

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
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Beyond School Walls: Race, Labor, and Indian Education
in Southern California, 1902-1940

A Dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of

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in

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by

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Beyond School Walls: Race, Labor, and Indian Education
in Southern California, 1902-1940

by

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Dr. Clifford E. Trafzer, Chairperson

During the early twentieth century, officials from the Office of Indian Affairs sent hundreds of Native people from around the American Southwest to live and work within white-owned households and businesses under the umbrella of a program called the “outing system.” Such work, they argued, would make young Indians more like the white, Protestant people with whom they lived and labored. Young men from Sherman Institute, a federal Indian boarding school in Riverside, California, dealt with low pay and dangerous conditions as they used the outing system to find work on industrial farms across Southern California. Likewise, Native women who found work via the outing system faced isolation and unsupervised working conditions as they travelled far from home to labor as domestics in Los Angeles and surrounding communities.

While outing programs presented challenges to Native communities, they also presented opportunities. Archival sources from the Office of Indian Affairs reveal that in Southern California, federal programs that aimed to assimilate indigenous people through

labor became integral components within the survival strategies of young Native people and their communities during the early twentieth century. Native people from across the Southwest used outing programs at Sherman Institute and in Los Angeles to gain access to urban Southern California, its jobs, and its intertribal networks of indigenous peoples. Others used jobs secured through the outing system to earn significant wages and accrue new skills and perspectives. In many ways, Sherman Institute and the Los Angeles outing center became hubs within far-reaching migrations of Native people from across the American Southwest. In wealthy white homes, on factory floors and industrial farms, Native people combined education, mobility, and wage labor to forge modern pathways into the twentieth century. These students and their communities “turned the power,” making a federal bureaucracy that meant to erase Native identities into a crucial component within strategies for cultural survival.

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Introduction

The campus of Sherman Institute is not what it used to be. Rebranded by the Office of Indian Affairs as Sherman Indian High School in 1976, the federal Indian school located in the heart of Southern California Indian country has undergone drastic changes in its century-long existence. Sherman once stood at the forefront of government efforts to erase indigenous cultures, languages, and identities and replace them with the trappings of white, Protestant culture. As Indian identities faded away, argued administrators and bureaucrats for the Office of Indian Affairs, so too would the pesky treaty obligations accrued by the United States government as it spread westward across the North American continent. The push for the assimilation of indigenous peoples faded in the second half of the twentieth century as Native leaders transformed the schools into places that nurtured and respected indigenous cultures instead of erasing them. Today, indigenous cultures and languages form integral pieces of the curriculum at Sherman Indian High School. The efforts toward cultural genocide that once defined Sherman Institute and other federal Indian schools are now memories—albeit painful ones—for indigenous communities in the United States.¹

As the mission and curriculum changed at Sherman Institute, so did the campus itself. Built in 1902, the original campus stood as both a showcase for the Office of Indian Affairs and a grand homage to the Spanish fantasy past that came into fashion in Southern California during the early twentieth century. Carloads of tourists rode seven miles south and west along the citrus-laden Magnolia Avenue from downtown Riverside

to the school. Visitors entered the school from Magnolia Avenue and looked over a vast, green parade ground and neat lines of swaying palm trees to three grandiose, mission style buildings, complete with signature red tile roofs, stucco walls, arched windows, and bell-shaped parapets. The school's main classroom building stood at the center of the campus, flanked by administration and dormitory buildings on each side.²

The use of Mission Style architecture communicated an important message to the hundreds of visitors entered through the front gate of the school each month: Just as Spanish friars had supposedly "uplifted" indigenous Californians by teaching them Catholicism and making them work, so too would officials at Sherman Institute further the work of assimilating indigenous peoples into the dominant culture.³ Moreover, the use of Mission Style architecture at Sherman Institute fit neatly with the rapid popularization of the style in Southern California, placing the school within a broader campaign to draw tourists by promoting an idealized, carefree past in which Catholic priests converted unassuming Indians to Christianity and taught them how to work and pray. Some visitors came to witness cultural displays by students; Hopi dances proved particularly popular. Others came to relax and reflect among the aesthetic beauty of the new Indian school. The majority of visitors, however, came to see performances that demonstrated the tangible progress made by students on their supposed march from savagery to civilization, including plays, band concerts, and military exercises. For better or worse, the campus became a focal point for tourists and residents of Riverside alike.⁴

As the twentieth century marched onward, Sherman Institute grew larger in size and stature. Alongside Haskell Institute in Lawrence, Kansas, and Chemawa Indian

School in Salem, Oregon, Sherman Institute became one of the flagship institutions within the massive and misguided push to assimilate indigenous peoples into the broader fabric of white, Protestant America. As the size and scope of Sherman Institute grew more substantial, so too did the school's campus. From an original core of eleven buildings used by 350 students in 1902, Sherman Institute expanded to more than forty buildings at the height of its enrollment in the late 1920s, when over one thousand students attended the school.⁵

The rapid growth of the campus allowed for yet another venue to showcase the progress students in their alleged march away from Indianness and toward whiteness: construction. While local contractors built the original core of the campus, student laborers performed the vast majority of work as the school expanded rapidly for the two decades following its opening. Slowly but surely, young men from the school added buildings to the campus: dormitories for students, living quarters for employees, a hospital, vocational workshops, farm buildings, and an auditorium, among other structures. While the school paid students pithy wages for their efforts, administrators claimed the seemingly never-ending construction projects as valuable components of the vocational training programs that stood at the center of the school's curriculum. From the early twentieth century onward, the Office of Indian Affairs geared its push for assimilation toward training Native peoples to enter civilization as domestic workers, agricultural workers, and common laborers. As students constructed the campus, then, they gained valuable experience as carpenters, blacksmiths, plasterers, painters, and masons. If precise military drills and expert performances of Bach and Shakespeare

provided tangible evidence of the student body's climb up the so-called ladder of civilization, so too did the built environment in which they studied, worked, and lived.⁶

Sherman's original campus lasted until 1970, when inspectors from the state of California declared the vast majority of the school's structures unfit to withstand earthquakes.⁷ As the decrepit buildings came tumbling down, so too did one of the centerpieces of the labor curriculum that sought to assimilate Native students during the first half of the twentieth century. Today, visitors to Sherman Indian High School are hard pressed to find evidence of the school's original physical structure. Only the superintendent's office survived the rash of demolitions. The building still stands at the corner of Jackson and Magnolia Avenues, where it houses Sherman Indian Museum, a crowded, three-room treasure trove that holds rich volumes of documents and photographs related to the history of Sherman Institute. Over the past two decades, author, teacher, and museum curator Lorene Sisquoc (Apache/Cahuilla) has skillfully guided a growing cadre of researchers through these documents, which now form the backbone of a substantial and growing collection of published scholarship on the school's history.

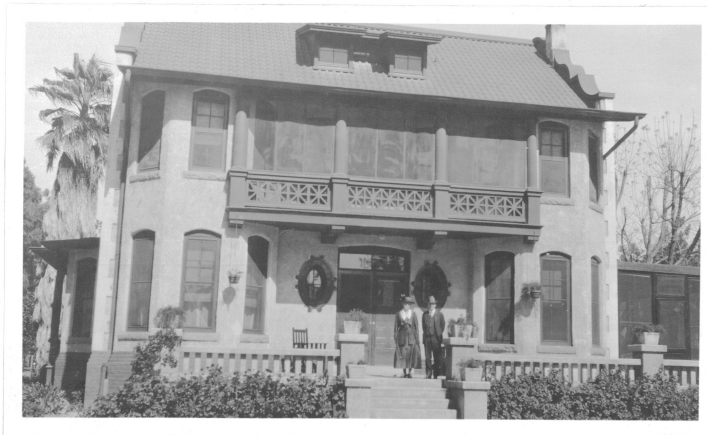


Home No. 1. - Employees' cottage. (For 12 single employees)



*Employees' and Club Building. (New)
Built by student labor.*

Figure 0.1. Employees' Cottage and Employees' Club Building. An unknown caption writer boasts that the Employees' and Club Building was "built by student labor." Photo courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.



Superintendent's Cottage (Mr. & Mrs. Conser!)



*Girls Industrial Building.
Notice annex and remodeling
work being done by students.*

Figure 0.2. Superintendent's Cottage and Girls' Industrial Building. At top, Sherman Institute Superintendent Frank Conser and his wife stand in front of their residence. The caption writer asks viewers to "notice annex and remodeling work being done by students." Photo courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.

At first glance, it appears as though the photographs and written correspondences housed in the museum are all that remain of the old campus and the labor performed by the students who built it. Look carefully, though, and a few pieces of the old school remain scattered across the vast, palm-laden campus. As I sat inside the Sherman Indian Museum and combed through school labor records, for example, I worked at an ornately decorated, ten-foot-long oak table, complete with intricately carved feet. Museum attendant Galen Townsend (Shoshone/Paiute) proudly noted that the table had been made by students under the supervision of his father, Ross, who worked as a carpenter and shop teacher at the school from the 1930s through the 1960s. I asked Townsend what other student-produced items survived the transition from old campus to new. The normally gregarious man, now in his seventies, ran his hand through his neatly trimmed moustache and sat in quiet thought. “Come on,” he said. “Let’s go outside.” Townsend took me out the front door of the old museum and across the parking lot to the curbside of Magnolia Avenue, the bustling, palm-lined thoroughfare that has long connected Sherman Institute and Sherman Indian High School with Riverside’s downtown. Leading me to the bus stop at the corner of Magnolia Avenue and Jackson Street, Townsend gingerly touched his cane to a bus bench. “Students made these benches during the 1930s,” he said. The bench consisted of a thick concrete plank laid across two sturdy feet—far less detailed than the table Townsend had pointed to inside the museum. Still, it had lasted eighty years. “This bench,” said Townsend, “has been here my whole life.” For those waiting to ride the Number One Route down Magnolia Avenue and into downtown Riverside, we must have

been a curious sight: An old man and a young one, quietly admiring a bus bench in the late-afternoon sunlight.

Though I did not detect it that day as I strolled the grounds of Sherman Indian High School with Galen Townsend, there was more than a little irony in our conversation. The campus at Sherman Institute was supposed to be a place of rapid and indelible transformation, a place where young people shed indigenous cultures and languages and emerged into white, Protestant civilization as common laborers who would work their way from the bottom upward. Nothing embodied this transformation more thoroughly than the body of the campus itself. It was, after all, built largely with student labor. At best, the very process of construction was supposed to spur a transformational process that would make students less like Indians and more like white, Protestant Americans. At worst, it would prepare students to leave behind their Native identities and enter the broader body politic of the United States as common laborers.

A little more than a century after Sherman Institute opened its doors, its efforts at assimilation have faded rapidly into the past. A wooden table and a concrete bench stood among the few objects from the first decades at Sherman Institute that have lasted into the twenty-first century. Meanwhile, indigenous cultures have survived well into the twenty-first century. The notion that manual labor would make indigenous people less Indian and more white now seems like a strange relic of the past. Assimilation died. Native communities and cultures lived on.

I am far from the first scholar to point out what historian Frederick E. Hoxie called “the irony of assimilation” a full quarter of a century ago. Boarding schools, noted

Hoxie, ultimately galvanized indigenous identities instead of erasing them.⁸ More recently, historians Clifford E. Trafzer and Patricia Dixon argued that students “turned the power” and used elements of their own cultures to survive the day-to-day challenges of federal Indian boarding schools and emerge with their cultures intact, or even strengthened.⁹ At Sherman Institute and federal Indian boarding schools across the western United States, young people often carved out secret spaces where they spoke their Native languages, sang, danced, hunted, and practiced other elements of their cultures.¹⁰ Away from the watchful eyes of school employees, students developed intertribal friendships and romances that sowed the seeds of the pan-tribalism that came to characterize Native political activism in the twentieth century.¹¹ Whether motivated by homesickness or abusive treatment, many students chose to run away from school.¹² Since the late 1980s, a small but growing group of scholars has delved into the boarding school experience and provided a deeper, more textured understanding of the creative approaches taken by indigenous students and communities in order to survive the boarding school era of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries with their cultures intact.¹³

To date, student labor at federal Indian boarding schools has not been explored as an area in which Native people exercised agency in order to preserve their cultures and identities. Many, if not most scholars of Indian education have noted the centrality of work within boarding school experiences. Throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, courses of study adopted by the Office of Indian Affairs for its Indian schools called for students to spend one half of each day in academic courses, and the

other half of the day performing labor related to the upkeep of the school.¹⁴ Many also participated in the “outing system,” a program that sent students to live and work within white households and businesses. Such work, school administrators believed, would make Native students more like the white, Protestant families with whom they lived and labored.¹⁵ Historian Michael Coleman has noted how at least some students took pride in the opportunity to work and make money, and American Indian activist and historian Adam Fortunate Eagle attributed much of his success in life to vocational learning at the Pipestone Indian School in Pipestone, Minnesota, during the 1930s and 1940s.¹⁶ Yet, most scholarly assessments of labor at federal Indian boarding schools have been brief portions of larger works, and have focused almost exclusively on the negative effects of labor systems within the schools. Time spent working took away from academic learning, for example, and many students experienced physical exhaustion, illness, and even death from days packed with classroom time and demanding, physical tasks such as doing laundry, cooking, baking, sewing, and farming, among others. Navajo Irene Stewart, a memoirist and a former student at Fort Defiance Indian School, captured with a simple sentence the dilemmas faced by overworked students at boarding schools: “We were too tired to study.”¹⁷

While scholars of Indian education have scoured archives and conducted interviews to unearth the actions and strategies of indigenous people within the day-to-day struggle of life at federal Indian boarding schools, much remains to be learned about how Native students and communities approached labor programs at the schools. Vocational curricula, student labor related to the upkeep of the schools, and outing

systems that sent students to work within white-owned households and businesses came to dominate the boarding school experience during the first half of the twentieth century. Just as they did with other elements of the misguided experiment in assimilationist education, Native students and communities survived the labor programs that aimed to assimilate them. At times, their approaches to labor programs even contributed to the survival of indigenous cultures and identities into the twentieth century. The question, then, is *how*?

Since the late 1990s, a small but growing cadre of scholars has pioneered the study of Native labor. Their work suggests possibilities for new directions in the study of Indian education and labor. Anthropologists Alice Littlefield and Martha Knack noted that well into the mid-1990s, scholars often ignored the participation of indigenous individuals and communities within wage labor markets. They did so, suggested the authors, out of a desire to find and preserve authentic aboriginal cultures before they disappeared forever. Littlefield and Knack suggested that wage labor and indigenous identity were not mutually exclusive, and that Native communities sometimes blended new forms of work with longstanding cultural identities as they came into increasing contact with newcomers.¹⁸

In the decade following Littlefield and Knack's groundbreaking essay, a host of scholars began building a new historiography on indigenous work. Where scholars had once seen only cultural degradation among groups who engaged capitalist market economies, historian Brian C. Hosmer found a more complex story among the Menominee and Metlakatlan peoples. While the market presented challenges to both

groups, Hosmer found that they “attempted to reshape its operations so as to be less destructive to cultural values on the one hand and productive of political and economic independence on the other.”¹⁹ Historian Colleen O’Neill found similar processes among Navajo people during the first half of the twentieth century. As Navajos migrated and worked for wages, argued O’Neill, they did so “in ways that made sense within their own cultural frameworks.”²⁰ Historian William J. Bauer, Jr., placed even more emphasis on indigenous agency within the capitalist marketplace. Indigenous peoples on California’s Round Valley Reservation, argued Bauer, “used wage labor to ensure family economic survival, forge social connections with other Native people in Northern California, and maintain close connections with the land.” For people at Round Valley, picking hops and shearing sheep served not only as avenues for survival, but as galvanizing processes in which their cultural identities became intertwined.²¹

Hosmer, O’Neill, and Bauer, among others, made two critical interventions within the fields of Native American history and labor history. First, they argued convincingly that indigenous peoples of the early twentieth century did not become completely defined by the rapidly changing economic, social, and political conditions in which they lived and labored. Rather, they maintained an important degree of control over their lives and cultures as they carefully and creatively integrated wage labor within their worldviews and practices.²² And, just as significantly, these scholars helped put to rest the antiquated notion that indigenous peoples failed to remain “real Indians” when they engaged with capitalist markets and wage work. While the term “capitalism” has become fundamentally intertwined with concepts such as progress and modernity, many

indigenous groups managed to engage with the marketplace in ways that allowed for, and even strengthened older, more conservative indigenous cultures and identities. For Native peoples, modernity and cultural identity did not play out as an either/or affair. Rather, as O'Neill and Hosmer argued, indigenous peoples “created alternative pathways of economic and cultural change that were not merely static renditions of some timeless past or total acceptance of U.S. capitalist culture.”²³

In Southern California, federal programs that aimed to assimilate indigenous people through labor became integral components within the survival strategies of young Native people and their communities during the early twentieth century. Native people from across the Southwest used federal outing programs at Sherman Institute and in Los Angeles to gain access to urban Southern California, its jobs, and its intertribal networks of urban Indians. In many ways, Sherman Institute and the Los Angeles outing center became hubs within far-reaching migrations of Native people from across the American Southwest. In wealthy white homes, on factory floors and industrial farms, young men and women braved unsupervised and often dangerous working conditions in order to make more money than they could at home on their reservations. These students and their communities “turned the power,” making a federal bureaucracy that meant to erase Native identities into a crucial component within strategies for cultural survival.

As indigenous students from across the American Southwest learned to navigate the outing system, they combined labor, migration, and expertise in federal bureaucracy in order to forge creative and deeply modern pathways forward into the second half of the twentieth century. “Beyond School Walls” tells their stories. Chapter One traces the

experiences of the first pioneers of outing labor in Southern California. Chapter Two explores the lives of male students from Sherman who worked and lived at Fontana Farms, an industrial farm located fifteen miles South of Riverside in Fontana, California. Later, when the Office of Indian Affairs opened an outing center in Los Angeles, young women quickly developed employment networks and social circles. While the outing center became underfunded, they nonetheless adeptly used it as a window into jobs and housing in the city. Chapter three examines indigenous approaches to domestic work in Los Angeles, while Chapter Four dissects the chronically understaffed outing bureaucracy that often left student-laborers in tenuous positions. Finally, when the Office of Indian Affairs abandoned its efforts to assimilate indigenous peoples through labor and closed or reduced outing programs in schools and cities, Native people pivoted from labor programs to higher education by beginning a decade-long push for the federal government to provide loans and housing as they attended colleges and universities across the United States. Chapter Five addresses reactions to this change in federal policy among Native students and their communities.

By the time that students and their communities began forming measured approaches to the outing system at Sherman Institute and in Los Angeles, indigenous communities in North America had dealt with attempts at assimilation and uplift via labor for as long as four centuries. Roman Catholic orders established missions in California as early as 1512. Mission fathers worked to separate young indigenous people, whom they referred to as “neophytes,” from their communities in order to make them more like Spanish, Catholic newcomers.²⁴ In a precursor to the federal Indian boarding schools of

the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, life within the walls of the missions revolved around labor. Native people within the missions lived under daily routines characterized by regimented, time-oriented work schedules, spatial confinement, and constant surveillance by church officials, and indigenous labor powered nearly every facet of mission society. Indigenous workers in the missions worked as shoe and harness makers, weavers, tailors, soap makers, masons, carpenters, shepherds, and agricultural laborers, among other jobs. The price of supposed salvation, it seemed, was steep.²⁵

On the eastern side of North America, colonists from France and Great Britain also engaged in efforts to Christianize and “civilize” indigenous peoples. In the Northeast, Puritan missionary John Eliot learned to preach in Algonquian languages and created “Praying Towns” for Native people who held some interest in Christianity. Eliot and other missionaries also built day schools for the education of indigenous peoples, although these schools bore little resemblance to the day schools that the Office of Indian Affairs would operate in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Further south, Anglican missionaries made fleeting efforts to educate indigenous peoples Chesapeake and Tidewater southward into the Carolinas, and Methodists and Moravians worked among tribes of Georgia and the Carolinas. Finally, small numbers of Native people attended colleges in the colonies, including William and Mary, Dartmouth, and Harvard.²⁶ While the form and function of efforts at Christianization of indigenous peoples in the eastern colonies differed by region, all shared a pair of common goals: to get Native people to demonstrate outward signs of salvation, and to send converted Indians to proselytize among their peoples. Eurocentric forms of labor rested at the heart of these efforts. Only

when indigenous peoples adopted Christianity in tandem with trades and vocations familiar to settlers, especially farming, would they truly become “civilized.”²⁷

The newcomers who worked to teach the virtues of European-derived forms of worship and work failed to acknowledge that, like people from all cultures, the vast array of American Indian peoples in the United States had well-established cultural practices of education and labor. Historian J.R. Miller has argued that indigenous communities educated their children for two primary purposes: to teach young people how to organize the world and learn their place within it, and to impart them with the skills necessary to become a contributing member of their community.²⁸ It is, of course, dangerous to generalize about education and labor practices among the myriad indigenous peoples of North America. But, as Miller notes, one can make some cautious observations about broad differences between styles of learning and working among natives and newcomers without doing violence to the former.²⁹

One of the significant differences between indigenous and white systems of learning and working centered on style and context of instruction. Many Native communities relied less on formal, classroom-based, didactic instruction and more on context-based, observational learning.³⁰ As a general rule, young children quietly observed older people as they completed labor tasks in a process Miller has called “the three Ls”—looking, listening, and learning. Games played by young children often mimicked these formal work activities. Once a child reached puberty, he or she began receiving more formal instruction. Processes of teaching and learning often relied on repetitive, experiential processes combined with gentle instruction and, when needed,

encouragement. Direct, verbal confrontation from teacher to student took place much more rarely than in the didactic systems of teaching and learning practiced within many European cultures. Finally, orally transmitted stories, and the languages in which they were told, played critical roles within education processes throughout indigenous America, as they preserved and transferred ethical, theological, historical, ecological, and political information.³¹ Historians Clifford E. Trafzer, Matthew Sakiestewa Gilbert, and Lorene Sisquoc have noted common elements within the transmission of oral histories. Within Palouse and Nez Perce communities, for example, elders recited stories to younger tribal members. Storytellers would then ask one of their listeners to repeat the story. After correcting mistakes in the recitation and making sure that the young person understood where they erred, elders would ask for another recitation, and so on. By this kind of thorough but sensitive pedagogical practice, indigenous communities transmitted laws, mores, and religious practices to their young people.³²

For officials in Indian affairs, of course, indigenous ways of learning and working remained invisible or invalid as efforts to make American Indians abandon their ways of living and working intensified following the American Revolution. As the United States struggled during its fledgling years in its relationships with indigenous peoples, Secretary of War John Knox and President Thomas Jefferson laid the ideological foundations that would underpin future attempts to fully immerse Native peoples within the white, Protestant fabric of American life. For both men, teaching Native peoples the tenets of European-style trades and agriculture would lie at the heart of their efforts.³³ Faced with growing conflicts between land-hungry whites and indigenous peoples, Knox asserted

that the best way to avoid removing Indians would be to “civilize” them. Steeped in the literature of the enlightenment, he argued that surrounding Indians with the components of yeoman-style agriculture—domesticated animals, farm implements, and wheat—would fundamentally transform indigenous peoples, preparing them for peaceful co-existence with white Americans. Knox dreamed of white missionaries venturing among tribes to serve as educators, as well as “friends and fathers.” Once Indians possessed the tools for European-style farming, Knox asserted, they would surely abandon tribal cultures in favor of the ethos of private property and accumulation of wealth. In transforming the land from wilderness to farm, Indians themselves would undergo a fundamental change from savagery to whiteness.³⁴ Just as importantly, once Indians adopted European lifestyles, they would be able to reside on their own lands without inciting violence from ever-encroaching whites.³⁵

Much like Knox, Thomas Jefferson sought to assimilate Native peoples to free up land for white settlers. “Humanity enjoins us,” declared Jefferson, “to teach [Native Americans] agriculture and the domestic arts.”³⁶ Like Knox, he argued that the Indian capacity for change could be accelerated through European-style labor, especially yeoman farming. “Industry,” Jefferson proclaimed, “... would enable them to maintain their place in existence and... prepare them in time for that state of society which to bodily comfort adds the improvement of the mind and morals.”³⁷ Foreshadowing the attitude of arch-assimilationist Richard Henry Pratt, Jefferson preached an almost radical belief in the transformative power of the environment, even proclaiming that engagement in single-crop agriculture would whiten the skin of Indian peoples.³⁸ The United States

Congress passed the Indian Civilization Act in 1819, and the bill codified into law the formal propagation of Christianity and vocational labor among indigenous peoples. Alongside Indian agents, the United States government sent missionaries and schoolteachers to teach Christianity, agriculture, and basic vocations such as blacksmithing. Under the purview of the bill, Congress authorized funding for twenty-one boarding schools to be operated by Christian missionaries.³⁹ As the young republic expanded westward across the North American continent, transforming indigenous ways of working and living quickly became enshrined within official policy.

