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Images of American Indians in Environmental Education: Anthropological Reflections on the Politics and History of Cultural Representation

ANNA J. WILLOW

Anthropologist Renato Rosaldo uses the term *imperialist nostalgia* to characterize the curious yearnings of colonizers for “traditional” lifeways they intentionally altered or annihilated. As Rosaldo explains,

Imperialist nostalgia revolves around a paradox: A person kills somebody, and then mourns for the victim. In more attenuated form, someone deliberately alters a form of life, and then regrets that things have not remained as they were prior to the intervention. At one more remove, people destroy their environment, and then they worship nature. In any of its versions, imperialist nostalgia uses a pose of “innocent yearning” both to capture people’s imaginations and to conceal its complicity with often brutal domination.¹

For hundreds of years, North America’s colonizers worked systematically to eradicate the indigenous cultural practices, religious beliefs, and autonomous political systems many among us now venerate. As the following pages illustrate, imperialist nostalgia underlies and directs portrayals of American Indians in environmental education today.

Whether unconsciously or unmistakably, intellectual insight is often born of personal experience. My critical perspective on American Indian cultural representation took shape in the place where academic and applied fields collide, where work weaves itself into the fabric of everyday life. The

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summer after I completed my graduate studies in cultural anthropology, I worked part time at a local nature center. As a summer naturalist, most of my time was spent planning and implementing informal environmental and outdoor education programs for kids between the ages of two and eleven. We dipped for tadpoles and dragonfly larvae in the on-site pond, hiked amid oak trees in the woods, swept the prairie for butterflies and spiders, and enjoyed nature-oriented games and crafts. My coworkers were dedicated, creative, and conscientious; our work was usually fun and always rewarding.

I was not new to environmental education. I'd earned a degree in the field eight years earlier and worked as a naturalist and program leader while in school and for much of the subsequent year. As I dusted off my curriculum guides and updated my mental list of amazing animal facts, it all came back to me. Within a matter of weeks, I'd returned comfortably to the swing of things, with one conspicuous exception. When I learned that programs about Native Americans were included among the center's offerings on amphibians, insects, and mammals, my stomach churned. Somehow, I had forgotten that this was a familiar theme in environmental education. Almost a decade before, I'd taught these programs eagerly. Even then, I'd known more about American Indians than most other non-Natives: I was a regular spectator at powwows, majored in anthropology as an undergraduate, devoured paperbacks from my local bookstore's tiny Native American studies section, and firmly believed that it behooved those of us trying to live sustainably in North America at the dawn of the twenty-first century to figure out what the people who had been here before us had done right.

What changed? By now I'd read more—not only scholarly books and articles that filled my head with swarms of “facts” about indigenous Americans, but also critical works addressing the politics of representation and the ways Indians have been imagined by non-Natives through the centuries. More importantly, though, I'd gotten to know dozens of Indian people during my dissertation fieldwork on Anishinaabe anticlearcutting activism in Northwestern Ontario. The Indians I knew were dynamic individuals, not representatives of a distant mythical image that could be somehow captured and synthesized in a one-, two-, or three-day summer camp for kids.

Tracing my unease meant asking the challenging questions that inspired this article. Why do Native Americans figure so prominently in environmental education, when other ethnic groups are seldom mentioned? How are Native North Americans portrayed in environmental education curriculum guides and programming? And what factors underlie these particular portrayals? There are straightforward answers, like mine of years past: Native Americans lived admirably close to nature, and by imparting their example we can urge young people to reconsider Western industrial society's materialistic, disconnected values. As one of my new coworkers similarly pointed out, anything that accomplishes the essential goal of getting today's kids outside is a worthwhile pursuit.

More analytically demanding answers rooted in environmental education's historical development and in non-Native society's complex and often contradictory imaginings of American Indians also exist. Although the majority of stereotypes associated with American Indians over the years have been

exceedingly negative and have served to affirm the presumed superiority of Western culture, so-called positive images have also been in circulation since the earliest days of contact. The Noble Savage construct has—in various guises—been deployed for more than five hundred years to critique the evils of European civilization.² In many cases, those who wield such stereotypes have regarded them as flattering portrayals. But in doing so, they overlook the fact that all stereotypical images of American Indians problematically subsume hundreds of diverse peoples within a single simplified category, thereby denying individuality, history, and the rich multiplicity of Native viewpoints.³

I argue here that environmental education's enduring fascination with Native Americans can be understood as a symptomatic manifestation of non-Native society's collective imperialist nostalgia for the purportedly environmentally sustainable indigenous ways of life it destroyed. Portrayals of American Indians in environmental education are built upon the simultaneous erasure of contemporary Native realities and the glorification of a selectively monolithic Native past; they combine a denial of actual Indian peoples' coevalness with calls for inventive emulation by non-Indians.⁴

CULTURAL REPRESENTATION AND THE ORIGINS OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Although environmental educators have frequently debated their field's definition and ultimate goals, most practitioners and scholars seem to agree that environmental education should involve learning in the environment (the process and setting of environmental education), about the environment (the content of environmental education), and for the environment (the greater social purpose of environmental education).⁵ As William Stapp, one of the field's founders, put it, "Environmental Education is aimed at producing a citizenry that is knowledgeable concerning the biophysical environment and its associated problems, aware of how to solve these problems, and motivated to work towards their solution."⁶

Stapp's 1969 declaration is reflected in what remains one of the most widely accepted definitions of environmental education. *The Tbilisi Declaration* was generated by an intergovernmental conference about environmental education held in October 1977 in Tbilisi, Georgia (then part of the Soviet Union). According to the declaration, the goals of environmental education are:

1. To foster clear awareness of, and concern about, economic, social, political, and ecological interdependence in urban and rural areas;
2. To provide every person with opportunities to acquire the knowledge, values, attitudes, commitment, and skills needed to protect and improve the environment;
3. To create new patterns of behavior of individuals, groups, and society as a whole towards the environment.⁷

Although the phrase *environmental education* and the designation of environmental education as a separate—if inherently interdisciplinary—field first appeared only in the mid-1960s, environmental education was not invented out of thin air. Contemporary environmental education arose from a merger

of the youth scouting programs developed around the turn of the twentieth century and the modern environmental movement launched in the 1960s and 1970s. From both of these antecedents, environmental education inherits its deep-seated interest in American Indians.

Playing Indian: Scouting and the Development of Nature Education

In 1907 England, Lord Robert Baden-Powell founded the Boy Scout movement as a comprehensive program to build the character of young men. Around the same time, Canadian author, illustrator, and naturalist Ernest Thompson Seton was advocating an American Indian model for the creation of a positive, patriotic, and quintessentially modern character in boys. Both of these men were instrumental in the establishment of the Boy Scouts of America (BSA), which combined Baden-Powell's affinity for militaristic discipline and Seton's focus on outdoor living and Indian play to become the largest youth organization in the United States.

