawn into an impenetrable mystery. He
never was found; he never was so much as heard of" (38). While the reader is left to
suspect the true character of the rapist, John Jolly posits that a reading of Vandover and
the Brute, in comparison with The Octopus indicates the identity of the "Other": "Textual
parallels between the two novels, as well as internal evidence in The Octopus, suggest
this, and so point to the fact that the shepherd himself is the rapist of Angèle" (201). Jolly's "textual parallels," however, ignore the corollary of the rapes of the feminine-
gendered landscape and the female body of Angèle, or what Seltzer calls, "an almost
diagrammatic instance of what might be called the double discourse of the novel"
("Naturalist" 125). As with McTeague, a violent "symmetry" exists in The Octopus.
Norris's depiction of Angèle's violent rape mirrors the continuous rape of the earth.

As a writer at the end of the nineteenth-century, Norris sensed an emasculation of the
American masculine identity and experience. His cultural values, whether derived from
his Judeo-Christian worldview or his artistic and literary training, are deeply
phallocentric. Although Norris "was prone to attempt what he saw as balanced, full-
scope representations of the whole of the predicaments in [his] works," according to
Crisler and McElrath, he disregards the feminine while presenting "the view of . . . the
top, the middle, and the bottom of the economic pyramid" (11). In McTeague and The
Octopus, female identity is suppressed and incorporated into the male identity. When women attempt to assume an individual identity, it is quickly and violently extinguished through the means of rape and murder. Norris denies the possibility of existence or individuation for the earth and does not see the interconnectedness of humanity and the land; rather, his descriptions objectify the land, portraying her as a vessel that holds and produces the fruits of man. Miners tunnel deep within her and strip her bare, removing her fruits, which they believe God placed there for them to retrieve. The harvests of wheat come not from the earth's supporting nutrients but from the exhaustive labor of the men who use her as an incubator for their labors. Norris's blind phallocentrism and, what Robert E. Morsberger terms, his "transcendental optimism" ignore the fact that the earth is not an exploitable commodity (105). If the miners of McTeague and the ranchers of The Octopus continue to abuse the land, the earth will be stripped bare and not be able "to feed thousands of starving scarecrows on the barren plains of India" (651). The earth is not an empty vessel, delivering up the fruits of man, as Norris's writing would have his audience believe. The deterministic forces found in Norris's work exclude the feminine, propagating the exploitation and subjugation of women and Mother Earth.
"WE ARE TREATED BY WHITE SAVAGES AS IF WE ARE SAVAGES": 
TEXTUAL AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN SARAH WINNEMUCCA HOPKINS'S LIFE AMONG THE PIUTES

On March 9, 2005, the State of Nevada presented a bronze statue of Sarah Winnemucca Hopkins to the National Statuary Hall Collection, effectively returning her to the city of American political power and the place where American Indian policy is formed. An affixed plaque to the bottom of the statue describes Winnemucca as a "defender of human rights, educator, [and] author of first book by a Native woman." Indeed, Winnemucca's Life Among the Piutes: Their Wrongs and Claims, published in 1883, asserts the rights of the Northern Paiutes, and all indigenous peoples for that matter, in an era when Native peoples were not granted rights, either as citizens of the United States or as human beings, and attempts to educate a largely Euro-American, Protestant female audience. Winnemucca employed the rhetoric of the colonizer to counteract Native American cultural constructions prominent in the nineteenth century and even to this day yet relied also on the rhetorical traditions of her tribal culture to convey Northern Paiute cultural identity and sovereignty. Although Elizabeth Peabody and Mary Peabody Mann, Winnemucca's influential White benefactors, wanted a political text that would move Americans to political action, Winnemucca's intention was
not solely to recount a history of her people's interaction with the White invaders and to describe the abuses of the reservation system but rather to dismiss the White Judeo-Christian patriarchy, which assumed Native American value systems were primitive, godless, and immoral. Euro-American settlers applied the Puritan typology used to reify the landscape of New England as both paradise and wasteland to the northern Great Basin system, justifying the seizure and destruction of Northern Paiute, Washoe, and Western Shoshone lands and subsistence patterns: they were divinely appointed to be a great nation that spanned the continent because the original inhabitants did not use the land as God would have them. In the destruction and eventual possession of indigenous lands and the disruption of Northern Paiute communal life and subsistence patterns, White settlers undertook a system of violence that forever changed the land and the Northern Paiute peoples, both body and spirit.

Winnemucca's response to Euro-American constructions of Native women proves equally important and powerful as she challenges the images that the hegemony affixes to Native women. The assumptions that Native peoples were godless and amoral, if not explicitly immoral, created various cultural stereotypes. These commonly recognized and understood stereotypes included the sexualized, mysterious "dark woman" or Indian "squaw" and the forceful, insatiable Indian "buck." The Pocahontas myth and the Indian captivity narrative tradition further fueled these cultural constructions. Indian gender and sexual construction perpetuated sexual degradation of Native women and fostered hysteria and fear of Native men. In her speaking engagements and later in her text, Winnemucca carefully outlines moral differences existing between the two cultures, speaks to the complexity of existence for Native American women, and situates Native
American women as objects of White desire and victims of White rape—a contradiction of the traditional White-constructed stereotype.

Sarah Winnemucca, whose name as a child was Thocmetony, which meant "shell flower," was born most likely sometime in 1844 along the Humboldt River.23 She was the daughter of Winnemucca, frequently referred to as Old Winnemucca in historical records, a powerful antelope shaman and Tuboity, the daughter of Truckee, the leader of the Kuyuidika-a band.24 Her maternal grandfather Truckee was the greatest influence on her younger years, and his imprint can be seen throughout Winnemucca's life. Truckee advocated a peaceful relationship with the White immigrants who streamed across Northern Paiute lands on their way to the gold fields in California despite previous violent encounters with Euro-Americans.25 According to Northern Paiute oral tradition, the White settlers were the children of the Paiute's long lost brother and sister, who had been separated by their forefather and mother because "[t]hey were cross to one another and fought" (6). Despite the sometimes overwhelming fear that Winnemucca had for the White settlers, she and her family, except for her father, followed Truckee into California to work for Jacob Bonsall and Hiram Scott, who ran a ferry across the San Joaquin river and owned an inn for travelers making their way to San Francisco from the gold mines in the Sierra Nevadas. During her time working for Bonsall and Scott, Winnemucca began to see the Whites in a different light, pointing to two specific incidences that helped change her impression. The first came when settlers on the Carson River gave her some sugar: "That was the first gift I ever got from a white person, which made my heart very glad" (23). The second moment of change occurred after Winnemucca became ill from a severe case of poison oak. A White woman, whose child had recently died, cared for
Winnemucca while she recovered: "At last some one came that had a voice like an angel. [. . .] she was, indeed, a beautiful angel [. . .] and this sweet angel came every day and brought me something nice to eat" (31-32). These two experiences challenged the perceptions that Winnemucca held regarding the White immigrants and confirmed to her that, like her grandfather and father, she should "try and heal the wound" between her people and Euro-Americans, even if those efforts proved to be in vain (7).

Winnemucca understood that the means to "healing" the divisions between the Northern Paiute and White settlers lay in the power of language—a lesson that she learned as a young girl from Truckee. After serving as a scout for John C. Frémont in the Bear Flag Revolt to take California from Mexico in 1846, Truckee received a letter from Frémont that was "a more wonderful thing than all the others that he had brought. [. . .] a paper, which he said could talk to him" (18). This letter, which recommended Truckee to whomever should read it and ordered them to offer whatever assistance possible to Truckee and his people upon its presentation, spoke for Frémont but also spoke for Truckee. As Sally Zanjani correctly notes, the letter, which Truckee called his "rag friend," acts as "the true source of white men's power" (24). Truckee understood its power, and Winnemucca had many occasions to see its effects on White readers.

Truckee's dying instructions to his family signal the importance he believed literacy had for the future of his family and the survival of his people: "You see there are my two little girls and there is my big girl, and there are my two boys. They are my sons' children, and the two little girls I want you to take to California, to Mr. Bonsal and Mr. Scott. They will send them to school to 'the sisters,' at San José" (67). Winnemucca and her younger sister Elma traveled to San Jose in the spring of 1860 to attend school, but they left three
weeks later, after the parents of other students complained about Indian children being in the same classroom. According to Zanjani, later in her life, "Sarah found it expedient to represent herself as 'convent educated' to establish her bona fides in white America and once even declared (unless misquoted) that she had spent three years in the convent school," but in truth, she was largely self-educated, learning to speak, read, and write fluently in both English and Spanish (68).

Winnemucca's literacy became a source of power and influence that she employed to benefit her people and to give them voice in a political, religious, and commercial discourse that cast Native peoples as "primitive savages" or as a romantic, vanishing people. Living in an arid landscape with few natural resources, the Northern Paiute effectively used the food and water stores available to them. With the arrival of White wagon trains to California and White settlers in traditional Northern Paiute lands, their physical means of survival were threatened. The settlers' livestock destroyed grassland where seeds were harvested for winter stores. White presence disrupted traditional and ceremonial hunting and fishing activities. The discovery of gold near Virginia City in 1859 and of silver a few months later brought California miners across the Sierra Nevadas, causing White settlements to spring up throughout Northern Paiute territory. The areas surrounding the towns were "quickly stripped bare of all piñon trees, thus effectively removing for non-food purposes one of the major Indian food resources" and what little water was "expropriated, as stockmen claimed springs for their cattle [and] miners diverted nearby streams for flumes and stampmills" (Knack and Stewart 46-47). The threat of starvation and an emerging western economy that required precious metal, or another form of currency, to acquire goods led Old Winnemucca and his family to
appeal directly to the citizens of Virginia City and San Francisco for money to feed his people. In the fall of 1864, twenty years prior to Buffalo Bill's Wild West Exhibition, Winnemucca became a "show Indian," translating the speeches that her father made in the streets and halls of Virginia City. While the family's success was limited, they received enough of a response that they decided to present a theatrical performance at the Metropolitan Theater on 22 October 1864 in San Francisco, titled "Romantic Entertainment." Much like Buffalo Bill's later enterprise, the Winnemucca family's presentation played on the Indian stereotypes held by the White audience. The San Francisco press roundly panned the exhibition but did praise Winnemucca's "sweet English voice" (qtd. in Zanjani 77). Undoubtedly, these early "oral" performances affirmed Truckee's belief that White power was tied to literacy and spurred Winnemucca to expand the uses of her voice on behalf of her people.

Over the remainder of her life, Winnemucca worked as a translator and scout for the United States government, educated White audiences and Northern Paiute children, advocated on behalf of her people and all Native Americans, and presented an alternative image of what her White audience expected of a Native woman. Winnemucca began working as an interpreter for the United States military at Camp McDermit in 1869, developing a trust and respect for the military that she would hold until her death. During her work at Camp McDermit, Winnemucca sent a letter to Maj. Henry Douglas, the superintendent of Indian Affairs for Nevada, providing information on the deplorable condition of her people and the poor treatment they had received from the Indian agents at the Pyramid Lake Reservation. Douglas was impressed enough with the letter that he forwarded it on to the commissioner of Indian Affairs in Washington. Winnemucca's

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letter was eventually published in Harper's magazine and reprinted in Helen Hunt Jackson's *A Century of Dishonor* (1881)—an attempt to do for Native Americans what Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852) did for African slaves. As her notoriety, and infamy in the minds of many non-military government employees, grew among the western and eastern presses, Winnemucca took a position on the Malheur Reservation in southern Oregon in 1875 as an interpreter and teacher. The Indian agent at the beginning of Winnemucca's employment, Samuel B. Parrish, lived up to the promises made by the United States government, providing the bands of Northern Paiute on the reservation with the clothing and food that had been commissioned for them. Parrish was dismissed from the reservation in 1876 after President Ulysses S. Grant's policy transferred control of all Indian reservations to various Christian groups. The new agent, William Rinehart, undid all of the positive work that Parrish had accomplished at Malheur, embezzling funds and goods intended for the Northern Paiute and pushing the people to the brink of starvation. When the Bannock tribe encouraged the linguistically-related Northern Paiute to join them in war against the continuing encroachment of White settlers, many of Winnemucca's people joined the battle, leaving the Malheur Reservation empty. Hoping to prevent war and the possible deaths of her father, brother, and other family members, who the Bannock had imprisoned since they refused to join in the fighting, Winnemucca volunteered to act as a guide and scout for Gen. Oliver O. Howard. The Bannock War, as it has come to be known, was quickly diffused, largely in part because of Winnemucca's heroic actions.

After her military service and the banishment of her people to the Yakima Reservation in Washington, Winnemucca began a letter writing and speaking campaign
to present the state of the Northern Paiute, who were currently without food, clothing, or shelter and were dying in the snows of Washington at Yakima. Her speaking engagements took her to Philadelphia, Providence, Hartford, New York City, Washington D.C., where she met with Secretary of the Interior Carl Schurz, President Rutherford B. Hays and received promises from both that went unfulfilled, and Boston, where she made the acquaintance of her future financial backer and her editor: Elizabeth Peabody and Mary Peabody Mann (Canfield 209). She lectured in the homes of Ralph Waldo Emerson and John Greenleaf Whittier, both of whom published their writings with the financial support of Elizabeth Peabody, and Senator Henry L. Dawes, where she was able to speak in length with him about and offer suggestions for his proposed legislation: the General Allotment Act of 1887 (Canfield 209, Zanjani 243). Over the course of her lecture tour, Winnemucca came to the realization that she could present more information and reach a larger audience if she were to write a book; she could include the information she presented at her lectures and could clearly outline the history of her people and the abuses they had suffered at the hands of the United States government and the supposed Christian adherents, who controlled the Indian reservation system. With the financial and editorial assistance of the Peabody sisters, Winnemucca wrote and published Life Among the Piutes in 1883—the first book written and published by a Native woman. The text included an appendix of letters written by White friends and colleagues of Winnemucca, attesting to her truthfulness and moral upstanding, and a petition that readers could fill out and send to their representatives in the United States Congress. What proceeds realized from the publication and sale of her book Winnemucca used to establish the Peabody Institute in Lovelock, Nevada, where she undertook the teaching of Northern
Paiute children in both their native and English languages. The Peabody Institute offered an effective alternative to the assimilationist-directed policies of the Indian boarding school system. Indeed Alice Chapin, an experienced teacher from Indiana and a friend of Elizabeth Peabody, described the students at the school to be "decidedly superior to white children of the same age" and "so interested and zealous to learn that they were perfectly obedient" (qtd. in Zanjani 270). Unfortunately, the Peabody Institute closed in 1889 after the little funds Winnemucca had were stolen and gambled away by her husband Lewis Hopkins. After the closure of her school, Winnemucca traveled to Henry's Lake, Idaho to live with her younger sister Elma, whose husband Joseph had died. Winnemucca died on 17 October 1891 at her sister's home. The New York Times published the notice of her death on page one, calling her "a remarkable woman" ("Princess"). As the prominent posting of her obituary attests, the power of Winnemucca's words had reached and influenced many audiences.

The rhetorical positions Winnemucca assumed in her lectures and maintains in Life Among the Piutes, as well as the definition and placement of her work in Western literary discursive traditions, continue to be the predominant focus of readers and scholars. The critical approaches that many scholars use to elucidate Winnemucca's narrative constitute a textual and spiritual form of violence, as they force Western literary and theoretical models on the text, which both appropriate and mute her voice. Although European colonizers saw Native peoples as primitive, in part because they were preliterate, Native peoples had and continue to have a rich literary tradition that is often more oral than written. Furthermore, the literary productions of Native peoples are communal projects rather than individual endeavors, as tribal culture, history, and tradition are passed from
generation to generation in order to maintain the identity and sovereignty of its members. This fact has proved problematic to critics who struggle to define Winnemucca's text. A review of the labels critics have applied to *Life Among the Piutes* reveals an over-reliance on the terminology used in the fields of anthropology and literary studies. Siobhan Senier argues that Winnemucca uses the rhetoric of ethnography, since it demonstrates the "ethnographic present," but that "Winnemucca 'does' ethnography in part to challenge it" (106-07). For A. LaVonne Brown Ruoff the term ethnography does not account for Winnemucca's formulation of "self" in the text and instead labels the narrative an "ethnoautobiography" because Winnemucca "combines myth, history, and contemporary events with tribal ethnohistory and personal experience" (84). Meanwhile, Hertha D. Sweet Wong, borrowing the term from Françoise Lionnet, argues Winnemucca's work would fit the definition of an "autoethnography": "the defining of one's subjective ethnicity as mediated through language, history, and ethnographical analysis" (177 n. 2). Ethnography and its scientific cousin anthropology, as Wong concedes, reduces "living Native people into commodities" (171). In *The Limits of Multiculturalism: Interrogating the Origins of American Anthropology*, Scott Michaelsen argues that the field of anthropology emerged in the mid-nineteenth century and that the "discipline of anthropology is invented across the 'red/white' color line" (xvi). In other words, anthropology is a unique Western praxis and materialized to study the "Indian" and his origins. Vine Deloria Jr. (Standing Rock Sioux) argues that "[t]he fundamental thesis of the anthropologists is that people are objects for observation, people are then considered objects for experimentation, for manipulation, and for eventual extinction" (*Custer* 86). While anthropologists fulfill their "boyhood fantasies of playing Indian,"
Deloria argues, they define American Indian identity and portray Native peoples as vanishing (Spirit 123). Robert F. Berkhofer, Jr. argues that the hegemony's purpose in defining "Indianness" resides in the need to justify the exploitation, assimilation, and destruction of Native peoples in order to assuage Euro-American guilt:

Whether describing physical appearance or character, manners or morality, economy or dress, housing or sexual habits, government or religion, Whites overwhelmingly measured the Indian as a general category against those beliefs, values, or institutions they most cherished in themselves at the time. For this reason, many commentators on the history of White Indian imagery see Europeans and Americans as using counterimages of themselves to describe Indians and the counterimages of Indians to describe themselves. (27)

Mary Louise Pratt goes further in explaining the purpose of Euro-American imaging of Native American identity claiming, "The European imagination produces archeological subjects by splitting contemporary non-European peoples off from their pre-colonial, and even their, colonial pasts. To revive indigenous history and culture as archeology is to revive them as dead. The gesture simultaneously rescues them from European forgetfulness and reassigns them to a departed age" (134). In reading Winnemucca's text through the critical lens of ethnography or anthropology, critics continue to participate in the project of objectifying Native American peoples, which serves to preserve a false, hegemonically-imposed definition of "Indianness" and to suppress feelings of guilt for the near-destruction of Indian peoples and culture.

The most frequent appellation for Winnemucca's work is "Native American autobiography," yet the application of this term also participates in textual violence. This
relatively nascent term, "Native American autobiography," and area of critical study would seem to oppose traditional Native American literary forms. Autobiography, according to Sidonie Smith, "is a process through which the autobiographer struggles to shape an 'identity' out of amorphous subjectivity" (5). Using this definition, Kathleen M. Sands argues that the autobiography is "not an indigenous form of literature for American Indian peoples," and it becomes "particularly problematical in reference to American Indian personal narrative since autobiography generally presumes literary intention and form" ("Indian Women's" 270, 272). Arnold Krupat agrees with Sands assertion and proffers the term "bicultural composite composition" instead of autobiography (31), yet this term also proves problematic since the term does not account for narratives like William Apess's (Pequot) A Son of the Forest (1829) or Samson Occom's (Mohegan) An Indian Preacher in England (1774), neither of which have a non-Native mediator negotiating between the cultural distance between the narrator and the reader. Furthermore, the application of the term "bicultural composite composition," or any similar derivative, raises the complicated issues of voice and reliability, but it also tends to shift focus away from the tribal culture and emphasizes the cross-cultural aspect of the narrative and the contributions of the non-Native mediator. Too often, in the critical examination of these "bicultural composite compositions," the Native perspective is dismissed, as Sands admits, in an effort to distinguish between the Native and non-Native voice, to understand what editorial choices the non-Native collaborator made, and to surmise what the mediator excised from the narrative and why:

Until recently I [like others] have focused on omissions in collaborative Native American narratives—and in their methodological introductions—believing them
critical to uncovering the collection and editorial processes that shape inscription. What is not addressed in texts has seemed to me at least as valuable as what appears in print. The unspoken, or at least uninscribed, ideologies and attitudes mold written texts have offered evidence for editorial manipulation. [. . .] Consciously or unconsciously, I think we have all assumed that the collector/editor is the key to unlocking theses cross-cultural autobiographical texts because we assume he or she possesses the exclusive power to control the narrative presentation. ("Cooperation" 138)

Sands admits in this passage that, because most critical examinations of Native American narratives center on the non-Native collaborator's presence and privilege the non-Native voice and mediation, current theoretical approaches continue the process of muting and subjugating Native voices, even in their own texts.