Not all shared the confidence of Knox and Jefferson in the ability of Native peoples to participate within white, Protestant society that dominated the culture of the United States. Under the direction of President Andrew Jackson, the federal government abandoned intentions to educate and Christianize Native peoples of the Southeast and removed tribes to the west beginning in 1830. In the years following the Civil War, vocational education for Native peoples returned to prominence under the so-called Peace Policy, a complex set of policies put in place by President Ulysses S. Grant that focused especially on moving indigenous communities onto reservations. Congress allocated \$100,000 for Indian education in 1870, and it supplied a growing pool of money for the assimilation and “uplift” of indigenous peoples for the next five decades. Looking to clean up the greed and graft that had characterized Indian affairs in the years preceding his term, Grant hired representatives from each of the major Christian denominations—people he thought were sure to adhere to the highest moral standards—to serve as Indian agents.⁴⁰

Beginning in 1873, these agents oversaw the rapid construction and staffing of day schools across Indian country. The Office of Indian Affairs built many of these schools near indigenous settlements so that children could attend class during the day and return to their families at night. Teachers emphasized the skills that had remained at the heart of government efforts to educate Indians since the days of Knox and Jefferson: basic literacy, farming, and vocations such as carpentry and blacksmithing.⁴¹ As the relationships between tribes and the federal government shifted during the late nineteenth century, the desire of federal officials to place Eurocentric forms of labor at the center of Indian-white relations remained constant.

During the last three decades of the nineteenth century, a military Captain named Richard Henry Pratt brought the perceived relationship between labor and “uplift” to the center of efforts to solve the so-called “Indian problem.” A cavalry member and veteran of the American Civil War, Pratt began his experiment with “uplift” through labor at Fort Marion in St. Petersburg, Florida, where he supervised a group of Cheyenne, Kiowa, Comanche, Arapahoe, and Caddo prisoners from 1875 until 1878. Pratt used labor as a means to expose his captives to the acquisitive, individualistic values of capitalism.⁴² The men polished sea beans and sold them to tourists, earning \$1,600 altogether. They also worked for area citrus, railroad, and timber companies.⁴³

In 1878, Pratt accompanied sixteen of his prisoners north to Hampton Institute, a school for black freedmen that counted Booker T. Washington among its alumni. At Hampton, labor remained the unifying thread within his efforts to eradicate the indigenous languages and identities of the Native people under his watch. Alongside

General Samuel Armstrong, Pratt created the first version of the “outing system,” under which he sent Native students from Hampton to live and work with white, Protestant farmers in Western Massachusetts. Not only would the students labor as idealized white, Protestant families did on yeoman-style farms, but they would live among members of the majority culture. This kind of cultural immersion, Pratt argued, would accelerate the process by which Native student-laborers would shed their tribal identities and embrace the language and worldview of the dominant, white population.⁴⁴

Less than a year after he arrived at Hampton, Pratt secured funding from the War Department to take his charges north Pennsylvania. There, he founded the Carlisle Industrial School, the first federally funded, off-reservation boarding school for American Indians. At Carlisle, Pratt made the outing system a centerpiece of the educational curriculum. A strong believer in the democratizing influence of yeoman agriculture, he sought to place his students on small, family operated farms. “Good country homes,” he said, would help young Indians “break away from the tribal commune” and “go out among our people and contend for the necessities and luxuries of life.” This kind of immersion, argued Pratt, would allow Native people to gain intellectual and social parity with their white, Protestant counterparts.⁴⁵

Students could enter the outing program in one of three ways. Most finished with academic work in late May and worked out for the summer, returning for classes in the fall. A smaller group remained on outing for the entire year. Pratt required that these students attend a local public school and perform their labor after school and on weekends. Finally, a select few learned skilled trades in urban settings. Ever suspicious of

the morally corrosive properties of city life, Pratt presented this option only to his most trusted students. Pratt designed the outing system with the greatest confidence that under the watchful eyes of virtuous yeomen, Carlisle students could abandon indigenous cultures and abide by what he saw as the hallmarks of American “civilization”—Christianity, the English language, and a love of manual labor.⁴⁶

In 1887, Pratt’s plan for assimilation became part of a two-pronged strategy run by the federal government in hopes of eliminating indigenous cultures, languages, and identities once and for all. In that year, Henry Dawes, a progressive senator from Massachusetts, passed through Congress a grand plan to break reservation lands into individual holdings. The result of a six-year push among a small but influential group of congressional Progressives, the Dawes Severalty Act of 1887 set forth a vague set of directives that aimed to “civilize” indigenous peoples by placing them on individually owned plots of land. Allotment would occur at different times for different tribes—whenever the President concluded that a given tribe had been adequately prepared for the demands of owning land as private property. Once an allotment was granted, the individual landowner would be unable to sell their parcel for a probationary period of twenty-five years. Native people would become citizens of the United States upon receipt of their individually owned plots.⁴⁷

As historian Frederick E. Hoxie has noted, the Dawes Act proved to be more a set of ideas than a hard and fast set of legislative edicts. It meant different things to different people. For Progressive reformers, individual land ownership and the curricula of Indian schools would form a potent one-two punch that would help indigenous peoples to more

rapidly shed their cultural identities and blend into the white, Protestant cultural majority of the United States. Others saw the new law as an opportunity to finally pull Indians away from their perceived reliance upon the treaty annuities that tribes had received in return for giving up land and resources.⁴⁸ For land-hungry settlers and their political representatives, the Dawes Act presented opportunities to quickly privatize and dispossess reservation lands. They took advantage of the malleable language put forth in the bill, adding riders and amendments that abrogated the twenty-five-year probationary period and allowed indigenous landholders to sell their plots if and when they found themselves in dire need of cash.⁴⁹ On many reservations, settlers and spectators brought rapid dispossession of land and resources to Indian country in the decades following the passage of the Dawes Act. The dovetailing policies of Dawes and Pratt came under threat almost as quickly as they had been built. Forces beyond the realm of Indian affairs would soon disrupt these plans even further.

At the turn of the twentieth century, the United States came into increasing contact with unfamiliar peoples, at home and abroad. To many, it appeared as if the so-called island communities of the nineteenth century were being pulled apart at the seams by newcomers from Southern and Eastern Europe. During the years after 1900, immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe poured into the United States at an unprecedented rate of close to one million per year.⁵⁰ Many Americans responded with what immigration historian John Higham called a “loss of confidence.”⁵¹ Where politicians, bureaucrats, and Indian reformers had once been confident in the ability of “savage” peoples to undergo the process of “uplift,” they recoiled. Indigenous peoples

around the world suddenly transformed from improvement projects to disappearing vestiges of bygone times.

American Indians did not hold immunity to these trends, as legislators and bureaucrats in the United States lost faith in the idea of assimilation and equal participation in American society for indigenous peoples.⁵² During the first decade of the twentieth century, for example, Superintendent of Indian Schools Estelle Reel declared that boarding schools should skip pedantry such as “the chemical and physical properties of matter” in favor of teaching young Indians to cook, sew, and do laundry.⁵³ “The importance of holding the work strictly within practical lines,” dictated Reel, “can not be too strongly impressed upon the instructor.”⁵⁴ In the Office of Indian Affairs, high hopes for the assimilation of Native peoples had faded quickly.⁵⁵ As Pratt’s outing system spread to Indian schools across the United States West, an increasingly negative outlook for the future of Native peoples brewed within the circles of legislators and reformers who held sway within Indian Affairs.

Richard Henry Pratt advocated whole-heartedly for the “uplifting” benefits of the outing system as he implemented it among the stolid yeomen of Western Massachusetts and the humble Quakers of Pennsylvania. He had reservations, however, about prospects for outing at boarding schools in the western United States. A philosophical environmentalist in the mold of Thomas Jefferson, Pratt believed that a person’s surroundings affected the development of their physical and mental characteristics. For Pratt, then, the American West, only a generation removed from initial white settlement, was no place to attempt to civilize young people.⁵⁶ Labor-starved factory and farm

owners compounded the “uncivilized” state of affairs. Those who hired Native laborers via the outing system would likely hold more interest in securing cheap labor than aiding in the process of “uplift.” Lamenting that the west lacked the “refined environment and personal touch” of the genteel eastern United States, Pratt warned that any attempt to implement outing in the West would almost surely end in “flat failure.”⁵⁷

Pratt’s warnings about outing in the west proved prescient. At the Phoenix Indian School in Arizona, superintendent and future head of Sherman Institute Harwood Hall proclaimed in 1894 that the outing system at his school would serve as an employment agency rather than a means to promote equality between American Indian peoples and whites. “The school,” wrote Hall to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Hiram Price, “can thus serve as an employment agency, whereby the deserving Indian pupil can secure employment as soon as qualified.” Hall left little doubt that under his watch, the outing system at Phoenix would center on the provision of cheap labor to white Phoenicians rather than any sort of education for Native participants. “The hiring of an Indian youth is not looked upon by the people of this valley from a philanthropic standpoint,” said Hall. “It is simply a matter of business.”⁵⁸ In Phoenix, the moral and intellectual development of students, so cherished by Richard Henry Pratt, took a back seat to providing cheap labor for white businesses and households.

As the outing system expanded at the Phoenix school, it focused mostly on providing domestic workers to well-off, white Phoenicians. By 1896, Hall sent nearly 200 young women to work in white homes within the city. When Samuel McCowan took over as superintendent of the Phoenix Indian School in 1897, he expressed disapproval

over what would eventually become the primary shortcoming of the outing system as it took shape in Southern California. McCowan noted that the families for which outing workers labored “care nothing for them except for the work they can get from them,” and that outing system as it had functioned under Hall “lacked careful supervision” of domestic workers. The outing system, declared McCowan, was “more of a curse than a blessing” to the young women it proclaimed to uplift.⁵⁹

McCowan lobbied successfully for the Office of Indian Affairs to hire a full-time outing matron. From 1900 onward, a series of matrons lived at the school and supervised young women who worked as domestics in Phoenix. This did little to change the fundamental nature of the program, however. The outing system at the Phoenix Indian school continued to function as a labor source for households and businesses into the twentieth century, even if an outing matron in Phoenix provided an extra layer of supervision. By the 1920s, the program almost ceased to work with students of the school, as the outing matron focused instead on matching older Pima and Tohono O’odham women with employers in the city. If Richard Henry Pratt’s fingerprints had ever existed upon the outing system in Phoenix, they were no longer present.⁶⁰

The growth of outing at the Phoenix Indian School represented a few broader trends within the development of outing systems at boarding schools nation wide. Gender roles had shifted at Phoenix. Pratt had imagined the outing system primarily as a means to prepare young men to work and provide for nuclear families, while women could learn to keep house by assisting farm wives.⁶¹ But employer demand had changed the program, as Native maids became a popular symbol of affluence among the well heeled of

Phoenix. As outing programs spread to boarding schools throughout the west, other schools followed suit by focusing primarily on supplying young women to work as domestics in the homes of local white patrons. These locations included the Fort Mojave School in Arizona and Genoa Industrial School and Haskell Institute, both in Nebraska.⁶² Sherman Institute would also focus its outing program primarily on sending young women out to work during the first decade of the twentieth century.

The shift away from the outing system as a tool for education and towards the operation of a simple labor agency foreshadowed how the Office of Indian Affairs would approach outing in the coming years. In its earliest forms, outing had been implemented at boarding schools in conjunction with school curricula as a “supreme Americanizer” that supplemented classroom learning and vocational practice with experience living and working in the midst of white, Protestant people. By the early twentieth century, outing focused less on uplift and more on satiating the desires of white households and businesses for Native laborers. The outing matron at Phoenix became the first of many who would work independently of any federal school. In Tucson, Arizona, Reno, Nevada, Albuquerque, New Mexico, and Los Angeles and Berkeley, California, domestic work functioned without formal affiliations with federal Indian boarding schools.⁶³ In the eyes of officials from the Office of Indian Affairs, the menial labor of outing work became a terminal destination for Native women rather than a brief stop along a path toward assimilation into the dominant white society.

Tucson became the next city to host an outing system in 1916, when the Office of Indian Affairs hired Outing Matron Minnie Estabrook to supervise Native domestic

workers there. Women from a Tohono O’odham community adjacent to the city had worked in white households in Tucson since the late nineteenth century, and concerns over their conduct led to Estabrook’s appointment. Employers of domestic workers grew frustrated when their employees simply found new jobs whenever they felt they suffered from poor treatment or subpar pay. Others complained that the behavior of Tucson’s Native maids failed to conform to Victorian mores of gender and sexuality. Estabrook and her successors sought to better control Native domestic workers and keep them from changing employers at will. In keeping with the trend that developed in Phoenix, then, Estabrook did not come to Tucson to make outing more conducive to the “uplift” of Tohono O’odham women. Instead, she sought to root out and punish behavior that ran counter to the desires of employers—in other words, to protect the women from both their perceived sexual proclivities, as well as the sexual vulnerability they experienced while working in white homes.⁶⁴ In Tucson as well as Phoenix, providing cheap, efficient labor in a manner that pleased white employers outweighed the importance of any perceived benefit to the Native women who worked in white homes.

In the years following Estabrook’s appointment, outing centers spread rapidly through the major metropolitan centers of the western United States. By 1918, the Office of Indian Affairs had opened new outing offices in Los Angeles, Albuquerque, Berkeley, and Reno. High demand for domestic laborers in cities of the Western United States during the early twentieth century fueled the growth of urban outing systems during the 1920s. Historian Margaret Jacobs has noted that in the San Francisco Bay Area, a rapidly expanding middle class found relatively few women available to work as domestics. The

booming cities of the western United States faced frequent labor crunches during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The market for domestic workers likely proved to be no exception, and the Office of Indian Affairs did not hesitate to send young Native women into this void.⁶⁵

If employers in Tucson, San Francisco, and Los Angeles actively sought out Native domestic workers, indigenous women in all three places chose to work, often with alacrity. As Victoria K. Haskins argued, Tohono O'odham women developed networks of domestic employment in Tucson long before the Office of Indian Affairs attempted to regulate and control their work.⁶⁶ The same likely proved true in Los Angeles and the San Francisco Bay Area. By the time that the outing center opened in Los Angeles in 1918, Quechan and Mojave women had already developed intimate knowledge of where and how to secure domestic work in the city. These women could, and often did, arrange employment beyond the purview of any outing matron or reservation superintendent. Alongside high demand for domestic workers, then, preexisting networks of domestic employment likely meant that indigenous women would find work in the city, whether or not the Office of Indian Affairs attempted to supervise and provide them a measure of protection.

During the early twentieth century, confluences between indigenous and white worlds often revolved around ideas about labor, its shape and form, and its proper place within society and culture. After a generation of interaction with the federal government, many indigenous communities had already become experts in bureaucracy. They would respond creatively to efforts to control and remold their identities through labor,

eventually integrating outing programs into patchworks of migration and work formed in response to the rise of artificially depressed reservation economies. At the turn of the twentieth century, however, many indigenous groups in the Western United States had yet to experience government outing programs. In Southern California, Sherman Institute became the first point of entry for Native people into outing labor. It is there we turn first.

Endnotes

1. For a comprehensive look at the push to assimilate indigenous peoples into the dominant white, Protestant culture of the United States during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, see David Wallace Adams, *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1995). See also John Reyhner and Joanne Eder, *American Indian Education: A History* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2004). On the role of the eradication of indigenous languages within the broader push for the assimilation of Native peoples, see Ruth Spack, *America's Second Tongue: American Indian Education and Ownership of English, 1860-1900* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002).
2. Robert McCoy, "Mission Architecture and Sherman Institute," in *The Indian School on Magnolia Avenue: Voices and Images from Sherman Institute*, edited by Clifford E. Trafzer, Matthew Sakiestewa Gilbert, and Lorene Sisquoc (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2012), 35-64.
3. Ibid., 50-55. As McCoy notes, the romanticized view of California's missions held by many during the early twentieth century ignored the "forced confinement, hard labor, sexual abuse, or harsh punishments that constituted the reality of life at the missions."
4. See William Oscar Medina, "Selling Indians at Sherman Institute, 1902-1922" PhD diss., University of California, Riverside, 2007.
5. McCoy, "Mission Architecture and Sherman Institute," 42; Inspection Report of J.L. Perry, February 4, 1927, Box 3, Folder: 22599-1927, Central Classified Files, Records of Sherman Institute, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75, National Archives, Washington, D.C. (hereinafter referred to as CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NADC).
6. In a report on Sherman Institute to the Office of Indian Affairs, Assistant Commissioner of Indian Affairs E.B. Merritt bragged that the use of student labor had allowed for "remarkably efficient construction work... at about one-third the cost of the open market." E.B. Merritt to Sherman Institute Superintendent Frank Conser, January 8, 1927, Personnel File for Frank Conser, National Personnel Records Center, St. Louis, MO (hereinafter referred to as NPRC).
7. McCoy, "Mission Architecture and Sherman Institute," 60.
8. Frederick E. Hoxie, *A Final Promise: The Campaign to Assimilate the Indians, 1880-1920* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), 239-44.
9. Clifford E. Trafzer and Patricia Dixon, "The Place of American Indian Boarding Schools in Contemporary Society," in *Boarding School Blues: Revisiting American*

Indian Educational Experiences, edited by Clifford Trafzer, Jean Keller, and Lorene Sisquoc (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006), 237.

10. See especially K. Tsianina Lomawaima, *They Called It Prairie Light: The Story of Chilocco Indian School* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994), 129-67.

11. See David Wallace Adams, "Beyond Bleakness: The Brighter Side of Indian Boarding Schools, 1870-1940," and Clyde Ellis, "We Had a Lot of Fun, Of Course, But That Wasn't The School Part," in *Boarding School Blues: Revisiting American Indian Educational Experiences*, edited by Clifford E. Trafzer, Jean Keller, and Lorene Sisquoc (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006), 35-64, 65-98.

12. On runaways, see Brenda Child, *Boarding School Seasons: American Indian Families, 1900-1940* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000), 87-95.

13. See especially Child, *Boarding School Seasons*; David Wallace Adams, *Education for Extinction*; Michael C. Coleman, *American Indian Children at School, 1850-1930* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1993); John Reyhner and Joanne Eder, *American Indian Education: A History* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2004).

14. Adams, *Education for Extinction*, 149; Coleman, *American Indian Children at School*, 112-115.

15. Adams, *Education for Extinction*, 156-63.

16. Coleman, *American Indian Children at School*, 114; Adam Fortunate Eagle, *Pipestone: My Life at an Indian Boarding School* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2010), 57-62, 82.

17. Coleman, *American Indian Children at School*, 113.

18. Alice Littlefield and Martha Knack, "Native American Labor: Retrieving History, Rethinking Theory," in *Native Americans and Wage Labor: Ethnohistorical Perspectives*, edited by Alice Littlefield and Martha Knack (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996), 3. Historian Daniel Usner has noted a similar tendency to draw a false dichotomy between "authenticity and annihilation" when considering relationships between Native peoples and wage labor. See his *Indian Work: Language and Livelihood in Native American History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009), 145.

19. Brian C. Hosmer, *American Indians in the Marketplace: Persistence and Innovation among the Menominees and Metlakatlans, 1870-1920* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1999), xii. For a study that focuses on cultural degeneration resulting from capitalist market engagement among indigenous groups, see Richard White, *The Roots of*

Dependency: Subsistence, Environment, and Social Change among the Choctaws, Pawnees, and Navajos (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1988).

20. Colleen O'Neill, *Working the Navajo Way: Labor and Culture in the Twentieth Century* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2005), 4.

21. William J. Bauer, Jr., *We Were All Like Migrant Workers Here: Work, Community, and Memory on California's Round Valley Reservation, 1850-1941* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), xii.

22. Here, I take important cues from Devra Weber's discussion of structure and agency within the writing of labor history. See her *Dark Sweat, White Gold: California Farm Workers, Cotton, and the New Deal* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996), 4.

23. See Colleen O'Neill and Brian Hosmer's Introduction in *Native Pathways: American Indian Culture and Economic Development in the Twentieth Century*, edited by Brian C. Hosmer and Colleen O'Neill (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2004), 3-4.

24. See Clifford E. Trafzer, Jean Keller, and Lorene Sisquoc's Introduction in *Boarding School Blues: Revisiting American Indian Educational Experiences*, edited by Clifford E. Trafzer, Jean Keller, and Lorene Sisquoc (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006), 7.

25. Lisbeth Haas, *Conquests and Historical Identities in California, 1769-1936* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995), 24-6.

26. See Margaret Connell Szasz, *Indian Education and the American Colonies, 1607-1783* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1988).

27. *Ibid.*, 4-7. In a precursor to the outing system, Indian schools began sending young women to work in white, Protestant homes as early as 1761, when officials at the Moor's Indian Charity School in Lebanon, New Hampshire, paid local white women to host Native students and teach them domestic arts within their homes. See Jane E. Simonsen, *Making Home Work: Domesticity and Native American Assimilation in the American West, 1860-1919* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), Kindle edition, location 1111/3619.

28. J.R. Miller, *Shingwauk's Vision: A History of Native Residential Schools* (Toronto and London: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 15.

29. *Ibid.*, 16-17.

30. Jacqueline Fear-Segal, *White Man's Club: Schools, Race, and the Struggle of Indian Acculturation* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007), 50.

31. Miller, *Shingwauk's Vision*, 20-38.

32. See Clifford E. Trafzer, Matthew Sakiestewa Gilbert, and Lorene Sisquoc's Introduction to *The Indian School on Magnolia Avenue*, 4.

33. For a concise summary of pre-removal federal Indian policy in the United States, see Reginald Horsman, "The Indian Policy of an 'Empire for Liberty,'" in *Native Americans and the Early Republic*, edited by Frederick E. Hoxie, Ronald Hoffman, and Peter J. Albert (Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 1999), 37-61.