Seton was not the first to play Indian.⁸ Fraternal organizations for well-to-do Euro-American men, including prominent groups like the Improved Order of Red Men and Lewis Henry Morgan's Grand Order of the Iroquois, were in vogue in the mid- and late 1800s. From these predecessors Seton borrowed not only his "braves" and "warriors" progressive-ranking terminology but also adopted the underlying philosophy that turning to the primitive—represented by Indians—would renew American men's and boys' rapidly diminishing masculinity.⁹ Comfortable living threatened to reduce young urban males to effeminacy, but outdoor nature study and brief guided encounters with modernity's fundamental opposite, Seton believed, would produce a hardy cohort of modern young men.

The centerpiece of Seton's youth program was what he termed "woodcraft." "Woodcraft," historian Philip Deloria observes, "taught children to appreciate and value nature, and its essence resided in Indianness."¹⁰ Seton's philosophical embrace of "Indianness" as the key symbolic embodiment of a glorified primitive existence was apparent in his vision of woodcraft practice. His Woodcraft Indian boys dressed in generically Native American costumes and camped in Plains-style tipis. Seton's official woodcraft handbook outlined the proper mode of social organization: each group was to incorporate as a tribe, each tribe was to have its own totem and tribal officers, and individual tribal members were to be honored with Indian names. Seton's manual also included instructions for Indian games, dances, and songs.¹¹ Woodcraft, for Seton, was a purposeful form of recreation, intended to inspire and improve America's youth. "The Red Man is the apostle of outdoor life," he wrote, "his example and precept are what young America needs today above any other ethical teaching of which I have knowledge."¹²

As an independent incorporated group, the Woodcraft Indian League never got off the ground, but Seton's ideas figured prominently in the formulation of the BSA. Founded in 1910 by William Boyce and Colin Livingstone, Baden-Powell's scouting program and Seton's woodcraft movement amalgamated to form a distinctively American youth movement.¹³ Despite the fact

that some prominent BSA leaders vocally disagreed with his Indian-centered approach, Seton was selected as the BSA's first Chief Scout. Seton's legacy was secure by the time he resigned from the organization in 1915; generations of Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and Camp Fire Girls have followed in his moccasined footsteps.¹⁴

For most of the twentieth century, BSA celebrated its "Indian" heritage with pseudo-Indian costuming, toponyms, dwellings, imagery and insignias, and ritual elements. A historical study of summer camps operated by the BSA in central Wisconsin, for instance, notes the prominent use of Indian imagery at Camps Tichora (1920–58) and Castle Rock (which opened in 1959 as Tichora's replacement and successor). Photographs taken at Order of the Arrow Honor Society "call out" ceremonies from both these camps show scouts posing in front of tipis and donning Indian-style regalia (see fig. 1).¹⁵ Intricate costuming, sandpaintings with Woodland graphic themes, torch tossing, and Indian-style dancing made these ceremonies popular events for public attendees and campers alike. Although Indian play no longer reaches this elaborate level in today's more politically correct BSA organization, scouting paved the way for the future expansion of outdoor education and, as I describe in the following sections, Seton's Indian ideal remains clearly discernable in environmental education curriculum guides and programming.



FIGURE 1. Ceremony at Camp Tichora in the 1950s. Four Lakes Council #628, *The First Ninety Years, 1912–2002* (Madison, WI: Litho Productions, 2003), 256. Photo used with permission of Boy Scouts of America, *Glaciers Edge Council*.

The Environmental Movement's Indian

Every part of this earth is sacred to my people . . . we are part of the earth and it is part of us. . . . Whatever befalls the earth, befalls the sons of the earth. If men spit upon the ground, they spit upon themselves. This we know. The earth does not belong to man, man belongs to the earth.¹⁶

Reprinted and recited countless times, these words have been celebrated as the environmental manifesto of a defeated Duwamish/Suquamish leader. But Chief Sealth never uttered these lines. In reality, the famous speech so many recognize as Sealth's was composed by a non-Native screenwriter for a 1972 television documentary produced by a Texas-based group called the Southern Baptist Convention. Invoking the idea of the Indian rather than any reality about indigenous Americans' history, culture, or contemporary reality, the speech's lack of authenticity has mattered little for those it inspires.¹⁷

"Narratives about Native North Americans," ethnohistorian Shepard Krech points out, "are contingent on the times in which they were created."¹⁸ Just as scouting's version of outdoor education replaced real Indian people with an abstract symbol tailored to fit its own recreational, pedagogical, and philosophical purposes, so too did the modern environmental movement fashion the Indian into its own creation. The environment emerged as a topic of widespread public interest in the tumultuous 1960s and 1970s. Not only were people paying more attention to the relationships between humans and the natural world, but the environmental damage caused by industrial civilization was also becoming ever more apparent.

Both a distinctive sign of changing times and an interpretive reenactment of an inherited conceptual legacy, the environmental movement built on and reworked centuries-old images of American Indians. In its most recent embodiment as the ecological Indian, Noble Savage imagery is among the modern environmental movement's most fundamental conceptual foundations.¹⁹ During the past decade, the ecological Indian image has proven highly controversial; whether Native North Americans are—or ever were—truly "ecological" or "environmental" has been the subject of heated scholarly debate. Some have cited prehistoric, historic, and modern cases that seem to contradict the existence of an American Indian ecological sensibility.²⁰

Concurrently, however, scores of tribes across North America have expressed their genuine concern for the environment with political and grassroots action. Often, Native environmental campaigns integrate political calls for recognition of treaty rights and self-determination as well as local struggles for environmental justice, health, and cultural survival.²¹ To cite one particularly illustrative example, in 1995 the Sokaogon Chippewa Community exercised their sovereign legal status to win Treatment as State (TAS) water-quality standards under the Clean Water Act, thus enabling the community to establish its own stringent water-quality standards on tribal lands.²² Stricter than federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations, TAS status ultimately helped the Sokaogon defeat a proposed sulfide mine adjacent to

their small Northern Wisconsin reservation, which protected not only their traditional wild rice beds and hunting grounds but also the 3,690-square-mile Wolf River watershed.