Because the term autobiography does not adequately reflect the narrative acts of Native American literary traditions and the term "bicultural composite composition" continues the processes of colonization, critics must find new means of defining and describing narrative acts like Life Among the Piutes. Perhaps, the most correct option and accurate term for Winnemucca's narrative act would be "tribal narrative," as her text provides a history of her people from 1844 until 1882. In his study American Indian Autobiography, H. David Brumble III argues against a tribal reading of Life Among the Piutes referencing instances in Native American literary traditions where autobiographical acts are permitted and even encouraged, citing the "counting coup" tale and stories that explain how a shaman acquired his or her power (63). While Winnemucca relates many of the experiences that occur in her life during the thirty-eight
years that her text covers, events that Brumble compares to the "counting coup" tale (e.g. the rescue of her father's band from the Bannocks during the Bannock War, her meetings with Secretary Schurz and President Hayes, etc.), these experiences hold more importance and meaning for the Northern Paiute than their narrator; they are the stories of the people. Claiming that "Winnemucca's whole book may be seen as an extended self-vindication, as an attempt to defend her own reputation," as Brumble argues, ignores the larger tribal issues that Winnemucca addresses (68). While as critics have correctly noted that "Winnemucca's words as well as her image needed to be carefully constructed to appeal to the primarily white audience upon whom she depended for financial and political support," an equally plausible rationale for not including certain aspects of her personal life (e.g. how and where she learned English, the number of men she married and the dynamic of those marriages, or how much money she lost gambling, etc.) in her narrative exists—they have little relevance to the history and condition of the Northern Paiute (Tisinger 102). Early in her tribal narrative, Winnemucca alerts the reader to her purpose in writing Life Among the Piutes and her purpose in life: "When I think of my past life, and the bitter trials I have endured, I can scarcely believe I live, and yet I do; and, with the help of Him who notes the sparrow's fall, I mean to fight for my down-trodden race while life lasts" (6). Winnemucca draws the reader not to her own story but to the story of her people and their ongoing struggle for survival in the face of Euro-American colonization and assimilation.

The utilization of Western theoretical positions also proves inadequate in explicating Winnemucca's tribal narrative and ignores issues of tribal, literary sovereignty. Most critical readings of the text employ formalist, poststructural, and postcolonial theory to
force the narrative into existing and delineated epistemological structures. From these theoretical starting points, critics have focused on how Winnemucca constructs her narrative through the mediating influence of Mary Peabody Mann. Andrew S. McClure calls Winnemucca a "Post-Indian Princess" because the "apparent concessions to Western culture—sentimentality, her diplomacy with whites, and her acculturation—are what make her work subversive and dialogic" (31). McClure is not the only critic to use M.M. Bakhtin's dialogic or heteroglossic model. Noreen Grover Lape argues that the text displays "double consciousness," which is "the result of Hopkins's frontier, liminal existence as a translator and mediator of cultures" (260). Cari M. Carpenter combines Bakhtinian theory with the postcolonial theoretical advancements of Homi K. Bhabha to understand "Winnemucca as neither a neutral mediator nor a traitor to the Paiutes but rather as a figure of generic hybridity" (72). Finally, Deborah Gilbert defines Life Among the Piutes as a postcolonial text because it addresses "the phase after colonization marked for both sides by transition and cultural instability: specifically, the unraveling of the imagined community, the challenges of hybridity and the class struggle, and the tension between universality and racial exclusiveness" (26). The ineffectiveness of such approaches and arguments comes, as Sands noted earlier, in the attention that the dominant culture receives in "bicultural," "dialogic," and "hybrid" texts, since the means of these theoretical paradigms are derived from Western literary and cultural underpinnings.

Native scholars counter the use of Western literary criticism to explicate meaning in Native texts and suggest a tribal perspective. Choctaw/Cherokee critic Louis Owens
cautions that the use of postcolonial theory in reading Native texts is more than problematic as indigenous peoples still live in a state of colonization:

I think it is crucial for us to remember that the American Revolution was not truly a war to throw off the yoke of colonization as is popularly imagined, but rather a family squabble among the colonizers to determine who would be in charge of the colonization of North America, who would control the land and the lives of the indigenous inhabitants. America never became postcolonial. The indigenous inhabitants of North America can stand anywhere on the continent and look in every direction at a home usurped and colonized by strangers who, from the very beginning, laid claim not merely to the land and resources but to the very definition of the Natives. (14-15)

According to Owens, postcolonial theory, while of great use and importance to peoples living in a postcolonial age and place, cannot address the tribal histories, cultures, and conditions of present-day Native Americans. Craig S. Womack (Muskogee/Cherokee) maintains that "Native literature, and the criticism that surrounds it, needs to see more attention devoted to tribally specific concerns" (1). In discussing the Native American novel, Womack argues that the text "originates with and serves to define the people as a whole, the community" (9). In Tribal Secrets: Recovering American Indian Intellectual Traditions, Robert Allen Warrior (Osage) demonstrates how a tribal reading can elucidate a text like Osage author John Joseph Mathew's Sundown (1934). Warrior discusses how Western literary criticism focuses on Chal (Mathew's protagonist) and his struggle to understand his identity as a mixed-blood but argues that Mathew's novel points to larger tribal concerns: "Mathews did not intend Sundown to be merely a story of how an
individual deals with personal identity. Rather, Mathews evokes a historical period of intense importance for Osage people and communities and attempts to sort out how the political strategies of various groups of Osages played out and what possible future might exist" (54). By first carefully considering the history and culture of a Native American writer, Womack and Warrior would argue, readers would find broader cultural implications and meanings and would move towards a less ethnocentric theoretical position.

The larger tribal concerns and perspectives in Winnemucca's text are almost overlooked. As an example of this common oversight, Ruoff and Brumble engage in a debate over the rhetorical and aesthetic origins of the text. Each provides alternative theories of origination. Ruoff argues that Winnemucca's tribal narrative mirrors nineteenth-century Victorian literary traditions:

*Life Among the Piutes* has more in common with the life histories written by women of color and of the working class and with the post-Civil War autobiographies by African Americans than with those by mainstream middle-class women, which usually do not broach these topics. [...] Winnemucca, like many nineteenth-century slave narrators, reminds whites of their own brutality, particularly toward women. Such narratives emphasize how the conquest of Indians, like the slave system, destroyed the morality of the whites. (85, 88)

As noted earlier, Brumble counters with the assertion that Winnemucca's primary rhetorical influences are the "counting coup" tales and other stories of the attainment of individual honor and power in the Native American oral tradition. He believes that Winnemucca's formal "Western" education is overstated and argues that her literacy and
breadth of reading are exaggerated; thus, she more than likely did not have the knowledge to shape her text to conform to the captivity or slave narrative traditions Ruoff believes she follows (63). In discussing the opposing views of Brumble and Ruoff, Senier correctly points out that "here we have an interesting predicament, with each critic trying to claim a somewhat ill-defined feature—'personal experience'—for his or her respective side" (94). Senier, however, assumes the primacy of "personal experience" in *Life Among the Piutes* and fails to examine how the text is more than Winnemucca's "personal experience" but of her people's collective experience. The similarities between Winnemucca's text and literary forms found in the captivity narrative and the slave narrative cannot, and should not, be easily dismissed. Indeed, Jace Weaver (Cherokee) acknowledges that the earliest Native American writers "could not hope to reach a wide audience," but as they used the language of the colonizer "their work [. . .] served Native purposes and reflected communitist values as they sought not only to preserve and defend their cultures but also to reassert their own and their fellow Natives' humanity" (49).

Although the elements of the captivity narrative appear in Winnemucca's text, and will be discussed in more detail below, the captivity narrative is not her own but the captivity of her people, and even more specifically the captivity of Native women by White men. While the popularity of the slave narrative was apparent during the nineteenth-century, Winnemucca is far from enslaved, and the history of her people after the arrival of Euro-American colonists depicts a people who refuse and resist enslavement, insisting continually on their tribal sovereignty.

While Winnemucca's rhetorical position occupies the language of the colonizer, she uses this language to convey the condition of her people and to challenge Judeo-Christian
and Western cultural values. Owens argues that for Native American texts to be published and voices to be heard, indigenous peoples had to work within the dominant discourse:

In order to be recognized, and to thus have a voice that is heard by those in control of power, the Native must step into that mask and be the Indian constructed by white America. Paradoxically, of course, like the mirror, the mask merely shows the Euro-American to himself, since the masked Indian arises out of the European consciousness, leaving the Native behind the mask unseen, unrecognized for himself or herself. In short, to be seen and heard at all by the center [...] the Native must pose as the absolute fake, the fabricated "Indian."

(17)

Malea Powell sees Owens's assertion at work in *Life Among the Piutes* and maintains that "Winnemucca knew she must play to the stereotypes of Native peoples, like the Indian princess or the childlike and trusting ward, that reformers were likely to believe" (73). Winnemucca learned this lesson at a young age when her family took to the stage to present several tableaux vivants to audiences in Virginia City and San Francisco. These sketches included "The War Council," "The Coyote Dance," "Taking a Scalp," and "Grand Scalp Dance," as well as scenes from the John Smith and Pocahontas myth (Zanjani 73). The family performed these tableaux vivants in "costume" as they wore clothing more appropriate to that worn by the Plains tribes than the traditional clothing of the Northern Paiute, which was made using the skins of coyote, badger, bighorn sheep, deer, and rabbit, and twined sagebrush bark, and twisted tule. Also, the subject of the sketches would be more appropriate for other tribal groups. Greed and its consequences,
according to Winnemucca, were the impetus for war, and because her "people had not learned to steal," they would rarely need to hold a "war council" (59). Furthermore, she also explains that her people "never scalped a human being" (54). Throughout the text, Winnemucca uses the rhetoric and the imagery of the colonizer because they are the rhetoric and imagery of her audience, yet this usage does not make her an advocate of assimilation. She does not participate in "the torn between two worlds' victimization still too often attributed Native peoples and Native scholars, which leaves American Indians who didn't 'disappear' in the position of being victims of [their] own subjectivity" (Powell 77).

Winnemucca challenges hegemonic cultural values and institutions, arguing the deficiency in these systems and presenting the Northern Paiute alternative. The refutation of Judeo-Christian morality begins in the second chapter, titled "Domestic and Social Moralities." While the title suggests the "authorial sensibility" of Mary Peabody Mann, as Katharine Rodier asserts, Winnemucca details the interrelationships between individuals, families, and bands within the tribe (115). Appropriating the voice of Victorian sentimentality and the language of Protestant Christianity, she accomplishes this explication on the cultural values of the Northern Paiute without constructing a binary system—a Western theoretical structure—although Mann imposes this form on the text, commenting in her editorial notes, "In one of her lectures, Mrs. Hopkins spoke of other refinements and manners that the Indian mother teaches her children; and it is worthy the imitation of the whites" (51 n.1). Winnemucca's focus on and presentation of Northern Paiute concerns, rather than those of Whites, is not a strategy of "authorial silence" (Rodier 108). Winnemucca speaks loudly for the Northern Paiute and attacks
the Euro-American constructions of the godless and immoral Indian. The Northern Paiute have a belief system, Winnemucca argues, that instills principles and values that a White reader would equate with those of Christianity:

We are taught to love everybody. [...] the whites have not waited to find out how good the Indians were, and what ideas they had of God, just like those of Jesus, who called him Father, just as my people do, and told men to do to others as they would be done by, just as my people teach their children to do. My people teach their children never to make fun of any one, no matter how they look. [...] Be kind to all, both poor and rich, and feed all that come to your wigwam. [...] Be kind both to bad and good, for you don't know your own heart. (45, 51)

Instead of recognizing alternative belief systems and spiritual practices, Euro-Americans send missionaries, in the capacity of Indian agents, to teach the principles of Christianity, yet, they fail to live by them. Her language also reveals an understanding of words and how they may be used to provide irony to her presentations. As Sands finds, "It is clear who she thinks is really civilized, but she knows how to play her audience and uses her 'only an Indian woman' pose to gain sympathy for her cause, just as she uses the image of the exotic 'princess' to fill a lecture hall" ("Indian" 276). Winnemucca fills the role of "Great Father" and appropriates the rhetoric of the hegemony and instructs her audience, casting them in the role of "child." As she teaches Northern Paiute culture and morality, she allows her tribal narrative to speak for itself and leaves the audience to see the implied conclusions she draws for them.

The most important condemnation within "Domestic and Social Moralities" is the Euro-American propensity toward sexual aggression and violence. The threat and
practice of rape by White settlers causes Northern Paiute mothers to fear giving birth to girls because of the possibility of sexual violence: "My people have been so unhappy for a long time they wish now to disincrease, instead of multiply. The mothers are afraid to have more children, for fear they shall have daughters, who are not safe even in their mother's presence" (48). Winnemucca anticipates the claims that Native American women, and even more specifically herself, are sexually promiscuous and corrupt.

Winnemucca was aware of these charges made against her, as evident in the affidavits filed by Rinehart with the Board of Indian Commissioners, and other Native women.

While Northern Paiutes have marriage customs different from the dominant society, Mann determined the necessity to include an appendix with letters written by other Indian reformers and military personnel, which testified of Winnemucca's virtue and worked to deflect criticism from Winnemucca's sexuality and sexual history. Brigitte Georgi-Findlay argues that the inclusion of the testimonials directly places Winnemucca's tribal narrative as a text concerned with the sexual violence of White men on Indian women:

Read against this framework, the issues of sexuality and morality written into the text take on a new meaning: what is negotiated in her presentation of Indian-white relations is not only the issue of dispossession of tribal land, an issue a white audience dedicated to the rhetoric of national westward expansion would not have espoused without restrictions, but also the outrageous issues of sexual violence and miscegenation revealed in the violation of native women's bodies by white men. (229)
Essentially, Winnemucca attacks the morality of Euro-Americans, who profess a Christ-like existence, and asserts and defends the morality of her people, and especially that of Native American women.

Winnemucca also challenges the mythic origins of the United States and the subsequent formulation of American identity and the violence which enables their existence. Having seen the continual flow of White settlers into Northern Paiute lands and the privileged place that Christian reformers held on the Board of Indian Commissioners, Winnemucca was familiar with the doctrine of manifest destiny as evident in the following passage:

Oh, for shame! You who are educated by a Christian government in the art of war; the practice of whose profession makes you natural enemies of the savages, so called by you. Yes, you, who call yourselves the great civilization; you who have knelt upon Plymouth Rock, covenanting with God to make this land the home of the free and the brave. Ah, then you rise from your bended knees and seizing the welcoming hands of those who are the owners of this land, which you are not, your carbines rise upon the bleak shore, and your so-called civilization sweeps inland from the ocean wave; but, oh, my God! leaving its pathway marked by crimson lines of blood, and strewed by the bones of two races, the inheritor and the invader; and I am crying out to you for justice,—yes, pleading for the far-off plains of the West, for the dusky mourner, whose tears of love are pleading for her husband, or for their children, who are sent far away from them. (207)

In her discussion of the above passage, Powell believes that "Winnemucca uses Christian revival language techniques and further uses the 'Christian' roots of European
immigration both to remind her audience of the 'greatness' of their 'forefathers' and to let them know that she is knowledgeable about white people in a way that they are not knowledgeable about Indian peoples," yet Winnemucca does more than demonstrate her knowledge of American colonial history and the words to the "Star-Spangled Banner" (76). Winnemucca suggests that European colonists were welcomed to the New World landscape by its indigenous inhabitants and that the two diverse peoples could have coexisted if the colonists had not begun to violently impose Western structures and institutions onto Native peoples. She also roots American violence in Judeo-Christian epistemology and its beginning at Plymouth Rock. Senier understands Winnemucca's rhetoric in this passage as the means to challenge the authenticity of American identity: "Winnemucca shows American colonial identity to be made, not given or natural, and she targets the central myths by which it is so made. Further, she reveals that U.S. national identity is built on the erasure and destruction of other nations, thus refusing to let the conquerors (here her interlocutors) mask their own power and violence" (92).

Winnemucca locates the projection of Christian-sanctioned, White violence onto the land and bodies of Native peoples as the heart of her tribal narrative.

Unlike the Western tradition of commodifying and gendering the landscape, as Norris does in his work, Native American conceptions of land and place are situated in the physical and spiritual, tribal identities of its peoples. Winnemucca's text refers to Northern Paiute land ownership and to her peoples' desire to have "lands allotted to them in severalty;" indeed, Winnemucca advocated the passage of the Dawes Act, as she saw it as one of the only means of protecting the little lands left to the Paiute after being forced onto reservations, yet she also maintains the importance of the land to the survival of her
people and signals how violence committed against their homeland mirrors the violence committed against the Northern Paiute (223). Rather than seeing the land as a physical commodity or an intellectual abstraction, Native peoples recognize that "[p]eople and place are inseparable" (Erdrich 1). Paula Gunn Allen (Laguna Pueblo) explains that the inseparability of the Laguna Pueblo and the land is more than an idea but is essential to peoples' identity:

We are the land. To the best of my understanding, that is the fundamental idea embedded in Native American life and culture in the Southwest. More than remembered, the Earth is the mind of the people as we are the mind of the earth. The land is not really the place (separate from ourselves) where we act out the drama of our isolated destinies. [. . .] The land is not an image in our eyes but rather it is as truly an integral aspect of our being as we are of its being. (315)

Simon Ortiz (Acoma Pueblo) echoes the same sentiment when he discusses the centrality of a specific place, Acoma Pueblo, in the identity and existence of his people:

You recognize your birth as coming from a specific place, but that place is more than just a physical or geographical place, but obviously a spiritual place, a place with the whole scheme of life, the universe, the whole scheme and power of creation. Place is the source of who you are in terms of your identity, the language that you are born into and that you come to use. (105)

The connectedness of Indian peoples to specific places and the natural world is "not an abstraction," a concept that, as Deloria notes, is difficult for non-natives to understand:

It is difficult to present an Indian view of the environment because there is such a difference in the way Indians and non-Indians look at the world. Indians get very
confused when non-Indians come up to them and try to engage in a dialogue on nature and the environment. More traditional Indians have a devil of a time communicating to non-Indian audiences exactly what their relationship with nature is. (Spirit 223)

As Erdrich, Allen, Ortiz, and Deloria explain, the conception of their individual tribal peoples is intimately tied to place. In denying access to these places, Euro-American intruders and the United States government, who failed to enforce treaties that protected important tribal and spiritual places from White squatters, participate in the ongoing assimilation and annihilation of tribal peoples.

Winnemucca's tribal narrative demonstrates how the non-Native settlers on Paiute lands do not understand how the violence they commit against the land is violence against the Northern Paiute. As settlers clear piñon forests for lumber and grazing lands, a valuable resource is lost to the Northern Paiutes, but it also threatened communal gatherings where many of the bands would come together in "social gathering, competing in sports, gambling, and talking about the fine harvest they hoped would come" (Knack and Stewart 20). When White farmers and ranchers seized and cleared fertile land along the river bottoms, where buckberry patches grew, and appropriated water sources, these actions certainly created changes in the ecosystem, but more importantly it endangered the identity and survival of the people. Without buckberries to harvest, the Wiyitika-a band's ("Buckberry Eaters") identity ceases to exist. In violently seizing and altering the traditional homeland of the Northern Paiute, White colonists proceed in the physical elimination of the Paiutes (e.g. depriving them of food sources causing many to die of starvation) as well as the spiritual destruction of their culture and identity.
The sexual violence and rape that Northern Paiute women endure at the hands of White immigrants provides another example of the hypocrisy of Judeo-Christian morality, and Winnemucca signals that this form of violence is particularly destructive and demoralizing for her people. From the point of first contact, Euro-Americans have constructed Native Americans as a corrupt, immoral race, lacking the beneficence of God. To the Judeo-Christian patriarchy, Native Americans practiced pagan forms of religion and needed to be rescued from the damnation that awaited them. Key to the construction of Native Americans as immoral and godless was, and still is, the common view of Indians being highly sexualized. The dominant culture imaged Native American men as having an insatiable sexual appetite with a particular penchant for beautiful White women—a result of the popularity of the Indian captivity narrative—and received the moniker "buck." The construction of Native American women in the Judeo-Christian understanding of morality was much more precarious. Rayna Green (Cherokee) terms this construction of Indian women as the "Pocahontas perplex." In the minds of Euro-American men, Native women could fill only two roles, either the Indian "princess" (virtuous, kind, and always willing to help White men, even at the cost of her own life) and the Indian "squaw" (exotic, venal, dangerous, the great tempter of Christian men). The "princess" role incorporates the Virgin/Whore dichotomy, where the "princess" is admired for her goodness and aid, yet also serves as an object of unattainable White male sexual desire. The construction of the "squaw" is more simplistic. According to Green, "Squaws are understood as mere economic and sexual conveniences for [. . .] men" (189). Winfred Blevins, in Give Your Heart to the Hawks: A Tribute to the Mountain Men, his
"Lusty saga of the Great American West," exemplifies the hegemonic imagery of Indian men as "bucks" and Indian women as "squaws":

When alien peoples meet, the saying goes, first they fight and then they fornicate. The trappers and Indians did both, as mood and circumstance might dictate. The opportunity for some great sex was probably one of the primary lures of the mountains for the whites, and the squaws seem to have relished it with the trapper, in or out of marriage, avidly enough to fulfill his wildest fantasies.