34. *Ibid.*, 45.

35. Bernard Sheehan, *Seeds of Extinction: Jeffersonian Philanthropy and the American Indian* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1973), 25.

36. Horsman, "Empire for Liberty," 49.

37. *Ibid.*

38. Sheehan, *Seeds of Extinction*, 36.

39. Trafzer, Keller, and Sisquoc's Introduction to *Boarding School Blues*, 10. See also Francis Paul Prucha, *The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indians, Abridged Edition* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986), 48-63. For a look at efforts to "civilize" and educate a specific tribe during the early nineteenth century, see William G. McLaughlin, *Cherokee Renascence in the New Republic* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986).

40. Trafzer, Keller, and Sisquoc's Introduction to *Boarding School Blues*, 10-13

41. *Ibid.*

42. On the founding of Carlisle Industrial School, see Hoxie, *A Final Promise*, 54-57. On the assimilationist attitudes of Richard Henry Pratt, see Pratt's *Battlefield and Classroom: Four Decades with the American Indian, 1867-1904* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2004), and Elaine Goodale Eastman, *Pratt: The Red Man's Moses* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1935), 223.

43. Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, 118-130.

44. See Donal F. Lindsey, *Indians at Hampton Institute, 1877-1923* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 36-7. For a good overview of the outing system and its origins, see David Wallace Adams, *Education for Extinction*, 156- 61. See also Robert A. Trennert, Jr., "From Carlisle to Phoenix: The Rise and Fall of the Outing System, 1878-1930," *Pacific Historical Review* 52, no. 1 (1983): 267-91.

45. Quotes taken from Adams, *Education for Extinction*, 156-63.

46. For information on the mechanics of Pratt's outing system at Carlisle, see Adams, *Education for Extinction*, 156-63. For a good summary of how the system functioned in the western United States, see Trennert, "From Carlisle to Phoenix," 267-75.

47. Hoxie, *A Final Promise*, 72-80.

48. Ibid.

49. For a particularly poignant account of the dispossession that played out under the terms of the Dawes Act, see Melissa Meyer, *The White Earth Tragedy: Ethnicity and Dispossession at a Minnesota Anishinaabe Reservation, 1889-1920* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999).

50. Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876-1917* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2000), 193.

51. For information on the growth of anti-immigration sentiment during the early twentieth century, see John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925* (New Brunswick, NJ and London: Rutgers University Press, 1955), 145-55. See also Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues*, 18-57, 221-59.

52. Hoxie, *A Final Promise*, 83-146.

53. Quoted in Adams, *Education for Extinction*, 154. For a thorough look at Estelle Reel, see K. Tsianina Lomawaima, "Estelle Reel, Superintendent of Indian Schools, 1898-1910: Politics, Curriculum, and Land," *Journal of American Indian Education* 35, no. 3 (May 1996): 7-9.

54. Margaret Jacobs, "Working on the Domestic Frontier: American Indian Domestic Servants in White Women's Households in the San Francisco Bay Area, 1920-1940," *Frontiers: A Journal of Women's Studies* 27, nos. 1 and 2 (2007): 171.

55. On the diminishing expectations for Native people and a subsequent retreat from the notion that Native people could participate equally within white, Protestant society, see Frederick E. Hoxie, *A Final Promise*. See also Tom Holm, *The Great Confusion in*

Indian Affairs: Native Americans and Whites in the Progressive Era (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005).

56. On the environmentalist leanings of Richard Henry Pratt, see Trennert, "From Carlisle to Phoenix," 270-74. For a deeper look at the role of philosophical environmentalism within the development of Indian policy in the United States, see Bernard W. Sheehan, *Seeds of Extinction*.

57. Adams, *Education for Extinction*, 162; Victoria K. Haskins, *Matrons and Maids: Regulating Indian Domestic Service in Tucson, 1914-1934* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2012), 19; Trennert, "From Carlisle to Phoenix," 276-80.

58. Trennert, "From Carlisle to Phoenix," 280.

59. *Ibid.*, 281.

60. Haskins, *Matrons and Maids*, 23-27.

61. Adams, *Education for Extinction*, 156-63, 173-81.

62. Haskins, *Matrons and Maids*, 34.

63. *Ibid.*, 23-34; Jacobs, "Working the Domestic Frontier."

64. Haskins, *Matrons and Maids*, 54-6.

65. Jacobs, "Working on the Domestic Frontier," 172. For additional information on connections between Victorian gender ideals and domestic labor among Native women, see Robert Trennert, "Victorian Morality and the Supervision of Indian Women Working in Phoenix, 1906-1930," *Journal of Social History* 22 (1988): 113-28.

66. Haskins, *Matrons and Maids*, 35-54.

Chapter 1

Labored Learning: The Outing System at Sherman Institute

Just after sunset on June 5, 1925, Donald Franklin jumped down from the bed of an oversized truck and touched his feet to the dusty Kansas soil for the first time. Franklin and twenty-four Navajos from near Tuba City, Arizona, had just completed a long journey crowded shoulder to shoulder into the bed of a pickup. For five days and four nights, they rode northeast from Arizona through the mountains and high deserts of Arizona, New Mexico, and Colorado. After arriving on the high plains of Kansas, Franklin and his companions worked there for two months. Ten hours a day, they stooped in the dreadful Kansas heat and humidity, topping and harvesting sugar beets. The labor would be performed under the auspices of the “outing program” of Sherman Institute, an Indian boarding school in Riverside, California.¹ According to reformers, bureaucrats, and Indian schools administrators, such work would inculcate young Indians with the prerequisite qualities of racial “uplift”: thrift, economy, and a willingness to work. All of this would be done for the wages of a migrant laborer. Torturously long days, shoddy living quarters, and inadequate food made employer-run living quarters hellish places on other farms that utilized migrant labor. This one would likely be much the same.²

Despite these looming challenges, Franklin awoke on his first morning in Kansas filled with excitement rather than dread. Before trudging out to the fields for the first time, he wrote a letter to his love interest back at Sherman Institute. “I am getting along pretty fine and dandy with my every day live,” he wrote, “and sure injoy riding in truck

from Tuba City, Arizona to Kansas.” Franklin assured his sweetheart that his time away would pass quickly, and that they would be reunited when he returned to Sherman in the fall. In closing, he left little doubt as to his optimism. “Kansas,” he told his sweetheart, “is a wonderful place.”³ With these words, Franklin captured some of the most important complexities of the outing system. His participation in the outing system entailed hardship from the beginning, when he endured five straight days of bumpy roads and likely sleepless nights as he traveled from Arizona to Kansas. On the job, he faced long hours, low pay, and poor living conditions. Moreover, the work aimed to inculcate within him a resignation to a life of hard, manual labor. Yet Franklin embraced the experience, relishing the chance to see new places, make new friends, and earn money. For Franklin, the outing program became an adventure.

At best, the outing system functioned as a vital part of a larger federal Indian boarding school system that sought, in the words of historian Matthew Sakiestewa Gilbert, to make Indian students “think, behave, work, and look less like Native people, and more like white Protestant Americans.”⁴ Laboring in places as varied as print shops and beet fields would help, as Indian educator Richard Henry Pratt said, to “kill the Indian . . . and save the man.”⁵ At worst, the outing system saw government boarding schools function as employment agencies, sending young Indian people to perform dangerous, physically demanding tasks at discount wages.⁶ To be sure, the outing system proved harmful to many boarding school students: a gateway to lifelong marginal employment for some, and for others, a site of short-term suffering and exploitation.⁷ Yet if Franklin embraced the outing system and used it at least somewhat for his own

purposes, surely others must have too. A deep look at the outing program at Sherman Institute reveals a complicated story, one that saw limited expectations and the significant risks of isolated, menial labor set against the lures of money, adventure, and for some, significant work experience.

Sherman Institute opened its doors in Riverside, California, during the fall of 1902. The school had opened eight years earlier in Perris, California, which was sixteen miles south of its new location. At Perris, the outing system remained relatively small and restricted to female students. Between ten and twenty girls worked in the outing system each year, and the program generally operated only from June through August. Once placed into homes, female student-laborers from the Perris Indian School performed a variety of tasks, depending upon their age. The youngest girls, usually between ten and twelve years of age, normally served as “nurses” to young children. Older girls received a host of other responsibilities, including laundry, cleaning, and washing dishes. Only the oldest, most experienced female students prepared meals for outing families.⁸

Citing a lack of drinking water and a desire to move his students into a more urban environment, Superintendent Harwood Hall pushed to move the Perris Indian School into Riverside from the day he became superintendent. His predecessor, Edgar Allen, began exploring the feasibility of a move to Riverside as early as 1895.⁹ Upon his appointment to the Perris Indian School, Hall quickly adopted Allen’s plans for a move into Riverside. Tantalized by the prospects of an influx of federal money, a small group of Riverside boosters lobbied Washington in support of a new Indian school. Frank Miller, owner of the Glenwood Hotel in downtown Riverside (later renamed the Mission

Inn), led the charge.¹⁰ The combined efforts of Hall and Miller proved successful. Construction of the new school at Riverside began in 1900, and the last few pupils transferred from Perris to Sherman Institute in the spring of 1902.¹¹

More than bad drinking water and the promise of federal dollars paved the way from Perris to Riverside. As Hall gathered support among affluent community members in Riverside, he sought to demonstrate that a new Indian school would provide easy access to a pool of cheap, pliable laborers. To do so, he followed the lead of Wellington Rich, the man he had once succeeded as superintendent of the Phoenix Indian School.¹² Hoping to move his school from a remote desert location into the heart of Phoenix, Rich lobbied local ranchers and businessmen. In large, town-hall style meetings, Rich loudly asserted that the construction of an Indian school in Phoenix would bring abundant “cheap and efficient labor” to area cotton and citrus growers. The citizens of Phoenix took the bait. Local newspapermen proclaimed that the presence of Native laborers would be a boon to the local economy, going so far as to claim that indigenous peoples were better suited than “the Mexican” for working in the sun. The people of Phoenix hastily built an Indian school, largely on the wings of visions of cheap, brown labor.¹³

Though he operated more subtly, Hall worked from a similar playbook as he gathered support for an Indian school in Riverside. In the years leading up to the relocation of the school from Perris to Riverside, he shifted the balance of the school’s outing laborers from Perris and Redlands, California, into Riverside. Hoping to build support for a new Indian school, Hall flooded the citrus-laden neighborhoods of downtown Riverside with low-wage domestic laborers. Frank Miller, the de facto head

lobbyist for Hall's move from Perris to Riverside, received a steady flow of student-laborers at his home and in his hotel. Miller and Hall became fast friends. They bonded over shared family roots, with both of their mothers having grown up in the Quaker tradition. On many Sundays, the two men sat together in church. The budding friendship and political partnership between Frank Miller and Harwood Hall meant that whenever Miller requested a student-laborer for a friend or family member, Hall quickly obliged. Hall's message rang clear: those who supported Sherman Institute could expect to receive remuneration in the form of discount-rate student labor.¹⁴

Fifteen years as a superintendent in schools of the Office of Indian Affairs provided Hall with the political acumen necessary for the move from Perris to Riverside. Born in New Jersey in 1859, Hall began his career in the Indian Service when he became superintendent of the Seneca Boarding School in Wyandotte, Oklahoma. After seven years there, Hall made stops at the Pine Ridge and Cheyenne and Arapaho Agencies before becoming Superintendent of the Phoenix Indian School in 1893. He finally landed at the Perris Indian School in 1897.¹⁵ After arriving in Riverside in 1901, Hall quickly gained support from Frank Miller and other influential Southern Californians, including Indian reformer Albert K. Smiley and railroad tycoon Collis P. Huntington. A shrewd politician, Hall relied on this quickly constructed but strong network as he expanded Sherman Institute and its outing system during the first decade of the twentieth century.¹⁶



Figure 1.1. Sherman Institute Superintendent Harwood Hall, n.d. Hall made the outing system a key piece within his campaign to move the Perris Indian School to Riverside by promising cheap, Native labor to Frank Miller and other influential citizens. Photo courtesy of the National Archives Personnel Records Center, St. Louis, MO.

During its early years at Sherman Institute, the outing program functioned as a haphazard employment agency. Young women from Sherman worked steadily and with one family throughout the course of the summer, returning to school by the start of September. A select few students lived and worked in the outing program all year. Following the year-round outing template set by outing designer Richard Henry Pratt, Hall required these students to attend at least eighty days of classes at the nearest public school. Rather than being paid for their work, year-round outing students attended class

during the week and worked for room and board on the weekends.¹⁷ All student-laborers—male and female, year-round and seasonal—had the cost of meals deducted from their final paychecks.¹⁸

Hall also formed plans to send male students to work on Riverside area farms. He placed very few young men into jobs during the first years at Sherman Institute, and those who were placed worked more sporadically than their female counterparts. Hall's successor, Superintendent Fred Conser, would hire multiple employees under the title of outing agent to arrange jobs for students, provide minimal supervision at work sites, and keep track of wages owed and paid to student-laborers. While Hall presided over Sherman Institute, he stacked these tasks on top of his already heaping pile of daily responsibilities. Such woeful understaffing affected the nascent system in two ways. First, it restricted the size and scope of the program. Hall had neither the time nor the money to keep any records on the outing program, let alone track the conditions of students. He responded to this functional limitation by largely restricting the program to female student-labor. Second, early underfunding of the outing program left student-laborers in relatively vulnerable positions. Although students in the outing program after 1911 received at least minimal care and protection from specialized employees, those who experienced problems in the earlier years could expect little more than a letter from Hall, encouraging them to continue working.

From the beginning of his time in Riverside, Hall led local families and businesses to believe that the outing system at Sherman Institute would function as an employment agency. Correspondence between Hall and the recipients of student-labor

often read more like exchanges between a salesman and a buyer than communication between a concerned father-figure insuring proper care for his charges from surrogate parents. This dynamic became especially apparent whenever problems arose between student-laborers and their employers, as Hall often promised to provide replacements for workers deemed “unsatisfactory” by their employers. Just more than two weeks after receiving a male student-laborer to help with baling hay, rancher S. S. Hotchkiss wrote to Hall to express his dissatisfaction. The boy, it seemed, had little experience with horses, making plowing into a difficult, time-consuming task. Hall responded promptly and apologetically, promising to replace the original student-laborer with “a capable worker . . . who understands horses.”¹⁹ More commonly, Hall switched female student-laborers from house to house in order to mollify angry employers. When sending out final notification to families who had been selected to receive female student-laborers, Hall never failed to assure a labor recipient that he would be happy to send another student if the first one did not work out. “Of course if the girl is not satisfactory,” he wrote repeatedly, “you may return her at once.”²⁰

Hall promised total control of student-laborers to families and businesses taking on outing students. He tantalized S. R. Smith, who requested two boys to work on his ranch: “They are . . . accustomed to taking orders, and will come to you with that understanding—not only in work, but in general conduct as well.” Perhaps concerned that Smith might be dense, Hall rounded out his letter by making explicit the degree of power that patrons held over student-laborers from Sherman Institute. “I am sure that such cannot be objectionable,” he said, “as it will only make their services more valuable to

you.”²¹ He also offered recipients of student-laborers the chance to ship their charges to and fro in order to perform labor for friends, family, or nearby businesses. Almost without fail, Hall permitted employers to “loan” student-laborers to friends and family in need of an extra hand, sometimes for a weekend and sometimes for months. In April 1901, for example, George Winterbothem asked Hall for permission to lend the services of student-laborer Margaret Buggs to the Hillegas family. Hall responded with characteristic nonchalance. “I have to state that I have no objection to the matter,” he said. “Please explain the matter to Mary, and let Mrs. Hillegas know regarding the girls [*sic*] disposition. . . . Kindly advise me what day she goes to the home of Mrs. Hillegas.” Neither Hall or Winterbothem solicited the wishes of Buggs as they shipped her about.²²

Although the ability to share laborers freely between family and friends no doubt enticed potential suitors of Sherman student-laborers, the discount prices for which they could be had probably stood as the biggest selling point for the program. During the first decade of the twentieth century, non-Indian employers hired younger female students, usually between the ages of ten and thirteen, for as little as one dollar a month. The oldest, most expensive students cost no more than ten dollars a month.²³ These wages may seem scant, but female student-laborers actually held higher ground than their male counterparts during the early years of the outing system at Sherman Institute. Although he meticulously determined wages before sending young women out to work, Hall rarely negotiated wages for his male students. Replying to an inquiry about expected wages for a male student to do ranch work, Hall cavalierly told a labor recipient that he could “take the young man and pay him whatever he is worth.”²⁴

Upon arrival at ranches and farms of the Inland Empire and the Imperial Valley, young men from Sherman Institute faced conditions that could not be even loosely connected to the stated goal of the outing system—to “uplift” young Indian men by contact with white families and business owners. Hall likely knew as much, as ranchers often requested that male student-laborers come prepared with tents and bedding so that they might be able to sleep outdoors or in barns. When the Riverside Orange Company asked Hall to send bedding with his boys so that they might sleep outside, he gave a perfunctory defense that focused more on the safety of government property than on the well-being of his students: “I regret to say that I am not authorized to allow any of the government bedding to leave [Sherman Institute]. Consequently will not send the boys until I hear from you further.”²⁵ One week later, Hall dispatched a group of boys to Riverside Orange Company. How long they remained and what conditions they faced went undocumented. Nonetheless, it appears certain that Riverside Orange Company surely held more interest in extracting cheap labor than in preparing young Indian men for equal participation within the white, Protestant mainstream.

Just as they had at Perris, girls continued to predominate within the outing system at Sherman Institute. If Hall paid relatively little attention to where male student-laborers worked or how much they were paid, he gave more notice to the whereabouts and health of his female students. Before sending female student-laborers out during late May, Hall corresponded extensively with families that sought domestic workers. He used these correspondences to determine which families would be most fit to receive student-laborers and, among those chosen, to figure out which girl would be best suited for each

household. Hall kept no rosters of outing students, making it impossible to decipher the exact ratio of male to female student-laborers during his tenure.²⁶ However, correspondences between Hall and recipients of student labor reveal that more female than male laborers participated in the outing program. This gender imbalance may at least partly explain his more thorough attitude in keeping track of young women in the outing system.

Although Hall left no explicit evidence as to why he preferred to use girls in the outing system, he provided at least a few clues. He likely needed to keep at least some male students at Sherman throughout the summer in order to provide crucial labor and upkeep at the school. Classes ended by June 1, but the physical plant and the school farm required year-round maintenance.²⁷ Hall's experience with the outing system at the Phoenix Indian School also likely shaped his approach with the system in Southern California, first at Perris and then at Riverside. As Robert Trennert noted, obtaining domestic help from young Native women had come into vogue among the residents of Phoenix by the time that Hall finished his tenure at the Phoenix school in 1897. Male students proved to be a different story, as Hall struggled to place boys from the Phoenix Indian school on area citrus and cotton farms through the end of his tenure in Arizona.²⁸ In sending out mostly girls, Hall gave Southern Californians what he was sure they wanted. Moreover, Hall held up female students as superior representatives of the Sherman Institute when compared to their male counterparts, arguing that they were "quite neat in their work as well as in their person" and more likely to "reflect credit on their school and their race."²⁹ Male students, on the other hand, worried him. On the rare

occasion that Hall sent a male student out to work, he did so only after sending extensive instructions regarding discipline and control.³⁰

Hall clearly trusted young women more than young men. Still, his approach to sending female students out to work was nonetheless shaped by a potent blend of Victorian gender ideals and racial assumptions. Hall went to great lengths to protect Sherman girls from what he perceived as their sexual proclivities. As Hall prepared to send a female student-laborer to work in a downtown Riverside home, he gave explicit instructions on how to best cloister her. “Under no conditions permit her to be out evenings,” he warned, unless the girl would be accompanied by “yourself or other responsible persons.” In years past, Hall admonished, outing hosts had let their charges “run around considerable,” allowing indigenous domestics to congregate away from the watchful eyes of white adults.³¹

When employers provided anything less than constant surveillance over their charges, Hall stepped in swiftly. In June 1902, Hall learned that the Sharpe family of Riverside had allowed one of his students, Marinela Puente, too much freedom: “It has been reported to me that Marinela Puente . . . is frequently seen at the street railway park in company with girls whose reputations are said to be not good and also with young Indian boys or Mexicans, and that in one or two instances the young men were partially intoxicated and deported themselves unseemly [*sic*]. It seems that Marinela is at the park a great deal and often times late in the afternoon when it is particularly dark.”³² Hall wasted no time in calling Puente back to school. “While I regret to discommode you,” he said, “my duty prompts me to recall her.”³³

None of this is to suggest that Hall hated his students. Hall's political maneuverings in Phoenix and Riverside revealed a deep-seeded ethnocentrism toward indigenous peoples. Historian Jean Keller has noted, however, that many among the students and staff at Sherman Institute regarded Hall as a warm, caring man. A career educator, Hall often surpassed his fellow boarding school superintendents in demonstrating concern for his charges.³⁴ Yet if Hall clearly cared for the health and wellbeing of his students, the way in which he operated the outing system suggested that he did not hold much faith in their intellectual capabilities. If the outing system would bring Native people into contact with what Hall called "the influences gained by contact with higher civilization," it also funneled young Indians into jobs that would never "uplift" them from their supposed positions at the bottom of the hierarchy of civilization: bailing hay, picking fruit, and keeping house.³⁵ The vision of Pratt had died away with surprising speed, and Sherman administrators rested assured in their belief that the only way to help young Indians was to prepare them for lives of manual labor and economic marginalization. Indians who wished to survive would have to take their places beside others labeled as problem peoples by Progressive Era reformers: African Americans, Southern and Eastern Europeans, Mexicans, and Asians. Hall believed in a different sort of assimilation that Pratt had dreamed of thirty years earlier. While indigenous peoples might very well assimilate into the dominant white, Protestant culture of the United States, Hall believed they would do so as nurses for white children, cooks and maids for white families, wage laborers on white farms. Pratt created the outing system as a vehicle to propel Indians onto equal footing with white Americans. Hall, on the other hand, used

outing as a means to prepare students for a second-class existence. Although the size and the gender balance of the outing program would change dramatically following the departure of Hall, this underlying tenet remained in place under his successor.³⁶

Frank Conser became the second superintendent of Sherman Institute in April 1909.³⁷ Unlike Harwood Hall, who began his career in the field and worked as a superintendent wherever he went, Conser held deep ties to the Indian Office in Washington, D.C. Born in Columbus, Ohio, in 1871, Conser attended Mount Union College in Alliance, Ohio, and the Spencerian Business College in Cleveland, Ohio, before landing his first job as a clerk within the Washington, D.C., offices of the Office of Indian Affairs. After stints as supervisor of Indian education from 1897 to 1902 and a special Indian agent from 1902 to 1904, Conser rose to the position of Chief Clerk within the Indian Office in Washington, D.C.³⁸ By the time that Harwood Hall left Sherman Institute for the position of Supervisor of Indian Schools and a \$500 pay raise, Frank Conser had become a well-connected company man in the Indian Office.³⁹ His name quickly rose to the top among applicants for the job at Riverside.