All told, not all Indians fit—or should be expected to fit—the ecological stereotype. Nor should the genuine reality of indigenous ecological values be discounted. In reality, the evidence on this matter is complex and sometimes contradictory. As Paul Nadasdy further attests, attempts to place Indian people anywhere on the “spectrum of environmentalism” are deeply problematic. “The debate over whether indigenous people are or are not ecologically noble is a spurious one,” he argues, “since it necessarily entails evaluating their behavior according to imposed Euro-North American cultural assumptions.”²³

Although alliances between environmental activists and indigenous peoples have occasionally been facilitated by strategic use of the ecological Indian image, the image’s negative consequences have dominated the conversation. Substantiating his critical stance, Krech states:

The Ecological Indian image distorts culture. It masks cultural diversity. It occludes its actual connection to the behavior it purports to explain. Moreover, because it has entered the realm of common-sense and as received wisdom is perceived as a fundamental truth, it serves to deflect any desire to fathom or confront the evidence for relationship between Indians and the environment.²⁴

Finis Dunaway also presents a critical view of the ecological Indian image. The popular visual discourse of environmental concern that developed in association with the first Earth Day, he suggests, made prominent use of the ecological Indian stereotype in ways that “effaced racial and class divisions to present environmentalism as a cause that everyone could support.”²⁵ But the ecological Indian stereotype also invites impassioned charges of “inauthenticity” when actual Indian people inevitably fail to act in accordance with unrealistic standards, and, as I argue elsewhere, the image enables members of Western industrial society to distance themselves from the legacies of colonialism by obscuring the political dimensions of contemporary indigenous environmental activism.²⁶

Still, much as the inauthenticity of Sealth’s speech did not dampen its audiences’ enthusiasm—it was, quite frankly, a matter few thought to raise—the debate surrounding the veracity of the ecological Indian image has not diminished the value environmentalists find in it. With the rise of the modern environmental movement, Indian stereotypes were reformulated to fit environmentalists’ emerging interests and rhetorical needs. As Kay Milton avows, environmentalists deeply want to believe in the existence of viable alternatives and paths to sustainability. “The myth of primitive ecological wisdom,” she notes, “is fundamental to the radical environmental critique of industrialism, for without the assumption that non-industrial societies live sustainably in their environments, there would be no grounds for arguing that industrialism is the cause of environmental destruction.”²⁷ If Indians were once able to

live sustainably, the reasoning goes, we too can hold out hope of someday achieving a sustainable society.

Take, for example, former Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall's vision—put forth just as the ecological Indian image gained popular momentum—of American Indians as the “first ecologists.”²⁸ Udall posits the indigenous peoples of the North American continent as pioneering role models for the contemporary environmental movement. Invoking transcendentalist philosopher and naturalist Henry David Thoreau's attraction to Indian values and implicit rejection of his own society's materialistic ways, Udall approvingly cites the “simplicity” of Indian lifestyles and “the Indian desire to live in harmony with the earth.”²⁹ Udall's depiction of indigenous Americans' spiritual connection to nature and innate environmental stewardship creates an implicit contrast with Western industrial society. It suggests not only that contemporary non-Natives can learn from an Indian ecological perspective, but also that Western society has serious problems—environmental and otherwise—that require our urgent attention.

Once the ecological Indian image became a standard part of environmentalists' iconic repertoire, the idea of the Indian could be efficiently deployed in the environmental critique of Western civilization. Extending eco-feminism's critical correlation of men's domination over women with Western humanity's domination over the earth, Indians were metaphorically coupled to wild nature as a growing number of Americans in the 1960s and 1970s began to see both as hapless victims of industrial society's fixation on progress, growth, and competition at the expense of emerging countercultural values emphasizing sustainability, peace, freedom, and community.³⁰

Although few participants in the counterculture movement had any meaningful contact with Indian people, popular culture rapidly picked up on the newfound relevance of this line of cultural critique. For example, the Pulitzer Prize-winning work of poet-philosopher Gary Snyder—emblematically entitled *Turtle Island*—draws heavily on Native North American values and imagery.³¹ Reaching an even wider audience, the nonprofit environmental group Keep America Beautiful unveiled its “Crying Indian” public service announcements in 1971. An actor of questionable Cherokee heritage named Iron Eyes Cody was featured in the starring role. Behind the memorable phrase, “Pollution: It's a Crying Shame,” Cody was shown with a single tear rolling down his cheek. Inherently and profoundly ecological, Keep America Beautiful's Indian urged members of non-Native society to judge their own behavior by point of contrast.³²

Comparable images continued to reach receptive audiences in the decades following their popular debut. Scores of popular and scholarly works portray North America's indigenous peoples in an ecological light. Collectively, the environmentalist literature suggests that non-Native industrial society has much to learn from the environmental philosophies and practices of Native peoples, and award-winning films have depicted American Indians along ecological lines.³³ Clearly, environmentalists have strong incentives for continuing to cast American Indians as inherent ecologists. For individuals devoted to environmental education as a means of nurturing

others' environmental awareness, knowledge, attitudes, skills, and participatory behavior, ecological Indians are attractive and accessible role models. But the Indians who grace the pages of environmental education curriculum guides and contour environmental education programming are not real. Instead of coeval global citizens with urgent concerns and varied opinions, they are Indians of the imagination.

AMERICAN INDIANS IN ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM RESOURCE GUIDES

Project Learning Tree

Among the dozens of environmental education curriculum resource guides, one of the most comprehensive, widely known, and respected is Project Learning Tree (PLT). If any published guide can be considered representative of environmental education, PLT must be included among the likely contenders. Natural resource managers and educators seeking to develop "an unbiased, educationally sound program for elementary and secondary students and their teachers" launched PLT, a project of the American Forest Foundation, in 1976.³⁴ Designed for use in traditional classrooms as well as less formal centers of environmental learning, PLT contains lessons geared for prekindergarten through grade eight that loosely orbit the theme of understanding and appreciating forests. Of PLT's ninety-six activities, three focus explicitly on American Indians.

"Tipi Talk" is an activity recommended for grades four through eight that spotlights the Plains Indian tipi in order to illustrate how different types of shelters are adapted to their environments and to the lifeways of the people who inhabit them.³⁵ Students consider the basic functions of a "house" and list the diverse forms that human dwellings can take. They are encouraged to draw comparisons between the different types of homes they imagine and consider the reasons for these differences. Students learn about tipis from a one-page handout that covers basic tipi facts.³⁶ From this intentionally incomplete information, they are asked to generate inferences into the lives of the people who might have called such a dwelling home.

An optional "assessment opportunity" included in the activity plan suggests having students think about their own houses and what their homes say about them.³⁷ This implicit invitation to contrast (modern) American and (nonmodern) Native ways of life is related to one of the "concepts" listed in the activity's introductory sidebar that states, "if planned, constructed, and landscaped to be compatible with the environment in which they will be located, human-built environments can conserve resources, enhance environmental quality, and promote the comfort and well-being of those who will live within them."³⁸ The message seems unambiguous: the Plains tipi—inhabited by people in touch with their environment and attentive to the need to conserve its resources—achieved this admirable objective.

Although "Tipi Talk" contains little that could be considered directly offensive, it ultimately perpetuates rather than challenges a stereotypical view

of American Indians. The introductory material for educators includes the following instructions:

Although the following information on Plains Indian society focuses on similarities, it is not meant to imply that Plains Indian culture was homogeneous or static. (You should point out that this activity describes the traditional Plains Indian lifestyle that existed when European settlers first arrived. Today, American Indians live in the same type of houses as other Americans.)³⁹

The activity plan that follows substantiates the need for such a disclaimer; this note is the sole allusion to a bitter history of epidemic disease, forced settlement, armed conflict, and decimated bison herds. Nor are the contemporary concerns of the more than two-dozen Indian nations who live on the Plains today—including poverty levels that consistently rank among the highest in the United States—mentioned. The history and contemporary legacies of colonialism simply do not enter the picture.