The status of women in Indian tribes was low. They were property and treated as such. They were saddled with all the domestic work, because a brave's honor would not allow him to touch it. They were made beasts of burden and traded like horses. Like many "primitive" peoples, Indians made women the objects of distrust, hostility, and taboos. [...] So the women certainly could expect no worse from the white man than they would get at home.

Compared to white attitudes toward sex, Indians were utterly uninhibited. They suffered from no embarrassment, shame, or secretiveness about it. With rare exceptions, they had no concept of chastity, in the sense of abstinence before marriage. [...] Public ceremonies in which men and women copulated with anyone other than their own husbands or wives were common among the plains tribes. (191)

Sexual exploitation of Native American women was acceptable, and, after many early fur trappers and traders had taken Indian wives, they discarded them with the arrival of European women on the frontier. As Sylvia Van Kirk notes, frontiersman did not always give up their relationships with their former wives, keeping them as prostitutes and
mistresses: "In well-settled areas in the post-union period, there was a growing tendency for Indian women to be reduced to the state of prostitutes, a situation conveniently blamed upon the supposed immoral leanings of their race" (160). Whether a "princess" or a "squaw," a Native American woman's identity was always constructed, and as Green remarks, defined by her relationships with White men: "They are both tied to the definition by relationships with white men" (191). Winnemucca understood the dualities of this formulation as she was called the "Paiute Princess" but was also slandered by the White men she challenged and labeled a common prostitute.

The popularity of both factual and fictitious Indian captivity narratives further perpetuated the construction of Native Americans as sexually promiscuous and immoral. Mary Rowlandson's historic account of her captivity, A True History of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson (1682) appeared in thirty editions (Namias 9). The Indian captivity narrative was an immediate best seller in both Europe and America, and, as Christopher Castiglia notes, "remained popular even after Anglo-America had won its wars for possession of the continent and its resources because they offered sensational stories of explicit or implied sex and violence" (2). The Indian captivity narrative, according to Kolodny, became the means by which Euro-American women interacted with the New World landscape and expressed the captivity they felt in its wildness and in the sexual metaphors of conquest that men had created.33 Furthermore, the narrative served the larger Judeo-Christian mythos as it provides "a more affecting image of New England as Judea capta than in the languishing figure of a Puritan woman held captive in the rugged wilderness retreats of the Indian" (Land 21). Castiglia reaffirms the essentiality of the Indian captivity narrative in the colonization and

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subjugation of the New World landscape and its indigenous inhabitants: "Dominant narratives of manifest destiny, from the colonial era through the present day, have relied for dramatic tension on the threatened sexualization of white women by men of color who possess uncontrollable, violent, and animalistic lusts" (123). Ultimately, as Susan Scheckel explains in her examination of the role Indians played in nineteenth-century American nationalism, the White female captive becomes a formidable cultural figure:

[T]he white female captive becomes a "national symbolic" in which the boundaries of the nation are aligned with the boundaries of the white female body. [. . .] The symbolic equation of woman/captive and nation performs its ideological work of affirming national identity and power only insofar as the woman/captive remains sexually and culturally intact and is eventually reincorporated within national boundaries. (74)

As these critics have found, the Indian captivity narrative serves multiple purposes, but what most fail to recognize is that the program of self-definition Euro-American writers undertake relies on the codification of Native American identity as "savage" and sexually violent and corrupt.

Novelists like James Fenimore Cooper and Nathaniel Hawthorne capitalized on the popularity of the historical accounts and recast them in their fiction, further ingraining these stereotypes into the national consciousness. Cooper made the Indian captivity narrative popular in his Leatherstocking Tales and tapped into White fears of rape and miscegenation despite the fact that, as historian Laurel Thatcher Ulrich relates, "Puritan writers were amazed at the sexual restraint of Indian men, who never raped their captives" (97). Rowlandson's own narrative support this assertion:
I have been in the midst of those roaring lions and savage bears that feared neither God nor man nor the devil by night and day, alone and in company, sleeping all sorts together, and yet no one of them ever offered the least abuse of unchastity to me in word or action. Though some are ready to say I speak it for my own credit, I speak it in the presence of God, and to his glory. (71)

Yet Cooper presents his hero, Natty Bumppo, as the national defender of White female virtue and purity. He finds himself continually in the position of rescuing a beautiful woman, kidnapped for her Otherness and her perceived ability to provide sexual pleasure and stimulation to her Indian kidnapper. Invariably, Bumppo always manages to save the heroine before her captor has the chance to rape and abuse her, protecting the delicacy and propriety of White chastity and morality. From these early American writers, the captivity narrative continued through Beadle's dime novels to the westerns of the 1940s, 50s, and 60s. John Ford's *The Searchers* (1956) does not have Cooper's optimistic resolve and has his White captive incorporated into Comanche society, becoming a wife to the war chief Scar. John Wayne's racist character Ethan Edwards reflects the ideas that Hawthorne presented in *The Scarlet Letter* (1850): the Indian captive cannot return and exist in White society (although Ethan relents and spares her life); they must be eliminated. Consequently, White captives are forever stigmatized, existing between two cultures, and White readers are left with fear and dread of the possibility of Indian atrocities. With the popularity of writers like Cooper, Hawthorne, and filmmakers like Ford, the Indian captive stereotype, and the fear it engenders, is firmly embedded in the collective consciousness of White society.
Winnemucca's tribal narrative inverts the traditional model of the Indian captivity narrative, offering her audience an alternative: the White captivity narrative. Undoubtedly, Winnemucca's reader was familiar with the Indian captivity narrative tradition but was either ignorant or dismissive of the Euro-American practice of taking Indian peoples captive. Pauline Turner Strong, one of the few scholars to examine Euro-American captivity of Native Americans, presents Squanto and Pocahontas as examples of Indians who have become "legendary figures in hegemonic representations of American identity because both are tragic heroes," but were "captives among the English before they became valuable allies" (19). Most Americans revere Squanto and Pocahontas for the assistance they provided to European colonists, but they do not know and are not taught that their assistance was frequently compelled by captivity. The suppression of this fact, Strong argues, happens "because it is inconsistent with their personification of peaceful and voluntary acquiescence in the colonial project" (20).

Winnemucca's text challenges the stereotypes that depicted Native peoples as "savage" and reveals the Euro-American practice of captivity and rape.

Rape is a central issue in Life Among the Piutes not only for Winnemucca, who escapes being raped on at least five occasions, but also for the Northern Paiute, the Bannock, and all other Native Americans. The act of rape is more than a form of physical violence. As Susan Brownmiller notes in her study, Against Our Will: Men, Women, and Rape, rape "is nothing more or less than a conscious process of intimidation by which all men keep all women in a state of fear" (5). In this assertion, Brownmiller argues that, instead of being simply an individual, singular, physical act, rape is also a communal, continuing, emotional and spiritual project. Brownmiller, while tracing the
recorded history of rape and the criminalization of rape, believes that "[b]y anatomical fiat—the inescapable construction of their genital organs—the human male was a natural predator and the human female served as his natural prey" (6). The ensuing fear of being "hunted" by sexually aggressive men, Brownmiller hypothesizes, "led first to the establishment of a rudimentary mate-protectorate and then sometime later to the full-blown male solidification of power, the patriarchy," which inevitably positioned women as man's "first piece of real property" (8). The construction of women as another male possession allows patriarchal systems to justify rape. Playing on Blevin's statement "first they fight and then they fornicate," Brownmiller connects the rape of women to the conquest of the Americas adducing, "When men are men, slugging it out among themselves, conquering new land, subjugating new people, driving on toward victory, unquestionably there shall be some raping" (23). The raping that accompanies the "conquering [of] new land" and the "subjugating [of] new people" affects Native peoples in devastating ways. Andrea Smith (Cherokee) remarks, "We cannot limit our conception of sexual violence to individual acts of rape—rather it encompasses a wide range of strategies designed not only to destroy peoples, but to destroy their sense of being a people" (3). Smith's perception of the "genocidal" consequences of rape points to the "ideology that Native bodies are inherently violable—and by extension, that Native lands are also inherently violable" (12). As discussed earlier, Native peoples see no distinction between their peoples and the land on which they live. When White colonists violate treaties and destroy Indian lands, they reenact, according to Smith, the rape of Native women: "Through the rape of the earth, Native women's bodies are raped once again" (67). Winnemucca's text demonstrates an understanding of these concepts as she
focuses the reader not just on the attempted rapes she avoided but also on the rapes of numerous Native women and the rape of the land.

Many critics who have explored the relationships between White men and Indian women have failed to see rape as more than a sexual crime. For example, Walter O'Meara, in his book *Daughters of the Country: The Women of the Fur Traders and Mountain Men*, examines the roles that women, both Native and White, served in fur trade society. O'Meara, while acknowledging the fear that Native American women had of White men, attributes this emotion to the fallacious dichotomy: "Yet there was a gulf that was never bridged: a chasm, not just of race but of archaeological time, that perhaps no civilized man has ever succeeded in closing between himself and a primitive woman" (3-4). O'Meara dedicates an entire chapter to the subject of rape, looking particularly at White atrocities on Indian women. O'Meara naively concludes that the majority of rapes occurred during the early years of first contact, as the Spanish, primarily, looked for sexual slaves. In fur trade society on the other hand, he argues that trappers, normally the first wave of Euro-American contact, did not rape or abuse women: "[I]t seems quite safe to say that sexual violence against [Indian] women seldom occurred" (110). O'Meara bases this denial of rape on the precarious nature in which the mountain man found himself: surrounded by "hostile savages." Permanent white settlement did not begin in Nevada until 1854, yet White emigrants had almost raped Winnemucca's older sister years earlier, proving O'Meara to be erroneous in his conclusions on the frequency of rape on the frontier.

Winnemucca signals her reader to the fear of rape at the beginning of her tribal narrative and restates this fear throughout the text. Because the geography and climate of
Northern Paiute land is remote and arid, the Paiutes had "never seen a white man" (7) until a few years after Winnemucca's birth, when a wagon train of California-bound emigrants arrived. Winnemucca's initial reaction to the presence of the White emigrants was fear, not unlike the reaction that Jedediah Smith encountered as he rode into an Indian village in the Rockies, where a girl of nine or ten fled before him and his trapping party and then fell dead because of her immense fear (O'Meara 3). While there are many agents that created and intensified Winnemucca's fear and distrust of White men, from her narrative, one can see that at the center of her dread was the fear of being raped. At a very young age, this fear materializes in the rape of her older sister Mary when the family stays with and works on the Scott homestead:

The men whom my grandpa called his brothers would come into our camp and ask my mother to give our sister to them. They would come in at night, and we would all scream and cry, but that would not stop them. My sister, and mother, and my uncles all cried and said, "Oh, why did we come? Oh, we shall surely all be killed some night." My uncles and brothers would not dare to say a word, for fear they would be shot down. So we used to go away every night after dark and hide, and come back to our camp every morning. (34)

Winnemucca's mother pleads with her oldest son to leave his employment with the Scotts because she fears her daughter will be taken forever and either killed or forced into prostitution: "Mother said, 'Dear son, you know if we stay here sister will be taken from us by the bad white man. I would rather see her die than see her heart full of fear every night'" (37). Winnemucca does not explicitly claim her sister was raped, but as Margo Lukens correctly reads this passage, "The characteristic delicacy of Winnemucca's
narration suggests, despite an absence of prurient detail, that her sister may have been raped, since the family's tears and noise "would not stop them" (98). Throughout her text, Winnemucca avoids the "prurient details" and adopts "a synonym of rape or sexual assault that was familiar to white women, [which] asserts not only that such violations occurred but that they were, indeed violations" (Carpenter 75). Mary's rape, while not explicitly detailed, still occurs and has powerful consequences for Winnemucca and for her people.

Winnemucca does not always provide details of her own narrow escapes from White and Spanish men, who intend to rape her, yet her text implies that she too has survived attempted rapes. In the most detailed attempt, Winnemucca recounts how on a trip to the Yakima Reservation, having been warned by her cousin Joe Winnemucca that "very bad men" along the way "[s]ometimes [. . .] would throw a rope over our women, and do fearful things to them [. . .] most terrible outrageous things to our women," she and her sister stopped at a Mr. Anderson's and narrowly escaped being raped (228):

I said to sister, "Oh, how my heart jumps. Something is going to happen to us, dear."

"I feel that way too," sister said. We sat a long time, but it was very cold, and at last we lay down and I soon fell asleep.

Some one laid a hand on me and said, "Sarah!"

I jumped up with fright and gave him such a blow right in the face. I said, "Go away, or I will cut you to pieces, you mean man!" He ran out of the house, and Mr. Anderson got up and lighted a candle. There was blood on the side of the bed, and on my hands and the floor. He said, —
"Oh, Sarah, what have you done? Did you cut him?"

"No, I did not cut him; I wish I had. I only struck him with my hand."

He said, "Well, a man who will do such a thing needs killing." (231-32)

While Winnemucca does not make plain the man's intentions, her account of the experience signals the audience that she, as well as her sister and Mr. Anderson, believed he was determined to rape her. Furthermore, Winnemucca's response to the attack demonstrates the means she and other Native American women take to protect themselves from White male violence, essentially positioning themselves as subjects who act rather than objects who are acted upon. She follows through with her vow that "[i]f such an outrageous thing is to happen to me, it will not be done by one man or two, while there are two women with knives, for I know what an Indian woman can do" (228).

Winnemucca's tribal narrative also demonstrates how singular acts of captivity and rape are collective acts and how they lead to larger conflict and destruction. The catalyst that pushes the Northern Paiute into the Pyramid Lake War and the Bannocks into the Bannock War is the rape of Indian women. Winnemucca recounts the story of two twelve-year-old Paiute girls who were abducted and raped in 1860. The Williams brothers, two traders who lived on the Carson River near the Paiute camp, denied having seen or having taken the girls, but on the discovery of a hidden cellar, Paiute men found the kidnapped girls and killed the Williams brothers for the atrocities they had committed. Of course, the local White population requested the government send soldiers to protect the community and to kill the "bloodthirsty savages [that] had murdered two innocent, hardworking, industrious, kind-hearted settlers" (71-72). The resulting Pyramid Lake War, as Winnemucca recounts, "lasted about three months, and
after a few precious ones of my people, and at least a hundred white men had been killed 
[. . .] a peace was made" (72). In 1878, a band of Bannock arrived at the Malheur 
Agency from Fort Hall Reservation with sad news: "One of the Indians had a sister out 
digging some roots, and these white men went to the women who were digging, and 
caught this poor girl, and used her shamefully. The other women ran away and left this 
girl to the mercy of those white men [. . .]." (139). The Bannock retaliated by killing the 
rapists. To punish the Bannock for their carriage of justice, White authorities confiscated 
their ponies and guns. The starving Bannock on the Fort Hall Reservation and the 
similarly starving Northern Paiute at the Malheur Agency joined together in revolt 
against the oppressive Indian agents and the reservation system, beginning the Bannock 
War, the last significant Indian/White conflict in southern Oregon and northern Nevada. 
The consequences of the Bannock War were great for the Northern Paiute: the 
government closed the Malheur Agency and, in the winter of 1879, forced the Northern 
Paiute to walk 350 miles through deep snow to the Yakima Reservation. The cost in 
human life was great as 550 Northern Paiutes died on a march that is reminiscent of the 
Cherokee "Trail of Tears." Winnemucca signals that her text is a narrative of her people's 
captivity, when she charges the United States government of holding "us in places against 
our will, driving us from place to place as if we were beasts" (244-45). Winnemucca's 
accounting of the captivity and of the rape of the Northern Paiutes not only inverts the 
literary and popular conventions of the Indian captivity narrative but also takes the 
rhetoric of colonization and fashions it into a tribal narrative form.

While numerous and complex factors contributed to the commencement of the 
Bannock War, Winnemucca suggests that the rape of one Bannock girl by a White settler
caused the death of so many of her people and the further loss of Paiute land.

Winnemucca's account of Native American interaction with White colonists presents a history that counters the traditionally held images of Native peoples being highly sexual and immoral. She defiantly proclaims the morality of her people and decries the hypocrisy of Judeo-Christian, White men: "Ah, there is one thing you cannot say of the Indian. You call him savage, and everything that is bad but one; but, thanks be to God, I am so proud to say that my people have never outraged your women, or have even insulted them by looks or words" (244). Instead of seeing the popular tradition of White women being taken and raped by Indian men, Winnemucca accuses White men of committing the atrocities that the dominant culture affixes to Native men.

Winnemucca's challenge to White-constructed images of Native Americans and indictment of White, masculine violence against Native women continues as she expresses the horror and fear she has of the practice of cannibalism, which she learned of when the Donner and Reed party became stranded in the Sierra Nevadas in 1846. Winnemucca accuses Euro-Americans of engaging in cannibalism—a justification Euro-American colonists often used for the extermination of Native peoples. Maggie Kilgour argues that the concept and definition of cannibalism is centered in the struggle between societies who want to impose their own cultural and religious ideology on other groups:

The definition of the other as cannibal justifies its oppression, extermination, and cultural cannibalism (otherwise known as imperialism) by the rule "eat or be eaten." In the case of the New World, a similar logic also justified the appropriation of property: the Indians' lack of a concept of possession, on the one hand, supported comparisons of America with Paradise, where there had been no
private property; on the other, it made appropriation totally excusable, as no individual was being harmed. (148)

W. Arens, in The Man-Eating Myth: Anthropology and Anthropophagy, argues that cannibalism, whether "exocannibalism" (the eating of people outside of the cultural group) or "endocannibalism" (the eating of people from inside the group), is largely a myth put forward by overly zealous anthropologists as a means to demonize the racially and ethnically "Other." Arens's claim came under strong criticism from anthropologists, understandably, who felt their arguments and investigations would be dismissed. Don Gardner, in defending his research, insists "there is ample evidence that, for many peoples, attributions of cannibalism to alien others is an effective instrument of demonization" (28). Gardner's statement maintains that non-Western peoples practice cannibalism and that Western anthropologists are correct in demonizing them. Gardner, however, does not address Western cannibalism nor does he demonize those who have engaged in the practice.

Winnemucca's fear of being eaten alive by White settlers is just as palpable as her fear of being raped. With the memory of the Walker party's massacre of almost eighty Paiute in 1833 and the "fearful story" that Paiute mothers told their children of "whites [...] killing everybody and eating them," Winnemucca and the members of her band flee before the arrival of a group of emigrants to the Humboldt River in 1848 (11). Unable to keep up with the rest of the band, Tuboityony tells her sister, "Let us bury our girls, or we shall all be killed and eaten up" (11). Winnemucca describes the fear she felt as she waited through the day in the burning sun for her death: "Oh, can any one imagine my feelings buried alive, thinking every minute that I was to be unburied and eaten up by the
people that my grandfather loved so much?" (12). Canfield suggests that Winnemucca's fear and the tale her mother told her and her sister derived from a well-known tale of a "Cannibal Owl, a Paiute boogeyman who [. . .] carried away crying, misbehaving children, pounded them into a tender pulp, and ate them with relish," but Winnemucca's tribal narrative does not support this assertion and instead suggests the factual cannibalism committed by the Donner and Reed party that passed through Northern Paiute land in 1846, a story they would have heard through their contact with the Eastern Miwok (5).35

The infamous Donner and Reed party, armed with Lansford Hastings bestseller The Emigrants Guide to Oregon and California (1845) and little frontier experience, made a late start for California, almost died of thirst in the western deserts of Utah before being rescued by volunteers who brought them needed water and supplies, and became trapped by the first snows in the Truckee basin without adequate shelter or food. In mid-December all of the men and women who were strong enough to walk, left the Truckee Basin camp in an attempt to traverse the mountains by snowshoe. While the first acts of cannibalism among the Donner party were white on white, and only the bodies of those who had died of natural causes were consumed, two members of the actual party were killed for food: the two Miwok guides Luis and Salvador. Luis and Salvador had willingly accompanied Charles Stanton, who had crossed the Sierra Nevadas in advance of the main company to secure needed supplies from John Sutter, to assist the wagon train in their late passage. Luis and Salvador joined the group of snowshoers in their attempt to cross the Sierra Nevadas and refused to consume human flesh, while the White members cannibalized their dead (Stewart 105). After several hard days in the mountains
and having eaten all of the dried human flesh left over from the body of Patrick Dolan, members of the group decided that, rather than drawing lots on who would be sacrificed and consumed, Luis and Salvador would be killed:

And now a new idea came to some of the starving and half-crazed refugees. The two Indians! These men and women who lay starving in the snow were westerners. Behind them lay a tradition bred by generations of warfare—rifle and long-knife against arrow and tomahawk. The Indian, that skulker by the clearing, that devil of the torture stake, was to them an enemy, a child of Satan, a lower creature. Should not an Indian be killed that a white man might live? Fosdick was dying; the others talked together. (Stewart 110)

George R. Stewart states that William H. Eddy warned the two Miwok guides of the intentions of the remainder of the group, allowing them to escape their imminent deaths; yet, Charles F. McGlashan argues that they fled because they were "[h]orrified at the sight of human beings eating the flesh of their comrades" (81). Their escape would be short lived. Eliza W. Farnham, a survivor of the small group, recorded in her journal the horrific fate of Luis and Salvador:

Suddenly they came, one day, upon the two fugitive Indians, resting. Poor fellows! They had had nothing to eat since they fled from the camp of death on that terrible night. They had traveled on, feeble and hungry, but hopeful; for they knew that abundance was before them, and that it was really not far off, could they but struggle forward.