Although the outing system maintained the same look and feel as it did under Hall, Superintendent Conser expanded it significantly and sought more male participation. Ranchers and farmers in the Inland Empire and Imperial Valley proved eager to utilize male student-laborers from the Sherman Institute. By 1924, more male than female student-laborers participated in program.⁴⁰ This proved a significant change from the first days of the outing system, when Hall sent only a handful of male student-laborers to work at local citrus ranches.⁴¹ The vast majority of students working under the

outing system toiled as laborers on ranches and farms, and a few students worked as engineers, printers, and carpenters, or in shoe shops.⁴²



Figure 1.2. Sherman Institute Superintendent Frank Conser. Conser significantly expanded the outing system. A clerk by training, he kept careful records of the whereabouts and earnings of outing laborers. Photo courtesy of the National Archives Personnel Records Center, St. Louis, MO.

In the first years of the outing system, Hall paid relatively little attention to the well being of his student laborers, especially young men. A clerk by training and disposition, the detail-oriented Conser gave more notice to the whereabouts and conditions of student-laborers. He required employers of Sherman students to send in weekly and monthly timecards. In addition, Conser hired staff members to give their full energies to the supervision of Sherman's student-laborers.⁴³ The first of these employees was Ms. Orrington Jewett, hired in 1909.⁴⁴ During the winter months, the forty-year-old bachelorette corresponded with prospective recipients of Sherman student-laborers and supervised female Sherman students who remained with their employers year-round. In the summer months, when participation in the outing system reached its annual peak, Jewett remained in almost constant motion. She answered the letters of concerned Native American parents, forwarded letters from parents to children, and met students at train stations as they traveled to and from their jobs. Beckoned by angry employers and homesick or obstinate student-employees, Jewett made frequent house calls. At times, she served as a sort of surrogate parent, attending recitals and award ceremonies.⁴⁵ She remained at Sherman Institute until 1921, when she accepted a position as a home economics teacher in the California public school system.⁴⁶ After Outing Matron Jewett left Sherman Institute in 1921, Superintendent Conser hired Etta Long to replace her.⁴⁷



Figure 1.3. Sherman Institute Outing Matron Orrington Jewett, n.d. Hired in 1911, Jewett became the first employee at Sherman Institute to devote her full energies to the outing system. Photo courtesy of the National Archives Personnel Records Center, St. Louis, MO.

In 1915, Conser promoted Etta Long's husband, Fred Long, from school carpenter to boys outing agent. This move provided much-needed, if nominal, supervision to the rapidly expanding outing program for male student-laborers. Born in Kansas City, Kansas, Long attended school at the Seneca Boarding School in Wyandotte, Oklahoma.⁴⁸ He joined the Indian School Service at age twenty-three as an industrial teacher at the Quapaw Agency in Oklahoma. After a whirlwind tour of duty that included stops at the Oglala and Pine Ridge Boarding Schools in South Dakota and the Phoenix Indian School in Arizona, Long found a more permanent position when he took a job as the school carpenter at the Perris Indian School. He continued as a carpenter at Perris and Sherman Institute until he received his promotion to outing agent in 1915.⁴⁹ In supervising the hundreds of male student-laborers fanned out among the ranchers of Southern California, Long filled a dire need at Sherman. When ranchers or citrus operators requested laborers, he often visited and inspected worksites before sending students. Once student-laborers departed Sherman for their outing worksites, Long rode a motorcycle from ranch to ranch in order to monitor their living and working conditions. Long also made personal visits to employers who failed to pay student-laborers.⁵⁰ He served in the position of outing agent until 1930, when injuries suffered in a car accident forced him to retire at the age of 65.⁵¹



Figure 1.4. Sherman Institute Outing Agent Fred Long, n.d. A longtime employee of the Indian School Service, Long became Sherman Institute's first outing agent in 1915. Photo courtesy of the National Archives Personnel Records Center, St. Louis, MO.

Aside from creating the positions of boys outing agent and girls outing matron, Superintendent Conser also worked with outing matrons based in Los Angeles. In 1918, the Office of Indian Affairs assigned Matilda Ewing to monitor Native people living and working in the Los Angeles area. Ewing worked closely with officials from Sherman Institute to supervise students and alumni from Sherman Institute who worked and lived in the city, many of whom worked as housekeepers and domestic laborers. For the most part, the duties taken on by Ewing largely mirrored those of Sherman outing matrons Jewett and Long. When Conser received requests for laborers from businesses and

families in Los Angeles, he forwarded them to Ewing. Ewing collected the two-thirds of the payments received by Sherman alumni working in the city, just as Jewett did at Sherman Institute. If problems arose between Sherman students and their employers, Ewing and DePorte attended to them. Finally, Ewing provided sleeping quarters for women transitioning in and out of the city and hosted monthly get-togethers for Native people living in Los Angeles.⁵² The Office of Indian Affairs transferred Ewing to the Santa Fe Indian School in 1922, but the outing center continued on. Grace Viets replaced Ewing and held the position until she died of tuberculosis in April of 1923. Rilla DePorte, a Sac and Fox woman and a graduate of Haskell Institute, held the position from 1922 until 1926. Finally, Frances Hall, the wife of former Sherman Institute Superintendent, held the position from 1926 until the outing center closed in 1933. Well into the 1930s, then, sending young women to perform domestic work in Los Angeles would become a vital part of the outing system at Sherman Institute.⁵³

Nominal supervision of student-laborers and haphazard employment assistance for a few Sherman graduates did not alter the fundamental nature of the outing system as it changed hands from Hall to Conser. Under Conser, the outing program came to resemble an employment agency even more so than it did under Hall. When Superintendent Conser arrived in 1909, no coherent outing program for boys existed. By 1913, Superintendent Conser sent hundreds of male student-laborers from Sherman to more than one hundred businesses across Southern California, the majority of them ranches (see Table 1.1). In 1915, Outing Agent Long arranged outing positions for 210 male Sherman students. Of those students, 205 worked on ranches. Common duties for

these student-laborers included cutting and baling hay, digging irrigation ditches, picking and washing fruit, and digging potatoes. Among the five students who avoided agricultural labor, a lucky two gained valuable experience working in the printing trade, one cleaned rooms at a local hotel, and two worked under the vague description of “chores.”⁵⁴

Table 1.1. Employers of Male Student-Laborers from Sherman Institute

Year	Number of Employers	Average Pay Per Day (Dollars)	Number of Agricultural Employers	Number of Skilled Employers	Percent Agricultural Employers	Percent Skilled Employers
1913	113	1.69	105	1	93	1
1914	98	1.43	86	5	88	5
1915	89	1.42	78	5	88	6
1921	92	2.4	84	0	91	0
1922	133	2.28	124	1	93	1
1923	101	2.46	84	2	83	2
1924	125	2.52	94	3	75	2
1925	176	2.38	147	3	84	2
1927	152	2.4	132	2	87	1
1928	136	2.63	109	0	80	0

Sources: Records of Boys Outings, 1912-1918 and Time/Pay Worksheets for Outing Pupils, 1917-1929, Boxes 115-123, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

Note: Employers of what I term “skilled labor” included blacksmiths, printers, tailors, carpenters, shoe repairers, and garage mechanics.

By 1924, Sherman Institute placed 536 student-laborers across Southern California, providing a significant source of cheap labor for area families and businesses.⁵⁵ So why did Sherman administrators expand the outing program so quickly? The most obvious answer lies in the rhetoric of Hall and Conser. Little doubt exists that

the first two superintendents of Sherman Institute held the genuine and ethnocentric belief that exposing Indians to hard, manual labor would provide the most realistic preparation for life after boarding school. However, a closer look reveals that balancing the books probably played an equal, if not greater, role than ethnocentrism in the growth of the outing system at Sherman Institute.

Sherman Institute received its scant federal funding on a per-student basis. In 1908, the school received \$157 for per year for each student enrolled.⁵⁶ Through the 1920s, these per-student funds failed to keep pace with the rising costs of operation. As Sherman administrators dealt with budget shortfalls, crowding more students into the school provided the most reliable influx of money. When the school reached or surpassed capacity, Superintendent Conser accepted additional female students and placed them in the year-round outing system. Sherman Institute received per-annum funding for each student that worked year-round in the outing system. But because Conser required these students to cover their own room, board, and transportation costs, he could move the funding from these additional students into the general operating budget. When Supervisor of Education E. H. Hammond asked Conser whether he could take more students at Sherman, the superintendent replied that he had no more beds. “But we can use more girls,” he said, “as we can place them on outing and take care of them very nicely.”⁵⁷ Placing male students in year-round jobs proved more difficult, as area ranches needed fewer laborers during the winter. Nonetheless, the few male students who worked year-round also provided budget relief.

The outing program remained an important component of the curriculum at Sherman Institute through the 1920s and early 1930s, even as economic depression cut into the number of jobs available for students. Etta Long became the outing matron in 1921, and although she did not keep thorough records, it appears as though she continued to run the outing system for women much as her predecessor had. A Southern Californian by birth, Long had been appointed as an assistant seamstress in 1916 at the age of 34. Before joining the Office of Indian Affairs, she took a year of training at Riverside Business College and worked for a decade as a clerk for a pair of local businessmen.⁵⁸ After a two-year stint as a laundress, Frank Conser promoted Long to outing matron when Orrington Jewett left the school in 1921. Citing the work of her husband, Fred, who served as the boys outing agent, Conser wrote to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs that it would “make a very good combination for her to have the work of outing matron.”⁵⁹

Long tackled her new position with what Conser termed “unlimited energy.”⁶⁰ The few records related to her tenure suggest that she needed at least that much drive to successfully carry out the many tasks required by the position. By 1927, Long placed over two hundred students and alumni of Sherman Institute to perform domestic labor in households across Southern California.⁶¹ While the bulk of women in Long’s outing system worked in Riverside and the adjacent cities of San Bernardino and Colton, California, many also worked in Los Angeles. A few worked as far away as Ventura and San Diego, California. In 1932, for example, Long held supervisory duties for 108 women, thirty-nine of whom worked in or around Los Angeles. In the months leading up to May and the end of classes at Sherman Institute, Long worked tirelessly to correspond

with potential employers and coordinate with Los Angeles Outing Matron Frances Hall with regard to the women who would venture into the city. When classes ended in May, she directed the flood of workers to their new employers by escorting them to outgoing trains or driving them in her school-issued car.⁶²

The work did not stop after Long got the women to their places of work. Throughout the summer months, the outing matron remained in almost constant motion as she attended to outing workers throughout Southern California. Almost every day, Long met with domestic workers to help them attend to dental or medical issues, go shopping, or attend recreational activities with other outing employees. These duties came in addition to regular in-home visits to check on the conditions faced by domestic workers under her watch.⁶³ All of this required significant time on the road. In 1932 and 1933, Long regularly drove between 1,500 and 2,200 miles each month in order to carry out her duties.⁶⁴ When not on the road attending to outing workers, she tackled mountains of correspondences related to her work. In June of 1932 alone, Long wrote and received nearly 500 letters.⁶⁵

Winter months meant a lighter workload for Long, as most students returned for classes at Sherman Institute. Still, supervising those students who worked in the outing system year-round required significant travel throughout Southern California.⁶⁶ As economic depression depleted the number of jobs available to young women from Sherman Institute during the 1930s, Long devoted more time to searching for prospective jobs for Sherman students, and less time supervising those who worked. Where the outing matron found positions for over 200 women during the summers of the 1920s, she

placed only 100 women in 1932 and 1933. Slowed by a back injury and arthritic knees, Long retired from the Indian Service in 1939 at the age of fifty-six.⁶⁷

Etta Long struggled to find domestic work for students at Sherman Institute, but securing jobs for male students became a nearly impossible task as the Great Depression wore on. Citing the economic slowdown, the Office of Indian Affairs refused to grant permission for the hiring of a replacement when Etta's husband Fred Long retired from his position of outing agent in 1930. Kenneth Marmon, a Pueblo man who taught printing, added outing to his list of duties. He received some assistance from R.A. Sneddon, the school's shop instructor. Marmon and Sneddon often contacted upwards of forty businesses each month, but they had little luck in securing positions for their students. During August of 1933, they placed only forty-nine students, and only one of those students worked for longer than ten days. While students continued to pursue work through Sherman Institute, the economic depression had real and lasting effects on the number of jobs to be had in the outing system, especially for young men.⁶⁸

Admittedly, the first half of this chapter amplifies the voices of bureaucrats and administrators hired to eradicate indigenous peoples and their cultures. A blow-by-blow account of the development of the outing system at Sherman reveals a program that grew from an ethnocentric foundation, placed students at significant risk, and impeded their academic progress. Although the degree of harm done by the outing program may have varied from student to student, it cannot be argued that the outing system consistently fulfilled its stated goal of providing students the tools necessary to join mainstream, white, Protestant America after leaving school.⁶⁹ Rather, it prepared hundreds of young

Indians for lives of menial labor and of limited expectations. But, as anthropologist James C. Scott has noted, to examine the bureaucratic records that now dominate most archival holdings is to create narratives that are “resolutely centered on the state’s interests.” Although records of tragically misguided programs administered by the Office of Indian Affairs contain much important information on the efforts of the United States government to assimilate indigenous peoples, straightforward readings of these documents often provide incomplete narratives.⁷⁰ To accept the words of Hall or Conser as totally representative of the events that took place at Sherman Institute is to take the path of least resistance, to see only half the story. Such a viewpoint transforms Indian students from what they were—the most important players in any of the myriad stories within the giant debacle that was assimilationism—into passive statuettes within games controlled by administrators like Pratt and Hall.

Ethnohistorians have done much to detail how Indian students and their families navigated their experiences at boarding schools. Indigenous students, argued historian Clyde Ellis, proved remarkably adept at adapting information from ethnocentric school curricula and utilizing it within the cultural frameworks of their home communities. Far from eliminating Native American cultures, boarding schools often positioned their students to negotiate the fluid, ever-changing confluences of white and indigenous worlds effectively. Historians Wilbert Ahern, Scott Riney, and Anne Ruggles-Gere noted that after quitting academic work or graduating from boarding schools, many students found employment at schools run by the Office of Indian Affairs, sometimes exerting powerful influence over the educational experiences of young Indians. At times, argued historian

David Wallace Adams, boarding schools could even be places of fun and romance.⁷¹

These authors forged an important and relatively new approach, one that emphasized the difficult and often-tedious work of culling indigenous voices where few seem to exist. Surviving records related to the outing program at Sherman Institute offer an opportunity to do just that. Archival narratives from Hall and Conser position the outing system as part of a larger bureaucratic machine that pulled in young students and forced them into exploitative situations. Yet the voice of Franklin, faced with grueling and ill-paid labor, yet so full of excitement and anticipation, should remind us that such a scenario rarely played out. Many Sherman students managed to enter the outing system on terms of their own choosing. Once there, they exercised the tools at hand in order to make the best of their situations.

Historians Brenda Child and Myriam Vuckovic have noted that for many American Indian families, government boarding schools served as crucial resources that helped to offset the harsh economic realities of reservation life.⁷² In much the same way, the outing program at Sherman Institute often stood as a resource to be sought out by Native people, rather than some sort of monster that pulled them in against their will. When Chet Danby struggled to find work during the spring of 1930, he called on Sherman Institute Outing Agent Fred Long for help. A thirty-two-year-old Pima from the Salt River Reservation near Phoenix, Danby apparently had extensive experience working on citrus ranches. “I want to get a steady job so I can work all the time,” he said. “I work on farms around here, so I know I can work out there too.”⁷³ Women also used the Sherman outing program as a resource when seeking work. Outing matrons

frequently received letters from older Indian women, many of them non-alumni, requesting placement as domestic help in white homes.⁷⁴

Letters sent from job seekers to outing matrons Long and Ryan reveal some important trends. First, the outing system provided employment opportunities not only to young Indians enrolled at Sherman Institute but also to Sherman alumni, and even non-alumni living on reservations with strong connections to the school. More importantly, the words of Danby reveal that in times of extended unemployment, many Native people viewed the outing program with a sense of pragmatism. To be sure, the menial positions offered by the Sherman Institute outing program reflected low expectations for American Indians. Yet employment in the outing system offered money and food to people living on reservations where both could be scarce. In times of hunger, employment within the outing system may have felt more like relief than coercion.

For the young women of Sherman Institute, the outing system presented unique challenges. Where male students most often tackled agricultural tasks in teams of at least three or four, female student-laborers almost always worked individually as domestic servants. At job sites, these students often became islands unto themselves, completely removed from family and friends. Yet archival sources show these young women to be anything but passive, pliable, or completely controlled by their employers. Confronted with such harsh realities, many female student-laborers did not hesitate to exercise available means of resistance in order to better their situations.

The first line of defense against the outing program involved a simple refusal to participate. During the spring of 1901, Leticia Nichols declined to return to the Bakewell

home in Riverside for a second summer of work, apparently objecting to her treatment there. "Leticia Nichols will not work out this year," Harwood Hall informed the Bakewells. "For some reason she objects very strongly to being sent out."⁷⁵ Moreover, parents and siblings often assisted in efforts to bring Sherman students home for the summer months when time spent with family trumped the importance of earning money. This was the case during the spring of 1901, when the father of Cecilia Cortez insisted that his daughter be allowed to return home for the summer rather than work in the outing program. "Cecilia Cortez's father insisted that I permit his girl to come home at once, as he did not want her to work out," Hall told the Waldman family. "In as much as he is a man of some means, and has a very fair home, I felt that it was proper for me to send her; in fact, there was nothing else for me to do."⁷⁶ Finally, homesick student-laborers often took it upon themselves to gain permission to take leave from their outing duties in order to visit home. If coming home for the summer proved more beneficial than working within the outing system, students and their families went to great lengths to make it happen.⁷⁷

Once on the job, discontented female student-laborers wielded a number of different strategies in order to improve their conditions, or if need be, get sent home. A common form of resistance involved feigning incomprehension of instructions. Shortly after receiving a young woman from Sherman Institute to help clean her house and take care of her children, Mrs. Charles Martin of Glendora, California, complained bitterly to Etta Long, the outing matron at Sherman Institute. "When she first came I took considerable pains in showing her the things I expected of her, but after two weeks it is

necessary for me to do over almost everything she does,” said Martin. Apparently, the student would not complete simple tasks like cleaning dishes, washing clothes, and sweeping the kitchen floor. Martin had reached the end of her patience. “The lack of progress in her understanding discourages me and I find I cannot even depend on her to keep an eye on my year old baby and therefore she is no benefit to me whatsoever.”⁷⁸ It is certainly possible that this student failed to comprehend the instructions of her employer, or that Mrs. Martin proved so overbearing that nothing short of a perfect job done could please her. It is likely, though, that this student knew that Superintendent Conser shared the alacrity of his predecessor when it came to providing new student-laborers to unsatisfied customers. Conser’s propensity for switching laborers, combined with the simplicity of the tasks requested, raise the possibility that this student feigned the inability to sweep dust or scrub dirty diapers as a means of escape from an overbearing employer.⁷⁹

As historian Myriam Vuckovic has noted, male students at federal Indian boarding schools encountered more opportunities than their female counterparts to resist unfavorable living and working conditions.⁸⁰ This held true for the outing system. Whereas outing labor for girls involved near-constant confinement to the home, male student-laborers often received tasks that required independent labor and, at times, solitude. The most frequent among these included threshing and baling hay, thinning beets, harvesting citrus fruits, and fighting fire. These jobs provided ample opportunity for disgruntled male student-laborers to run away, and run away they did with frequency. In 1929, for example, Sherman student Martin Fisher walked away from a job at a ranch

near Corona, California, just south of Riverside. Officials at Sherman Institute notified law enforcement, and police officers found Fisher at an adjacent ranch and took him to Riverside County Jail. Superintendent Frank Conser brought Fisher back to Sherman Institute two days later. Lack of success in escaping work sites did not stop young men on outing from leaving their jobs. Fisher was one of many male runaways in 1929 alone.⁸¹

Challenges related to outing work did not end with the summer, as students and nonstudents alike often had to fight for months after leaving their jobs to receive pay owed to them by their employers. Sherman Institute policy dictated that its student-laborers should only receive one-third of their payment at their job sites. Employers sent the remaining wages to the school superintendent, who deposited the money in individual savings accounts for each student. When a nonstudent worked under the auspices of the outing program, outing employees from Sherman Institute forwarded wages to reservation agents to be deposited. As one might imagine, this system of delayed payment offered ample opportunity for employers to withhold hard-earned money from student-laborers. At the close of the 1914 and 1915 school years, male student-laborers still awaited 10 and 20 percent of the money earned in those years, respectively.⁸²

One case of late payment occurred in 1928, when M. K. Thompson failed to pay the remaining two-thirds wages he owed to eight outing laborers who had pressed hay for two months on his ranch near Brawley, California. Thompson, who had received outing laborers from Sherman for nearly a decade, had become ill and fallen into debt.⁸³ While Hall quickly involved officials from the California State Division of Labor Statistics and

Law Enforcement, investigators sympathized with Thompson's health troubles and gave him more time to pay his former workers.⁸⁴ Finally, at the urging of Long, state officials filed an official complaint against Thompson in July.⁸⁵ As the case slowly moved through the California courts, Long continued to seek payment from M.K. Thompson, making three unsuccessful trips to El Centro to search for the delinquent farmer.⁸⁶

Thompson's former workers waited patiently for the legal process to run its course. After nearly a year, however, they rose with a fury, writing letter after letter to Fred Long. Randall Carrera started the firestorm of letters. "Well Mr. Long," he wrote, "what I wanted to ask you is that do you remember when I worked on a hay presser down in the imperial valley for K. Thompson and he never pay us. Did he send money yet. I like to know if you please."⁸⁷ Long also received letters from Doyle Perry and Herbert Lester, both looking for wages owed to them by Thompson.⁸⁸ After receiving another round of letters from Perry, Carrera, and Lester, Long again pressed his case to the California State Labor Commission. On June 1, 1930, the State Labor Commission sent twenty dollars each to the student laborers who had worked for M.K. Thompson. Upon receipt of the money, former Sherman students and M.K. Thompson employees Jackson Moro, Arlen Chez, and Herbert Lester sent letters in search of the remainder of their wages.⁸⁹

Fred Long took his retirement from the Indian service just as the conflict between M.K. Thompson and his former outing employees reached a full crescendo, and so documentary records do not reveal a satisfying end to the narrative.⁹⁰ Still, much can still be gathered from this story. To the young men who threshed hay for M.K. Thompson,

outing labor provided a crucial opportunity to earn much-needed money. This was especially so for Perry. Born on the Pala Reservation in 1905, Perry lost both of his parents early in life. He came under the care of an aunt in Los Angeles, where he attended public schools intermittently. Life there apparently proved difficult, however. By the time Perry arrived at Sherman Institute during the fall of 1922, he was an orphan again.⁹¹ Sherman Institute, with its steady meals and clockwork routines, might have seemed like a sanctuary. Perry excelled. He chose the agricultural vocational track and received high marks throughout seven full years at school. As he neared the end of his time at Sherman, Perry must have felt a strange blend of excitement and dread, for he had no family awaiting him after graduation. Whatever money he earned as an outing student would be all he had as he started a new life.⁹²

Although archival records reveal far less about Carrera and Lester, it appears as though they needed their outing funds almost every bit as badly as Perry. Like Perry, Carrera lost his father early in life. A Quechan from the Fort Yuma Reservation, Carrera arrived at Sherman in 1925 at the age of sixteen.⁹³ He studied gardening and vocational painting and made frequent trips home to visit his family during breaks from school.⁹⁴ Although Lester came from a two-parent household, it appears as though life at Sherman provided him an escape from poverty. A Hopi from Keams Canyon, Arizona, Lester suffered from trachoma, a painful, potentially blinding eye disease that plagued many reservations during the early twentieth century.⁹⁵ Nineteen years of age and a first-grade-level student when he arrived at Sherman in 1920, Lester entered the vocational program in carpentry.⁹⁶ Whether he wished to avoid his home life or he simply enjoyed earning

money, Lester consistently chose to work in the outing system rather than visit home.⁹⁷ Perry, Carrera, and Lester came from different tribes, educational backgrounds, and family situations. All three, however, saw opportunity within the outing system. When denied fair compensation for their work, they acted quickly and forcefully to recover wages from their employer.