In educational settings, the realities of time constraints, discipline issues, and other variables mean that teachers and learners often relegate parenthetical comments—even important ones—to the back burner. When all is said and done, it is easy to imagine students walking away from “Tipi Talk” believing that Plains Indians either no longer exist or, alternatively, all live in tipis. Although the presentation of selected, simplified material is a necessary part of any introductory treatment and is often suitable for young children, the lack of alternative portrayals in activities like “Tipi Talk” functions to fix the familiar picture of a tipi-dwelling, earth-loving, past-tense Indian in children’s minds.

PLT’s second American Indian-themed activity is called “Native Ways.”⁴⁰ Unlike “Tipi Talk,” this activity has the explicit goal of investigating Native American attitudes and actions concerning the land and its resources. Geared toward the same age group, the activity’s background information for teachers—which may or may not get transmitted to students—provides a rough overview of Native North American diversity following a culture-area framework. In common with “Tipi Talk,” the teachers’ introduction also contains a brief qualification regarding the continued existence of Native Americans. It notes that “today, Native Americans live in diverse communities throughout North America. Many also live in communities on Native American reservations,” but it makes no attempt to bridge the gap between past and present realities.⁴¹

The lesson goes on to compare two versions of Chief Sealth’s famed 1854 speech, one based on notes taken by Dr. Henry Smith—an onlooker who attempted to record what the chief actually said—and the other from the 1970s made-for-television version. Students are instructed to discuss the differences between the two versions and consider possible reasons for their existence. Although indisputably a valuable exercise in close reading and critical thinking, the focus remains on the ecological Indian image: “Can the roots of the environmental message in the synthesized speech be found in the authentic one?”⁴²

The answer is clearly expected to be yes. Although it would be possible to use this comparative exercise as a springboard for a meaningful discussion about images and stereotypes of American Indians, current versions of the activity plan stop well short of guiding instructors in this direction.

The assumption that ecological nobility underlies the “Native Way” becomes even more apparent in the activity’s next suggested step:

Read aloud the “Message from Chief Luther Standing Bear” on the student page. If possible, invite a guest, perhaps an American Indian or someone with American Indian ancestry to come and read this passage. Have students answer the questions on that student page.⁴³

The student page notes that the message that follows is “said to be a quote from Chief Luther Standing Bear” but does not state when Standing Bear uttered—or penned—these words or attribute them to any published source. The following message is offered to fill the space of the classroom:

The Lakota was a true naturalist—a lover of nature. He loved the Earth and all things of the Earth, the attachment growing with age. The old people came literally to love the soil and they sat or reclined on the ground with a feeling of being close to a mothering power. It was good for the skin to touch the Earth [and the old people] liked to remove their moccasins and walk with bare feet on the sacred Earth. Their teepees were built upon the Earth and their altars were made of Earth. The birds that flew in the air came to rest upon the Earth and it was the final abiding place of all things that lived and grew. The soil was soothing, strengthening, cleansing and healing.

That is why the Indian still sits upon the Earth instead of propping himself up and away from its life-giving forces. For him, to sit or lie upon the ground is to be able to think more deeply and to feel more keenly; he can see more clearly into the mysteries of life and come closer in kinship to other lives about him. . . . Kinship with all creatures of the Earth, sky and water was a real and active principle. For the animal and bird world there existed a brotherly feeling that kept the Lakota safe among them and so close did some of the Lakotas come to their feathered and furred friends that in true brotherhood they spoke a common tongue.

The old Lakota was wise. He knew that man’s heart away from nature becomes hard; he knew that lack of respect for growing, living things soon led to lack of respect for humans too. So he kept his youth close to its softening influence.⁴⁴

With potentially dramatic flair, the “Native Way” invites the ecologically imagined Indian to step from the movie screen onto the stage of the classroom. If one can be found, a real live Native person is asked to enter the domain of environmental learning not to share his or her own ideas but to recite a

decontextualized “Native American message” selected for the transparency and easy digestibility of its ecological theme.

“A Look at Lifestyles” is the third and final American Indian-themed activity in PLT.⁴⁵ This lesson encourages middle school students (grades five through eight) to draw contrasts between the environmental attitudes and resource-use patterns of three groups: the historically decontextualized precontact Lakota Sioux (as represented by the well-known “White Buffalo Calf Woman and the Sacred Pipe” legend), early Euro-American pioneers, and modern industrial society. Part A, “Defining Our Needs,” asks students to think carefully about the dozens of items they use in their daily lives and to classify each as a necessity for survival, requirement for maintaining their current lifestyle, or luxury. Students are then asked to consider where all these goods come from and determine whether they are composed primarily of renewable or nonrenewable resources. This is a basic exercise in ecological reflexivity and does not bring Native North Americans into the equation. Part B, “With Respect for the Earth,” introduces the Lakota legend. Students are asked to read “The White Buffalo Calf Woman and the Sacred Pipe”; discuss what the various parts of the sacred pipe, sky, earth, and four directions represent in the story; and contemplate what they can do to take care of the earth. They are then assigned to research the historically documented lifestyle of a local or regional Indian tribe. Part C of the activity investigates Euro-American pioneer attitudes toward the environment and encourages students to compare them to the Native American attitudes ascertained in Part B.⁴⁶

For a number of reasons, “A Look at Lifestyles” is an excellent activity; it encourages students to take a close look at themselves, their consumption patterns, and their society. Still, the activity’s strategic inclusion of Native Americans remains problematic. Students are introduced to Native peoples not on their own terms but as a vehicle for the environmental critique of Western industrial society. The fact that Indian legends remain relevant to the tribes they belong to and continue to guide contemporary environmental values remains unaddressed. Ultimately, the activity’s message has a familiar ring. Although historical studies of American Indian environmental relationships and values do have an important place in environmental education, PLT’s activities are set outside of history rather than contextualized within it; problematically, no recent or contemporary complements are presented. Once again denied a coeval presence in the modern world, the Indian is placed on the hollow pedestal of an imagined ecological ideal.

Talking to Fireflies, Shrinking the Moon and The Kid’s Wildlife Book

Although this article does not attempt to provide an exhaustive treatment of environmental education resources, examples from two additional activity guides substantiate environmental education’s frequent incorporation of an ecologically heroized American Indian. Though much less widely known than PLT, Edward Duensing’s *Talking to Fireflies, Shrinking the Moon: Nature Activities for All Ages* and Warner Shedd’s *The Kid’s Wildlife Book: Exploring Animal Worlds through Indoor/Outdoor Experiences* contain lesson ideas that are creative, adaptable, and

realistic given the time and budget constraints environmental educators face.⁴⁷ Included among activities on astronomy and wildlife, both guides feature references to Native North Americans that seem oddly out of place.