They never saw their bountiful home again. The starving emigrants, who could not slay each other, thought with less scruple of the fate of these. (151)
News of the party's gruesome actions quickly reached the Northern Paiute and further cemented their belief that Whites practiced cannibalism and particularly enjoyed Indian flesh.

In his travel narrative Life in the Far West, George Frederick Ruxton relates a similar account of four trappers who were working in the Great Basin, northwest of the Great Salt Lake during the winter of 1847. The trapper and hero of Ruxton's narrative, La Bonté, led his small group of four trappers on the trail of some "Digger" Indians (Western Shoshone), who had stolen two of his party's horses. After a single day's pursuit, La Bonté and his party came upon the Western Shoshone village and exacted their revenge. The trappers quickly murdered nine Indian men and then turned to their spoils: "All this time the women, half dead with fright, were huddled together on the ground, howling piteously; and the mountaineers advancing to them, whirled their lassos round their heads, and throwing the open nooses into the midst, hauled out three of them, and securing their arms in the rope, bound them to a tree, and then proceeded to scalp the dead bodies" (83). The three Indian women were particularly valuable to the trappers because they were not only sexual partners, but they could also serve in a domestic function. Ruxton explains that trappers held Native women at a premium:

American women are valued at a low figure in the mountains. They are too fine and "fofarraw." Neither can they make moccasins, or dress skins; nor are they so schooled to perfect obedience to their lords and masters as to stand a "lodge poleing," which the western lords of the creation not unfrequently deem it their bounden duty to inflict upon their squaws for some dereliction of domestic duty.

(96)
The kidnapping and subsequent marriage of Native American women to White fur trappers, termed, marriage à la façon du pays, was widespread. Indian girls could also be procured through trade or purchase at the slave markets in Taos and Santa Fe (O'Meara 134). For La Bonté and his men, these Western Shoshone were without a spiritual or moral center; they were not human beings like themselves but were a commodity to be bought and sold.

The captivity of these three women elucidates Winnemucca's fear of rape and cannibalism, while enforcing the commodification of Native American women. After the trapper raid on the Shoshone village, La Bonté and his party traveled southeast, crossing the barren salt flats west of the Great Salt Lake. With their supply of water and food entirely depleted, the men and their captives march for four consecutive days, looking for water and eating their horses as they give out. The trappers, on the point of starvation, according to La Bonté, murder their still living captives and eat them:

"There's the meat, hos—help yourself." La Bonté drew the knife from his scabbard, and approached the spot his companion was pointing to; but what to his horror to see the yet quivering body of one of the Indian squaws, with a large portion of the flesh butchered from it, and part of which Forey was already greedily devouring. (86)

To the four trappers, the Shoshone women are property and may be disposed of as they wish, even butchered for meat. In the trappers' understanding of the role and purpose of Native American women, their actions, while horrific to La Bonté, are justified because, as Forey says, "meat was meat, anyhow they fixed it" (85). The Western Shoshone, neighbors of the Northern Paiute in the Great Basin, often crossed paths in their patterns
of subsistence. One must assume that through inter-tribal contact the Northern Paiute, and Winnemucca herself, would have heard of the events that Ruxton describes in his narrative. Coming only a year after the Donner party, another episode of cannibalism by the White invaders would surely have solidified and justified Winnemucca's fear of captivity, rape, and cannibalism.

A critical reading of Winnemucca's tribal narrative reveals a connection between rape and cannibalism (other than the fact that they are both appalling and gruesome acts) and speaks to the connection of body and spirit. Georgi-Findlay argues that Winnemucca uses her knowledge of White rape and cannibalism to create an "inversion of the pattern of the Indian captivity narrative," in which "she casts white people in the role of savages" (232). While Georgi-Findlay identifies the importance of these two fears for Winnemucca and for her people, she does not recognize their connection. In From Communion to Cannibalism: An Anatomy of Metaphors of Incorporation, Kilgour examines not just the act of cannibalism but also its metaphorical representations in Western culture. She argues that rape and cannibalism are forms of consumption:

> [T]here are different methods of incorporation available, ranging from the most metaphorical and sublime, to the most literal and, if not always ridiculous, frequently gothic and grotesque. The root of the word *incorporation* is in the body; it is a process concerned with embodiment and the bringing of bodies together. (5-6)

With this definition of "incorporation," Kilgour makes the connection between sexual intercourse and cannibalism, explaining that "like eating, intercourse makes two bodies one, though in a union that is fortunately less absolute and permanent" (7). Because
sexual intercourse "is an incomplete act of incorporation," Kilgour argues that it "may be seen as intensifying desire to the point where it becomes transformed into not art but aggression" (8). For Winnemucca, rape and cannibalism constitute forms by which White men control and possess Native peoples and Native women in particular. In the act of rape, the male takes the female's virtue, forcing his identity and sexual desire upon her, while simultaneously repressing hers. Nicholas Groth, in his study of rape offenders Men Who Rape The Psychology of the Offender, argues that "rape is a pseudosexual act, complex and multidetermined, but addressing issues of hostility (anger) and control (power) more than passion (sexuality)," and, "for the offender it is not his desire to harm his victim but to possess her sexually" (2, 25). Cannibalism more demonstratively develops this idea. Peggy Reeves Sanday points out that the act of cannibalism is a form of domination and power:

When projected onto enemies, cannibalism and torture become the means by which powerful threats to social life are dissipated. To revenge the loss of one's own, the victim taken in warfare is tortured and reduced to food in the ultimate act of domination. At the same time, by consuming enemy flesh one assimilates the animus of another group's hostile power into one's own. (6)

The incorporation and consumption of another human being represents the ultimate act of possession, taking the flesh, blood, nutrients, and soul of the victim into the consumer. People who practiced cannibalism throughout history have believed that in killing and eating one's enemy they gained their victim's strength and power. Winnemucca's immense dread of being raped and eaten is based upon the fear of losing her strength,
identity, virtue, and spirit and the fear that her tribal people will continue to dwindle in strength, numbers, identity, and spirit.

*Life Among the Piutes* is most often read as a political text, something that Winnemucca expected and wanted, that would move its readers to demand changes in the United States's Indian policies. Within recent years, scholars and critics of both autobiographical writing and Native American literature have read the text as the autobiography of an Indian woman who used Western, and more distinctly Western American, literary traditions to cast herself as a Western hero or as a woman warrior (Sands, "Indian Women's" 276; Tisinger 116). Postcolonial theorists argue that *Life Among the Piutes* is an excellent example of a cross-cultural literary collaboration. In staking out Western theoretical positions, scholars and critics have overlooked the importance of tribal culture and tribal criticism in Winnemucca's work. Her narrative of tribal events from 1846-1883 may be read as a defense and affirmation of Northern Paiute culture, morality, and identity, countering hegemonic imagery that saw Native peoples as "noble savages" whose cultures were "vanishing" and in need of preservation. The presence of countless stories of captivity, rape, and cannibalism are not included solely as the individual episodes in the adventurous life of the author; they also represent the communal expression of the Northern Paiute's "tribal narrative."
CHAPTER 4

"WE ARE NO MORE AND NO LESS THAN THE LIFE THAT SURrounds US":

CHALLENGING PATRIARCHAL VIOLENCE IN THE WORKS OF TERRY TEMPEST WILLIAMS

As a woman who has lived in the Great Basin area of Utah and Nevada, and more recently on the high desert Colorado Plateau of Eastern Utah, Terry Tempest Williams exhibits an intimate relationship with the lands, cultures, and peoples of the West. Writing in the contemporary West, she stands as an important writer and advocate for wild places, individuality, community, and democracy. She sees the Western landscape and all of its inhabitants as interconnected, a bond that allows for the wild, the individual, and the communal. All things have voice. For Williams, humankind's intimate relationship with the wild has been damaged, and the voice of wilderness has been ignored. The source of this loss, according to Williams, is a culture that expects its members to be silent and to blindly follow its authority. As Williams drives out to the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge with her friend Sandy Lopez, she articulates the origin of American cultural authority:

We spoke of rage. Of women and landscape. How our bodies and the body of the earth have been mined.
"It has everything to do with intimacy," I said. "Men define intimacy through their bodies. It is physical. They define intimacy with the land in the same way."

"Many men have forgotten what they are connected to," my friend added.

"Subjugation of women and nature may be a loss of intimacy within themselves."

(Refuge 10)

Williams's conversation signals to her reader that the violence committed against the land is violence committed against the feminine, and that such violence not only affects the physical but also the spiritual. Unlike Frank Norris, who writes of the violence against the female body, which he depicts in the rapes of Trina McTeague and Angéle and in the rape of the wheat fields of the San Joaquin Valley of California, and unlike Sarah Winnemucca Hopkins, who describes how physical and sexual violence on Native women also defiles their spirituality, Williams combines all three aspects of violence against the feminine to show how, in the modern West, the land, the body, and the spirit continue to be violated.

The large body of Williams's work covers a wide-range of interests and issues, yet a recurring motif of violence against the feminine in the West informs almost every aspect her work. This violence originates within the cultural hegemony, which, as Williams argues, is invariably masculine. The U.S. military's detonation of nuclear weapons at the Nevada Test Site, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints's expectation of blind obedience to both governmental and ecclesiastical authority, and the state of Utah's response to the flooding of the Great Salt Lake demonstrate this violence. Like Norris, Williams genders the land; thus, feminine landscape stands in opposition to masculine culture. Furthermore, Williams argues that a direct result of violating the land is the
harming of the women who live upon it, evidenced by the high rate of cancers in women who lived downwind from the Nevada Test Site during the 1950s and 1960s. As the women close to Williams see their land and bodies ravaged, their spiritual beings are harmed. While the violent actions of the past cannot be undone, Williams's work advocates resistance and reconciliation. The few wild places left in the West can be protected and preserved for all members of the natural world. The women of her family cannot be restored, but future women can be saved. Lastly, humankind can regain their connection to the earth and its wildness.

Williams's connection to the land and wildness began from birth. She was born on 8 September 1955 in Corona, California, where she lived only briefly before her parents, Diane Dixon Tempest and John Henry Tempest III, took her back to their ancestral home in Salt Lake City, Utah. According to Williams, she comes "from a family with deep roots in the American West," who came, along with other members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, with "few provisions over the twelve-hundred-mile trail" from Missouri to the Salt Lake Valley in the 1850s (13). From a young age, Williams learned that stories have the power to heal and that those stories are rooted in the land. Williams's educational goals reflected this understanding, as she earned a B.S. in English from the University of Utah in 1979 yet also displayed a strong interest in science. During her graduate study, she moved from the study of literature to environmental science, earning a M.S. in environmental education in 1984. With this strong background in English, education, and science Williams worked as the curator of education at the Utah Museum of Natural History from 1979-1986. She held this position until 1986, when she became naturalist-in-residence at the museum, working in
this capacity from 1986 to 1996. In 1996, Williams and her husband moved to Castle
Valley, Utah, near Moab and Arches National Park, where she could more fully
concentrate on her writing and her environmental and political activism. Once Williams
left the Utah Museum of Natural History, she accepted a position as the Shirley Sutton
Thomas Visiting Professor of English at the University of Utah. Later in 2004, the
University of Utah named her the first Annie Clark Tanner Fellow in Environmental
Studies—the position she still holds. Williams's work experience has allowed her to
devote her life to the environment, and perhaps more importantly, education. With the
variety of positions and her emphasis on environmental education, she demonstrates
through her work a strong environmental ethic and her willingness to help others
reconnect with wild places, while decrying the ongoing violence against the feminine
landscape, body, and spirit.

Williams's publishing career reflects her efforts to expose all peoples to wildness and
to help them to see their interconnectedness. While attending the Teton Science School
in Jackson Hole, Wyoming during the summers of 1974-1976, she met and worked with
Ted Major, the founder of the school. They collaborated on Williams's first book, The
Secret Language of Snow (1984), a book for children that won the Children's Science
Book Award in 1984. This book examines the Inuit vocabulary for snow and explores
science, myth, and story. In Pieces of White Shell: Journey to Navajoland (1984) and
Between Cattails (1985), Williams's examines the ontological nature of place and
demonstrates how sagebrush, sandstone, great blue herons, and all forms of nature have
their own stories. In Coyote's Canyon (1989), Williams revisits the deserts of southern
Utah and Navajoland and draws upon an indigenous perspective of how stories invoke a
sense of place, using the trickster Coyote as her guide. *Refuge: An Unnatural History of Family and Place* (1991) combines autobiography with natural history and political discourse. With the stellar reviews and national attention following *Refuge,* Williams became more than just an activist but also an artist—a theme she explored in *An Unspoken Hunger: Stories from the Field* (1994) and fully embraced in the poetic *Desert Quartet: An Erotic Landscape* (1995). A visit to the Prado Museum in Madrid, Spain and a viewing of Hieronymus Bosch's painting *El jardín de las delicias* (*The Garden of Earthly Delights,* circa 1500) served as the impetus for Williams's examination and interpretation of the painting in *Leap* (2000). *Leap* combines art history, natural history, memoir, poetry, environmental activism, religion, and philosophy. Most importantly, *Leap* serves as a response to the Mormon community's reception of *Refuge.* In the last four years, Williams's work has become more political. *Red: Passion and Patience in the Desert* (2001) reprints excerpts from *Desert Quartet* and *Coyote's Canyon,* yet the work also includes America's Redrock Wilderness Act and "America's Redrock Wilderness: The Citizens' Proposal." Much of *Red* and Williams's new book *The Open Space of Democracy* (2004) criticizes the George W. Bush administration for its open hostility toward the land and freedom of speech—the open spaces of democracy. While Williams's work has always focused on environmental issues, politics is a natural extension, since, as Williams notes in *Red,* "It is a simple equation: place + people = politics" (3). Critics, publishers, bookstore buyers, librarians, and readers may struggle to categorize Williams's immense body of work, as it appears her writing defies definition and categorization; yet, Williams finds no difference between literary forms or cultural forums. As she explains in an interview, "I think if anything comes out of this literature
it is that the world cannot be categorized. It is seeing the world as whole, or even holy"
("Testimony, Refuge" 25).  

Numerous religious, geographical, environmental, and political influences contribute
to the eclectic nature of Williams's writing. Williams, whose ancestors came West with
Mormon handcart companies in the 1850s, grew up in the heart of Mormondom and the
Great Basin—the Salt Lake Valley. First, and foremost, Williams is a Mormon writer.
As she remarked in an interview with Jana Bouck Remy:

  Mormonism is one of the lenses I see the world through. We cannot escape
our conditioning. Why would we want to? I grew up in a Mormon household
where that was the focus of our lives. It was the fabric that held everything else
together.

  I think it's still so much a part of me. I cannot separate out the various strands
again; it's my connective tissue. (19)

The Mormon "connective tissue" shapes her understandings of history, place, family,
environment, and politics. Although Williams writes exclusively poetry and prose
nonfiction, she has more in common with, what Richard H. Cracroft refers to as, the
"faithless fiction" of Mormon novelists of the Lost Generation.  

Writing that critiques
Mormonism places Williams in a sometimes uncomfortable situation; she remarks, "One
of the curious situations I have found myself in as a writer is that outside of Utah, I am
seen as Mormon, whereas inside Utah I am seen as an 'edge walker,' an unorthodox
Mormon" ("Terry" 19). Her unorthodox nature comes from her willingness to reject
certain tenets of Mormon doctrine and theology, while adopting principles from other
religious traditions including Roman Catholicism, Buddhism, and various Native
American epistemologies. After Diane Dixon Tempest dies, Williams celebrates *el Día de los Muertos* in the village of Tepotzlán (Refuge 276-79). The poetry and philosophy of Saint Teresa de Ávila influence Williams's interpretation of Bosch's *El jardín de las delicias*. Thich Nhat Hahn, the Zen Buddhist monk from Vietnam, has informed many of Williams's recent ideas and writings on democracy and the environment, as she articulates them in *The Open Space of Democracy*. Next to Mormonism, the largest religious source for Williams's work is a variety of Native American epistemologies (e.g. Diné and Hopi). The stories of Diné children instruct her in *Pieces of White Shell: A Journey to Navajoland*, and the archaeological record left by the Fremont provide an example of how humanity can coexist with the rising and falling of the Great Salt Lake. Joanna Brooks argues

Indians—more dead than living—and Indianness do figure significantly in [Refuge] as the objects of ethnography and natural history. Williams participates in a long tradition of fantastic anthropology and primitivistic modernism by displacing questions of identity, authenticity, culture, custom, and survival onto indigenous peoples. Her purposes are self-protective: this strategy allows Williams to evade a direct interrogation of Mormonism. (298)

Williams's "playing Indian," according to Brooks, allows her to confront indirectly the problems of orthodoxy in Mormonism. As she questions Mormon patriarchy, demonstrates against nuclear testing at the Nevada Test Site, and defends free speech during the 2004 presidential election, Williams invokes the Native American trickster, Coyote.
Just as Williams's work defies easy categorization her environmental philosophy also resists clear and direct lines of influence. For critics like Elizabeth Dodd, Nathaniel I. Hart, John Nizalowski, and John Tallmadge, Williams follows Thoreau and Emerson, creating a neo-transcendentalism. Indeed, in her commencement address at the University of Utah on May 2, 2003, she revealed that her life changed when, after studying the American Romantics, she "realized, 'Yes, I am a Mormon, but I am really a Transcendentalist'" (Open 5). Yet, while Williams believes as Thoreau that humanity needs "the tonic of wildness" (205), and, like Emerson, that all of creation is "part or parcel of God" (6), her form of transcendentalism also recognizes that economic and population growth are inevitable, and that humanity must find the means to temper growth with preservation. In this way, Williams, like many other contemporary environmental writers, traces her development to the founders of the modern environmental movement. Mary Austin, according to Williams, "haunts me. I am intimidated by her. She is a presence in my life even though she has been dead over sixty years" (Red 165). When writing on behalf of wild places, Williams states, "I can honestly say it is Aldo Leopold's voice I continue to hear whenever I put pen to paper in the name of wildness" (Red 174). In her essay "One Patriot," Williams reveals that in the wake of September 11th and the larger cultural discussion of patriotism that followed, "no one looms larger in [her] mind than Rachel Carson" as the "model for a true patriot" (39). Edward Abbey, whom Williams believed was a true Coyote, inspired her and her Coyote Clan to "go forth with a vengeance" in defense of the desert winds, slickrock canyons, and open skies of the American West (Unspoken 73, 78). Each of these environmental influences use the written word to express their connection to wild places, but they are
also a clarion for ecological and political action—a call that Williams willingly and vigorously follows.

Environmental advocacy is, according to Williams, political, and her defense of the land, body, and spirit is evident not only in her writing but also in her actions. While she has served on the Governing Council of the Wilderness Society and was a member of the western team for the President's Council for Sustainable Development, she continues to sit on the advisory board of the National Parks and Conservation Association, The Nature Conservancy, and the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance. On March 4, 1991, Williams testified before the United States Congress concerning the Pacific Yew Act of 1991.\textsuperscript{43} Four years later, on July 13, 1995, Williams testified before Congress on the Utah Public Lands Management Act of 1995.\textsuperscript{44} While Williams's testimony before Congress on both occasions centered on environmental issues, her statements placed the environment in a more human context, demonstrating that the issues of land use and wilderness preservation reach far beyond evergreen forests and redrock.