For those students who worked frequently, the outing system sometimes proved to be a means to productive, if not lucrative, employment. Sherman Institute student Hal Bennett provides a prime example. A Navajo from Tohatchee, New Mexico, Bennett arrived at Sherman in August 1921 at the age of nineteen and enrolled in the vocational program in agriculture.⁹⁸ Bennett began working in the outing system during the summer of 1922. Between June and August, he worked for the Fontana Farms Company, the largest employer of male student-laborers from Sherman Institute during the 1920s. He worked for three-and-a-half weeks at a rate of \$2.65 per day, pulling in seventy-nine dollars. Bennett then worked through late August and early September on the ranch of A. E. Kinsley in Corona, California, where he made an additional forty-four dollars, leaving him with total earnings of \$123 for the summer. Throughout the next two summers, Bennett worked only sporadically. He earned thirty-five dollars and fifty-eight dollars, respectively. During 1925, he did not work under the outing system at all. In 1926, Bennett once again went to work for Fontana Farms. This time, he remained at work from June 1 through October 1, earning \$3 per day. By the end of the summer, Bennett had pulled in \$220. Bennett's participation in the outing program became more profitable than ever in 1927, when he began working full-time on the ranch of Douglas Fairbanks.

Between September 1927 and June 1928, he earned just short of \$600. The progression of Bennett through the outing system was a typical one. In the beginning, Bennett worked only sporadically, earning little money. As he aged, though, Bennett continued to take on longer stints of labor, until he finally began working full time at age twenty. By 1930, Bennett had accumulated almost \$800 in his bank account at Sherman Institute.⁹⁹

Although Bennett and other student-laborers like him managed to collect potentially life-altering sums of money within the outing program, these earnings often carried a hefty price tag. During his final year in the outing system at Sherman Institute, Bennett performed backbreaking labor for as many as eighty-four hours per week. It appears as though labor conditions faced by Sherman students in Southern California and migrant workers in the Central Valley were similar. Where an experienced Mexican cotton worker in 1930 earned an average of three dollars per day, Sherman student-laborers usually made about \$2.50 per day at cutting, shocking, and bailing hay in 1928.¹⁰⁰ During the late 1920s, Sherman students who worked steadily between June and August could expect at least two hundred dollars, while Filipino lettuce workers in the San Joaquin Valley averaged earnings of about \$250 for a four-month season.¹⁰¹ Moreover, it is likely that Filipino, Mexican, and Native laborers faced similar living conditions on ranches and farms. Mexican workers in the San Joaquin Valley dealt with shoddy tents, dirt floors, and contaminated water.¹⁰² Correspondence between Hall and the ranchers suggested that Sherman students faced similar circumstances on their job sites, as prospective employers frequently asked the superintendent to send his students equipped with their own tents and cots.¹⁰³ Finally, it appears as though long-term

participation in the outing system often came at the expense of academic education. Although the final year of labor performed by Bennett occurred under the watch of Sherman Institute Outing Agent Long, it is doubtful that he attended school during his time at the Fairbanks Ranch. As Hall and Pratt had done before him, Sherman Superintendent Conser required that students attend at least eighty full days of public school in order to remain enrolled. Bennett did no such thing, as he worked an average of fifty-two hours during each week he remained at the Fairbanks Ranch, making eighty days at school all but impossible.¹⁰⁴

A few Sherman students used the outing system to gain not just substantial pay but also relatively specialized skills. Existing scholarship argues that outing programs, and vocational curricula in general, provided students with few usable skills. Young American Indians, the story goes, floated through years of vocation-oriented educational curricula without absorbing any information that might be useful after leaving school. Sherman Institute students John Black and Ross Townsend did not follow such a path of futility. Black, a Pima from near Scottsdale, Arizona, arrived at Sherman as a thirteen-year-old boy during the fall of 1910.¹⁰⁵ Short and slim—he weighed less than one hundred pounds when he enrolled—Black arrived at Sherman in ill health, suffering from trachoma.¹⁰⁶ As his health improved, Black excelled in school. An A student in both his vocational and academic courses, he played clarinet in the school orchestra.¹⁰⁷ Black declined to go on outing for the summers of 1911, 1912, and 1913, opting to go home instead.¹⁰⁸ When he finally did decide to participate in the outing system, Black managed to do so within the field that he had chosen as his vocational focus: printing. Over the

summers of 1914 and 1915, he gained valuable experience working in the printing office of the *Riverside Enterprise*, making \$57 and \$107, respectively.¹⁰⁹ Black graduated from Sherman in 1920. Shortly thereafter, he married classmate Meredith McAllister and moved with her to Los Angeles, where he worked for Llewellyn Iron Works.¹¹⁰ Black returned to Sherman to work in the school print shop in 1923. Whether Black obtained steady employment in the field of printing is unknown, but his brief stint back at Sherman makes it appear likely that he continued pursuing print work for at least a decade after graduating.¹¹¹

Many scholars note that employment within the Indian School Service stood as perhaps the most viable career option for graduates of federal Indian boarding schools.¹¹² Ross Townsend's experience provides a case study of this trend. A Pauite from Fort Bidwell, California, Townsend arrived at Sherman at the age of eighteen in 1927. Quiet and well rounded, he earned high marks in both his academic and vocational courses, and he played key roles on the Sherman baseball, football, basketball, and wrestling teams.¹¹³ After a year of prevocational courses, he chose to be trained as a carpenter during his final two years at school. In the summer of 1928, Townsend worked for Cresmer Manufacturing Company, where he helped construct a new building for the West Coast Theater Company near downtown Corona, California.¹¹⁴ Despite his unassuming nature, Townsend drew the attention of Superintendent Conser. He graduated in May of 1930 and made his way home to the Fort Bidwell Reservation. Townsend must have felt elation when he received a letter from Sherman Assistant Principal A. P. Westhafer offering him an assistant carpenter position at the school. Noting that he had not yet

found a job at Fort Bidwell, Townsend promptly accepted the position and headed for Riverside.¹¹⁵

Townsend spent the remainder of his life serving Sherman Institute, with the exception of a four-year stint in the military during World War II. He married classmate Laura Premo, a Shoshone and fellow Sherman alumnus who worked as an assistant matron at the school after graduation. The newly married Townsends moved into a small house on the Sherman campus. Townsend used his carpentry skills to build new rooms onto the house at night and on weekends. Although school records list Townsend as an assistant carpenter and assistant mason, he worked mostly in maintenance. “He was a ‘jack-of-all trades,’” remembered Townsend’s son, Galen. “He did a little bit of everything for the school.” Important tasks performed by the elder Townsend included plumbing, electrical work, and automobile repair—skills that he likely first developed as a vocational student and outing laborer. After hours, he served as a wrestling coach. Townsend’s teams produced state and national champions and defeated the likes of the University of Southern California and the University of California, Los Angeles.¹¹⁶

Historian Cathleen D. Cahill has noted the precarious positions held by Native employees of the Office of Indian Affairs. Many American Indian people in the employ of the Indian office worked subversively against the assimilation-oriented curriculum in order to protect the languages and cultures of their students. Others used their paychecks to support families and communities, especially those employees who hailed from reservations that lacked wage labor opportunities. Finally, some Native workers in the Office of Indian Affairs directed their paychecks toward the more acquisitive, capitalistic

ideals touted by the schools in which they worked. No matter what course these indigenous employees chose, wrote Cahill, they faced difficult choices as they operated as “subalterns in a colonial bureaucracy.”¹¹⁷

To be sure, Ross and Laura Townsend faced challenges that their white coworkers did not. During his first ten years as an assistant carpenter at Sherman Institute, Ross drew an annual salary of \$1,200, while head carpenter Charles Hoffstetter earned a yearly salary of \$1,800. School wide, white employees earned more than five hundred dollars per year more than their Native counterparts for the year 1931. In addition, white employees almost always held relatively secure, full-time job appointments, while Native employees often worked in part-time positions.¹¹⁸ Indigenous employees, it seems, received unfair treatment. Yet the story of the Townsend family complicates this picture. Townsend surely knew that Native employees received poorer pay and fewer promotions than white coworkers. When confronted with a choice between unemployment at Fort Bidwell and a relatively menial position at Sherman Institute, though, he did not hesitate to choose his alma mater. Within the walls of the Sherman campus, the Townsends managed to raise five children comfortably. “We weren’t rich,” said Galen, “but we had everything we needed.”¹¹⁹

The Townsends raised their children to be both conscious and proud of their indigenous identities—no small feat given the emphasis on assimilation and cultural erasure that pervaded the academic curriculum at Sherman Institute between 1940 and 1960. Their son Galen proudly asserted his Shoshone/Paiute identity, even as many people mistakenly identified him with the prominent Latino population of California’s

Inland Empire. Today, Townsend and his children maintain strong connections with Sherman Institute. Townsend volunteers at the school museum, and his son coaches and teaches at the school, just as Ross Townsend once did. Ross and Laura Townsend attended and worked for a school that existed to erase their indigenous identities.¹²⁰ Yet paychecks from Sherman Institute and the intertribal community of Native people that the school created ultimately fostered the indigenous identity of the Townsend family.

Boarding schools and their outing systems did not prepare Indian students for equal participation in the majority culture. By the time that Sherman Institute came into existence, administrators and bureaucrats within the Office of Indian Affairs had already bought into the increasingly prominent notion that American Indians lacked the tools necessary for equal participation within the dominant culture. But Native voices that speak from remaining records on Sherman Institute remind us that low expectations, poor working conditions, and scant pay comprised part, but not all, of the outing system. For Danby and Franklin, the chance to earn money and see new places at least partly obscured the poor wages and conditions that characterized their work. Far from helpless, students such as Leticia Nichols fought hard to exercise a measure control over when, and for whom, they worked. John Black and Ross Townsend participated in the system not out of coercion, but because they wanted to, whether for much-needed money or a break from the often-mundane institutional rhythms of boarding school life. These voices remind us that fixating on the ethnocentric roots and sometimes-brutal outcomes of the outing system is to ignore its complexity, at best, and, at worst, to assume a condition of helplessness among boarding school students and their families. Like almost all aspects

of federal Indian boarding schools during the early twentieth century, the outing system at Sherman Institute presented difficult and sometimes overwhelming challenges to young Native Americans. But, like students at federal Indian boarding schools everywhere, the young people at Sherman Institute used courage and creativity to draw from the outing system the most that they could.

As the outing system at Sherman Institute expanded throughout the twentieth century, it sent young women further afield in search of the supposedly “uplifting” benefits of labor, with some students travelling to cities and towns as far as one hundred miles from Riverside to find wage labor opportunities. Women from Sherman Institute ventured into Los Angeles to work as domestics in the fast-growing metropolis. Some went even further, working in Ventura and Ojai, California, some eighty miles west of Los Angeles. Young men chopped sugar beets in Temecula, California, forty miles south of Riverside, and others ventured eighty miles north to fight fires in the Angeles National Forest. Still others found outing labor among the factories and foundries of downtown Los Angeles.

The largest recipient of outing workers, however, was far closer to Sherman Institute. Just fifteen miles north of Riverside, an enterprising businessman named A.B. Miller undertook the nearly impossible work of transforming a forlorn desert outpost into an agricultural empire. Between 1907 and 1929, hundreds of male students from Sherman Institute worked for Miller and his company, Fontana Farms—more, in fact, than any other company associated with the outing system at Sherman Institute. In Fontana, the lives of young, indigenous men from across the American Southwest became intertwined,

however briefly, with the messy complexities of agricultural labor on a large-scale, industrial farm. Hopis and Navajos, Mojaves and Apaches spent their nights jammed into filthy living quarters. By day, they rubbed elbows with laborers from Mexico, Japan, and Eastern Europe, among other places, as they herded hogs and threshed hay. For these workers, the challenges of time spent at Sherman Institute went far beyond the hardships that are traditionally associated with federal Indian boarding schools. We turn now to their experiences.

Endnotes

1. D.F. to E.J., June 3, 1925, Box 119, Time/Pay Records, Folder: 1921–1922, Records of Sherman Institute, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75, National Archives, Riverside, CA, (hereinafter referred to as RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR). To protect the privacy of students and their families, I use pseudonyms in place of actual names. The first letters of first names and surnames correspond to those within the actual name of the student. Only the initials are provided within my citations.
2. On connections between federal boarding schools and beet producers, see Alice Littlefield, “Learning to Labor: Native American Education in the United States, 1880–1930,” in *The Political Economy of North American Indians*, edited by John H. Moore (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993), 54.
3. D.F. to E.J., June 3, 1925, Box 119, Time/Pay Records, Folder: 1921–1922, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
4. Matthew Sakiestewa Gilbert, *Education Beyond the Mesas: Hopi Students at Sherman Institute, 1902–1929* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010), xxi.
5. Adams, *Education for Extinction*, 52.
6. At the outing system’s peak during the mid-1920s, Sherman Institute maintained three full-time employees to supervise more than 500 student-laborers. Frank Conser to Supervisor of Education E. H. Hammond, February 13, 1924, Letters Sent and Received (hereinafter referred to as LSR), RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
7. Alice Littlefield argues that federal Indian boarding schools proletarianized students. See Littlefield, “Learning to Labor.” See also Alice Littlefield, “Indian Education and the World of Work in Michigan, 1893–1933,” in *Native Americans and Wage Labor*, edited by Alice Littlefield and Martha C. Knack (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996), 100–21.
8. Harwood Hall to Frank Miller, January 30, 1901, Outing System Letters (hereinafter referred to as OSL), 1900–1901, Sherman Institute Collection, Sherman Indian Museum, Riverside, CA (hereinafter referred to as SIC, SM).
9. R. C. Mertinson to Edgar Allen, May 30, 1895, SIC, SM. Allen took out advertising space in the *Riverside Press* in search of construction bids for a new campus in Riverside.
10. Harwood Hall to Frank Miller, January 30, 1901, OSL, 1900–1902, SIC, SM. For a detailed account of Miller’s involvement in bringing Sherman Institute to Riverside, see

Nathan Gonzalez, "Riverside, Tourism, and the Indian: Frank A. Miller and the Creation of Sherman Institute," *Southern California Quarterly* 84 (Fall/Winter 2002): 193-222.

11. Jean Keller, *Empty Beds: Indian Student Health at Sherman Institute, 1902–1922* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2002), xv, 16–17.

12. Robert Trennert, *The Phoenix Indian School: Forced Assimilation in Arizona, 1891–1935* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988), 41.

13. *Ibid.*, 28–29.

14. Harwood Hall to Frank Miller, January 30, 1901, OSL, 1901–1902, SIC, SM. During the years before the Perris Indian School moved to Riverside, Miller served as a liaison between Harwood Hall and wealthy community members of Riverside. When an unknown citizen of Riverside requested a student-laborer, Hall solicited Miller for a character reference. Rather than contacting Hall directly, families in search of live-in help often directed their requests through Miller. Evidence of a lasting friendship between Miller and Hall can be found in Hall's civil service personnel file. For example, Miller continued to use his wealth and influence in support of Harwood Hall long after the two secured funding for the new boarding school at Riverside, often by writing to legislators in support of promotions for Hall. Frank Miller to Senator John D. Works, May 6, 1912, Personnel File for Harwood Hall, NPRC.

15. Personal Statement of Employee, January 16, 1922, Personnel File for Harwood Hall, NPRC; Record of Employment, Personnel File for Harwood Hall, NPRC.

16. On Hall's relationships with Albert K. Smiley and Collis P. Huntington, see Frank Miller to Secretary of the Interior Ray L. Wilbur, June 9, 1931, Personnel File for Frank Conser, NPRC.

17. Adams, *Education for Extinction*, 157; Harwood Hall to Mrs. Thomas Bakewell, July 22, 1900, OSL, 1900–1901, SIC, SM.

18. Timecards for student-laborers included deductions for meals. See Fred Long to Chief Clerk H.E. Mitchell, November 1, 1928, Box 110, Records of Outing Agent Fred Long, Folder: Unmarked, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR; Meal Ticket Receipts for Ross Townsend, Box 110, Records of Outing Agent Fred Long, Folder: Unmarked, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

19. Harwood Hall to S. S. Hotchkiss, June 16, 1902, OSL, 1901–1902, SIC, SM.

20. Harwood Hall to W. P. Gulick, February 15, 1900, OSL, 1900–1901, SIC, SM.

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21. Harwood Hall to S. R. Smith, February 10, 1900, OSL, 1900–1901, SIC, SM.
 22. Harwood Hall to George S. Winterbothem, April 16, 1901, OSL, 1900–1901, SIC, SM.
 23. Harwood Hall to J. H. Reed, February 25, 1901, OSL, 1900–1901, SIC, SM.
 24. Harwood Hall to Colonel J. F. Ritchey, February 6, 1902, OSL, 1901–1902, SIC, SM.
 25. Harwood Hall to S.R. Smith, February 28, 1900, OSL, 1900–1901, SIC, SM.
 26. Frank Conser, who became superintendent of Sherman Institute in 1909, kept timecards for every student-laborer in the outing program. Letters are the only surviving outing system records from Hall’s tenure.
 27. For in-depth looks at student labor as related to the upkeep and operation of boarding schools, see Adams, *Education for Extinction*, 149–56; Lomawaima, *They Called It Prairie Light*, 65–79; Coleman, *American Indian Children at School*, 105–114.
 28. Trennert, *The Phoenix Indian School*, 54.
 29. Harwood Hall to Mrs. Harold Lacy, February 12, 1900, OSL, 1900–1901, SIC, SM.
 30. Harwood Hall to S.R. Smith, February 10, 1900, OSL, 1900–1901, SIC, SM.
 31. Harwood Hall to Mrs. Francis Ellis, January 22, 1902, OSL, 1901–1902, SIC, SM.
 32. Harwood Hall to Mrs. A. Sharpe, June 21, 1902, OSL, 1901–1902, SIC, SM.
 33. Ibid. For excellent analysis of the role of Victorian gender ideologies within the functioning of the outing system, see Katrina Paxton, “Learning Gender: Female Students at the Sherman Institute, 1907–1925,” in *Boarding School Blues: Revisiting American Indian Educational Experiences*, edited by Clifford Trafzer, Jean Keller, and Lorene Sisquoc (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006), 181-84. For a look at connections between gender, colonialism, and outing labor, see Haskins, *Matrons and Maids*, 7-17. See also Robert Trennert, “Victorian Morality and the Supervision of Indian Women Working in Phoenix,” 113-28.
 34. Keller, *Empty Beds*, 1–40. Hall allowed his students to bathe at all hours of the day, thus providing an unprecedented amount of self-control within the boarding school system, even if only related to personal hygiene. Hall also encouraged students to write home, welcomed the families of students to visit Sherman, and regularly allowed students

to visit home during the summer months. For another take on Hall, see Trennert, *The Phoenix Indian School*, 41-56.

35. Harwood Hall to S.R. Smith, February 10, 1900, OSL, 1900–1901, SIC, SM.

36. As historian K. Tsianina Lomawaima notes, curricula at federal Indian boarding schools and vocational institutions for African American and white students closely resembled one another. See Lomawaima, *They Called It Prairie Light*, 65–67. For information on curricula at vocational schools designed for black students in the American South, see James Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860–1935* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988). For vocational curricula at public schools, see David Tyack, *The One Best System: A History of American Urban Education* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974). Lomawaima, Anderson, and Tyack all argue that vocational institutions sought to create and maintain laboring underclasses. For connections between vocational programs for black and Indian students, see Lindsey, *Indians at Hampton Institute*.

37. Employee Record for Frank Conser, Personnel File for Frank Conser, NPRC.

38. Ibid. As a special Indian agent, Conser travelled to conduct investigations of troubled agencies and schools within the Office of Indian Affairs.

39. Note on promotion of Harwood Hall, March 4, 1909, Personnel File for Harwood Hall, NPRC.

40. In 1924, 272 boys and 264 girls participated in the outing system. Frank Conser to Supervisor of Education E. H. Hammond, February 13, 1924, LSR, 1924, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

41. Harwood Hall to S.R. Smith, February 28, 1900, OSL, 1900–1902, SIC, SM.

42. Boxes 115-122, Time/Pay Records for Outing Pupils, 1912–1928, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR. The most common agricultural tasks for male students on outing included shocking and cutting hay; smudging, picking, and packing citrus fruits; and picking potatoes. Only a few students worked as, tailors, carpenters, shoe repairers, and garage mechanics.

43. Ibid. On Conser's propensity for detail and order, see Efficiency Reports for Frank Conser, Personnel File for Frank Conser, NPRC.

44. Employee Record for Orrington Jewett, Personnel File for Orrington Jewett, NPRC.

45. Report of the Outing Matron from Sherman Institute, Box 126, Daily Bulletins, Folder: Disciplinarian's Office, 1929, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

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46. Orrington Jewett to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles Burke, April 30, 1921, Personnel File for Orrington Jewett, NPRC.
47. Employee Record for Etta Long, Personnel File for Etta Long, NPRC.
48. Employee Record for Fred Long, July 1, 1912, Personnel File for Fred Long, NPRC. Records from Sherman Institute and federal personnel files list Long as an “Indian,” but do not reveal his tribal identity.
49. Sherman Institute Superintendent Frank Conser to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles Burke, April 10, 1922, Personnel File for Fred Long, NPRC; Employee Register, SIC, SM.
50. *Sherman Bulletin III*, no. 22, June 22, 1909, SIC, SM; *Sherman Bulletin III*, no. 26, September 1, 1909, SIC, SM.
51. Box 110, Records of Outing Agent Fred Long, 1917–1930, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR; Frank Conser to U.S. Employees’ Compensation Commission, September 11, 1929, Personnel File for Fred Long, NPRC; Employee Record for Fred Long, Personnel File for Fred Long, NPRC.
52. Record of Employment for Matilda Ewing, Personnel File for Matilda Ewing, NPRC; Matilda Ewing to H.W. Palmer, June 29, 1922, Personnel File for Matilda Ewing, NPRC; Record of Employment, Rilla DePorte, Personnel File for Rilla DePorte, NPRC; Record of Employment, Frances Hall, Personnel File for Frances Hall, NPRC.
53. Assistant Commissioner of Indian Affairs E.B. Merritt to Matilda Ewing, May 5, 1922, Personnel File for Matilda Ewing, NPRC; Record of Employment for Grace Viets, Personnel File for Grace Viets, NPRC; H.W. Palmer to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles Burke, March 24, 1923, Personnel File for Grace Viets, NPRC; Employee Record for Rilla DePorte, Personnel File for Rilla DePorte, NPRC; Employee Record for Frances Hall, Personnel File for Frances Hall, NPRC.
54. Time/Pay Worksheets for Outing Pupils, Box 115, Folder: 1915, Records of Sherman Institute, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR; Report of Outing Boys of Sherman Institute, Boxes 115-123, Records of Boys Outings, 1912-1918, Folder: 1915, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
55. Frank Conser to E.H. Hammond, February 13, 1924, LSR, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
56. Office of Indian Affairs Circular No. 240, September 21, 1908, Box 107, Folder: Circulars, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

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57. Frank Conser to E.H. Hammond, February 13, 1924, LSR, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
 58. Employment Record for Etta Long, Personnel File for Etta Long, NPRC.
 59. Sherman Institute Superintendent Frank Conser to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles Burke, April 25, 1921, Personnel File for Etta Long, NPRC.
 60. Efficiency Report, April 13, 1927, Personnel File for Etta Long, NPRC.
 61. Ibid.
 62. Report of Outing Matron for Month Ending May 31, 1932, Box 38, Folder: Outing System, 1932-1933, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR; Report of Outing Matron for Month Ending June 30, 1932, Box 38, Folder: Outing System, 1932-1933, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
 63. Sherman Institute Superintendent Donald Biery to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles Rhoads, January 21, 1933, Personnel File for Etta Long, NPRC.
 64. Reports of Outing Matron, 1932-1933, Box 38, Folder: Outing System, 1932-1933, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
 65. Report of Outing Matron for Month Ending June 30, 1932, Box 38, Folder: Outing System, 1932-1933, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
 66. Report of Outing Matron for Month Ending January 28, 1933, Box 38, Folder: Outing System, 1932-1933, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
 67. Sherman Institute Superintendent Donald Biery to Commissioner of Indian Affairs John Collier, May 5, 1939, Personnel File for Etta Long, NPRC.
 68. Sherman Institute Superintendent Donald Biery to Commissioner of Indian Affairs John Collier, June 13, 1934, Box 38, Folder: Outing System, 1932-1933, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR; Placement and Coordinating Report for August, 1933, Box 38, Folder: Outing System, 1932-1933, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
 69. The goal referred to here is that of outing system founder Pratt, who wished to use the program as a device to bring Indian children into social and economic parity with whites. See Adams, *Education for Extinction*, 156-7.
 70. James C. Scott, *The Weapons of the Weak: Everyday forms of Peasant Resistance* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1985), xv.