Duensing's readable volume, for example, suggests listening to the motion of a woodchuck in its den by (temporarily) wedging a rock in the entrance and pressing an ear to the rock in order to hear otherwise undetectable vibrations caused by the animal's subterranean motions. "This technique works," Duensing writes, "because sound travels through solid ground far better than it does through the air. Native Americans utilized this same principle when they pressed their ears to the ground to listen for the hoofbeats of nearby horses or buffalo."⁴⁸ As an environmental education activity, Duensing's idea is superb; it is easy to implement and likely to produce positive memories for all involved. I do not intend my critique to discourage environmental education practitioners from turning learners' ears to the underground world of the woodchuck. But the peculiar juxtaposition of woodchucks and American Indians is striking. As in *PLT*, Native Americans are once again relegated to the past—this time to the relatively short-lived but perennially caricatured era of the horse on the Great Plains. Why, we must ask, does Duensing bring Indians into his discussion of woodchucks? What conscious or unconscious associations spark this connection in the author's mind? Is the mention of indigenous uses of this technique meant to authenticate and legitimize? Or, perhaps, does the mental picture of an ear pressed to the ground conjure up the stereotypical Indians of Western genre films?

The Kid's Wildlife Book is conveniently organized by animal and offers sections on bears, raccoons, and other charismatic North American fauna. Creative craft activities and simple experiments are included along with ideas for outdoor observation. In addition, boxes containing "Native American Legends" are scattered throughout the text. Shedd explains their inclusion early on:

Native Americans—the North American Indians—told many wonderful stories, or *legends*, about wildlife. Wildlife was all-important to American Indians, because they depended on it for food, clothing, and certain kinds of shelter. The Indians felt a great closeness to these wild creatures, whether it was prey such as rabbits, deer, and buffalo that they hunted for food and clothing, or whether it was their fellow predators, such as bobcats, coyotes, or wolves. Indian legends served at least three purposes. First, they told of special characteristics that the Indians had observed about these creatures, such as the cleverness of the coyote. Second, they were a way of explaining things about wildlife, such as why the bear has such a short tail, or why the crane has long legs. Third, they were great entertainment—marvelous stories to be told and retold around the campfire. Fortunately, we can still enjoy these wonderful legends and learn these time-honored insights and observations, while imagining what it must have been like to hear them around an Indian campfire.⁴⁹

Not only does Shedd consign all American Indians—and their dynamic oral traditions—to the past tense, but also in a few cases he simultaneously encourages children to engage in imaginative Indian play. In the section on the Virginia opossum, for example, the text directs the reader to “imagine that you’re an American Indian of long ago, entertaining your people with stories around the fire at night. Make up your own legend about why the possum has such a long, pointed face with so many teeth.”⁵⁰ Just as listening for woodchucks can be an excellent way to open a new dimension of natural wonder for learners, imaginative etiological animal stories play a valuable role in environmental education. But why must the “American Indian of long ago” enter into the activity? What purpose, we need to ask, does this Indian serve? American Indian legends—prized by many contemporary tribes as sacred and season-specific—are in this case packaged and decontextualized for nostalgic enjoyment.

The *Keepers* Series

One additional environmental education resource—in this case a series of activity guides—deserves mention. In the 1990s, Joseph Bruchac and Michael J. Caduto collaborated to produce a handful of books consisting of environmental education activities inspired by traditional American Indian stories. The *Keepers* books have become popular among environmental educators, though the niche they fill is much more specific than that of PLT. The series is the only major environmental education resource to focus specifically and entirely on Native North Americans and is also the only one with Native authorship.⁵¹ The *Keepers* series was generated with the ambition of integrating the ecological lessons of Native American stories and scientific knowledge. As the authors observe, “The ecological lessons of science and North American Indian stories show us how to care for the Earth. Through their combined knowledge we can help children to discover their own roles in maintaining this fragile balance for themselves and all living things in the generations to come.”⁵²

In some ways, the *Keepers* series offers an exception to the exoticising portrayal of American Indians seen in most environmental education resources. The rich diversity of Native nations is addressed, stories from a wide variety of tribes are incorporated, and a map of culture areas and major tribes is included. Significantly, *Keepers* is the only familiar environmental education resource that speaks of Indians primarily—though by no means exclusively—in the present tense. Still, *Keepers* does not attempt to address the pressing contemporary issues prominent in indigenous American discourse today. Notwithstanding its positive contributions, *Keepers* is unable to single-handedly shift representations of American Indians in environmental education away from their ahistorical, romantically ecological foundations. Designed to attract a mainstream audience, much of the language in the text describes a generalized Indian closeness to nature: “Because Indians see themselves as *part* of nature, and not apart from it,” Bruchac and Caduto write in the introduction to *Keepers of the Earth*, “their stories use natural images to teach about relationships between people, and between people and the Earth. To the Indians, what was done to a tree or rock was done to a brother or sister.”⁵³

The slippery tenses in this passage seem indicative of a tension between the authors' aspirations to represent Indians as dynamic and diverse individuals and an enduring celebration of the Indian as ecological role model.

Lacking conscientious ongoing guidance to contextualize, historicize, and enrich the lessons in the *Keepers* books, learners are likely to come away from the stories and activities with a message that differs little from the other resources discussed here: Indians are admirable and interesting; they are invariably ecological; and, they are not participants in our complex contemporary world. In my own experience as a naturalist, the books in the *Keepers* series have been employed in ways—most notably as a source for bedtime stories at sleepover camps—that echo the predominant images of American Indians in environmental education.

NATURE CENTER INDIANS

As a naturalist at three different midwestern nature centers over a span of nearly a decade, I participated in numerous American Indian-themed programs and witnessed many more. Designed as school field-trip programs, summer day camps, and badge options for scouts, most of these programs were attended by children in the seven-to-eleven age group (roughly corresponding to grades two through six). Activities regularly included in these programs include the donning of Native-inspired costumes (most typically vests made from paper grocery bags and brilliantly colored feather head-dresses), visits to wigwam- or tipi-like structures for storytelling or discussion, Native-style crafts (such as totem rocks, medicine pouches, and baskets), and "Indian" games (pinecone- and spear-throwing contests have been especially memorable). The nature centers I have known are not unique in offering Native American programming. Though their titles vary, a majority of centers in the United States seem to offer at least one such program.⁵⁴

During my summer as a hybrid anthropologist/summer naturalist, I signed up to lead only one American Indian program. Woodland Championship Buddy Camp was a one-day program that encouraged friends and siblings to attend together. The day of the camp, it poured rain. I was new to the center, returning to environmental education after a seven-year hiatus, and had very little time to plan. I tried to ease my conscience by preparing handouts of contemporary tribal communities in the state and talking to the young attendees about the Indians who live in the region today. I told them the Anishinaabemowin (Anishinaabe language) names of some of our study mounts (nature center lingo for taxidermied animals) and emphasized the fact that I'd learned these names from real, living people with whom I'd fished, trapped, and passed my time. Anxious that so much lecturing might overwhelm my audience, I was heartened by the few older campers taking notes and asking thoughtful questions.