In this new century, Williams has become more visible and prominent in her political and environmental writing and actions. After the election of President George W. Bush in 2000, Williams, along with the rest of the nation, saw the rolling back of many established environmental laws and policies, experienced the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and witnessed the ensuing invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq. These events have created what Williams describes as an "escalation of rhetoric" where "[o]ur language has been taken hostage. Words like patriotism, freedom, and democracy have been bound and gagged, forced to perform indecent acts through the abuse of slogans" (Open 2). She has worked closely with groups that advocate peace, social justice, and
democracy. The Orion Society, a grassroots organization whose "mission is to inform, inspire, and engage individuals and grassroots organizations in becoming a significant cultural force for healing nature and community" (OrionSociety.org), published Patriotism and the American Land (Williams contributed the chapter "One Patriot") and her most recent book, The Open Space of Democracy. She included the poem "Freedom of Speech" in an collection of eleven thousand poems, in opposition to the invasion of Iraq, that the poets Sam Hamill and W.S. Merwin presented to Congress on March 5, 2003. As a member of the women-initiated peace group Code Pink, Williams participated in a stationary demonstration in front of the White House on March 8, 2003, where she was subsequently arrested along with twenty-three other women including Alice Walker and Maxine Hong Kingston. She has also turned her attention to places and causes that are not uniquely American, working closely with 2004 Nobel Peace prize recipient Wangari Maathai (the first African woman and first environmentalist to win the award) and her Greenbelt Movement and traveling to Rwanda in 2005 to document the building of a memorial to the victims of the Rwandan genocide. While Williams's writing and advocacy has focused primarily on the American West, her more recent work encourages her audience to see themselves as being connected to a larger, global community. The violence, death, and destruction that accompanies terrorist attacks and conflicts in Iraq or Rwanda demonstrates the lack of connectedness that humanity has with one another but also their inability to see and preserve their links to the Earth. The complex, contextual framework that informs, surrounds, and appears in Williams's writing reveals the personal interconnectedness that she shares with her subject and with her reader. Her aesthetic presents the personal but advocates the
communal. Although Williams writes from the perspective of a Western, Mormon woman who has strong ties to the land, her broad contextual background allows for readers with different experiences and cultural worldviews to see how her value system matters in their lives and in their communities. The forms of violence may be different in Williams's life, but she argues that, whether the violence occurs through the use of pesticides, the drilling for gas and oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, the sacrificing of human, animal, and plant life for the sake of nuclear testing, or the suppression of basic human rights, they are symptomatic of a patriarchal culture that privileges the individual and breaks down the bonds that bind communities together. In order to solve the problems that exist at the beginning of the twenty-first century, according to Williams, one must start to understand that "[a] contract had been made and broken between human beings and the land" and "the fate of the earth [is our] own" (Refuge 288).

Throughout her body of work, Williams explicitly depicts how the fate of the land is connected to the fate of its inhabitants and specifically its female inhabitants. To facilitate this connection, Williams approaches the environment with a strong gynocentric worldview and genders the landscape feminine. Sherry Ortner argues that the common perception of woman being closer to nature than man can be found in the female body and its natural procreative functions (73). As Ortner suggests, Williams ties the body of Mother Earth to her own female body. She asserts oneness with the varying landscapes that surround her, maintaining "I am desert. I am mountains. I am Great Salt Lake" (Refuge 29) and finally declaring "I am Earth" (Leap 169). These simple, declarative statements of interconnectedness do not solely represent Williams's use of metaphor in
her writing but signal a clear ontological position. She insists that, like her, the land has both body and spirit. As the land experiences and feels, she experiences and feels. When hiking in the deserts of southwestern Utah, Williams experiences the same physical and emotional processes as the land:

Rain began—female rain falling gently, softly, as a fine mist over the desert. 

I felt innocent and wild, privy to secrets and gifts exchanged only in nature. I was the tree, split open by change. I was the flood, bursting through grief. I was the rainbow at night, dancing in darkness. Hands on the earth, I closed my eyes and remembered where the source of my power lies. My connection to the natural world is my connection to self—erotic, mysterious, and whole. (Unspoken 55-56)

In the desert canyons, landscape reminds Williams of who she is and follows the tradition of her Mother, who also "needed to get away, to be reminded by the desert of who I am and who I am not" (Refuge 136). While these declarations of oneness speak solely to Williams's understanding of her relationship with the natural world and all of its creatures, she extends this claim to all women.

In her essay "Undressing the Bear," found in An Unspoken Hunger, Williams uses the bear as a trope to explore and to illustrate the connections and similarities that exist between women and nature. She draws her examples from Greek mythology, (e.g. the Greek goddess Artemis, whose name means "bear" and the myth of Callisto and her placement in the northern sky as Ursa Major), Native American storytelling, contemporary Canadian fiction (e.g. Marian Engel's novel Bear), and her own stories of encounters with bears. The opening story of the essay tells of a returning soldier, at the end of World War II, who "could hardly wait to get back to the wilderness [. . .] and enact

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the ritual of man against animal" (Unspoken 51). He arrives in his native Wyoming in time for the fall hunting season:

A black bear crossed the meadow. The man fixed his scope on the bear and pulled the trigger. The bear screamed. [. . .] He walked over to the warm beast, now dead, and placed his hand on its shoulder. Setting his gun down, he pulled out his buck knife and began skinning the bear that he would pack out on his horse. As he pulled the fur coat away from the muscle, down the breasts and over the swell of the hips, he suddenly stopped. This was not a bear. It was a woman.

(51-52)

In relating this story, Williams firmly ties nature to the feminine, whereas the masculine stands outside of nature, intruding upon its meadows and forests and destroying its creatures. Like the bear, all women, Williams argues, have a "commitment to the wildness within—our instincts, our capacity to create and destroy; our hunger for connection as well as sovereignty, interdependence and independence" (53). For women to embrace nature, they embrace the feminine. As women embrace the feminine, patriarchal culture feels threatened, since, like the bears, "the fear of bears and the fear of women lies in [. . .] our refusal to be tamed, the impulses we arouse and the forces we represent" (58). Whether or not they adopt Williams's unique ontological perspective, women, she maintains, share fundamental similarities with the Earth, which makes their bodies and spirits one:

As women connected to the Earth, we are nurturing and we are fierce, we are wicked and we are sublime. The full range is ours. We hold the moon in our bellies and fire in our hearts. We bleed. We give milk. We are the mothers of
first words. These words grow. They are our children. They are our stories and our poems.

By allowing ourselves to undress, expose, and embrace the Feminine, we commit our vulnerabilities not to fear but to courage—the courage that allows us to write on behalf of the earth, on behalf of ourselves. (Unspoken 59)

The interconnectedness that women share with the land, Williams argues, provides them with a space that supports and asserts feminine identity and individuation, allowing women to become more erotic, mysterious, and whole.

Central to Williams's gendering of the landscape is the connection between the reproductive and erotic parallels that exist between the natural world and the feminine. She purposefully describes the earth as a sexual being and life-giving. In describing the sand dunes at the Fish Springs National Wildlife Refuge, Williams characterizes them as uniquely sexual and fertile, waiting for impregnation and birth:

There are dunes beyond Fish Springs. Secrets hidden from interstate travelers. They are the armatures of animals. Wind swirls around the sand and ribs appear. There is musculature in dunes.

And they are female. Sensuous curves—the small of a woman's back. Breasts. Buttocks. Hips and pelvis. They are the natural shapes of Earth. Let me lie naked and disappear. (Refuge 109)

Clearly, Williams sees and understands herself as a product and daughter of the earth's sexuality and birthing, and for her, the "umbilical cord between Mother and me has never been cut" (Refuge 53). Williams speaks of her relationship with her mother Diane Dixon Tempest in this passage, but the umbilical cord between her and the land has also not
been severed. Likewise, in Williams's womb, she feels "two heartbeats at once, my mother's and my own—[the heartbeats] are the heartbeats of the land" (Refuge 85). Mother Earth gives birth to the natural world, and Williams would have her reader understand that humankind is not a detached part of this landscape but a product, a child of the earth.

The land serves as a Mother to Williams, but just as significant is Williams considering the land to also be a sexual partner. The tradition of seeing the land as a motherly figure is, according to Maureen Devine, centuries old: "The images are easily available to us: nature as nurturing mother, the mother earth, virgin woods, images associated with the premodern organic world" (29). Cassandra Kircher claims that "by describing the Utah landscape as female, Williams uses metaphoric descriptions that fall in line with age-old accounts that objectify the land as woman, either virgin or mother" (159). Although she makes use of these readily available images and metaphors, Boyd Petersen, in examining Williams's short work Desert Quartet: An Erotic Landscape, argues that Williams pushes the relationship between the body and the landscape to its ultimate conclusion, asking "How might we make love to the land?" (95). Williams challenges her readers to see the erotic in nature and to create intimacy with the land.

The first section of the quartet describes Williams's experiences with the "Earth." While hiking through the slick-rock canyons of southern Utah, she squeezes through a tight opening between sandstone walls:

In some places my hips can barely fit through. I turn sideways, my chest and back in a vise of geologic time. I stop. The silence that lives in these sacred hallways presses me. I relax. I surrender. I close my eyes. The arousal of my
breath rises in me like music, like love, as the possessive muscles between my legs tighten and release. I come to the rock in a moment of stillness, giving and receiving, where there is no partition between my body and the body of the Earth. (10-11)

Williams suggests that interconnectedness with the land creates intimacy. In her case, this intimacy leads to sexual arousal and fulfillment. Similar passages of "making love" to the land appear in the other three sections ("Water," "Fire," and "Air") of Desert Quartet. Williams's ontological perspective insists that the land enacts more than the mother-figure but also presents itself as a generous lover.

As the earth creates and sustains life, while providing intimate and erotic experience, the land becomes a communal space where women are drawn together to find peace and understanding. In Refuge, Williams describes how her desire to become an environmentalist and an avid bird watcher was the result of a trip to the Bear River Refuge with the Audubon Society and with her grandmother Mimi. On this trip to watch birds, Williams came to the realization that her love for her grandmother was indelibly linked to their love of the land: "Our attachment to the land was our attachment to each other. The days I loved most were the days at Bear River. The Bird Refuge was a sanctuary for my grandmother and me" (15). This attachment that exists between the land and women is continually fostered throughout Williams's memoir. In each instance where the reader sees a group of women, the land is always centered in this community. While the Williams family gathers at the news of their mother's cancer, the women slowly move towards the garden, where they plant marigolds and work with the soil (34). As Williams recounts her trips to the Four Corners area, the Tetons, Mexico, and the
Wind River mountain range and her walks along the shores of the Great Salt Lake, one can see that these are opportunities for women to find renewal, largely outside the company of men. Diane Tempest, upon finding her tumor and learning of its malignancy, goes to the Grand Canyon because it is "a perfect place to heal" (23). In her darkest hours, as her mother lies dying, Williams turns to the land for the same healing and needful renewing:

I feel calm, having just returned from a brisk walk along the base of the foothills. The balm of fresh air; Great Salt Lake glistened on the horizon. The valley is in sharp focus, crystal clear. I am reminded that what I adore, admire and draw from Mother is inherent in the Earth. My mother's spirit can be recalled simply by placing my hands on the black humus of mountains or the lean sands of desert. Her love, her warmth, and her breath, even her arms around me—are the waves, the wind, sunlight, and water. (214)

Upon her mother's death, Williams finds her strength and solace in an isolated cave in the desert west of the Great Salt Lake. The cave, according to Williams, is a holy place, a "secret den of [. . .] healing," a place where she "is hidden and saved from the outside world" (237). In the womb of the earth, Williams is able to find the peace and refuge that her mother provided her in the surrounding natural world. Such love, however, is not exclusive, for in Williams's construction of the feminine landscape, Mother Earth is willing to pull all women into her love and warmth.

In a discussion with Edward Leuders and fellow nature writer Robert Finch about the biases that an author has and how they influence the writing of natural history, Williams acknowledges, "I write through my biases of gender, geography, and culture, that I am a
woman whose ideas have been shaped by the Colorado Plateau and the Great Basin, that these ideas are then sorted out through the prism of my culture—and my culture is Mormon" (41). Williams's depiction of the earth as a communal space, filled with peace, love, and intimacy, is largely devoid of men. In the landscapes and spaces of Refuge, Williams fills the pages with examples, images, and stories of women coming together to find refuge in the natural world. Lynn Ross-Bryant finds that Williams does not so much exclude men but rather attends to the important connections that exist between women and nature: "Her focus is on the nurturing continuation of life that has traditionally been called 'feminine'; and the importance of community is stressed, particularly the community of women, which is clearly set off from the world of men" (99). For example, as the women commune with the land and each other, men can be found "talking politics" or "figuring a bid" (161). After the death of their wife and mother, and while Williams continues to grieve in "a cave near the lake where water bubbles up from inside the earth [. . .] a holy place in the salt desert, where egrets hover like angels [. . .] my secret den of healing," the men of the family go "south for one year to lay pipe in southern Utah" (237-38). Throughout the memoir, Williams ties the health of the land to the health of her mother and the other women of her family. Despite the environmental awareness of some male members of her family and her male colleagues, men refuse to see their interconnectedness to the land but see it as another resource to be commodified and exploited.

While Williams recognizes and writes through her biases of "gender, geography, and culture" in Refuge, her exclusion of men from the natural world also signals her challenge to the mythology of the American West. In the distinctly Western landscapes
that appear in Williams's work and travel, the cultural values of self-reliance, self-
determination, and individuality are formed. Invariably, these values reflect a masculine,
Judeo-Christian value system. In her article "Sentimental Eco-Memoir: Refuge, Hole in
the Sky, and the Necessary Reader," Tara Penry argues that Williams believes the "family
and landscapes of home are [...] threatened by the western, masculine myth of conquest"
and that "Refuge represents women as uniquely vulnerable in a patriarchal culture, and
therefore as best suited to console and care for each other, and simply to identify with
each other's sentimental wounds" (341-42, 346). Williams addresses the western myth of
conquest as she describes the complexity of thought and feeling as President Bill Clinton
establishes the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument in southern Utah, saying "I
find myself standing among relatives and friends in a desert of cultural fear. In the
American West, we want to possess, to control, to remain sovereign [...] we are still
afraid of wildness: wild places, wild acts, wild thoughts" (Red 103). The threats that
women receive and the fear that women feel in a patriarchal culture result from men
forgetting from where they come. As the 2004 Nobel Peace Prize winner, Maathi,
explains to Williams, "[b]ecause we have forgotten our kinship with the land [...] our
kinship with each other has become pale. We shy away from accountability and
involvement. We choose to be occupied, which is quite different from being engaged"
(Refuge 137). Because of their lack of a physical and emotional connection with the
land, men cannot commune with nature and thus exploit it as the masculine, Western
tradition dictates.

Throughout the body of Williams's writing, men can be seen commodifying the
natural world and perceiving the earth as something to possess. In her first depiction of
men in *Refuge*. Williams relates a sad, yet humorous account, of the destruction of burrowing owl mounds for the sake of the Canadian Goose Gun Club:

The mound was gone. Erased. In its place, fifty feet back, stood a cinderblock building with a sign, CANADIAN GOOSE GUN CLUB. A new fence crushed the grasses with a handwritten note posted: KEEP OUT.

We got out of the car and walked to where the mound had been for as long as I had a memory. Gone. Not a pellet to be found.

A blue pickup pulled alongside us.

"Howdy." They tipped their ball caps. "What y'all lookin' for?"

I said nothing. Sandy said nothing. My eyes narrowed.

"We didn't kill 'em. Those boys from the highway department came and graveled the place. Two bits, they did it. I mean, you gotta admit those ground owls are messy little bastards. They'll shit all over hell if ya let 'em. And try and sleep with 'em hollering at ya all night long. They had to go. Anyway, we got bets with the county they'll pop up someplace around here next year. [...]"

I walked calmly over to their truck and leaned my stomach against their door. I held up my fist a few inches from the driver's face and slowly lifted my middle finger to the sky.

"This is for you—from the owls and me." (12-13)

Williams angrily stereotypes the three men as "rednecks" or "hillbillies," describing them as "beergut-over-beltbuckled men" (12). In her derision for the members of the Canadian Goose Gun Club, Williams points her middle finger more squarely at the patriarchal government, in this case, "those boys from the highway department" (12), who bulldozed...
down the owl burrows. Gun clubs replace burrowing owl nests so that men can have
their "hobbies" (Unspoken 98). Farmers drain wetlands around the Great Salt Lake in
order to extend their holdings and farmland. Suburban sprawl eliminates wilderness and
species habitat: "A backhoe. I [Williams] open the sliding glass doors and watch the
shovel's silver jaw rip into the Earth. Mother Earth. Another house is to be built" (204).
Williams argues that patriarchal cultural values are slowly killing the earth, commenting
in Leap, "We are slowly committing suicide. [...] The land is being stripped. Stripped
mined. Strip-searched. Gold-blooded murderers" (54). Individual recreation, personal
convenience, and corporate profits trump any responsibility that people or companies
have to the land.

While the men in Williams's family and her male colleagues display a certain level of
environmental awareness, they, too, participate in the killing and rape of the land. In
discussing his ambivalent relationship with the land, Williams's father concedes that "the
land, the water, the air, all have minds of their own" (Refuge 139) but justifies his desire
to receive the West Desert Pumping Project contract because the political and economic
institutions are too powerful: "It all comes down to dollars and cents" (Refuge 138).
Later in 1988, he rails against the "Endangered Species Act," which protects the
desert tortoise and stands in the way of the "[s]even miles of fiber optic cable running
from the town of Hurricane to St. George linking rural Utah to the Wasatch Front" (Red
86-87). Williams's uncle, Richard Tempest, complains that environmentalists care more
for the desert tortoise than they do for people, asking, "What do you kids want? To stop
progress? You and your environmentalist friends have lost all credibility" (88).
According to the men in Williams's family, the alteration and civilizing of the land is
essential for progress and economic stability; human needs and rights supersede those of
the natural world. Williams disputes this premise arguing that what people mistake for
needs and rights are confused with capitalist objectives. In discussing the elemental right
of freedom of speech in democratic cultures, Williams asserts that the well-being of a few
is not greater than the larger interconnected community of humanity and nature:

We have made the mistake of confusing democracy with capitalism and have
mistaken political engagement with a political machinery we all understand to be
corrupt. It is time to resist the simplistic, utilitarian view that what is good for
business is good for humanity in all its complex web of relationships. A spiritual
democracy is inspired by our own sense of what we can accomplish together,
honoring an integrated society where social, intellectual, physical, and economic
well-being of all is considered, not just the wealth and health of the corporate few.

(Open Space 86-87)

While progress may be a noble goal, Williams questions whether the cost will outweigh
benefit. Pumping the Great Salt Lake or laying fiber-optic cable will help people in the
short term but the potential, long-term damage to the land, flora, and fauna cannot be
adequately measured. Her family may prosper now, but, Williams argues, the larger
community may not.