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71. Clyde Ellis, "We Had a Lot of Fun, But of Course, That Wasn't the School Part," 66-7; Wilbert Ahern, "An Experiment Aborted: Returned Indian Students in the Indian School Service, 1881-1908," *Ethnohistory* 42 (Spring 1997): 263-304; Scott Riney, *The Rapid City Indian School, 1898-1933* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999), 167-92; Anne Ruggles-Gere, "Indian's Heart/White Man's Head: Native American Teachers in the Indian Schools, 1880-1930," *History of Education Quarterly* 1 (Summer, 2005): 38-65; Adams, "Beyond Bleakness," 36-60.
72. Brenda Child, *Boarding School Seasons*, 15, 23; Myriam Vuckovic, *Voices from Haskell: Indian Students between Two Worlds, 1884-1928* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2008), 123.
73. C.D. to Fred Long, March 6, 1930, Box 110, Records of Outing Agent Fred Long, 1917-1930, Folder: Untitled, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
74. Report of the Outing Matron from Sherman Institute, 1930, Box 106, Narrative Reports, Folder: Working Papers for 1931, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
75. Harwood Hall to Mrs. Thomas Bakewell, February 25, 1901, OSL, 1900-1901, SIC, SM.
76. Harwood Hall to Mrs. L. C. Waldman, February 3, 1902, OSL, 1901-1902, SIC, SM.
77. For additional examples of these strategies within a boarding school setting, see Child, *Boarding School Seasons*, 43-54.
78. Mrs. Charles Martin to Girls Outing Matron Etta Long, June 15, 1925, Box 119, Folder: Girls Outing Applications, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
79. On strategies used to escape harsh or unreasonable employers among young women in the outing systems at Flandreau and Haskell, see Child, *Boarding School Seasons*, 84-5.
80. Vuckovic, *Voices from Haskell*, 124.
81. Entry for April 11, 1929, Box 126, Daily Bulletins, Folder: Disciplinary Office, 1929, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
82. Report of Outing Boys of Sherman Institute, Boxes 115-123, Records of Boys Outings, 1912-1918, Folders: 1914, 1915, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
83. M.K. Thompson to Fred Long, September 30, 1928, Box 110, Records of Outing Agent Fred Long, Folder: Untitled, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

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84. W.E. Gould to Fred Long, April 26, 1929, Personnel File for Fred Long, NPRC.
85. W.E. Gould to Fred Long, July 30, 1929, Personnel File for Fred Long, NPRC.
86. Etta Long to Frank Conser, November 29, 1929, Box 110, Records of Outing Agent Fred Long, Folder: Untitled, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR; Fred Long to H.L., May 18, 1930, Box 110, Records of Outing Agent Fred Long, Folder: Untitled, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
87. R.C. to Fred Long, April 26, 1930, Box 110, Records of Outing Agent Fred Long, Folder: Untitled, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
88. H.L. to Fred Long, May 13, 1930, Box 110, Records of Outing Agent Fred Long, Folder: Untitled, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR; D.P. to Fred Long, June 24, 1930, Box 110, Records of Outing Agent Fred Long, Folder: Untitled, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
89. J.M. to Fred Long, June 5, 1930, Box 110, Records of Outing Agent Fred Long, Folder: Untitled, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR; A.C. to Fred Long, June 3, 1930, Box 110, Records of Outing Agent Fred Long, Folder: Untitled, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR; H.L. to Fred Long, June 30, 1930, Box 110, Records of Outing Agent Fred Long, Folder: Untitled, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
90. Employment Record of Fred Long, Personnel File for Fred Long, NAPRC.
91. Application for Enrollment in a Nonreservation School, September 4, 1922, Student Case File (hereinafter referred to as SCF) for D.P., Box 276, Central Classified Files (hereinafter referred to as CCF), RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR; Certificate of Physician, September 4, 1922, SCF D.P., Box 276, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
92. Vocational and Industrial Record Cards, 1924-1929, SCF D.P., Box 276, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
93. Application for Enrollment in a Nonreservation School, n.d., SCF R.C., Box 60, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
94. Records of Pupil in School, 1927-1929, SCF R.C., Box 60, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR; Ft. Yuma Indian School Superintendent Herbert Jolley to Frank Conser, June 8, 1926, SCF R.C., Box 60, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR; Frank Conser to Herbert Jolley, December 22, 1927, SCF R.C., Box 60, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
95. Application for Enrollment in a Nonreservation School, n.d., SCF H.L., Box 212, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR; Sherman Institute Hospital Individual Patient Record, SCF

H.L., Box 212, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR. For information on trachoma in indigenous communities and boarding schools, see Keller, *Empty Beds*, 86-88.

96. Industrial Records and Vocational Record Cards, 1924-1929, SCF H.L., Box 212, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

97. Loose note, n.d., SCF H.L., Box 212, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR. Note reads, "H. wants to continue in school. He does not want to go home for vacation."

98. Record of Pupil in Sherman Institute, SCF H.B., Box 31, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

99. Time cards for H.B., Records of Boys Outings, 1912-1918 and Time/Pay Worksheets for Outing Pupils, 1917-1929, Boxes 115-123, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR; Frank Conser to John Hunter, February 11, 1930, SCF H.B., Box 31, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR. Michael C. Coleman notes that, among boarding school alumni who left biographical accounts of their experiences, many expressed excitement and pride over the chance to work and earn money. See Coleman, *American Indian Children at School*, 114-16, 170. See also Child, *Boarding School Seasons*, 70-71.

100. Weber, *Dark Sweat, White Gold*, 64.

101. Mae Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton, NJ and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2004), 100-106.

102. Weber, *Dark Sweat, White Gold*, 72-74.

103. Harwood Hall to S.R. Smith, February 28, 1900, OSL, 1900-1901, SIC, SM.

104. Time cards for H.B., Records of Boys Outings, 1912-1918 and Time/Pay Worksheets for Outing Pupils, 1917-1929, Boxes 115-123, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

105. Application for Enrollment in a Nonreservation School, n.d., SCF J.B., Box 38, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

106. Record of Pupil in School, September 25, 1910, SCF J.B., Box 38, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR. By the end of his second year at Sherman Institute, Black had gained nearly twenty pounds. Black reported during his first year at Sherman Institute, he "did not go to school very much on account of my eyes." Personal Statement of J.B., SCF J.B., Box 38, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

107. Record of Pupil in School, 1913-1919, SCF J.B., Box 38, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

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108. J.B. to Sherman Institute Superintendent Frank Conser, September 1, 1913, SCF J.B., Box 38, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR. Black's father often pushed for him to come home and help out with agricultural work on the family's allotment.
109. Time cards for J.B., Records of Boys Outings, 1912-1918 and Time/Pay Worksheets for Outing Pupils, 1917-1929, Boxes 115-123, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
110. Sherman Institute Superintendent Frank Conser to William Light, December 12, 1922, SCF J.B., Box 38, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
111. Employee Ledger, SIC, SM.
112. See Lomawaima, *They Called It Prairie Light*, 18, 72. See also Ahern, "An Experiment Aborted," 282-83. Ahern notes that in 1898, Native Americans comprised 45 percent of staff at schools administered by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Although the percentage of Native employees within Indian boarding schools dropped steadily throughout the first half of the twentieth century, Indian employees nonetheless maintained a strong presence.
113. Sacramento Agency Superintendent Roy Nash to Sherman Institute Superintendent Donald Biery, April 13, 1939, SCF Ross Townsend, Box 364, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR; Galen Townsend, personal interview with the author, January 13, 2011; Certificates of Promotion and Vocational Record Cards, SCF Ross Townsend, Box 364, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR; Transcript of High School Record, SCF Ross Townsend, Box 364, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
114. Fred Long to H.E. Mitchell, July 18, 1928, Box 110, Records of Outing Agent Fred Long, 1917-1930, Folder: Untitled, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
115. Ross Townsend to Sherman Institute Assistant Superintendent A.P. Westhafer, August 11, 1930, SCF Ross Townsend, Box 364, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR; Sherman Institute Assistant Superintendent A.P. Westhafer to Ross Townsend, August 14, 1930, SCF Ross Townsend, Box 364, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
116. *Sherman Bulletin* 36, no. 3, November 19, 1943, SIC, SM; Townsend interview.
117. Cathleen D. Cahill, *Federal Fathers and Mothers: A Social History of the United States Indian Service, 1869-1933* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 104-115.
118. Employee Register, 1931, SIC, SM.

119. Townsend interview.

120. Ibid.

Chapter 2

Indian School, Company Town: Working at Fontana Farms Company, 1907-1929

In mid-May of 1907, classes came to a close at Sherman Institute. After a graduation soiree that featured concerts, baseball games, and grandiose speeches on racial “uplift,” the school’s five hundred odd students went their separate ways. Those fortunate enough to have reservation agents deem their parents’ homes “acceptable” travelled home for the summer. Most of the remainder worked in the “outing system,” a program that sent students to live and work at white-owned households and businesses. Some entered the outing system out of a desire to work and earn money, others because they had nowhere else to go, and still others because they couldn’t endure the mundane rhythms of boarding school life on a year-round basis. For administrators at Sherman Institute, the outing system had a much grander meaning. If Indian schools were to erase tribal identities, the outing system would serve as the centerpiece of the process.

Superintendent Harwood Hall and Outing Agent Fred Long did not have to look far for an ideal place to expose young men from Sherman Institute to the “uplifting” benefits of manual labor. Just fifteen miles north of Riverside, the Fontana Farms and Fontana Land Companies sprawled across twenty-eight square miles of rocky, wind-beaten terrain at the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains. A.B. Miller, the companies’ founder, made his first fortune in the construction boom that accompanied the rapid agricultural development of Inland Southern California’s Imperial Valley. It did not take

long, however, for Miller to shift his gaze from building homes and hotels in the heart of industrial farm country to creating an agricultural colony of his own.¹

Miller built Fontana Farms into one of the largest agricultural operations in North America, and he did so at least partly on the backs of young men from Sherman Institute. Between 1908 and 1929, at least 347 male students from Sherman Institute lived and worked at the Fontana Farms Company.² As they labored for wages, these students moved across vast spaces to balance the demands of home life with the benefits of earning money. Others battled dangerous working conditions, suffered subpar housing, and struggled to communicate with new peoples across linguistic and cultural barriers. In short, student-laborers from Sherman Institute confronted many of the same issues faced by non-Native working people within rapidly industrializing areas of the United States during the early twentieth century. Sherman Institute, then, was far from a hermetically sealed time capsule where students remained isolated from the challenges and opportunities of a rapidly changing world. For better or worse, Sherman students in the outing system confronted the complexities of working class modernity. In so doing, they moved beyond the spatial and curricular boundaries of the Indian school as historians have imagined it.

A.B. Miller arrived in Fontana in 1906, and immediately tackled the herculean task of transforming an arid swath of boulders, sage, and greasewood into a booming agricultural operation. Using investments from Los Angeles bankers, Miller quickly established infrastructure for the Fontana Farms Company. He purchased seventy-five percent of the rights to Lytle Creek, a snow-fed stream that flowed from the San Gabriel

Mountains, and used its waters for irrigation and power.³ Teams of workers planted eucalyptus trees to break ceaseless, destructive winds. Others cut roads and laid railroad tracks. By 1928, Miller's company had grown into one of the largest farms in California. His 5,000 acres of citrus groves sent oranges, grapefruits, and lemons to markets of the eastern United States under the Sunkist label.⁴ Fifty thousand hogs provided an estimated one-quarter of the pork products consumed in the Los Angeles basin and ample fertilizer for citrus groves and vineyards.⁵ The City of Los Angeles paid Miller handsomely to dump its trash at Fontana Farms, and Miller fed the refuse to his pigs.⁶

While the success of A.B. Miller likely made Fontana Farms an attractive destination for outing workers, it was not the only Fontana company to draw the attention of administrators at Sherman Institute. Under the banner of the Fontana Land Company, A.B. Miller developed and sold hundreds of small farm plots where families grew citrus, raised chickens, and cultivated small gardens. Small-scale agriculture, argued Miller, allowed independent-minded families to produce and consume their own food, and thus provided a buffer from the boom-and-bust cycles of Southern California's wage labor market. Most settlers at Fontana Land Company purchased 2.5-acre plots and built their own homes. A few moved into premade, Spanish-colonial-style bungalows.⁷ In theory, then, Fontana Land Company allowed settlers to move back to the land and escape the drudgeries and dangers of the rapidly industrializing Western United States. As long as they stayed away from the hog farm, of course.

The combination of hard physical labor and Jeffersonian ideals must have made A.B. Miller's colony an attractive place to "uplift" Sherman students, as it showcased two

possible paths to assimilation. Heaping trash into feeding pits, shoveling pig manure, and herding hogs onto train cars taught young Native men the value joining the wage-earning class, and the Fontana Land Company demonstrated to student-laborers the value of private land ownership and yeoman agriculture. Harwood Hall's successor, Frank Conser, sent hundreds of male student-laborers to work there each summer—more than any other work site in Southern California.

Sherman student Don Talayesva made one of the first sojourns from Sherman Institute to the Fontana Companies in 1907. One can only wonder what Talayesva felt as he rode north for fifteen miles, away from the magnolias and orange trees of Riverside and into the rocky desert hills of Fontana. In his dictated autobiography, the Hopi from Third Mesa left little doubt as to what filled his mind as he toiled in the Southern California summer heat: a woman. Talayesva earned two dollars a day for the difficult work of chopping, pitching, and baling hay. At night, he arranged frequent meetings with Olive, a young woman Talayesva described as “a Mexican girl, one-eighth Klamath and rather high-toned.”⁸

Talayesva gained more than experience in love. When he returned to Sherman in the fall, the young Hopi put his hard-earned money to use buying clothes to impress his classmates: low-top patent-leather shoes, a fancy hat, a velvet shirt, and a silk necktie. He opened his wallet even more at school social events, reporting that he “spent much money on the girls in gifts, tickets, and refreshments.”⁹ Historians of Indian education have unearthed the ideologies behind labor programs at federal Indian boarding schools. In so doing, they have demonstrated how labor programs at the schools negatively

affected academic learning and prepared students for lives spent on the lower rungs of the working class.¹⁰ Yet, Don Talayesva's remembrances of the Fontana Companies suggest that the experiences of student-laborers in the outing system went well beyond the ethnocentric visions of administrators at federal Indian boarding schools and the exploitative desires of business owners. Don Talayesva faced difficult conditions at Fontana Farms, to be sure. But as the enterprising young Hopi worked at Fontana Farms, he did so with his own goals, purposes, and desires in mind. In short, Talayesva had his own motives for working and earning money.

Talayesva's accounts of his time in Fontana point to another, underexplored theme within the study of Indian education: mobility. Talayesva's educational career began with a six-hundred-mile train ride west from the Orayvi Village on the Hopi Reservation through the desert and into Riverside, California—a place that returned Hopi students called “the land of oranges.”¹¹ Talayesva spent the academic year of 1906 - 1907 at Sherman Institute, then trekked fifteen miles north to work at Fontana Farms. After the 1907 - 1908 school year, Talayesva ventured east to harvest cantaloupes in California's Imperial Valley. Later, Talayesva worked at a dairy farm in San Bernardino, California, fifteen miles northwest of Riverside, before he returned again to Fontana to work the remainder of the summer. All told, he journeyed at least 1,500 miles in under two years.¹² Travel, then, became a significant part of Talayesva's time at school. Among Sherman students, he was far from unique in this regard. In the forty years after the school's opening in 1902, hundreds of young men from across the American West performed agricultural work in Southern California, many at Fontana Farms.¹³

If sojourns to Fontana Farms shed new light on student experiences at boarding schools, they also raise new questions. What did these young men experience on the job? In the second decade of the twentieth century, progressives in California created a state Division of Immigration and Housing in attempts to Americanize immigrant laborers and protect them as they worked. Reports from the Division of Immigration and Housing suggest that time spent at Fontana Farms prepared student-laborers from Sherman Institute for entrance into a racially divided world of work. Those deemed “Mexican,” as Talayesva and other Sherman students likely were, made between three and four dollars a day during the 1920s. Those labeled “Native born Americans” made as much as nine dollars each day.¹⁴

Mexican workers lived in segregated camps, where they faced conditions far worse than those confronted by their white counterparts. During the 1920s, most white workers paid one dollar per day for food and lodging. Mexican workers negotiated the cost of food and lodging independently.¹⁵ While records from the Division of Immigration and Housing do not reveal how much Mexican workers paid for accommodations, they leave little doubt that workers of color faced subpar living conditions. Housing in white-only camps featured rooms far more spacious than those found in Mexican camps. White workers often had ten-by-ten-foot rooms all to themselves, while Mexican workers dealt with far more crowded conditions. For example, the Decléz hog camp featured eight small, two-room shacks that held twenty-two beds for twenty-six workers. Housing facilities for white workers included separate kitchen quarters. Mexican workers, on the other hand, cooked and ate food within their

meager living quarters. At many camps, white workers reveled in the luxury of a hot shower. Mexican workers did not.¹⁶

To be sure, workers of all ethnicities shared many challenges at Fontana Farms, including outhouses. Latrines in both white and Mexican camps often overflowed, and black flies flew freely through unscreened privy windows. White and brown workers alike deposited food scraps into open pits just feet away from their barracks, where pigs and chickens noisily scavenged.¹⁷ Still, workers at the Mexican camps faced problems their white counterparts did not. One can imagine a Sherman student treading wearily to his job after a night spent a sleepless night in a smoky, ten-by-ten room, teeming with smells of human waste, body odor, and the last night's dinner. It seems likely that Sherman students living in such conditions might have developed respiratory problems from nights spent in such poorly ventilated rooms where bacteria, viruses, and molds bred unchecked by public health officials.

Poor living conditions for non-white workers at Fontana Farms give rise to an important question: What connections, if any, existed between agricultural outing labor and student health? A lack of comprehensive data makes it difficult to offer any hard and fast conclusions. If prolonged stints of labor in squalid conditions at Fontana Farms led to higher rates of sickness among student-laborers, administrators at Sherman had little interest in documenting the fact. Still, an unscientific sampling of the student files of those who worked at Fontana Farms reveals that some student-laborers became ill, and sometimes seriously so. Of the 347 student-laborers who worked for Fontana Farms

between 1912 and 1929, at least four ended up with a diagnosis of tuberculosis before leaving school.¹⁸

Navajo student Benjamin Small provides a tragic example of this trend. In late spring of 1926, a mysterious illness gripped twenty-one-year-old Small. Small had arrived at Sherman in 1922, and he began participating in the outing system in the summer of 1924, when he worked a month-long stint at Fontana Farms. In the summers of 1924 and 1925, Small worked with hogs at Fontana Farms, threshed and bailed hay at the C.H. Coulson Ranch, cleaned chicken coops at the Glenbea Poultry Ranch, and fought fire in the Cleveland Forest Reserve north of San Diego, California. Altogether, he earned \$135 over two summers.¹⁹

As classes came to a close in May of 1926, Small prepared to go on outing once again. After just a half a day spent working at the ranch of T.J. Richmond, he promptly returned to Sherman Institute.²⁰ Small's health was failing him. After returning to school, he wrote a worried letter to his family. Small feared the worst—he was coming down with tuberculosis. Word of Small's illness spread quickly around his home community of Diablo Canyon, Arizona, eventually reaching Leupp Agency Superintendent W.O. Roberts. Roberts met with Small's mother, who requested that Benjamin be sent home if he did indeed have tuberculosis.²¹

On June 5, 1926, Roberts sent news of Small's ill health to Sherman Institute Superintendent Frank Conser.²² Word of Small's condition sent Superintendent Conser into action, and he sent a terse note to staff at the school hospital. "Have this boy examined and have the doctor report to me," he wrote. Apparently referring to Sherman

students lost in the past, Conser opined, “I do not want a repeat where we send another boy home on a stretcher.”²³ Small promptly entered the school hospital for rest and observation by Sherman’s contract physician, W.W. Roblee. Roblee reported finding no signs of tuberculosis, but noted that Small was “losing in weight, has a poor appetite, and would be better off at home, at least for the summer.”²⁴ Conser followed the doctor’s recommendation, and Benjamin Small arrived home at Diablo Canyon on June 18.²⁵ He never returned to Sherman Institute. Records do not reveal whether Small recovered from his illness.

Much like Small, Navajo student Jim Marshall worked non-stop as a student at Sherman Institute and within the outing system during the summers before contracting tuberculosis. Marshall spent the summers of 1916, 1917, and 1918 working in the outing system. He finished a month-long stint at Fontana Farms on September 27, 1918. Two months later, he checked into the sanitarium at Fort Defiance, Arizona.²⁶ Gary Lamb, a Navajo student from near Crown Point, New Mexico, suffered a similar fate. In summers between 1924 and 1928, he worked for Fontana Farms, as well as the Santa Fe and J.J. Orraj Ranches. He worked longer and harder than most of his fellow outing laborers, grossing \$642 for three summers of work. Lamb could barely stay healthy enough to remain in school. After graduation in June of 1928, he headed straight for the sanitarium run by the Office of Indian Affairs at the Soboba Reservation near Hemet, California.²⁷ Lamb wrote in August to report that he was “feeling fine,” but that he wanted money from his outing account so that he could arrange for a transfer to the sanitarium at Fort Defiance, Arizona, which he felt would help his health “on account of the high altitude

and dry climate.”²⁸ Lamb apparently received no money from Conser, and he continued to languish at the hospital in Soboba until at least February, when Sherman Outing Agent Fred Long sent him an employment survey. “For being at the sanitarium,” wrote Lamb, “I cannot engage in any work.”²⁹ With a blank employment form, the story of Gerald Lamb fades into a mystery. In the end, the very curriculum that aimed to make Lamb into a productive cog in the industrial machine of the western United States left him unable to work, or worse yet, dead.