But if Bronislaw Malinowski's foundational goal of anthropology—the attempt to grasp the Native's point of view, relation to life, and version of his or her world—has any bearing on the practice of environmental education, I suspect that my improvised rainy-day approach holds little promise.⁵⁵ The

“Natives” gathered before me were grade-schoolers. Although vivid tales of adventure and intrigue often capture their attention, experience has taught me that kids this age tend to be more interested in developing and testing their creative capacity than in hearing secondhand facts about Indians or anything else. The fantastical past and the (slightly) unreal encourage imaginative self-exploration; by picturing themselves in a different time or place, children learn about who they are and what they might someday become. I believe most environmental educators would agree that we must celebrate this creativity, not stifle it.

All told, questions about the prominence and representation of American Indians in environmental education will be answered in the awkwardly reflexive, experientially analytical place where disciplinary history and personal calling meet. Environmental educators enter their field not because of great pay and material benefits but because they feel strongly that engaged environmental learning is the key to a better world. Imagining Indians is a tool—one of many—for making this happen. Rooted firmly in the history of the field, the inclusion of Indians in environmental education curriculum and instruction is naturalized. Because our educational systems’ treatments of Indian history, culture, and current affairs rarely progress beyond the perfunctory, a majority of future educators leave grade school, high school, and then college unprepared for—and unaware of—any alternative presentation of indigenous Americans.⁵⁶ Although some innovative university-level training programs can be applauded for approaching the environment in a way that integrates social and cultural issues, most environmental educators do not currently have significant cross-cultural training or experience to draw on.⁵⁷

CONCLUSION

The Noble Savage stereotype has existed since the days of Columbus, but the Indian of the romantic imagination gained a new level of prominence in Euro-American population centers once real Indians succumbed to Old World diseases, journeyed west under forced Removal, or faced military defeat. Yet even as real Indian people became physically distant, their mirages drew closer than ever before. Once disappeared and dispossessed—whether literally in the form of genocide or figuratively in the form of widespread ignorance—members of non-Native society felt free to re-create and reenact what Indians had come to symbolize to them.

Representations of Native North Americans in environmental education reveal a deeply ingrained cultural paradox that cannot be fully appreciated in the absence of the historical, social, and political contextualization of the sort so sorely lacking among educated Americans today. As Rosaldo describes, imperialist nostalgia can take hold on several different levels. Anthropologists may yearn to salvage information about the indigenous cultures their own society colonized and exterminated. Or people may destroy their environment through hasty resource exploitation and unrestrained pollution and then launch a movement to protect and preserve the nest they fouled. Filtered through the nature study and scouting tradition and the environmental

movement's ecological Indian, I have argued here that images of Indians in environmental education erase convoluted and often bitterly unjust colonial histories while relegating Indians to an idealized, mythologized ecological past.

Despite the imperialist nostalgic tendencies outlined here, I do not advocate for the elimination of American Indian topics from environmental education. If anything, the exploration of cultural diversity should play a more central role in the field. For generations, the struggle to survive in a world increasingly dominated by outsiders has pressed Natives to adopt a bicultural perspective.⁵⁸ For members of mainstream North American society, fluency in the beliefs and practices of others has long been a choice rather than a necessity. Although environmental education has barely begun to scratch the surface of a truly bi- or multicultural pedagogy, practitioners may be able to build on environmental education's established focus on human-environment interaction to inspire a broader cultural awareness in learners. As well, young people today are critically in need of positive environmental role models. Although the countless contemporary heroes—American Indian and otherwise—who work hard every day to make our world a better place should top this list, prohibiting a source of motivation for positive environmental behavior is not a productive solution. If environmental education hopes to encourage a richer and more productive understanding of American Indians and the world we all share, two essential changes are needed.

First and foremost, the inclusion of imagined Indians in environmental education cannot justify the exclusion of real ones. Although it may sometimes be inconvenient or require environmental educators to step outside their social comfort zones, Indian people—activists, elders, community leaders, doctors, lawyers, and subsistence hunters alike—should play substantive collaborative roles in the creation of American Indian-themed programming. Qualified Native individuals should be hired to co-develop and revise environmental education resources and teach at environmental education learning centers, and tribal members should be given the opportunity to review pertinent materials before they are disseminated. But correcting the accumulated misconceptions of five hundred years should not be up to professional Natives alone. Although some Indian individuals may feel well positioned to tackle stereotypes head-on, demographics demand that non-Native environmental educators share this responsibility. This means that educators must consciously and constantly step off the well-worn path of the ecologically noble past and instead strive to provide full and accurate information about American Indians. It means that educators must become enthusiastic learners and dedicated listeners. With this in mind, conferences and guidance programs that offer ongoing cross-cultural training promise to be a valuable asset for environmental education's future.

Secondly, environmental education must attend to the multitude of contemporary environmental, sociopolitical, and environmental justice issues that Native North American communities face, even when confronting these issues and their root causes may be less than pleasant. I do not suggest that environmental education's present focus on historical American Indian ways of life and tribal legends must be completely eliminated and replaced, but that representations of the past must be balanced by an equal number of

equally salient representations that demonstrate the dynamism, diversity, and complexity of contemporary American Indian lives. Students could be challenged to confront their own stereotypes about American Indians, analyze these images' origins, and look to the real world to find evidence to refute—or, if warranted, support—their views. Lessons spotlighting dozens of Indian individuals, tribes, and organizations currently working to protect the environment could be developed. More advanced students could begin to explore timely issues like environmental justice, toxic pollution and environmental health, nuclear waste storage, natural resource extraction, the retention and recognition of traditional ecological knowledge, and the juncture of treaty rights, tribal sovereignty, and environmental protection.

I also suggest, as a critical next step, exploring how contemporary Native people practice environmental education. If environmental education is to include American Indians, we need to ask what American Indian environmental education actually is like. With existing environmental/cultural programs for Native youth in mind, I offer these closing points for contemplation and future investigation.⁵⁹ For most Native people most of the time, learning about the environment takes place experientially. Often, this is a calculated pedagogical decision; Malcolm Margolin, for example, quotes a Native Californian who observed, “When you teach someone something, you’ve robbed the person of the experience of learning it.”⁶⁰ As well, learning about the environment is seen as a fundamentally social undertaking. Not only is the entire family involved in modeling environmental behavior, but also the concepts of family and community extend to the plants, fish, and animals that share our world.⁶¹ Finally, as my fieldwork at Grassy Narrows First Nation and in Northern Wisconsin Anishinaabe communities has shown, Native people tend to approach protecting the environment as inseparable from cultural struggles to keep land-based subsistence alive, which, in turn, are inseparable from political struggles to achieve a fuller recognition of Native rights. A contemporary and dynamic American Indian environmental education may well choose to confront the thorny political and historical dimensions of environmental issues with a truthful tenacity that mainstream environmental education has yet to approach.