Despite the limited examples of a positive, masculine presence on the land and the
frequent criticism that Williams's writings are essentialist and revert to tired dichotomies,
Williams does not suggest that only women are able to maintain a symbiotic relationship
with the natural world.; instead, she insists that both men and women must be stewards of
the land. A frequent criticism and complaint of Williams's environmental writing is her
proclivity in using a dualistic rhetoric that insists upon the man/culture and woman/nature parallels. Kircher describes *Refuge* as "simplistic" because she "relies [. . .] on prefabricated dualisms to structure her book, a decision that reveals an either/or sensibility on her part and a penchant for cliche" (159). In her examination of the importance of Mormonism in the construction of Williams's environmentalism and ontological perspective, Laura Bush argues, that instead of challenging the Western, masculine myth and its precursor, the Puritan pastoral tradition of American literature, "*Refuge* [. . .] perpetuates the idea of the Earth as gendered female. In other words, Williams's writing tends to reproduce cultural stereotypes of inherent difference between men and women, reflecting the mood of second wave feminism in which women are 'collectively undifferentiated' in their subordination to men" (Faithful 169). Mark Allister flatly claims, "It is difficult not to see Williams's views as essentialist" (73). Finally, Cheryll Glotfelty argues that, in *Refuge*, Williams "invents a literary art form consonant with Ecofeminist philosophy" (162). This "Ecofeminist aesthetic" as Glotfelty terms it, contributes to her overdependence on dualities:

Throughout *Refuge* Williams highlights, not the similarities, but the differences between men and women, privileging the special bonds that exist among women. With the exception of her male family members and friends, Williams depicts men as rather dense creatures who need to feel in control and whose motto is "dollars and cents." [. . .] I wish that invoking gender were done in the spirit of bridging differences rather than in exaggerating them. (165-66)

While such criticisms, especially of *Refuge*, appear valid, Williams's entire body of work expresses her desire to not "bridge differences" but to explode those differences.
Williams's reliance on dualities serves to starkly contrast the different attitudes that exist toward the land in contemporary American culture, yet she also wants her reader to understand how these simplistic structures create division between human beings and the natural world. Richard Hunt finds that the dichotomies in Refuge are "far from simple: as Williams uses them, they tend more to be corrective than divisive or oppositional. If 'men' have a poor connection with nature, Williams wants not to slap them but to offer them a means for adjustment" (186). Williams defends her use of the culture/nature and male/female dichotomies in an interview with Terre Satterfield and Scott Slovic, since they are rhetorical structures people use frequently and recognize easily: "I think [. . .] we're an incredibly dualistic society. It's black or white, it's this or that, it's you or me" (71). As a naturalist and a writer who argues for the interconnectedness of life, Williams's use of dichotomy to illustrate her ideas appears paradoxical, but in using this rhetorical strategy, Williams subverts staid modes of perceiving gender, geography, and culture. In discussing her environmental writing and work, as well as the work of other prominent women, Williams has said that she believes "it's very easy to say 'masculine' and 'feminine'," but the use of these labels are "extremely limiting" (Robinson 8). Critics who solely use feminist theoretical approaches to analyze Williams's work limit the possibilities and connections that Williams presents her audience. As a case in point, Glotfelty may read Refuge as an exemplar of Williams's "Ecofeminist aesthetic," Williams responds, in an interview with Joanna Robinson and Casey Walker, that she does not "know how ecofeminism is defined, or how the academy views these things" (Robinson 8). Indeed when discussing the "academy's" tendency to insist on theoretical and rhetorical categorization, Williams expresses her discomfort with such narrow
readings that perpetuate the myth that only "women act as intermediaries between the earth and human conduct":

I don't feel comfortable with these kinds of labels. They narrow our scope, confine our imagination to think beyond boundaries and borders. Although I'm very interested in feminist language, and the feminine critique and eco-feminism as an intellectual exercise, I find that in many ways that kind of writing, like so much of writing coming out of the academy, is removed from the body. When I hear, yes, women are caretakers of the earth, I think yes, in many ways we are but no, we cannot solely be seen in the nurturing role. It is limiting and ultimately unfair to both men and women. (Bartkevicius 11-12)

Instead of approaching gender, geography, and culture in such limiting terms, she acknowledges the dualities and then challenges them, which often requires her to embrace them. Williams argues that as humanity recognizes the dichotomies that permeate Western culture's epistemological underpinnings, the sooner humanity can evolve:

We are eroding.

We are evolving.

We are conserving the land and we are destroying it. We are living more simply and we are living more extravagantly. We are trying to live within the limits of arid country and we are living beyond the limits of available water. We live with a sense of humility and we live with a sense of entitlement. I hold these oppositions within myself. (Red 129)
Instead of advocating a more radical and aggressive position that holds the environment and its resources as inviolable, Williams understands the basic needs that humanity has for survival and prosperity. In arguing for environmental conservation and responsible development, Williams tells Leuders she is a "dichotomy" (59).

Like Williams, many of the men that appear in her work embrace the dualism inherent in their interaction with the land. The endangered species-status of the desert tortoise, which holds up her father's contract for laying fiber-optic cable in southern Utah, mirrors Williams's own perception of her father: "My father as an endangered species. The Marlboro Man without his cigarette is home on the range; I will list him as threatened by his own vulnerable nature. [...] My father, myself, threatened species" (Red 93). His business interests conflict with his desire to "remain sovereign against the political pull of the East," to live in "wild places," to commit "wild acts," and to keep "wild thoughts" (103). Furthermore, Richard Tempest, Williams's uncle and a Utah state senator, best illustrates how oppositions and dualities can be embraced. When first introduced to the reader in An Unspoken Hunger, Williams describes her uncle and his indifference towards the devastation of the land: "I love my uncle [...] A Mormon conservative. Republican. A complex and sophisticated man. He is known for speaking his mind. His voting record is erratic: he sponsored a tire-recycling bill and pushed clean-air legislation—but was against progressives on wilderness concerns and many social-reform bills" (98-99). Despite the inconsistencies in his voting record and his apathy towards more liberal environmental reforms, he accompanies Williams and his daughter and son-in-law to the International Mass Demonstration and Nonviolent Direct Action at the Nevada Test Site. After listening to an eclectic group of speakers, he joins
his family in protest. A Salt Lake City reporter and cameraman are surprised to find the 
staunchly conservative, Republican state senator at the protest. Tempest, on a request 
from the reporter to give a comment on the demonstration, surprises his family with his 
statement, as he recognizes his generation's importance in protecting the land for future 
generations:

    Our family has been ravaged by cancer. Like many Utahns, I have chosen to 
    ignore the facts surrounding radioactive fallout. I have just recently become a 
    grandfather. I want to leave my little granddaughter, Hannah, a more peaceful 
    world, if I possibly can. It was my generation who started this nuclear madness. 
    Maybe it's up to my generation to stop it. (106)

The inclusion of this encounter in An Unspoken Hunger disputes Allister's claim that 
Williams's work is "essentialist" and demonstrates how the individual, male or female, 
and the community must continue to transform, even as the natural world around them 
evolves.

    Williams implies that most men who have the power and the ability to effect change 
do not adapt, remaining largely indifferent to environmental issues. Most readers see the 
obvious attack Williams makes on patriarchal institutions, including the Utah state 
government, the United States government, and the Mormon Church. From the 
beginning of Refuge when "those boys from the highway department came and graveled"
the burrowing owl nests, Williams details the abuses and violations that the Utah state 
government commits against the Great Basin, the Colorado Plateau, and the Great Salt 
Lake. As the Great Salt Lake's water level quickly rises, threatening the Bear River 
Migratory Bird Refuge, Salt Lake International Airport, the Southern Pacific Railroad's
causeway, farm and pasture lands, and even downtown Salt Lake City, the Utah legislature works feverishly to find a way to disrupt the natural lake fluctuations, weighing five options to stem the rising waters: breach the Southern Pacific Railroad causeway, build a dam and store the water, divert the water, provide protective diking along the eastern shoreline of the Great Salt Lake, and pump the water into the West Desert (59-61). Each option, with taxpayer price tags ranging from $3,000,000 to $500,000,000 plus, intends to lessen the economic impact on the Salt Lake valley.

Williams questions the government's decision making process and their lack of caring or understanding for the environment: "Evidently, to do nothing is not an option" (61). After breaching the Southern Pacific Railroad causeway, which provides temporary relief from the flooding and restores "a small piece of Great Salt Lake's integrity" (78), the state legislature decides to undertake the West Desert Pumping Project. The idea of pumping water out of the lake and into the desert was not a new one; Brigham Young had originally thought of its possibility and the Army Corps of Engineers had investigated its feasibility in 1976 (60). None of these five options represent a willingness to create a symbiotic relationship with the Great Salt Lake environment. When Williams asks her father what would happen if the governor decided to let the lake follow its natural course, he explains that "[t]he pumping project is a way to bail out the salt and mineral companies, Southern Pacific Railroad, and a political career as well" (139). Governor Norm Bangerter assures his political career and cements his legacy by endearing himself to the railroad and industry with the economic windfall that the pumping project will create. The governor's project asserts patriarchal and cultural dominance over the lake when he exclaims, "We've harnessed the lake! [. . .] We are finally in control" to "The

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Elephant Club," a group of influential Utah Republicans, donors, and industry leaders. Economic and political considerations override the health and natural processes of the lake.

Williams's criticism of the United States government is much harsher because the act of violence it has committed affects not just the land but also the body and spirit of the men, women, and children in the Great Basin region. The most anthologized piece, and perhaps the most well-known, of Williams's writing is the final chapter of Refuge, "The Clan of One-Breasted Women." In this concluding chapter, Williams recounts what she believes to be a dream; however, the intense flash of light in the desert is a long-forgotten memory of an above-ground nuclear detonation at the Nevada Test Site. The cancer that has ravaged the women and men in her family now has a source:

It was at this moment that I realized the deceit I had been living under. Children growing up in the American Southwest, drinking contaminated milk from contaminated cows, even from the contaminated breasts of their mothers, my mother—members, years later, of the Clan of One-Breasted Women. (283)

The Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) chose the Nevada Test Site because the surrounding states had "low-use segments of the population." For Williams, the AEC ignored the beauty and importance of wild spaces, a common mistake made by eastern economic and political powerbrokers: "An empty spot on a map in the west means wild country. In the east, it simply means void of population" ("Landscape, People" 54). The spread of nuclear fallout covered the Great Basin and Colorado Plateau, exposing more than livestock to deadly levels of radiation. Testifying before the United States Congress, Richard Klausner, M.D., the director of the National Cancer Institute stated, "One of the
dark legacies of the above-ground nuclear tests was that 160 million Americans alive
during that period were, to varying degrees and unbeknownst to them, exposed to
radioactive fallout" (qtd. in Fradkin 241). The violent, atomic detonations in the Nevada
desert affected more than a few Americans but the entire American population living
between January 27, 1951 and July 11, 1962, creating what has come to be known as the
"American nuclear tragedy."

Despite the strong criticism of the United States government and its nuclear testing
policies and practices and the death and suffering they created, Williams does not address
the physically destructive toll that nuclear testing had on the landscape of the Nevada
desert and the Great Basin region. While the human cost of nuclear testing serves as an
American tragedy, the destructive force of nuclear weapons has forever changed and
scarred the land. The United States began their post-World War II atomic testing
program in the summer of 1946 with two test detonations taking place off the Bikini
Atoll in the Marshall Islands. Three more tests took place during the spring of 1948 at
Eniwetok Atoll, also in the Marshall Islands. With an intensification of the Cold War
between 1948 and 1950, Nelson E. Bradbury, director of the Los Alamos National
Laboratory argued that a more permanent and secure continental test site must be found
because of the "extremely difficult, time consuming, [and] expensive" journey to the
Pacific test site (qtd. in Fradkin 84). Initial considerations for the continental site were
the North Carolina coast between Cape Hatteras and Cape Fear and the Las Vegas
Bombing and Gunnery Range northwest of Las Vegas. Because of political and
economic complications, the AEC dismissed the feasibility of the North Carolina coast
and determined the Nevada location as the most suitable for testing since, as Bradbury
wrote Brigadier General James McCormack Jr., it was "empty desert. The population
problem was almost zero. It was already government property. It was close to sources of
technical supply. It was seventy-five miles from Las Vegas. Accessible by air.
Accessible by road" (qtd. in Fradkin 88). The AEC's selection of the Nevada Test Site,
and the prior safety and economic studies, ignored the large population centers of Las
Vegas and Tonopah, Nevada and St. George, Utah. With support from the Military
Liaison Committee, the State Department, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the National Security
Council, and the AEC, President Harry S. Truman approved the Nevada site for atomic
testing on January 10, 1951. The first above ground test took place at the Nevada Test
Site over Frenchman Flat on January 27, 1951. Between 1951 and 1992, the AEC
conducted 925 nuclear tests in Nevada, making the 1,350 square miles of the Nevada Test
Site the place where more nuclear weapons have been detonated than any other single
place in the world. Philip L. Fradkin notes that "[n]o other landscape in the Western
Hemisphere has been so irradiated by man," (23) and Richard V. Francaviglia argues that
"mankind must be added as the creator of igneous rocks—a direct legacy of the Cold
War" (196). This section of the Great Basin has been forever changed and depopulated;
it has become a place "pockmarked with craters from both regular ordnance and nuclear
weapons [...] set aside from the rest of America [...] a sacrifice zone" (Francaviglia
201). As radiation drifted offsite on the wind and in the ground water, it left a scarred
landscape behind.

Like the state and federal governments, leadership in the Mormon Church follows a
patriarchal model and does not escape Williams's criticism. Her critique of Mormon
attitudes and action towards the environment may not be so obvious to many readers.
Mormon positions toward environmental issues are ambivalent, which Williams tries to make clear. As some of the earliest Euro-American settlers in the West, Mormons have developed a connection with the harsh landscape that surrounded them. Mormon history is tied to the land, and the "character of the land [. . .] shaped the character of the people" (New Genesis viii). In her preface to a collection of essays on Mormonism and environmentalism, New Genesis: A Mormon Reader on Land and Community, Williams remarks that the great Mormon leader Brigham Young "preached sustainable agriculture and dreamed a United Order while allotting time in LDS general conference for talks on appropriate farming practices and community vitality in harmony with the land" (ix).

Indeed, Mormon history and mythology contains numerous accounts of the beneficence of the environment towards the Mormon people. Williams recounts the famed story of the California Gulls that swooped into the Salt Lake valley to aid the Mormons in their battle against a cricket infestation. Joseph Smith, the founder of the Mormon Church, exhorted the people to be kind to animals and to treat them with respect as they, too, were God's creatures:

Let them alone—don't hurt them! How will the serpent ever lose its venom, while the servants of God possess the same disposition, and continue to make war upon it? Men must become harmless before the brute creation, and when men lose their vicious dispositions and cease to destroy the animal race, the lion and the lamb can dwell together, and the sucking child can play with the serpent in safety.

(71)

In a later revelation, Joseph Smith, speaking for the Lord said, "For it is expedient that I, the Lord, should make every man accountable, as a steward over earthly blessings, which
I have made and prepared for my creatures. I, the Lord, stretched out the heavens, and built the earth, my very handiwork; and all things therein are mine" (Doctrine and Covenants 104.13-14). The current leader of the Mormon Church, Gordon B. Hinckley, has simply stated that the earth is God's creation, and "when we make it ugly, we offend him" (273). According to Mormon doctrine, being a good steward of the land and all its creatures is a commandment, but as Joseph Smith suggested in his admonition to his followers, only once men become good stewards will peace reign on the earth.

Williams acknowledges the rhetoric of the Mormon Church and their attempts to educate their people to respect the environment, yet she also finds that they have not done enough. Where Williams had earlier praised Brigham Young's progressive attitudes toward land management, she finds that, even with his environmental doctrines, the patriarchy came before the environment: "I don't know if Brigham Young ever ventured to Gunnison Island or observed the finely tuned society of pelicans. But had his attention been focused more on Earth than 'heaven on earth' his vision for managing the Saints in the Great Basin might have been altered" (Refuge 107). In modern times, Williams points to the lack of care that Hinckley gave to the prospect of flooding in the downtown Salt Lake area, questioning the need to let Mormon members leave their ecclesiastical duties and meetings on the Sabbath to help fill sandbags until he learned that the Mormon temple and church office complex were in danger (45). Williams notes how Marshall Massey's report "Where Are Our Churches Today? A Report on the Environmental Positions of the Thirty Largest Christian Denominations in the United States" concluded that the Mormon Church fell under the category of "Policies of Inaction—denominations formally committed to inaction" (qtd. in New Genesis ix). The teachings of Joseph Smith
have been supplanted with the pragmatism and progressive doctrine of Brigham Young. Where the Latter-Day Saints were a "peculiar" people in their communal nature and environmental ethic, Williams believes they have become more mainstream and capitalistic:

As Latter-day Saints, we [. . .] are honest, earnest, hard-working people, not people prone to roaming naked in gardens plucking fruit, eating berries, kneeling under trees, or searching for water with two quivering sticks. No, we can the fruit. Chop the trees. Do something useful, practical. Work. Don't dream. Take the beehive to heart and adopt it as a symbol of industry. As a people, my people, we have dropped the hand of Joseph and grasped the hand of Brigham who led us to the Promised Land, this land of little water, to organize, colonize, proselytize, and grow.

The pragmatism of Brigham Young is our religion now. Communal. Corporate. Mormon, Inc. There is little mystical about us. (Leap 144-45)

The replacement of mysticism with pragmatism originated with a cultural shift that favored obedience over independent thinking. In an interview with Tom Lynch, Williams laments the loss of a healthy moral code towards the land: "Unfortunately, much of this ethic has been lost as the Mormon Church has entered modernity. Like so many other facets of American culture it has assumed a corporate and consumptive stance with an emphasis on growth and business" ("Talking"). For Williams, the "price of obedience has become too high," and in that blind obedience the land and female body and spirit have suffered: "The fear and inability to question authority that ultimately killed rural communities in Utah during atmospheric testing of atomic weapons is the
same fear I saw in my mother's body. Sheep. Dead sheep. The evidence is buried" (Refuge 286). As Mormonism both invokes and repudiates environmental conservation, Williams is conflicted by what Bush calls, her "attempt both to promote and violate affiliations" ("Terry" 148). Williams wants to maintain her Mormon community, yet she also resists the constructions of femininity they force upon her.

In many regards Williams's attempt to negotiate the place of Mormonism in her own life is the more important issue, and she follows the same patterns that she uses in her treatment and gendering of the natural world. Williams questions ascribed gender roles in Mormon culture and then demonstrates how Mormon patriarchy may be feminized. The primary manner that she accomplishes the gendering of the Mormon patriarchy is by demonstrating how women have and can utilize the same priesthood power as men. At the age of twelve years old, all Mormon males are offered the opportunity to receive the holy priesthood of God, giving them the authority and power to act in God's name. Priesthood holders perform a wide variety of tasks through the use of this power; they give blessings of healing, perform the rites of the holy sacrament, baptize new members, officiate at meetings, excommunicate wayward members, etc. The Mormon hierarchy does not give this privilege to its female members, and the illicit practice of such rites by women may result in disfellowshipment or excommunication. Rather, Mormons view the woman's role of wife and mother as her true calling, deeming motherhood to be equally as important as priesthood power. This belief has largely become cultural, but its roots can be found in doctrine. John A. Widstoe, a member of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles, taught that while righteous Mormon men hold the priesthood "woman has her gift of equal magnitude—motherhood" (qtd. in Newell 140). At a meeting on the campus
of Brigham Young University in 1966, Mormon writer Rodney Turner delivered an address titled "Woman and the Priesthood." In his remarks, he argued that "A woman, in the highest sense, [is] not a woman if she is not a mother" (qtd. in Newell 141). Where women are discouraged from questioning authority and the right to bear the holy priesthood, they are encouraged to marry young, as Williams did at the age of nineteen, and "multiply and replenish the earth" with children. This fact is born out as Williams's mother questions her daughter's refusal to bear children:

"I don't ever remember being so happy, Terry. Having a child completed something for me. I can't explain it. It's something you feel as a woman connected to other women."

She paused.

I asked her if she thought my life was selfish without children.

"Yes," she said. (51)

Williams is clearly unhappy with the role that the Mormon patriarchy has given her. She is not allowed the same privileges accorded her father, brothers, or husband, and she is relegated to having children. She is repeatedly questioned by Mormon ecclesiastical authorities for her refusal to conform to the patriarchal ideal. In a letter from a Mormon General Authority that she calls "'Ode to the Gene Pool,' a manipulation of theology, personalized, tailorized to move me toward motherhood," Williams receives direct counsel to procreate:

"A female bird," he wrote to me, "has no options as to whether she will lay eggs or not. She must. God insists. Because if she does not a precious combination will be lost forever. One of your deepest concerns rests with
endangered species. If a species dies out its gene pool will be lost forever and we are all the lesser because of the loss. [...] The eggs you possess over which your husband presides are precious genes. [...] You are an endangered family."

I resist. (Red 93-94)

For Williams, the male priesthood is another manner by which the patriarchy may keep women in their place.

Where Williams finds support and comfort in the environment and in the community of Mormon women, she challenges the Mormon constructions of femininity and womanhood. Though many critics have discerned the importance of Williams's connection to Mormonism, few have been able to see the manner and extent to which Williams genders the Mormon patriarchy. Kircher argues that Williams links women to "non-destructive institutions, such as the Utah Museum of Natural History and the Mormon church, which offers women a valuable community within a patriarchal framework" (161). Furthermore, Kircher believes that "Williams rarely depicts women overtly challenging church protocol" (162). Similarly Tallmadge contends that Williams maintains an "inner spirit of independence and integrity while observing the decorum of Mormon culture" (203). Kircher and Tallmadge are not, in what Bush calls, the "Mormon know" ("Terry" 147). Kircher's and Tallmadge's assertions could not be further from the truth. In a highly symbolic passage at the beginning of Leap, Williams describes the Sunday morning after her baptism at the age of eight. Following her baptism, priesthood holders confirm her as a new member and bestow on her the gift of the Holy Ghost by the "laying on of hands": "The following Sunday, I wished I had not worn the white headband to keep my bangs out of my eyes. Even before the
confirmation began, the weight of the men's hands on top of my head was forcing the plastic teeth to bite into my scalp. [...] The pressure of the warm hands on my head increased" (10). This important and sacred ritual is not one of celebration for Williams but an early lesson of the pain and pressure that she will feel as a Mormon woman. Refuge should be read as an overt act of patriarchal disobedience, while Leap functions as Williams's "interrogation of faith" (5).