The fates of a pair students who spent time at Fontana Farms during the 1920s are much clearer than those of Jim Marshall and Gary Lamb: Navajos Hank Bisbee and Cary Jackson both succumbed to tuberculosis within the walls of the school hospital at Sherman Institute. Bisbee must have felt a sense of excitement and hope in the spring of 1929 as he graduated from Sherman Institute. An A student, he had been admitted to Haskell Institute in Lawrence, Kansas.³⁰ There, he could finish the eleventh and twelfth grades, clearing the way for an advanced vocational trade, or even college. But it was not to be. Rather than going home for the summer following graduation, Bisbee elected to go on outing in Southern California. Bisbee was a hard worker—between 1926 and 1929, he had never earned less than \$108 in a summer.³¹ That final summer at Sherman, though, he returned from work in July, a full month earlier than normal, and checked himself into the school hospital. School physician W.W. Roblee diagnosed him with tuberculosis. On September 8, after two excruciating months of illness, he suffered a lung hemorrhage. By late August, it became clear that Bisbee would never make it to Haskell Institute. For the next three months, fever gripped Bisbee’s body, and his temperature hovered between

100 and 103 degrees Fahrenheit. Each night, Bisbee's nurse reported that he sweated through his sheets. On the worst days, Bisbee coughed until he vomited. Finally, on November 22, 1929, he died.³²

Cary Jackson suffered a similar fate. The Navajo from near Crown Point, New Mexico, had arrived at Sherman Institute in 1923 as a fourteen year-old. Jackson took quickly to working with leather. Over the next nine years, he became a fixture in Sherman's shoe and harness shop, where he worked an average of twenty-one hours each week.³³ From 1926 to 1929, he spent summers working at Fontana Farms and the Los Angeles Construction Company. He never took home less than \$150 for a summer's work.³⁴ By the summer of 1929, the combination of schoolwork, vocational labor in the shoe and harness shop, and summer outing must have taken its toll. Jackson developed chronic tuberculosis. After three years spent moving back and forth between the hospital and the shoe and harness shop, Sherman officials sent Jackson to the East Farm Sanitarium on the campus of the Phoenix Indian School in late October of 1932. He died less than a year later.³⁵

By no means do four tragic deaths draw a perfect correlation between outing and chronic disease. Outing labor, however, fit into a broader system in which students at Sherman Institute and other federal Indian boarding schools worked far too much. Students endured school years filled with ceaseless academic and vocational work that began as early as six in the morning and often kept them awake until eleven at night. They ate starchy foods not suited to their biological needs.³⁶ After the brief respite of graduation ceremonies, Sherman students ventured into the fields and factories of

Southern California. Those students lucky enough to visit home did so within a two-week window at the end of August. While almost all scholars of Indian education have commented on the sometimes-harsh work regimens at boarding schools, few have drawn connections between the frequency and duration of labor and a decreased ability to fight illness.³⁷ For students who spent significant portions of the summer working on outing, the lure of potentially lucrative wages ran head on into the dangers of reduced time for rest and recovery from the school year. At Fontana Farms, the combination of poor sanitation, inadequate food, and a rigorous daily work regimen likely wore down the bodies and immune systems of workers from Sherman Institute. Add in feelings of depression and homesickness that might have come from time spent working rather than visiting family and friends at home, and the possibilities for connections between outing and ill health loomed even larger.

Sherman students almost certainly worked too much, whether they did so on outing or at school. Yet the school itself was not necessarily a death trap. While federal Indian boarding schools are often imagined as disease-ridden places, conditions faced by student-laborers at Fontana Farms actually stood in stark contrast to the relatively healthful campus at Sherman Institute. Boarding schools opened in the 1880s and 1890s often featured small, poorly ventilated sleeping quarters. These conditions, combined with harsh work schedules and starchy meals with few fruits and vegetables, made students susceptible to infectious diseases. Trachoma and tuberculosis ravaged the student population at Carlisle Industrial School in the years after its opening in 1878.³⁸

Negative publicity surrounding poor student health drove administrators from the Office of Indian Affairs to design healthier schools. At Sherman Institute, Superintendents Harwood Hall and Frank Conser pushed the Indian Office to provide money for facilities that would promote student health. Hall built dormitories to comply with guidelines from the Office of Indian Affairs that mandated forty cubic feet of space for each bed. When increasing enrollments caused crowding, he added sleeping porches and tents to house students until new dormitories could be built. Hall equipped the dormitories with flush toilets. He oversaw the construction of a school hospital in 1905, and contracted the services of a local doctor. Later, Superintendent Conser lobbied the Indian Office for \$15,000 to construct additional bathing facilities so that students could bathe freely with hot water at all hours of the day.³⁹ To be sure, trachoma, tuberculosis, and other diseases still struck many students at Sherman Institute. Yet rates of morbidity and mortality looked nothing like those found at Carlisle Industrial School during its early years. In all respects, conditions at Fontana Farms proved far worse than those at Sherman Institute. The vast difference between accommodations for students at Sherman Institute and Fontana sheds light on the fundamental message students received as they moved between Indian school and company town: The relative cleanliness of Sherman Institute would not last. Life in the segregated, agricultural working class would be dirty and dangerous.

Reports of segregated, unsanitary work camps might be less than shocking to those familiar with agriculture in California during the early twentieth century.⁴⁰ Still, the lived experiences of outing laborers at Fontana Farms offer important insight. Richard

Henry Pratt, the founder of the Carlisle Institute and a primary architect of federal Indian education policy, dreamed that boarding schools and their outing systems would propel young Native people onto equal footing with white, Protestant Americans. As historian Frederick E. Hoxie has noted, the sun had set on such ideas by the early twentieth century. Among the politicians and bureaucrats who controlled Indian affairs, hope for the assimilation and equal participation of Native peoples within the dominant white culture of the United States gave way to pessimistic caricatures of the “vanishing Indian.” At Fontana Farms, hundreds of students from Sherman Institute lived the realities of diminished expectations within federal Indian boarding schools.⁴¹

The outing system funneled Sherman students into wage earning class. With whom, then, did they work? Don Talayesva provided at least the seed of an answer. As Talayesva reflected on his time at Fontana Farms in his dictated autobiography, ethnic diversity came to the forefront of his thoughts. First, of course, came Olive, the “high-toned” young woman of mixed Mexican and Klamath ancestry. Talayesva then remembered being teased over his love affair by his boss, a crusty old man from the Netherlands.⁴² While inspectors from the California Division of Immigration and Housing only recorded the presence “native born Americans” and “Mexicans” at Fontana Farms, other sources suggest that A.B. Miller’s company drew a diverse body of workers from all over the world.⁴³

According to reports from the California Division of Immigration and Housing, so-called “Mexicans” constituted the majority of non-white workers at Fontana Farms.⁴⁴ Still, the Fontana *Herald-News* reported the presence of substantial numbers of Asian

laborers, many of Japanese descent, among the company's five hundred total workers.⁴⁵ The diversity of the workforce at Fontana Farms reflected a broader trend within California agriculture. The days of a California agricultural workforce built from single, white bindlestiffs faded into the past during the early twentieth century as immigrants from across the globe sought work in California.⁴⁶ Between 1923 and 1930, year-end labor camp reports from the California Division of Immigration and Housing noted the presence of thousands of workers who had come from abroad and found work in the fields of California, including immigrants from Mexico, Italy, Greece, Armenia, India, Ireland, Russia, France, and Switzerland.⁴⁷ Moreover, settlers from Southern and Eastern Europe and the Midwestern United States poured into Fontana to create homesteads under the banner of the Fontana Land Company.⁴⁸

Scholars have done much to examine how federal Indian education systems fostered new interactions between students from different tribes. Historian Hazel W. Herzberg, among others, argued that the schools fostered a sense "pan-Indian" identity among students from across Indian country.⁴⁹ The outing system likely moved far beyond pan-Indianism in impacting how students imagined the world and their places within it. As young men in the Sherman outing system made their way to jobs at Fontana Farms and elsewhere in Southern California, they came into intimate contact with myriad peoples, languages, and cultures.

In his history of Italian, Greek, and Mexican railroad workers in the United States and Canada, historian Gunther Peck argued compellingly that immigrants often ventured far beyond the boundaries of the ethnic ghettos that have so often served as the spatial

and theoretical focal points of immigration histories. The immigrants in Peck's narratives travelled to remote areas of Canada and the United States to work on railroad construction crews. Upon reaching work sites, they battled extreme weather, brutal foremen, and slippery labor contractors who often attempted to cheat workers out of their pay.⁵⁰ In moving beyond the walls of Sherman Institute to join the workforces of California's burgeoning industrial farms, young men from Sherman entered into common experiences with people from all over the world who braved the dangers of the rapidly industrializing Western United States in order to work and earn money. Just as immigration histories are pushing beyond the intellectually restrictive bounds of the ethnic ghetto, so too should studies of boarding schools do more to consider connections between indigenous students at boarding schools and the communities and regions in which they learned and labored.⁵¹

Historian James Clifford has noted that views of indigenous peoples change significantly once scholars and others acknowledge when, how, and why they moved across landscapes.⁵² With this thought in mind, how do perspectives of boarding schools change when we acknowledge mobility and engagement of wage labor markets among students? Sherman Institute looks less like a terminal point of suffering and more like a hub within a vast and complicated network of movements. Each summer, hundreds of students traveled great distances, sometimes thousands of miles, to balance the benefits of working and earning money with the obligations of home life.

None of this is meant to suggest that all students at all schools could use outing programs to engage wage labor markets on their own terms, or that students could leave

schools or workplaces to travel home at will. Surely this was not the case for most students. Those who did work often experienced segregation, low pay, and harsh working conditions. To borrow a phrase from historian Brian C. Hosmer, power mattered at boarding schools, and students often had precious little.⁵³ Reservation agents and school superintendents often shaped how, why, and when students traveled between school, work, and home. Yet, one cannot dip into the archives without encountering Native people attempting to use the outing system for their own purposes.

Sherman student Warren Davis provides a compelling snapshot of a distinctly Navajo approach to the outing system. Davis hailed from Tohatchi, New Mexico, and he arrived at Sherman Institute as a seventeen year-old in 1921.⁵⁴ After three years of coursework that focused mostly on agriculture, Davis began working in the outing system in the summer of 1925.⁵⁵ Like hundreds of Sherman students before him, Davis followed an annual cycle in which he struck a balance between schooling, wage labor, and home life. Davis finished school in late May 1925. Over the course of June, July, and the first half of August, he worked ten-hour days at Fontana Farms in the hot summer sun. Davis received \$3 each day for working with hogs and poultry, as well as cutting, threshing, and bailing hay.⁵⁶ Each night, Davis paid Fontana Farms at least one dollar to sleep in crowded, unsanitary quarters. Moreover, he had to purchase his own food.⁵⁷ All told, Davis netted \$159 before visiting home in late August of 1925. As Sherman Institute followed the template set by Carlisle founder and outing system designer Richard Henry Pratt, Davis received only one-third of this amount. The remainder went to a bank account at Sherman Institute to be controlled by Superintendent Frank Conser. If Davis

left school permanently, the money would be sent to the agent in charge of his home reservation.⁵⁸

In June of 1926, Davis began working in the outing system on a year-round basis at the ranch of Walter Martin in Temecula, California, an agricultural community located forty miles south of Riverside. By working instead of attending class, he joined a substantial group of Native people who essentially used the school as a labor agency to gain full-time employment in Southern California. Davis remained on the books as a student at Sherman Institute, in large part so that the school could continue receiving the annual payment that the federal government provided for each enrolled student.⁵⁹ This, of course, came in spite of the fact that Davis paid for food and lodging as he worked. At the Martin Ranch, Davis worked six days a week at a rate of \$2.25 per day. From June 1926 to June 1927, he labored ten hours a day, six days a week, taking only Sundays for rest. With room and board subtracted, Davis earned \$566 for the year.⁶⁰

Timecards from Sherman Institute allow for basic exploration of what Warren Davis experienced as he worked in the outing system. When Davis returned home to the Navajo reservation in 1927, however, he penned a note to Sherman Institute Superintendent Frank Conser that revealed far more than any timecard ever could. Writing from his home near Tohatchi, Davis bemoaned a forty-mile journey to the agency headquarters to pick up his outing wages that had left him empty handed. "I thought you sent my money to Fort Defiance already," he wrote. "Some time ago I went to Fort Defiance and my money is not there yet."⁶¹ Like many former students who had worked in the outing system, Davis wrote in search of the two-thirds of his wages held

hostage by Superintendent Conser. The words that followed, however, add depth and texture to Davis's time in the outing system. "I want my money right away because I want to buy some sheep. I bought only ten sheep already. I want to buy about fifty more." For good measure, Davis also informed Long that he intended to use any remaining outing money to buy lumber so that he could add on to his family's home.⁶²

Long hours travelling between reservation and boarding school and many months spent toiling in Sherman's outing system ultimately led Warren Davis back to the Navajo Reservation. In amassing in herd of sheep, Davis invested his hard-earned money into an economic activity that had become a crucial to many Navajo families and communities, and to the very culture itself. Spanish explorers and missionaries introduced horses, sheep, cattle, mules, and goats to Navajo country during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and Navajo people quickly incorporated the animals into their economy and culture.⁶³ By 1890, when the Office of Indian Affairs began keeping statistics related to livestock, Navajo people grazed some 575,000 sheep and 186,000 goats across the reservation. Sheep provided wool, mutton, and blankets that could be used at home or to barter for goods at trading posts.⁶⁴ By the late nineteenth century, sheep had moved to the very center of Navajo culture and identity. As historian Colleen O'Neill notes, sheep and other livestock had become deeply tied to "fundamental values about parenting, gender, and notions of security."⁶⁵ Navajo parents taught their children responsibility through care of livestock. Navajo families used large, healthy herds to signal their status within the community, and Navajo mothers passed wealth and security to their daughters via their sheep.⁶⁶

It is tempting to imagine that Warren Davis “dreamed of sheep” as he toiled in the fields and pigpens of Fontana Farms, and that he planned to use money from outing to return to the eastern side of the Navajo Reservation, purchase livestock, and start life anew as a wealthier Navajo. Given the information at hand, it is impossible to say whether this was the case. Still, the outing program *did* provide Davis with sufficient cash to start his herd, or add to a preexisting one. Perhaps more important is the way in which Davis got there, as he combined elements of mobility, federal Indian bureaucracy, and wage labor in order to accrue a relatively significant lump of cash. Colleen O’Neill has argued convincingly that Navajo people of the early twentieth century grounded the engagement of new wage labor markets within Navajo spirituality and culture. For Warren Davis, it seems that the outing system at Sherman Institute became an integral part of “working the Navajo way.”⁶⁷

The experiences of Warren Davis and Don Talayesva represent a broader trend within the outing system, as Navajo and Hopi students predominated among students working at Fontana Farms, and within the outing system more generally (see Table 2.1). Navajos and Hopis spent more days at work and netted more money than their counterparts from California tribes. In 1926, for example, thirty-one Navajos worked at Fontana Farms among a contingent of seventy-five students from Sherman Institute. Navajos, then, comprised just less than one-third of the group. This is surprising, given their relatively low numbers at Sherman Institute. In the late 1920s and early 1930s, Navajos normally comprised between ten and twenty percent of the overall student body (see Table 2.1).⁶⁸

Table 2.1. Student-Laborers at Fontana Farms by Tribe, 1926

Tribe	Number of Students	Percent of Students at Fontana Farms	Expected Percent
Navajo	31	41	15
Hopi	12	16	14
Apache	5	7	2
Pueblo	5	7	4
Papago	4	5	4
Paiute	2	3	7
Concow	1	1.3	1
Lakota	1	1.3	1
"Mission"	1	1.3	13
Mono	1	1	1
Pima	1	1	2
Quechan	1	1	3
Shasta	1	1	1
Wylackie	1	1	1
Yaqui	1	1	1
Unknown	6	8	

Sources: Time/Pay Worksheets for Outing Pupils, 1926, Box 121, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR, and Student Case Files, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

Note: Tribal affiliations were identified by pulling the names of students from outing timecards for the year 1926 and then accessing their student files. Expected percentages for each tribal group reflect averages calculated from censuses taken at Sherman Institute in 1923, 1929, 1931, and 1932. For 1923 census, see Malcolm McDowell to Board of Indian Commissioners, October 4, 1923, Folder: 92503-1923, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NADC. For 1929 census, see Annual Report for Sherman Institute, Box 19, Folder: 14570-1930, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NADC. For 1931 census, see Carl Moore to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles Rhoads, January 19, 1931, Box 20, Folder: 4043-1931, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NADC. For 1932 census, see *Sherman Bulletin* 26, no. 5 (1932), SIC, SM.

Among tribes represented at Fontana Farms, Navajo students more than doubled Hopis, the next most prominent group. Diné students, however, did not hold a monopoly on hard work. While their Hopi counterparts worked at Fontana Farms in numbers only slightly greater than their overall representation within the student body, they worked far longer and made far more money than the average student once they arrived on the job. Why, then, did Navajos participate in greater numbers, and why did Hopis work so much longer than their peers?

In Southern California, Navajo and Hopi students gained access to more and higher paying jobs than they could have found closer to home. In 1926, as Warren Davis and thirty of his fellow Navajo students from Sherman Institute toiled at Fontana Farms, prospects for earning cash on the Diné Reservation looked bleak. According to numbers collected by the Office of Indian Affairs and vetted by the Brookings Institution for the Meriam Report of 1928, Navajo individuals earned between \$17 and \$142 in 1926. In the same year, Hopi individuals earned an average income of \$173 (see Table 2.2).

In 1926, the average Navajo worker at Fontana farms earned \$184 for a summer's worth of work, and the average Hopi, \$241 (see Table 2.3). Records do not reveal the exact cost of room, board, and transportation to and from Fontana for Sherman student-laborers. If we assume, however, that Sherman students paid the \$1 per day charged to white workers, then Hopi student-laborers would have earned more in one summer than most Navajo and Hopi people made over the course of a year (see Table 2.2). On the Hopi Mesas, ethnographer Edward Kennard noted that men who left the reservation for wage work spent their cash "carefully and sparingly" on flour, sugar, and coffee, all of

which could be had for as little as a dollar a month.⁶⁹ A few months spent working at Fontana Farms could have provided enough cash to see some Navajo or Hopi families through the better part of a year. A full year's labor likely would have allowed a family to improve its economic standing significantly. For students such as Warren Davis and Don Talayesva, then, the pull of open jobs and relatively high wages in Southern California likely made a summer working in the outing system an attractive proposition.

Table 2.2. Per Capita Income among Tribes Represented at Fontana Farms, 1926

Agency	Tribe	Average Income
Leupp	Navajo	17
Western Navajo	Navajo	32
Fort Yuma	Quechan	95
Fort Apache	Apache	96
Mission	Cahuilla/Serrano	107
San Juan	Navajo	111
Consolidated Ute	Ute	113
Southern Pueblos	Pueblo	116
Uintah and Ouray	Ute	121
Southern Navajo	Navajo	135
Pueblo Bonito	Navajo	142
Fort Bidwell	Paiute	165
Pima	Pima	166
Hopi	Hopi	173

Source: Institute for Government Research, *The Problem of Indian Administration* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1928), 442-3.

Note: The authors of the Meriam Report essentially reused data from the 1926 *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs (ARCIA)*, but not before visiting each of the agencies enumerated and collecting their own data on individual income. The findings of the investigative team from the Institute for Government Research essentially matched the numbers found in the *ARCIA*.

Table 2.3. Navajo and Hopi Student-Laborers at Fontana Farms, 1926

	Median Gross Pay	Median Days Worked
All Student-Laborers	199.32	66.8
Hopi	241.16	81
Navajo	184	59

Source: Records of Boys Outings, 1912-1918 and Time/Pay Worksheets for Outing Pupils, 1917-1929, Boxes 115-123, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

A deeper look at material conditions and wage labor opportunities on the reservations from which Navajo and Hopi students came supports the notion that these students earned more cash in the outing system than they could have at home. Anthropologists Klara B. Kelley and Peter M. Whiteley noted that during the first three decades of the twentieth century, most Navajo people had yet to work wage labor into their cycles of work and subsistence. Rather, Navajo families most often made their living through some combination of raising livestock, farming, and producing wool, blankets, and handicrafts for the market.⁷⁰ Economic strategies depended in large part upon local terrain. Navajo families at higher elevations, mostly along the eastern side of the reservation, often pursued dry farming. Those near lowland washes used seasonal rainfalls to irrigate crops. Families residing on the grass-covered steppes, which covered one-third of the reservation, relied most heavily on livestock. A few Navajos pursued wage labor at agency headquarters such as Fort Defiance, Window Rock, and Tuba City, Arizona, or Shiprock, New Mexico, or in border towns such as Flagstaff and Winslow, Arizona, or Gallup, New Mexico. Most, noted Colleen O'Neill, survived on "what they could grow, herd, or weave."⁷¹

For a young Navajo man like Warren Davis, the chance to earn many hundreds of dollars at ranches and farms in Southern California must have seemed like a lucrative opportunity. Where most Navajo families built up their herds slowly and carefully for generations, Davis and other Navajo students had the chance to save large sums of cash, which they could use to purchase livestock outright and immediately. Colleen O’Neill has argued that in the first three decades of the twentieth century, the average Navajo family needed at least one hundred sheep, goats, and cattle in order to survive somewhat comfortably.⁷² For Davis and others, the chance to purchase significant numbers of sheep in short order might have changed the fortunes of a family, either from poverty to livability, or from a small herd to substantially larger one. Either way, Navajo students who used Sherman Institute to secure work would have found themselves on the vanguard of wage work among their people. Working at Fontana Farms likely allowed Davis to enlarge his family’s sheep herd, and by extension, their wealth and prestige, in a way that few other Navajos could have before the mid-1930s.⁷³

Hopi students, too, had good reason to work and earn money in the Sherman outing system. Historian Matthew Sakiestewa Gilbert has attributed Hopi participation at the Sherman Institute school farm and in the outing system to the centrality of agriculture within Hopi society and culture. In a tradition that began in ancient times and continues today, life on the Hopi Mesas centers on the production of corn. Over millennia, Hopis developed what Sakiestewa Gilbert calls “tried and true” methods in order to successfully coax corn from the ground in spite of the dry, arid conditions found on the Hopi mesas. Dry farming techniques, along with ceremonies and prayers, helped the corn grow each

year. Hopis also grew squash, beans, melons, grapes, peaches, apricots, and wheat, and some owned livestock.⁷⁴

Compared to peers from other tribes, then, Hopi students arrived at Sherman Institute with strong preparation for learning new agricultural techniques and engaging in farm labor. Don Talayesva recalled the learning of agriculture as a central element in his Hopi education on the Third Mesa. “We followed our fathers to the fields,” remembered Talayesva, “and helped to plant and weed.” Talayesva also recalled driving birds and rodents from the field, picking and drying peaches, harvesting melons and corn, and herding sheep. “Learning to work,” boasted Talayesva, “was like play.”⁷⁵

Alongside cultural affinity for agriculture, social and economic conditions on the reservation likely played important roles in pushing Hopi students toward prolonged stints in the outing system. The average Hopi individual earned more per capita than the average person from any of the five agencies on the Navajo Reservation (see Table 2.2). Still, the early twentieth century proved to be a difficult time for the Hopi people. The century started inauspiciously, as the year 1898 saw a terrible smallpox epidemic strike the Hopi Mesas. Over 600 people fell ill, and 159 died.⁷⁶ In 1906, tensions rose at the Third Mesa village of Orayvi over the issue of whether or not to send Hopi children to government boarding schools, or to cooperate with the United States government more generally. Tensions heated into conflict, and so-called “resisters” left Orayvi to start their own village.⁷⁷ To make matters worse, Mormons and other white settlers dammed water on and around the Hopi Reservation, causing land erosion and the loss of water.⁷⁸

As hard times came to the Hopi Mesas, few could depend on wage labor to turn the fortunes of their families or households. Anthropologist Richard O. Clemmer has argued that in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, wage labor jobs on the Hopi Reservation were “available, but not abundant.”⁷⁹ Between 1906 and 1908, a few Hopi laborers worked with Mohave, Navajo, and Pueblo men laying and repairing railroad tracks for the Santa Fe Railroad.⁸⁰ Others ventured into the fields of Kansas and Colorado to chop and thin sugar beets. At Moencopi in 1915, a dozen men worked at freighting, coal mining, carpentry, stone masonry, school housekeeping, laundering, and casual labor, earning between \$1 and \$4 a day. A few Hopi women worked as domestics in off-reservation cities such as Flagstaff and Winslow, Arizona. On average, they earned between \$1.50 and \$3 per week. Hopis from the First Mesa often obtained wage work at the agency, located just eleven miles east at Keams Canyon. These jobs were relatively few and proved inaccessible to Hopis outside the First Mesa.⁸¹

The combination of Hopi prowess in agriculture, along with a dearth of jobs on or near the reservation, meant that relatively few people on the Mesas leaned heavily on wage labor. Working from numbers provided by various Moqui Reservation Agents to the Office of Indian Affairs during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Richard O. Clemmer estimated that one third of Hopi subsistence came from wages. This number appears generous, given the lack of specific information provided by Indian agents regarding how Hopi people made the money.⁸² Alongside Hopi knowledge of agricultural work, a relative lack of wage labor opportunities on the Hopi Mesas must have made the abundant, relatively well paying jobs offered by the Sherman outing

system appear as opportunities. Regardless of how they perceived outing jobs, Hopis in the outing program worked longer and made more money per capita than students from any other tribal group represented at Sherman Institute (see Table 2.3).