NOTES

1. Renato Rosaldo, *Culture and Truth: The Remaking of Social Analysis* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1989), 69–70.

2. Robert F. Berkhofer, *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present* (New York: Vintage, 1978), 78.

3. For an excellent introductory survey of stereotypes about Indians, see Devon A. Mihesuah, *American Indians Stereotypes and Realities* (Atlanta: Clarity Press, 1996). In addition, many studies have critically examined stereotypical images of American Indians, especially as they appear in film (e.g., John Mihelich, “Smoke or Signals?: American Popular Culture and the Challenges to Hegemonic Images of American Indians in Native American Film,” *Wicazo Sa Review* 16 [2001]: 129–37 and Darryl Robes Kipp, “Images of Native People As Seen by the Eye of the Blackbird,” *Wicazo Sa Review*

16 [2001]: 29–34) and in sports (e.g., Carol Spindel, *Dancing at Halftime: Sports and the Controversy over American Indian Mascots* [New York: New York University Press, 2002]).

4. For a critical discussion of anthropology's ahistorical/atemporal treatment of indigenous peoples, see Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes its Object* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983).

5. William E. Marsden, "Environmental Education: Historical Roots, Comparative Perspectives, and Current Issues in Britain and the United States," *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision* 13 (1997): 7.

6. William B. Stapp, "The Concept of Environmental Education," *The Journal of Environmental Education* 1 (1969): 30.

7. United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), *The Tbilisi Declaration* (Tbilisi, Georgia, 1977). In addition to the three goals, the Tbilisi Declaration articulates the following environmental education objectives:

Awareness—to help social groups and individuals acquire an awareness and sensitivity to the total environment and its allied problems. **Knowledge**—to help social groups and individuals gain a variety of experience in, and acquire a basic understanding of, the environment and its associated problems. **Attitudes**—to help social groups and individuals acquire a set of values and feelings of concern for the environment and the motivation for actively participating in environmental improvement and protection. **Skills**—to help social groups and individuals acquire the skills for identifying and solving environmental problems. **Participation**—to provide social groups and individuals with an opportunity to be actively involved at all levels in working toward resolution of environmental problems

8. For detailed treatments of the history of Indian play in North America, see Philip Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1988) and Shari Michelle Huhndorf, *Going Native: Figuring the Indian in Modern American Culture* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001).

9. Jack Weatherford, *Native Roots: How the Indians Enriched America* (New York: Fawcett Columbine, 1991).

10. Deloria, *Playing Indian*, 96.

11. Earnest Thompson Seton, *The Birch Bark Roll of the Woodcraft League of America* (New York: Doubleday, 1927).

12. Deloria, *Playing Indian*, 96.

13. Weatherford, *Native Roots*, 193.

14. On the historical context of Indian symbolism and ritual pageantry in the Camp Fire Girls organization, see Pauline Turner Strong, "To Light the Fire of Our Desire: Primitivism in the Camp Fire Girls," in *New Perspectives on Native North America: Cultures, Histories, and Representations*, ed. Sergei A. Kan and Pauline Turner Strong (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006), 474–88.

15. Four Lakes Council #628, *The First Ninety Years, 1912–2002* (Madison, WI: Litho Productions, 2003).

16. Commonly attributed to Chief Sealth [Seattle], 1854. Sealth's alleged speech is widely reproduced in print and on the Internet, <http://www.ilhawaii.net/~stony/seattle2.html> (accessed 25 July 2009).

17. Deloria, *Playing Indian*, 167.

18. Shepard Krech, *The Ecological Indian: Myth and History* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1999), 26.

19. Krech defines the *Ecological Indian* as “the Indian in nature who understands the systemic consequences of his actions, feels deep sympathy with all living forms, and takes steps to conserve so the earth’s harmonies are never imbalanced and resources never in doubt” (ibid., 21). For treatments of the centrality of the ecological Indian in environmentalism see Kay Milton, *Environmentalism and Cultural Theory: Exploring the Role of Anthropology in Environmental Discourse* (London: Routledge, 1996) and Michael E. Harkin, “‘Swallowing Wealth’: Northwest Coast Beliefs and Ecological Practices,” in *Native Americans and the Environment: Perspectives on the Ecological Indian*, ed. Michael E. Harkin and David Rich Lewis (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007), 211–32.

20. Krech’s study sparked much of this controversy. Krech uses numerous examples—ranging from the prehistoric Pleistocene extinctions to the historic decimation of beaver populations during the fur-trade era—to discredit the ecological Indian “myth.” More recent cases such as the Makah tribe’s revitalization of the whaling tradition and the Hopi tribe’s ceremonial collection of golden eagle chicks have also been featured by the popular media to call the ecological Indian image into question.

21. See Winona LaDuke, *All Our Relations: Native Struggles for Land and Life* (Boston: South End Press, 1999).

22. Michael O’Brien, *Exxon and the Crandon Mine Controversy* (Middleton, WI: Badger Books, 2008), 116.

23. Paul Nadasdy, “Transcending the Debate over the Ecologically Noble Indian: Indigenous Peoples and Environmentalism,” *Ethnohistory* 52 (2005): 321.

24. Krech, *The Ecological Indian*, 27.

25. Finis Dunaway, “Gas Masks, Pogo, and the Ecological Indian: Earth Day and the Visual Politics of American Environmentalism,” *American Quarterly* 60 (2008): 71.

26. Anna J. Willow, “Clear-cutting and Colonialism: The Ethnopolitical Dynamics of Indigenous Environmental Activism,” *Ethnohistory* 56 (2009): 35–67. For examples of such “charges of inauthenticity” see Beth A. Conklin and Laura R. Graham, “The Shifting Middle Ground: Amazonian Indians and Eco-Politics,” *American Anthropologist* 97 (1995): 695–710 and David Rich Lewis, “Skull Valley Gestures and Politics of Nuclear Waste,” in *Native Americans and the Environment*, ed. Harkin and Lewis, 304–42.

27. Milton, *Environmentalism and Cultural Theory*, 109.

28. Stewart Udall, “First Americans, First Ecologists,” in *Look to the Mountain Top*, ed. Robert L. Iacopi, Bernard L. Fontana, and Charles Jones (San Jose, CA: Gousha Publications, 1972), 1–6.