One begins to see how Williams challenges the patriarchy in her relationship and conversations with her mother. After gathering the Dixon and Tempest families together for the news of Diane Tempest's ovarian cancer, the male priesthood holders of the family gather around her and give her a blessing of healing. With the men of the family forming a tight circle and placing their hands on Williams's mother's head, one begins to see the space that separates men from women in the Mormon Church. After this formal blessing, however, Diane Tempest takes her daughter into the privacy of her room, and "with my hands on my mother's belly, I prayed" (35). Although Williams's blessing does not follow the stringent ritual that the males had performed, the blessing signals her desire to bless the women of her life and presages more overt actions on her part. As Diane Tempest's cancer worsens and all medical remedies have failed, not having found relief from the blessing performed by her husband, Diane asks her daughter to perform the blessing:

I open the shutters, so Mother can see the clouds. I return to her bedside. She takes my hand and whispers, "Will you give me a blessing?"
In Mormon religion, formal blessings of healing are given by men through the Priesthood of God. Women have no outward authority. But within the secrecy of sisterhood we have always bestowed benisons upon our families.

Mother sits up. I lay my hands upon her head and in the privacy of women we pray. (158)

The male priesthood is taken and used for the construction of feminine unity. Williams's actions here are certainly grounds for disciplinary actions by the Church, and certainly the Mormon hierarchy and many members of the Mormon Church, including women, would find this passage highly offensive and sacrilegious. Williams's blessing signals her opposition to "blind obedience in the name of patriotism or religion" (286).

In another example, after Williams and her mother attend mass at the Abbey of Our Lady of the Holy Trinity at the Huntsville Monastery, they further challenge the patriarchy of the Mormon Church. Williams and her "Mother [. . .] break bread for the geese," symbolizing the preparation and administration of the Lord's sacrament (Refuge 193). Williams more explicitly acknowledges the purpose of her act when she describes an old woman, who comes every morning to the Prado Museum to administer to flocks of pigeons, performing the same act:

An old woman dressed in a turquoise sweater and a black skirt with black stockings and shoes is breaking bread for the pigeons. There must be fifty pigeons cooing and circling around her. I see her every morning. She finishes her sacrament for the birds and always leaves with a couple of loaves under her arms. (Leap 13)
The preparation, administering, and blessing of the Holy Sacrament is one of the first duties and responsibilities for new priesthood holders. Typically, deacons, teachers, and priests, who range in age from twelve to eighteen, carry out this task. Young women and women of the Mormon Church may take of the sacrament, but they are merely spectators to the ritual. Similar to the blessing that she gives to her mother, Williams defies the Mormon patriarchy and performs her own similitude of the sacrament. As the old woman feeding the pigeons in front of the Prado knows, and as Williams suggests to the reader, the Lord's sacrament is for all of His creatures and not the sole realm of men. In performing these "faithful transgressions" as Bush has termed them, Williams makes herself "a member of a border tribe among [her] own people" (286), yet in defying patriarchal authority, giving blessings of healing, and administering the sacrament, she has reinforced her understanding of a community of women, linked to one another, and linked to the environment.

In the epilogue to Pieces of White Shell: Journey to Navajoland, Williams characterizes her writing and storytelling as "an act of faith" (145), linking her art to spirituality and belief. As a woman, writer, and Mormon who has seen the family and the land that she love be exploited and systematically destroyed, Williams's critique of Western patriarchal cultural values comes with an insistence on faith, which, according to the Book of Mormon leads to hope and charity:

[I]f a man have faith he must needs have hope; for without faith there cannot be any hope.[... ] I [God] say unto you that he cannot have faith and hope, save he shall be meek, and lowly of heart. [... ] and if a man be meek and lowly in heart [... ] he must needs have charity. And charity suffereth long, and is kind, and
envieth not, and is not puffed up, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, and rejoiceth not in iniquity but rejoiceth in the truth, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, if ye have not charity, ye are nothing, for charity never faileth. Wherefore, cleave unto charity, which is the greatest of all [...] (Moroni 7.42-45)

Williams urges all people, men and women, Republican and Democrat, Mormon and non-Mormon, to cultivate faith and hope, which she defines as "the belief in our capacity to create meaningful lives" (Leap 264). Learning from those who challenged and subverted hegemonic cultural values and institutions, like Hieronymus Bosch and Joseph Smith, encourages people "[t]o seek: to embrace the questions, be wary of answers" and builds faith and hope (264). With faith and hope, charity springs forth and counters the patriarchal violence perpetrated upon the feminine. Williams demonstrates that through faith, hope, and charity humanity can restore its balance with the land and each other:

Something is terribly wrong, out of balance. [...] For those of us who choose to live in the outback of mainstream America—surely those of us who live in Utah qualify—we choose to believe that voices on the margin have always exerted pressure on the center. Listening is required. Belief and hard work are seen as allies. Suddenly dialogues spring forth like water bubbling up in the desert. And a community rises to the call of its members. We did it during the floods of 1983 when the Great Salt Lake was rising and State Street turned into a river. We did it again when Elizabeth Smart was kidnapped from her own home and thousands of volunteers took to the hills in search of a missing child and never gave up hope.
And we will do it again as the next situation of adversity reveals itself. ("Utah"
440)

Williams calls on all of humanity to show charity and come to the aid of all of its
members, both human and non-human. Williams's body of work demonstrates a
thoughtful criticism of patriarchy and its interaction with and indifference toward the land
and the feminine, but her writing is more than an environmental tract or a personal
memoir; it is an act of faith that change may be affected in her culture and heritage.
CHAPTER 5

"DEEP IN HIS VIOLENT AND IRRITABLE AND RESTLESS BLOOD": DEFILING THE FEMININE AND THE FALLACY OF "REGENERATION THROUGH VIOLENCE"

In her examination of the Western and its place in the literary canon, West of Everything: The Inner Life of Westerns, Jane Tompkins professes her affection for this genre, whether it is found in film, television, or literature: "I make no secret of the fact. I love Westerns. I love to hear violins with clip-clop of hooves behind them and see the cactus-punctuated sky spread out behind the credits. When the horses pound toward the camera and pull up in a cloud of dust, my breath gets short" (3). Like Tompkins, most Americans have grown up surrounded by Western American images, films, and books. These forms of media and the ideals they engender have continued the process of shaping an American ethos. John G. Cawelti argues that "[o]f all the major popular genres, the western is the one which most expresses some sense of the uniqueness of the American experience and identity" (884). He indicates that the "West as region is one of those themes, which is mentioned in almost every significant discussion of the western hero as archetypal American or of the western landscape as a uniquely American setting" (884). Tompkins finds the influence of western media and ideals to be more pointed: "[W]hat is most interesting about Westerns at this moment in history is their relation to gender, and
especially the way they created a model for men who came of age in the twentieth century. The model was not for women but for men: Westerns insist on this point by emphasizing the importance of manhood as an ideal" (17). Much of American literature, and by extension Western American literature, has insisted on the pre-eminence of masculine identity in the shaping and defining of the New World landscape, commercial and industrial praxis, and governmental institutions and policies. The hegemonic culture establishes the primacy of masculinity in the American ethos by suppressing and subjugating the feminine. This process is violent. The writings of Frank Norris, Sarah Winnemucca Hopkins, and Terry Tempest Williams demonstrate, investigate, and repudiate the systems of violence that prop up masculinity and threaten femininity.

Frank Norris's personal character and literary work embodies the concern for and reassertion of American manhood at the end of the nineteenth-century. The anxiety and atavism experienced by men at the close of the century, a result of the continuing industrialization of the United States and the emerging globalization of the American economy and populace, renewed and ingrained the romanticized Western hero as the masculine ideal. Norris's essays make an appeal to other writers to remember the forgotten Western hero and to create the American epic, but his most important works (i.e. McTeague, The Octopus, and The Pit) do not embrace his own charge. Because of his familiarity with and reliance on naturalism and social determinism, Norris instead portrays the American man as lost in an industrial, urban, and effete environment (e.g. McTeague, Anniixter, and Curtis Jadwin); his only means of escape and renewal come through a violent suppression of femininity and an adoption of the romanticized and
idyllic Western hero. Norris legitimizes this violence because of the primacy of manhood in American history, literature, and culture.

The long tradition of equating the natural world with the feminine, which by extension casts indigenous people living in the New World as feminine, places masculinity in opposition to the land and the Native Americans who live upon it. Norris's fiction excludes the presence of Native peoples from the California landscape at the end of the nineteenth-century, seeing them as a conquered people that have "vanished" before the violent hand of American masculinity. Winnemucca's Life Among the Piutes, while published sixteen years prior to McTeague and eighteen years before The Octopus, challenges the assumptions of Euro-American cultural colonists and shows that the Northern Paiute have not "vanished" but are still here. The processes of masculine violence in Norris's fiction are present in Winnemucca's work as well, but Winnemucca demonstrates that violence against the feminine is not isolated but systemic; the consequences of violating and brutalizing the feminine do not affect only individuals (e.g. Trina McTeague, Maria Macapa, or even Vanamee) and families (e.g. the Derricks and the Hoovens), but affect an entire nation and race of people. While the great tide of wheat flowing from the San Joaquin valley, the product of masculine violence and rape, may feed and save the lives of millions in the nations of Europe and Asia, the same agenda of violence destroys nations in the Americas.

Terry Tempest Williams exposes the dangers that arise when patriarchal institutions invoke progress as the end to justify violent means. As the literature of the American West and other forms of media exalt the Western hero as the ideal representation of American identity and masculinity, they divide man from woman, placing them in states
of opposition. Equally important is the separation of man from nature and the resultant conflict this binary creates. Like Norris, Williams genders the landscape of the American West feminine and extols the generative and restorative powers of the earth. Williams, however, challenges the dualities of man/woman and culture/nature even as she employs them, and, contrary to Norris's construction of man's relation to the earth and to the feminine, she advocates the interconnectedness of all natural elements, whether geological, floral, faunal, or human. Williams argues for an ontological existence that centers humanity in a history and a culture of place. Her suggestions for healing and wholeness are reminiscent of the ontological and epistemological positions of tribal peoples, which Winnemucca exhibits throughout *Life Among the Piutes*; yet, in appropriating a Native American worldview, Williams participates in the same violence that she decries in *Refuge: An Unnatural History of Family and Place* and *Leap*. In order to demonstrate the interconnectedness of all people with the land, she participates in the erasure of tribal, communal, and cultural identities, a form of violence of whom she finds the Mormon Church guilty, as they limit and define the roles of appropriate expression for women.

Norris, Winnemucca, and Williams are only three Western American writers whose work is representative of the ongoing campaigns to assert masculinity and of the challenges to the systematic use of violence against the feminine. Further critical readings of Western American writers Willa Cather, John Steinbeck, and Wallace Stegner would further add layers of complexity and create new avenues for exploring the issue of violence against the feminine. A reading of Wallace Stegner's body of work, a writer who many, including Joseph M. Flora, call the "dean of Western writers," offers
one of the more complex critical explorations of the role of the feminine in the American West and in its literature (836). Much of Stegner's writing is largely autobiographical including his first major commercial and literary success *The Big Rock Candy Mountain* (1943). In this cathartic novel, Stegner attempts to reconcile his feelings about the transient nature of his childhood, the abusiveness of his "rainbow-chasing" father, and the submissiveness of his altruistic mother. Of the expected literary and cultural conventions to situate masculinity at the heart of Western American literature and to relegate the feminine to the margins, Stegner, in his essay "Letter, Much Too Late," writes to his mother about the attempt he made to privilege her story and the regret he feels for failing her in this regard:

In the more than fifty years that I have been writing books and stories, I have tried several times to do you justice, and have never been satisfied with what I did. The character who represents you in *The Big Rock Candy Mountain* and *Recapitulation*, two novels of a semiautobiographical kind, is a sort of passive victim. I am afraid I let your selfish and violent husband, my father, steal the scene from you and push you into the background in the novels as he did in life.

(24)

Stegner's life and literature is replete with masculine violence against the feminine, and he confesses his inability to protect his mother from his abusive father as a child and to protect her from himself in his own writing. Unlike Norris, Stegner does not revel in masculinity nor does he condone the violence committed against the land and the women who live upon it. Some critics, like Krista Comer, accuse Stegner of producing literature that "theorized western literature in terms of an implicit masculine norm" and "permitted
no space for thinking about misogyny, male privilege, a restrictive gendered division of labor, or the institutional structures (law, education, religion, family) that house and enforce gender difference," but they fail to see his strong indictment of Western American masculinity and individualism (21). While he condemns the men who destroy their environments in the name of profit and progress and violently abuse women physically, emotionally, and spiritually, he also offers alternative examples. Stegner counters the violence of Bo Mason in *The Big Rock Candy Mountain*, who brutalizes the land, his children, and his wife Elsa with the compassion of Sid Lang in *Crossing to Safety* (1987), who understands and appreciates the independence of his dying wife Charity, despite his desire to have greater intimacy and interdependence with her. Stegner resists and confronts the American mythos of masculine regeneration through violence so prominent in the works of other western writers like Frank Norris. He denounces and subverts the dominant culture's idyllic representation of masculinity, the Western hero, whose brutality runs "deep in his violent and irritable and restless blood," as he subjugates and violates the feminine (*Big Rock* 163).

Readers and audiences have come to expect violence in Western film, television programs, and literature. Indeed, in recent years, filmmakers and writers have ratcheted up the graphic violence in films like John Hillcoat's *The Proposition* (2005) and in novels like Cormac McCarthy's *Blood Meridian* (1992), which initially shocks their consumers but eventually sates their appetite. The expectation and overload of violence anaesthetizes audiences and readers to the environmental, physical, and spiritual impact of violence and glosses over its very real consequences. Frank Norris, Sarah Winnemucca Hopkins, and Terry Tempest Williams each examine the implementations
and the ramifications of violence against the feminine in Western American literature. A critical reading of their work exposes the cultural and historical origins of violence against the feminine in all of its manifestations and more importantly reveals that the violation and destruction of the feminine is the violation and destruction of the self.
Chapter 1: Introduction: Masculine "Might Makes Right": The Historical and Cultural Contexts of Violence Against the Feminine in Western American Literature

In attempting to define "wilderness," Roderick Nash argues that the term belies "a deceptive concreteness at first glance," but that while "wilderness" is a noun, it acts more like an adjective. As a result, the term "designates a quality (as the '-ness' suggests) that produces a certain mood or feeling in a given individual and, as a consequence, may be assigned by that person to a specific place" (1). The malleable and subjective nature of the term allows writers to apply it liberally to different places and/or environments, as well as substituting alternative words in its place. In following the contemporary usage of nature writers like Terry Tempest Williams, the term wilderness is used interchangeably with land, landscape, earth, nature, etc.

The "New Western History," as it has come to be termed, seeks to reexamine the tenets of Turner's frontier thesis and to provide an alternative rubric for conducting Western history. Donald Worster articulates the "New Western History" project against the previously accepted imperialist history of the West:

What was missing was a frank hard look at the violent, imperialistic process by which the West was wrested from its original owners and the violence by which it had been secured against the continuing claims of minorities, women, and the forces of nature. That capacity for violence may be inherent in all people, but
when it showed its ugly face among the respectable and the successful it was
called "progress," "growth," "the westward movement," "the march of freedom,"
or a dozen other euphemisms—and it was time historians called such violence and
imperialism by their true names. (11-12)

Other dominant voices in the "New Western History" movement include William Cronon
and Richard White.

3 In her study of the rhetorical choices and strategies European writers used to relate
their experiences traveling among non-European peoples and cultures, Imperial Eyes:
Travel Writing and Transculturation, linguist Mary Louise Pratt labels the spaces where
disparate cultures meet the "contact zone." In The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and
Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815, historian Richard White advances the
term "middle ground" to describe a space, similar to Pratt's "contact zone," yet White
focuses more acutely not on the space but on the process of mutual, cultural exchange.
See Mary Louise Pratt, Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation (London:
Routledge, 1992) and Richard White, The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and

4 The Spanish, Portuguese, and French expressed alternative understandings of
wilderness than the English. All European colonial interests were economic and political,
yet the Puritans, unlike Roman Catholic colonists, saw the New World as a tableau on
which they could establish "New Canaan." This imaging of the wilderness became the
dominant typology of American mythology and self-representation.

5 St. Augustine's distinction between the "visible" and the "incredible" Church can be
seen in City of God, where he discusses the presence of false Christians in the Church:
She [the Church or the City of God] must bear in mind that among these very enemies are hidden her future citizens; and when confronted with them she must not think it a fruitless task to bear with their hostility until she finds them confessing the faith. In the same way, while the City of God is on pilgrimage in this world, she has in her midst some who are united with her in participation in the sacraments, but who will not join with her in the eternal destiny of the saints. (45).

The "visible" church exists in the temporal world and attempts to recreate the "invisible" church, which exists on an eternal plane. Augustine arrives at this philosophy after interpreting Plato's idealism—the assertion that a permanent realm exists where all forms are eternal and thus give shape to the material forms in the mortal world—and providing it with a Christian context.

6 The Puritan idea of the "visible" church, or City of God, appears in many other forms and texts. Thomas Morton, as the title of his promotional tract New English Canaan suggests, sold the American landscape as the new "promised land" and cast English colonists as modern Israelites. In his sermon "A Model of Christian Charity," John Winthrop signaled to the other Puritans on the Arbella that the community they would found "shall be a city upon a hill," echoing the words of Jesus Christ in the "Sermon on the Mount" (244): "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house" (Matthew 5.14-15). In "The Redeemed Captive Returning to Zion," John Williams describes his captivity by first the Mohawks and later by the French and his later release and return as a metaphor for the
righteous man wandering lost in the wilderness only to be redeemed and returned to God's presence. The trope of New England as God's newly sanctified realm is pervasive in the Puritan rhetorical tradition and is instrumental in how Puritans perceived their presence in the American wilderness.


8 Tribal peoples prefer to be identified by their tribal names; however, when referencing all tribal peoples, regardless of tribal affiliation, scholars generally use the appellations "Native Americans," "American Indians," "Native peoples," "indigenous peoples," and "Indians" interchangeably.

9 Mary Lawlor identifies a similar quality in the way American naturalists cast the West. Rather than constructing the West in the long-standing tradition of their Romantic predecessors, who saw the land as a open space full of opportunity and freedom, naturalists like Norris, Crane, and London depicted the frontier as confining and limiting. See Mary Lawlor, Recalling the Wild: Naturalism and the Closing of the American West (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers UP, 2000).

10 The term "spiritual violence" has been traditionally used to describe the imposition of or the prohibition against a religion on a group of people (e.g. the repression of Roman Catholicism in England under Henry VIII, Elizabeth I, and James I). Today, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) movements have adopted the term, defining it as "the misuse of religion to sanction the condemnation and rejection of any of God's
children" ("Soulforce"). In this dissertation, the term "spiritual violence" incorporates the traditional use, but also implies the violence religion uses to subjugate women and to maintain patriarchal hierarchy.

Chapter 2: "So Violent As to Be Veritably Brutal": Rape Fantasies in Frank Norris's McTeague and The Octopus

11 In Frank Norris: A Life, authors Joseph R. McElrath Jr. and Jesses S. Crisler recount how Norris's first novel, Yvemelle, was displayed at the 1893 Chicago World's Columbian Exposition in an exhibit displaying the literary accomplishments of California writers. His inclusion in the exhibit was undoubtedly helped by his mother, who was a member of the selection committee. Norris, himself, did attend the festivities at the Exposition in June 1893 but left at the end of the month before Turner gave his famous thesis.


13 For a more detailed discussion of the Zola's and LeConte's influences on Norris, see McElrath and Crisler 110, 123-25.

14 French is not the only critic to note the elements of Transcendentalism in Norris's work, especially in The Octopus, see Robert E. Morsberger, "The Inconsistent Octopus," Western American Literature 16.2 (1981): 105-13.
Jacobson notes that, as nineteenth-century American Naturalism attempts to explain abnormal psychological behavior because of heredity and environment, the field of psychiatry had begun to clinically define certain forms of abnormal behavior including obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), which was first diagnosed in 1877 by Carl Westphal, a professor of psychiatry in Berlin. Obsessive-compulsive disorder, Jacobson argues, manifests itself in the behavior patterns of McTeague, Trina, Zerkow, and Maria. For Jacobson, such obsessive and compulsive behaviors render these characters incapable of controlling their emotional and physical responses to the stresses in fin de siècle San Francisco and give a concrete label to the naturalistic tendencies Norris ascribes his characters.

Herbert does not argue that this second sexual assault constitutes rape only that the "rapist fantasy completes itself" (137). Trina's initial repulsion of his "primordial virility" and later resignation to it confirms to McTeague that she secretly wants to be raped. McTeague's initial rape of Trina, Herbert contends, occurs on their wedding night: "After the elemental rape that enlivens the wedding night, their sexual relationship quickly degenerates into a saccharine routine, since there remains nothing for McTeague to conquer" (137). Herbert in his brief examination of McTeague does not discuss the murder of Trina nor the possibility that McTeague raped her before killing her.

James D. Hart, who collected and edited the student themes Norris wrote while at Harvard, argues that "Theme 23" "is reworked in Ch. XVI of McTeague" (79), and while a reading of "Theme 23" as the primary source for Chapter XVI is consistent, textual elements from this theme also appear in Chapter XIX. Norris writes in Chapter XIX just prior to Trina's murder, "and all at once sent his fist into the middle of her face with the
suddenness of a relaxed spring" (205). The phraseology found in the final text echoes the same wording found in "Theme 23": "[H]e brought her down with a blow of his immense bony fist between the eyes" (qtd in McElrath and Crisler 164). More convincing, however, is Norris's use of the phrase "and then it was abominable" (qtd. in McElrath and Crisler), which he uses only after describing the commencement of McTeague's beating of Trina, "Then it became abominable" (206). What goes beyond mere brutality and becomes "abominable" is McTeague raping Trina. A careful reading and analysis of the phraseology found in the novel and "Theme 23" suggest that McTeague raped Trina prior to killing her in Chapter XIX.

Native peoples also contributed to the abuse and mistreatment of the land after the arrival of European colonists. Colin G. Calloway, in his history of the early relations between colonist and Native American, finds that the Abenaki people in New England had almost decimated the entire beaver population by 1723 in order to trade their skins to European merchants. The French Jesuit missionary Sebastian Rasies notes that the Abenaki "have so destroyed the game of their country that for ten years they have no longer either elks or deer. Bears and beavers have become very scarce" (qtd. in Calloway 15). During the 1750s, over one hundred thousand pounds of deerskins were shipped to England with most of the skins coming through trade with local native populations (16). Other studies of the ecological impact that European colonization and the subsequent Native American responses include William Cronon, Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England (New York: Hill and Wang, 1983) and Carolyn Merchant, Ecological Revolutions: Nature, Gender, and Science in New England (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989).
Berte's assertion that The Octopus repudiates American imperialism and conceptualizes a global geography, where all peoples are included in a "modern citizenship" does little to address the racist and ethnocentric rhetoric found in all of Norris's writing including The Octopus. Instead of examining Norris's xenophobia, especially as it pertains to his understanding of naturalism or evolutionary idealism, and how immigrants in America comprised a part of his "vision of global citizenship," Berte inexplicably gives Norris a pass, arguing that the author "challenges narrow ideas of localism, regionalism, and urbanism that dominated literature and culture not only at the turn of the twentieth century, but also in our own cultural moment" (221).


In a letter to the editor of Western American Literature in January 1983, Glen A. Love, another Norris scholar, credits Jolly's textual comparisons between Vandover and the Brute and The Octopus but strongly disputes Jolly's conclusion that Vanamee is Angèle's rapist. In arriving at this conclusion, Jolly ignores the fact that Vanamee would then be both father and lover to Angèle's daughter. As Love explains, "Given Norris's personal and fictional adherence to gentlemanly codes, would he create a monster to carry the philosophical and moral meaning of the novel, as does Vanamee, whose upbeat sentiments close the book? Would Norris give center stage to a character whose moral progress is—if he is indeed the rapist—from abhorrent to unspeakable?" ("Letter"). For

Chapter 3: Captivity, Rape, and Cannibalism: White Male Violence in Sarah Winnemucca Hopkins's Life Among the Piutes

21 Although Sarah Winnemucca Hopkins included her married name on the title of her text to appease a readership and audience that was largely comprised of White, married Protestant women, who would look more favorably on her and her people if she were married, she is most commonly referred to without her married name in critical studies of her life and work.


23 Several biographies of Winnemucca have been produced during the past thirty years. Gae Whitney Canfield's Sarah Winnemucca of the Northern Paiutes (1983) provides a historical record of Winnemucca's life constructed with the use of contemporary newspaper accounts and government documents. Dorothy Nafus Morrison's Chief Sarah: Sarah Winnemucca's Fight for Indian Rights (1991) focuses largely on what Morrison perceives as Winnemucca's position as chieftain among the Northern Paiutes. Sally Zanjani's Sarah Winnemucca (2001) recounts her subject's life
with emphasis on how Winnemucca constructs herself as a Northern Paiute and as a woman, who challenges the White construction of Native American feminine identity.

"Kuyuidika-a" translates relatively to "cui-ui Eaters." Northern Paiute band names derive from the food source most commonly found in the region where they lived. The cui-ui is a large plankton eating fish that lives only in Pyramid Lake in northern Nevada and is currently on the federal endangered list. For more information on Northern Paiute band names, see Fowler and Liljeblad, 436-37.

Jedediah Smith was the first white man to cross the Great Basin in 1826, but another trapper, Peter Skene Ogden, was the first white man to encounter the Northern Paiute in 1828. In 1833, Joseph Rediford Walker led a group of trappers into the Humboldt Sink, where they encountered and attacked a group of Northern Paiute, massacring upwards of eighty men, women, and children. For a more detailed history and opposing perspectives of the Walker party massacre, see Lalla Scott, *Kamee: A Paiute Narrative*, ed. Robert F. Heizer (Reno: U of Nevada P, 1966) and W.F. Wagner, ed., *Adventures of Zenas Leonard, Fur Trader and Trapper, 1831-1836* (Cleveland: Burrows Brothers, 1904).

Winnemucca is believed to have had several husbands. Zanjani suggests the possibility of five husbands: a German friend of Truckee's named Snyder who later died in Germany, First Lieutenant Edward C. Bartlett (1872-1876), an unnamed Indian man with whom she lived at the Warm Springs Reservation in north-central Oregon, Joseph Satewaller (1876-?), and Lewis H. Hopkins (1881-1887). The number and character of Winnemucca's husbands became one of the preferred means her critics used to attack her character. The *Reno Crescent* labeled Winnemucca a "common Indian strumpet," while
William Rinehart, in an attempt to counter the damning claims against his management of the Malheur Reservation, submitted an affidavit to the Department of the Interior in 1879 accusing Winnemucca as a willing participant in "the vices of drunkenness, gambling, and common prostitution" (qtd. in Zanjani 113, 207).

Senier defines the "ethnographic present" as the "generic use of the present tense when describing other cultures and societies" (106). She argues that the use of this rhetorical strategy "works to establish a 'scientific' dialogue between writer and reader that contrasts with the object being spoken about" (106).

For further discussion on how the term "autoethnography" is used in discussions on self-definition, gender, and race, see Françoise Lionnet, Autobiographical Voices: Race, Gender, Self-Portraiture (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1989) and Mary Louise Pratt, Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation (London: Routledge, 1992).

The Oxford English Dictionary (OED) defines ethnography as "the scientific description of nations or races of men, with their customs, habits, and points of difference" and anthropology, as "the 'study of man as an animal.' The branch of the science which investigates the position of man zoologically, his 'evolution,' and history as a race of animated being." After the publication of Custer Died for Your Sins, which included the essay "Anthropologists and Other Friends" and criticized the field of anthropology, Vine Deloria Jr. (Standing Rock Sioux) relates how anthropologists "came to [him] 'by night' like Nicodemus and confided, after looking fearfully over their shoulders, that they had never been anthropologists, that they had always been 'ethnographers,'" (Spirit 124). Deloria's anecdote illustrates the connection of the two
sciences and how practitioners of anthropology or ethnography use the terms interchangeably.

30 The term "tribal narrative" incorporates much of the meaning of LeAnne Howe's (Choctaw) term "tribalography":

Now I have come to the place where I must tell you what my term *tribalography* means and how it achieves a new understanding in theorizing on Native studies. This is a tall order for a storyteller, but here goes. Native stories, no matter what form they take (novel, poem, drama, memoir, film, history), seem to pull all the elements together of the storyteller's tribe, meaning the people, the land, and multiple characters and all their manifestations and revelations, and connect these in past, present, and future milieus (present and future milieus mean non-Indians). I have tried to show that tribalography comes from the Native propensity for bringing things together, for making consensus, and for symbiotically connecting one thing to another. It is a cultural bias, if you will. (42)


31 For more information on Northern Paiute clothing and adornment, see Fowler and Liljeblad, 444-46.

32 Captain Truckee learned the "Star-Spangled Banner" while serving with John C. Frémont in California. Winnemucca recalls, "The funniest thing was that [Captain Truckee] would sing some of the soldier's roll-calls, and the air to the Star-spangled [sic] Banner, which everybody learned during the winter" (18).
While agreeing with Kolodny's hypothesis that the Indian captivity narrative acted as the conduit for early Euro-American women to interpret their experiences in the wilderness, Pauline Turner Strong points out that men took over the literary production of captivity narratives shortly after seeing the success Rowlandson's account had:

In contrast to Rowlandson's first-person interpretation of captivity, the narratives of other New England captives published over the next several decades were written or "improved" by prominent clergymen, including Increase Mather, Cotton Mather, and John Williams, a frontier minister related by marriage to the Mathers who was himself taken captive in 1704. In "improving" the narratives of captives, just as in "improving the land, Puritans sought to make a "profitable" use of the resources at their disposal. (103)

The Indian captivity narrative is not limited to the kidnapping of White women. Historical accounts of male captivity include John Williams, The Redeemed Captive Returning to Zion. A Faithful History of Remarkable Occurrences in the Captivity and the Deliverance of Mr. John Williams (Northampton, MA: Hopkins, Bridgman, and Company, 1853) and John Tanner, A Narrative of the Captivity and Adventures of John Tanner (U.S. Interpreter at the Sault de Ste. Marie) During Thirty Years Residence Among the Indians in the Interior of North America (1830; Minneapolis: Ross and Haines, 1956). Fictional representations of male captivity include Nathaniel Hawthorne, The Scarlet Letter (1850; New York: Bantam Books, 1989).

The Euro-American fear in the case of male captivity is not the possibility of sexual violence but the influence of "demonic" and "primitive" Native cultures on the "enlightened" man. Hawthorne demonstrates this fear when he depicts Chillingworth...
washing ashore in Massachusetts and becoming an Indian captive who "enlarged his medical attainments by joining in the incantations of the savage priests; who were universally acknowledged to be powerful enchanters, often performing seemingly miraculous cures by their skill in the black art" (117).

35 Both Fowler and Liljeblad and Knack and Stewart list the Eastern Miwok as a tribal group with whom the Northern Paiutes would have contact. See Fowler and Liljeblad, 438 and Knack and Stewart, 29.

Chapter 4: "We Are No More and No Less Than the Life That Surrounds Us": Challenging Patriarchal Violence in the Works of Terry Tempest Williams

36 The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints is the official name of the church more commonly referred to as the Mormon church.


38 Mormon novelists of the "Lost Generation" include Paul Bailey, Samuel Taylor, Maurine Whipple, Virginia Sorensen, and Vardis Fisher. Cracroft titles the writing of the Lost Generation as "faithless," which he asserts is a "more sophisticated fiction in which dissenting or expatriate Latter-day Saints examine Church members' lives from a position critical of LDS history and tradition, teachings, leadership, and culture" (286). Writers of "faithless fiction" stand in contrast to those of "faithful fiction," which Mormon literary critics refer to as the Home Literature tradition. This tradition serves a didactic and instructional function that intends to support and to inspire the membership of the
Church. Of course in dividing Mormon literature into such disparate categories, Cracroft denies the possibility that some literature might both question LDS positions and strengthen personal faith.

39 In *American Indian Literature, Environmental Justice, and Ecocriticism*, Joni Adamson questions Williams's use of Native peoples to demonstrate the interconnectedness of humanity with the land. In reading Williams's essay "All That is Hidden," included in *An Unspoken Hunger*, Adamson points out that "there are no people in [her] silent desert" and that her construction of the Cabeza Prieta National Refuge as a hidden, pristine wilderness is problematic since the Tohono O'odham, the land's original occupants, are still there: "It assumes that all human culture is exploitative, and it fails to account for the ways in which some human communities have inhabited the land in sustainable ways. It also fails to account for what happens to indigenous peoples after they are removed" (16).

40 Brooks's essay is the only examination of the influence of Native American epistemologies on Williams's work. While Brooks correctly critiques Williams's use of indigenous philosophies, she excuses this use, believing that Mormons and native peoples have suffered similar circumstances in their relationships with the people and government of the United States. Both Williams's and Brooks's attention to the commonalities that Native Americans and Mormons hold in their dealings with the federal government ignores the larger questions of the colonization of Native peoples and lands after the establishment of the Utah Territory and the Native American creation story found in *The Book of Mormon*. In excusing Williams's claims to "Indianness," Brooks ignores issues of ethnicity and native sovereignty.


Williams's testimony supporting the preservation of the Pacific Yew revealed how environmental conservation works not only to protect the natural world but also to preserve humanity. The Pacific Yew, which National Forest Service, Bureau of Land
Management, and timber companies viewed as "a trash tree, a nuisance, a weed to get out of the way so they can manage and perpetuate the clearcut technology that supports the harvesting of Douglas fir," contains "taxol, which has been proven to be an effective treatment against ovarian and breast cancers" (Unspoken 126). Having lost seven women of her family to these devastating cancers, Williams argues that the preservation of the Pacific Yew will provide more options to women suffering from cancer.

During her testimony before the Congressional Subcommittee on Forest and Public Lands Management, Williams had a tense moment with Representative Jim Hansen (R.-UT). In an interview, she recalls the reception her own Congressional representative gave her:

I remember how his glasses were perched on the end of his nose, how when I began to speak he was shuffling his papers, yawning, coughing, anything to show his boredom and displeasure. [. . .] He wasn't even listening—that was clear. Finally, I stopped mid-sentence and said something to the effect, "Congressman Hansen, I have been a resident of Utah all of my life. Is there anything I could say to you that will in some way alter your perspective so that you might consider wilderness in another way?"

What I remember is how he leaned over his elbows and looked down on me over the tops of his glasses and said simply, "I'm sorry, Ms. Williams, there is something about your voice I cannot hear." It was chilling—personal. I don't think he was referring to the quality of the microphone. And then, it was over.

("Testimony" 19)
Instead of letting politicians in Washington "not hear" her voice, Williams joins Stephen Trimble to compile a collection of short essays by environmental writers on Utah Wilderness. *Testimony: Writers in Defense of the Wilderness* includes pieces by John McPhee, Charles Wilkinson, Barry Lopez, Bill Kittredge, and Ann Zwinger. Williams and Trimble delivered one thousand copies of the book to the U.S. Capitol where they distributed them to members of Congress and to the White House. Despite Rep. Hansen's refusal to listen to conservationist concerns earlier, Congress heard them when Sen. Bill Bradley (D.-NJ) read portions of *Testimony* into the Congressional Record. More importantly on September 18, 1996, as President Bill Clinton stood on the rim of the Grand Canyon and designated two million acres of Utah wild lands the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, he held up a paperback copy of *Testimony* and said, "This made a difference" (qtd. in "Testimony" 22).

45 At a reading in Salt Lake City on October 14, 2004, Williams thanked The Orion Society for publishing *The Open Space of Democracy* when no other publisher would. Terry Tempest Williams, reading of *The Open Space of Democracy*, Rowland Hall-St. Marks School, Salt Lake City. 14 Oct. 2004.

46 These eleven thousand poems were later published as a collection, Sam Hamill, ed. *Poets Against the War* (New York: Thunder's Mouth Press/Nation Books, 2003).

47 Williams's belief that the Earth has a spirit reflects her Mormon upbringing and understanding of Mormon doctrine. In *The Pearl of Great Price*, the Lord revealed to Joseph Smith, the founder and first prophet of the Mormon church, that "I the Lord God, created all things of which I have spoken, spiritually, before they were naturally upon the face of the earth [...] for in heaven created I them" (Moses 3.5). In another revelation,
Joseph Smith wrote that God had revealed "that which is spiritual being in the likeness of that which is temporal; and that which is temporal in the likeness of that which is spiritual; the spirit of man in the likeness of his person, as also the spirit of the beast, and every other creature which God has created" (Doctrine and Covenants 77.2). According to Mormon theology, as God created the physical Earth and all of its inhabitants, He first created their spirits in heaven. The combining of the physical being and the spiritual being create the soul (Doctrine and Covenants 88.15). Furthermore, Joseph Fielding Smith, the tenth president of the Mormon Church, wrote, "Latter-day Saints, at least, do not take the view that animals have no reason, and cannot think. We have divine knowledge that each possesses a spirit in the likeness of its body, and that each was created spiritually before it was naturally, or given a body on the earth" (194). If all members of the animal world have a soul and the ability to reason and think, according to Mormon scholar Hugh Nibley, they possess "real rights" (91). Former Utah Congressman Wayne Owens argues that this progressive doctrine comes from the transcendental spirit that permeated the places and thinking of early Mormonism:

Mormonism was born in Thoreau's and Emerson's New England. Mormonism, as a recipient of these influences, and Joseph Smith were both more closely aligned with appreciation of nature and wilderness than most other Christian faiths were. For example, Mormon theology teaches that the earth itself has a spirit. This goes well beyond even St. Francis Assisi, who was branded as a heretic for trying to save the souls of animals. ("Wilderness in the Hand of God" 223)

With a doctrine that insists that all things God created—Earth, sun, moon, oceans, mountains, rocks, animals, and humans—have a soul, Mormons should be more
environmentally conscious, but, as Owens notes, "Our doctrine is enormously progressive as it relates to the environment, but our cultural interpretation has not followed suit" (224).

48 In her work *Women in Western Political Thought*, Susan Moller Okin states that the "great tradition of political philosophy consists, generally speaking, of writings by men, for men, and about men" (5). Political philosophers, like Plato, Aristotle, Rousseau, and Locke, have dismissed the role of women in the political process because of "the functionalist treatment of women—the prescriptive view of woman's nature and proper mode of life based on her role and functions in a patriarchal family structure" (10-11). Okin argues that the patriarchal family structure serves as the standard that all Western political systems model.

49 Williams also discusses other lobbied proposals that have been put forward to drastically change the natural state and essence of the Great Salt Lake. The most radical plan presented to the state legislature was for the creation of Lake Wasatch. The Lake Wasatch Coalition would "impound freshwater flowing into Great Salt Lake from Bear, Weber, Ogden, and Jordan Rivers and other tributaries, by means of more than eighteen miles of inter-island dikes stretching through four counties" (265). The Great Salt Lake would cease to be a salt lake and would become "192 miles of shoreline," larger than Lake Powell in southern Utah, providing "opportunities for unlimited lakeside development [. . .] a chamber of commerce dream" (265). For developers, the creation of Lake Wasatch would give economic value to the Great Salt Lake, but this value would only extend to humans and not other species.

For further information on the United States's atomic testing program and the Nevada Test Site, see Philip L. Fradkin, Fallout: An American Nuclear Tragedy, 2nd ed., (Boulder: Johnson Books, 2004).

In the early years of the Mormon Church, women participated in many activities that are now reserved strictly for worthy male priesthood holders. In her examination of the role of Mormon women in the early church, Linda King Newell discusses how Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, and other early church leaders encouraged women to administer the "gifts of the spirit." "The Gifts of the Spirit," spoken of by Paul, include wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, working miracles, prophecy, and the speaking and interpretation of tongues (1 Corinthians 12.8-10). Newell notes that "[a]t first the gift of healing, like faith, wisdom, and discernment was available for any worthy member of the church. Women were as likely to heal or be healed as were men. But during the early twentieth century, healing was increasingly regarded as a priesthood function, and hence the exclusive prerogative of men, since Mormon women are not ordained to priesthood offices" (112). For further information, see Linda King Newell, "Gifts of the Spirit: Women's Share," Sisters in Spirit: Mormon Women in Historical and Cultural
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VITA

Graduate College
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Gregory Alan Wright

Home Address:
3216 Contesa Circle
Las Vegas, NV 89101

Degrees:
Master of Arts, English, 1999
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Bachelor of Arts, English, 1996
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Associate of Arts, English, 1996
Snow College

Publications:
Review of Toward a Native American Critical Theory. In Western American Literature. Fall 2006.


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Chairperson, Dr. P. Jane Hafen, Ph.D.
Committee Member, Dr. John H. Irsfeld, Ph.D.
Committee Member, Dr. Joseph B. McCullough, Ph.D.
Graduate Faculty Representative, Dr. Willard H. Rollings, Ph.D.