29. Ibid., 2.

30. Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind* (1967; repr., New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2001), 251. On the perception of American Indians in eco-feminism, see Carolyn Merchant, *The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology and the Scientific Revolution* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1980).

31. Gary Snyder, *Turtle Island* (1969; repr., New York: New Directions, 1974).

32. The Crying Indian advertisements are a prime public example of the use of an oppositional—yet simultaneously safely powerless—Native identity to elicit feelings of guilt from “middle- and upper-class Americans who worried about their complicity in the environmental crisis and romanticized the pristine past of the American Indian” (Dunaway, “Gas Masks, Pogo, and the Ecological Indian,” 94).

33. Major films that depict Native Americans as ecological Indians include *Dances with Wolves* (1990) and Disney's *Pocahontas* (1995). For examples of ecological Indians in environmental literature, see John Bierhorst, *The Way of the Earth: Native America and the Environment* (New York: Quill, 1994); Bill Devall and George Sessions, *Deep Ecology* (Layton, UT: Gibbs Smith, 1985); and David Suzuki and Peter Knudtson, *Wisdom of the Elders: Sacred Native Stories of Nature* (New York: Bantam Books, 1992).

34. Project Learning Tree, "OurHistory," http://www.plt.org/cms/pages/21_19_2.html (accessed 5 November 2008).

35. American Forest Foundation, *Project Learning Tree: Environmental Education Pre K-8 Activity Guide* (Washington, DC: American Forest Foundation, 2006), 320–24.

36. *Ibid.*, 324.

37. *Ibid.*, 320.

38. *Ibid.*

39. *Ibid.*, 320; parentheses in original.

40. *Ibid.*, 389–95.

41. *Ibid.*, 389.

42. *Ibid.*, 390.

43. *Ibid.*

44. *Ibid.*, 395. This passage comes from Luther Standing Bear, *Land of the Spotted Eagle* (1933; repr., Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006), 192.

45. *Ibid.*, 401–6.

46. Pioneers are also a common theme in environmental education. Although I do not promote stereotypical representations of any group, the dangers of imagining Euro-American settlers pale in comparison to the dangers of imagining Indians. A wide range of alternative and contemporary portrayals of Euro-Americans fill our society's popular media, literature, and classrooms. As well, a majority of environmental education audiences are not only Euro-American but also encounter scores of non-Native individuals each day. No matter what one's own ethnic/racial background is, we all know that Euro-Americans still exist, and that they don't all live in log cabins. In contrast, most environmental education audiences know American Indians not as real people but as TV characters, mascots, and, as in this case, ecological role models from a romanticized past.

47. Edward Duensing, *Talking to Fireflies, Shrinking the Moon: Nature Activities for All Ages* (Golden, CO: Fulcrum Publishing, 1997); Warner Shedd, *The Kids' Wildlife Book: Exploring Animal Worlds through Indoor/Outdoor Experiences* (Charlotte, VT: Williamson Publishing, 1994).

48. Duensing, *Talking to Fireflies*, 20.

49. Shedd, *Kids' Wildlife Book*, 8.

50. *Ibid.*, 23.

51. Bruchac is an Abenaki storyteller and writer. In addition, *Keepers of the Earth* includes a foreword by N. Scott Momaday (Kiowa) and illustrations by John Kahionhes Fadden (Mohawk).

52. Joseph Bruchac and Michael J. Caduto, *Keepers of the Animals: Native American Stories and Wildlife Activities for Children* (Golden, CO: Fulcrum Publishing, 1997), 5.

53. Joseph Bruchac and Michael J. Caduto, *Keepers of the Earth: Native American Stories and Environmental Activities for Children* (Golden, CO: Fulcrum Publishing, 1997), xxiii. Other books in this series include *Keepers of the Night: Native American Stories and Nocturnal Activities for Children* (Golden, CO: Fulcrum Publishing, 1994) and *Keepers*

of Life: Discovering Plants through Native American Stories and Earth Activities for Children (Golden, CO: Fulcrum Publishing, 1997).

54. The programs Native Americans and the Earth (Wisconsin), Creek and Cherokee (Georgia), Native American Culture and Customs (Connecticut), Native Americans (Maryland), Listening to the Past (Michigan), and Native Americans of the Foothills (California) are among those I found using a simple online search in the early spring of 2009.

55. Bronislaw Malinowski, *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (1922; repr., Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, 1984), 25.

56. As Mihesuah points out, “unless teachers are required to enroll in courses that focus upon minorities, they will continue to learn about Indians the same way almost everyone else does: through faulty images projected in movies and literature” (*American Indians Stereotypes and Realities*, 117).

57. Huxley College of the Environment (based at Western Washington University) exemplifies this type of holistic approach to environmental teaching and learning. As the college’s Web site states, “The Huxley College approach to educating about the environment is inclusive. We believe that natural science lies at the core of the field, for a measure of scientific knowledge is necessary to understand environmental issues and problems and possible solutions to them. Yet while science is necessary, it is not sufficient to address this set of challenges. The underlying causes of environmental difficulties are social and cultural, lying deeply in the realm of values and perceptions of humans and nature.” Huxley College of the Environment, <http://www.wwu.edu/huxley/medenvd/index.htm> (accessed 30 July 2009).

58. Michael Tlanusta Garrett (“Two People’: An American Indian Narrative of Bicultural Identity,” *Journal of American Indian Education* 36 [1996]: 3) characterizes bicultural American Indians as individuals who are “simultaneously able to know, accept, and practice both mainstream values and the traditional values and beliefs of their cultural heritage.”

59. Some examples of these youth programs are summarized in the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission’s quarterly publication *Mazina’igan*. In addition to coverage of educational workshops ranging from gathering wild rice (“Somethings Old, Somethings New” [Winter 2008]: 6) to ice fishing (“Akwa’waawin: Spearing through the Ice” [Spring 2009]: 12–13), *Mazina’igan* regularly contains activity pages for children that spotlight a plant, an animal, or another natural resource and its cultural significance as well as dozens of informative articles on environmental themes for its adult readership. Recent issues of *Mazina’igan* can be viewed online at <http://www.glifwc.org/publications/Mazinaigan.html> (accessed day month year). The US Fish and Wildlife Service also sponsors Native American environmental education programs for Plains tribes. See http://www.fws.gov/southwest/REFUGES/oklahoma/wichitamountains/native_american_EE.html (accessed 30 July 2009).

60. Malcolm Margolin, “Indian Pedagogy: A Look at Traditional California Indian Teaching Techniques,” in *Ecological Literacy: Educating Our Children for a Sustainable World*, ed. Michael Stone and Zenobia Barlow (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 2005), 70.

61. On Okanagan education, see Jeanette C. Armstrong, “Okanagan Education for Sustainable Living: As Natural as Learning to Walk,” *Ecological Literacy: Educating Our Children for a Sustainable World*, ed. Stone and Barlow, 80–84.