As historian Cathleen Cahill has noted, employment of Native Americans within private industry during the early twentieth century remains an underexplored topic.⁸³ Her statement holds true in the cases of Navajo and Hopi people. The Meriam Report of 1928, however, provides one small window into Navajo and Hopi wage labor near the reservation during the 1920s. Investigators from the Brookings Institution interviewed three groups of young Navajo men who had been sent from day schools operated by the Office of Indian Affairs to work in the beet fields of Kansas and Colorado. Investigators found that while the young men had been promised up to two dollars a day in wages, they returned home from their work having netted only nine, twelve, and forty-five cents per day, respectively.⁸⁴ Beet field operators paid the boys less than they had promised. After paying out-of-pocket costs for food, lodging, and clothing, the young men had almost nothing to show for over two months of backbreaking work thinning and chopping sugar beets—work that historian Lisbeth Haas has described as “particularly painful.”⁸⁵

Before he came to Sherman Institute, Don Talayesva spent three months working in the sugar beet fields near Rockyford, Colorado. He worked eleven and twelve hour days and earned fifteen cents per hour. “We were divided into groups of eight boys each,” remembered Talayesva, “and moved from farm to farm, thinning beets during the day and sleeping in tents at night.” Talayesva earned \$45 by the end of his stint in Colorado. He received only \$10, with the remainder sent to his reservation agent.⁸⁶

Talayasva earned less for his work in Colorado than he would in California. At fifteen cents per hour, he earned \$1.80 per twelve-hour day in the sugar beet fields of Rockyford. At Fontana Farms, he earned a flat daily wage of \$2.⁸⁷ Given time cards tallied by students from Sherman who worked at Fontana Farms during the second decade of the twentieth century, it seems more likely that Talayasva worked between eight and ten hours per day at Fontana.⁸⁸ Were this the case, he would have made more money in Southern California than he did in Colorado, and for far less work.

Sherman Institute did not record the net wages earned by students on outing during the first three decades of the twentieth century. Outing Agent Fred Long tracked only the total wages earned by student-laborers, the one-third of total wages paid to them on site, and the two-thirds sent to Sherman Institute for “safe keeping.” The failure of investigators from the California Commission on Immigration and Housing to record how much Fontana Farms officials charged for food and lodging makes things even murkier. Still, it appears as though Sherman students who worked for Fontana Farms during the 1920s fared far better than those who toiled in the beet fields of Colorado and Kansas.

If young Navajo and Hopi men had relatively good reason to work more and earn more money than their peers within the outing system, students from California tribes proved more reluctant. In 1932, indigenous Californians at Sherman Institute far outnumbered students from other states, as they likely did throughout the 1920s and early 1930s (see Table 2.4). Yet, in 1926, students from California tribes formed under one-tenth of the seventy-five student laborers who spent the summer at the Fontana Farms

Company (see Table 2.1). Why, then, did students from California tribes participate at such a low rate?

Table 2.4. Sherman Institute Enrollment by State of Origin, 1931 (N=1109)

State	Number	Percent Enrollment
Calif.	514	46
Ariz.	358	32
Nev.	68	6
N.M.	49	4
Utah	49	4
Idaho	32	3
Ore.	20	2
Okla.	3	<1
Wash.	5	<1
Mont.	1	<1
N. Dak.	5	<1
S. Dak.	2	<1
Wyo.	3	<1

Source: For 1931 school census, see Carl Moore to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles Rhoads, January 19, 1931, Box 20, Folder: 4043-1931, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NADC.

Deep familiarity with wage labor markets among California's Native peoples likely meant that students could make as much money near their homes as they could at the companies to which Sherman Institute sent its students. Students from the Round Valley Reservation in Northern California provide a prime example. Historian William J. Bauer, Jr., noted that from the mid-nineteenth century onward, Native peoples at Round Valley carefully engaged local wage labor markets and fit migratory wage work within their cultural worldviews and practices. As Round Valley peoples left the reservation to

shear sheep, pick hops, and thresh hay, they used wages to supplement and protect older, subsistence-based economic strategies.⁸⁹ For Sherman students from Round Valley, returning home to the reservation in the summer offered the best of both worlds: the chance to work and earn money, and also to be with friends and family. Near the reservation, they could thresh and bale hay for between two and three dollars per day—wages similar to those paid for the same work on ranches in Southern California. Given this context, it makes sense that students from Round Valley attempted to go home for the summer rather than work in the outing system.⁹⁰

Native peoples in Southern California had also engaged wage labor markets for well over a century by the time that Sherman Institute opened its doors in 1902. In present day San Diego County, Kumeyaay, Luiseno, and Cahuilla peoples drove cattle, sheered sheep, cut and dug irrigation ditches, and harvested fruit, among other jobs.⁹¹ Farther north, in Riverside and San Bernardino counties, Cahuilla, Serrano, and Chemehuevi people engaged seasonal wage labor markets in the agricultural fields of San Bernardino, as well as the Coachella and San Jacinto Valleys. In the winter, seasonal labor circuits saw many from these groups make their way to Banning, California to work in canneries.⁹²

If knowledge of wage labor markets played a key role in pulling California Indians homeward during the summer, so too did proximity of their homes to Sherman Institute. For most of the early twentieth century, the Office of Indian Affairs dictated that officials from Sherman Institute could only pay transportation costs for initial journeys of students to school and their final journeys homeward.⁹³ Even if Sherman

administrators and the superintendent from a student's home reservation agreed to allow a student to return home for the summer, the student still had to pay round-trip transportation. For students from California, this did not pose a significant issue. One-way train tickets to relatively far-off places such as Covelo and Round Valley, California, cost roughly fifteen dollars.⁹⁴ Students from more remote reservations—Hopis and Navajos, for example—found trips home to be far more expensive. A ticket from Riverside to Gallup, New Mexico, located just outside the southeastern boundary of the Navajo Reservation, cost thirty-five dollars in 1921, making a month-long visit home into at least a seventy-dollar round-trip ticket for students from the eastern half of the reservation.⁹⁵

This is not to say that wage labor markets did not exist on reservations beyond California, or that work would have been the only thing to draw students home for the summer. Certainly, Native people across Indian country found ways to earn cash. Moreover, cultural, spiritual, and family obligations brought students home at least as often as wage labor opportunities. Yet if a Sherman student who hailed from an out-of-state reservation wanted to earn money, the combination of Southern California's burgeoning wage labor markets and the high cost of returning home likely made the outing system a viable option.

Indigenous cultures and reservation economies clearly influenced student approaches to the outing system. But so too did personal circumstances. Hopi student Paul Sanders struggled with academic coursework from the day he arrived at Sherman Institute in June of 1921. Before coming to Sherman, Sanders had advanced to seventh

grade at the day school in his home village of Moencopi, Arizona.⁹⁶ As a student, Sanders excelled when he could use his hands, preferring Sherman's vocational shops and farm fields to its stuffy classrooms. He earned perfect marks in courses on farm implements, crop management, and shoe and harness repair.⁹⁷ Sanders struggled, however, to keep his focus in academic courses, and he remained stuck in the seventh grade for his first three years at Sherman Institute.⁹⁸

In June 1923, at the close of his second year at Sherman Institute, Sanders travelled the well-worn path from Riverside to Fontana Farms. After two years of frustration in the classroom, Sanders hatched a plan to make the best of his time in Southern California. Rather than suffer through another unproductive year in school, he would use the outing system to work full time and earn money. On June 29, after a month of working at the Declez Hog Camp at Fontana Farms, Sanders informed Sherman Superintendent Frank Conser of his plans. "Well I was figuring to stay here all winter," he wrote. "I like to stay here at Fontana because I am over twenty-one years old and also I never pass my grade for two years."⁹⁹ Conser quickly denied Sanders's request to work rather than study, arguing that difficulties in the classroom provided "all the more reason you should study while you have the opportunity."¹⁰⁰ Determined to have his way, Sanders quickly penned a second plea to Conser. "I'm too old," he wrote. "That's why I can't learn anything."¹⁰¹ Conser again denied his request.

The same story played out twice more in the summers of 1924 and 1925, this time from the poultry ranch of S.B. Lowell in Glenavon, California. By June of 1925, Sanders emphasized a desire to save money for his eventual return to the Hopi Reservation.

“Because I never did pass, this is my fourth year in grade seven,” wrote Sanders. “So I’d like to earn a little money before I go home.”¹⁰² This time, Sanders finally received his wish. He worked through the fall and into February at Lowell Ranch and Fontana Farms Company.¹⁰³ In December, Sanders married Lyla Short, a Hopi domestic worker living and working in Los Angeles, and moved with her to Flagstaff, Arizona.¹⁰⁴ The cash Sanders earned at the Lowell Ranch and Fontana Farms likely proved crucial when he and Lyla moved closer to home and started a family.

Even for students who saw opportunity in the outing system, or at least preferred it to the daily grind of Sherman Institute, things did not always end as envisioned. For Sherman student Charles Grant, wage labor via the outing system began with opportunity and ended in tragedy. A Navajo, Grant came from Toadlena, New Mexico, where he completed three years at the local day school before enrolling at Sherman in 1919 at the age of sixteen. Grant received mediocre grades in his area of focus, the shoe and harness shop, before turning his attention to outing labor in 1922.¹⁰⁵ That summer, he worked 75 days at Fontana Farms and earned \$176. Although he had signed up to attend Sherman Institute through the school year of 1928, Grant began working full time in the outing system in 1926. Like his Hopi classmate Paul Sanders, Grant seemed to prefer wage work to classroom work. No longer officially enrolled at Sherman, Grant continued to work at the Temecula ranch of Walter Martin, a major contractor of Sherman student laborers, until 1929.¹⁰⁶

Then, on a rainy March night, tragedy struck. Grant had recently purchased a car, and he picked up his girlfriend, a fellow Sherman alum who lived and worked in Los

Angeles, to go for a joy ride. Near Temecula, the car rolled off the road and caught fire, killing Grant and his sweetheart. Sherman Institute Superintendent Frank Conser sent his outing agent, Fred Long, to pick up Grant's belongings and mail them back to his family. Sherman officials laid Grant to rest in Riverside on April 2, 1930, and sent the remainder of his belongings to his family: nine shirts, two pairs of pants, a pair of canvas shoes, and a blanket.¹⁰⁷ The story of Charles Grant, then, represents both the opportunity and the danger faced by students who engaged the outing system for long periods of time. While Grant made significant money, he did so far away from friends and family. Grant survived the risks of living and working at the boarding school and in agricultural camps. It was another trapping of modernity, the automobile, which ultimately took his life.

Viewed through the many fragmented lenses of the archives, stories of Sherman student-laborers at Fontana Farms Company are often hazy at best. Cobbled together from many small pieces of evidence—outing time cards, state labor inspection records, newspapers, and student files—most of these narratives raise far more questions than they answer. Amorphous as these stories may be, they reveal a wide gap between the aims of federal Indian education and the on-the-ground results of school policies. Indian reformers such as Richard Henry Pratt created federal Indian boarding schools and their outing systems to eliminate indigenous languages and cultures—that much we know. There is more than a little irony, then, in Warren Davis using a boarding school to live in a Navajo way, or in Don Talayesva and Paul Sanders using Hopi knowledge of agriculture as they worked on ranches in Southern California. Historians Frederick E. Hoxie and Nancy Shoemaker have noted how boarding schools created a vanguard of

Native American political leaders who promoted pan-Indian identities and helped to carry Indian cultures into the twentieth century.¹⁰⁸ Talayesva, Davis, and Sanders suggest that so-called “ironies of assimilation” filtered beyond high politics and into day-to-day life, and that everyday resistance connected in significant ways with long-term cultural survival.

Lessons to be gleaned from Sherman students who passed through Fontana Farms go beyond disconnects between the abstract ideas of policymakers and the actions of Native people who lived and experienced the technologies of assimilation. Historian Philip J. Deloria has demonstrated how a vanguard of Native people in the early twentieth century “engaged the same forces of modernization that were making non-Indians reevaluate their own expectations of themselves and their society.” Not all Indians, argued Deloria, were “corralled on isolated and impoverished reservations,” and they did not stand by idly as modernity passed them by. Native people of the early twentieth century travelled. They played professional sports. They acted and sang. They drove cars, sometimes too fast.¹⁰⁹

In the same way that Native athletes, actors, and drivers in Deloria’s work push us to reconsider our expectations of indigenous peoples during the early twentieth century, narratives centered on outing laborers at Fontana Farms should encourage us to reconsider what we know about Native people and boarding schools. Students at Sherman Institute did not remain trapped within the confines of school grounds. To be sure, subpar academic curricula, strict rules, grueling daily routines, and crushing homesickness negatively affected the lives of students. Still, challenges like these did not

completely define their experiences. For many, Fontana Farms and its three dollars per day became an important component of navigating life at a boarding school.

By engaging the outing system, students wrestled with the same issues that faced working people in industrializing areas across the globe. Under the scalding desert sun, and in the shadows of European immigrant homesteaders, Sherman students fed garbage to pigs alongside laborers from Mexico and Japan. They suffered the same smells, slept and ate in the same crowded quarters, felt the same fatigue, contracted the same devastating diseases as agricultural workers on factory-style farms across the Western United States. Like immigrants worldwide, Sherman student laborers worried about balancing work with the demands of home life: To stay and work, or go home and help the family? To put down roots in a new place, or save money and return home? To buy a silk necktie, or send home a remittance?¹¹⁰ By grappling with these questions, student-laborers at Sherman Institute joined the ranks of indigenous peoples across North America who brought new forms of wage labor into their daily lives and cultures during the early twentieth century.¹¹¹ The outing system at Sherman Institute forced Native people from across the American southwest to consider many of the sticky problems associated with working class modernity. In so doing, Warren Davis, Paul Sanders, and the hundreds of other students from Sherman Institute who worked at Fontana Farms forged new and uniquely Native pathways into the twentieth century.

Young men at Fontana Farms were far from the only Native people to face the challenges of wage labor beyond the confines Riverside and Sherman Institute. Shortly after Don Talayesva made his first journey to Fontana in 1907, small groups of Mojave

and Quechan women, many of them from Sherman Institute, began making their way into Los Angeles to work as domestics in the homes of white Angelenos. These women often faced low pay and tenuous working conditions, and they received little assistance from the tangled web of bureaucracy set up to supervise and protect them as they worked. Yet, like their male counterparts at Fontana Farms and elsewhere, young women from Sherman Institute often managed to collect valuable wages and experiences as they lived and worked beyond school walls. Chapter Three explores their stories.

Endnotes

1. Mike Davis, *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles* (London: Verso, 1990), 380.
2. Discussion of labor camps at Fontana Farms comes from records of inspections by the California Division of Immigration and Housing, as well as timecards for student-laborers kept by Sherman Institute. For inspections, See Carton 65, Folder: Labor Camps, Operators, Fontana Farms Company, 1923-1933, California Department of Industrial Relations, Division of Immigration and Housing, BANC MSS C-A 194, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley (hereinafter referred to as CDIR, DIH, BL, UCB). For timecards of students who worked at Fontana Farms, see Records of Boys Outings, 1912-1918 and Time/Pay Worksheets for Outing Pupils, 1917-1929, Boxes 115-123, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
3. "Giant Farm near Los Angeles," *The Santa Fe Magazine* 17, no. 8 (1923), 48-9.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Davis, *City of Quartz*, 380-81.
7. Ibid.
8. Don Talayesva with Leo Simmons, ed., *Sun Chief: The Autobiography of a Hopi Indian* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1942), 118.
9. Ibid., 130-41.
10. See especially Lomawaima, *They Called It Prairie Light*, 65-79, and Trennert, "From Carlisle to Phoenix," 285-93. See also Alice Littlefield, "Indian Education and the World of Work in Michigan," 100-121.
11. For "land of oranges" reference, see Sakiestewa Gilbert, *Education beyond the Mesas*, 3.
12. Talayesva, *Sun Chief*, 114-34.
13. Timecards kept by outing officials reveal which students from Sherman Institute worked at Fontana Farms, for how long, and how much they earned. See Records of Boys Outings, 1912-1918 and Time/Pay Worksheets for Outing Pupils, 1917-1929, Boxes 115-123, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

14. See Carton 65, Folder: Labor Camps, Operators, Fontana Farms Company, 1923-1933, CDIR, DIH, BL, UCB. While it is almost certain that ethnic diversity in the Fontana Farm's camps went beyond Mexicans and Native Americans from Sherman Institute, it is impossible to be certain of where workers came from given the sources at hand. Therefore, my use of the term "Mexican" mirrors the ethnic label given by inspectors from the Division of Immigration and Housing.

15. Ibid.

16. Ibid.

17. A.B. Miller made much of his fortune by disposing of trash for the City of Los Angeles, which he fed to his chickens and pigs. Trash from employee quarters also served as chicken feed—it went into open pits near workers' quarters, where chickens ate their fill. See Davis, *City of Quartz*, 378 -83.

18. Health information is taken from an unscientific sampling of student files from among those who worked at Fontana Farms. SCF, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

19. Time Cards for B.S., Records of Boys Outings, 1912-1918, and Time/Pay Worksheets for Outing Pupils, 1917-1929, Boxes 115-123, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

20. Ibid.

21. Leupp Agency Superintendent W.O. Roberts to Frank Conser, June 5, 1926, SCF B.S., Box 341, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

22. Ibid.

23. Frank Conser to Mrs. Copeland, n.d., SCF B.S., Box 341, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

24. Sherman Institute School Physician W.W. Roblee to Frank Conser, June 11, 1926, SCF B.S., Box 341, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

25. Frank Conser to W.O. Roberts, June 16, 1926, SCF B.S., Box 341, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

26. Time Cards for J.M., Records of Boys Outings, 1912-1918 and Time/Pay Worksheets for Outing Pupils, 1917-1929, Boxes 115-123, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR; Frank Conser to Fort Defiance Agency Superintendent Peter Paquette, November 19, 1918, SCF J.M., Box 256, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

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27. Time cards for G.L., Records of Boys Outings, 1912-1918 and Time/Pay Worksheets for Outing Pupils, 1917-1929, Boxes 115-123, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR; W.W. Roblee to Sherman Institute Superintendent Frank Conser, May 16, 1929, SCF G.L., Box 197, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
28. G.L. to Frank Conser, August 4, 1929, SCF G.L., Box 197, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
29. Employment Survey, February 21, 1930, SCF G.L., Box 197, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
30. Frank Conser to Northern Navajo Agency Superintendent B.P. Six, September 4, 1930, SCF H.B., Box 40, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
31. Time cards for H.B., Records of Boys Outings, 1912-1918 and Time/Pay Worksheets for Outing Pupils, 1917-1929, Boxes 115-123, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
32. Weekly Hospital Reports, SCF H.B., Box 40, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
33. Application for Enrollment in a Nonreservation School, SCF C.L.J., Box 173, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR; Sherman Superintendent Frank Conser to Carl M. Snyder, March 13, 1930, SCF C.L.J., Box 173, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR; Records of Boys Outings, 1912-1918 and Time/Pay Worksheets for Outing Pupils, 1917-1929, Boxes 115-123, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
34. Time cards for C.L.J., Records of Boys Outings, 1912-1918 and Time/Pay Worksheets for Outing Pupils, 1917-1929, Boxes 115-123, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
35. Crown Point Agency Superintendent Samuel M. Stacher to Frank Conser, May 22, 1931, SCF C.L.J., Box 173, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR; Sherman Institute Superintendent Donald F. Biery to Crown Point Agency Superintendent Samuel M. Stacher, October 22, 1932, SCF C.L.J., Box 173, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR; Sherman Institute Boys' Advisor (unnamed) to Julian Sandoval, September 2, 1933, SCF C.L.J., Box 173, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
36. Historian Jean Keller noted that, while Sherman served plenty of food to its students, the school rarely offered fresh fruits and vegetables. Keller, *Empty Beds*, 53. Historians Clifford Trafzer, Jean Keller, and Lorene Sisquoc argued that Native children likely had difficulty digesting the starch-heavy foods served at Sherman and other schools. See their Introduction to *Boarding School Blues*, 19.

37. For one exception, see Ward Churchill, *Kill the Indian, Save the Man: The Genocidal Impact of American Indian Residential Schools* (San Francisco: City Lights, 2004), 50.

38. At Carlisle, six students died in the first year alone, and school administrators sent home fifteen more gravely ill students. See Adams, *Education for Extinction*, 124-35. For another perspective on student health at Carlisle, see Fear-Segal. *White Man's Club*, 241-67.

39. Keller, *Empty Beds*, 21-39.

40. For an excellent account of conditions faced by migrant agricultural laborers during the early twentieth century, see Weber, *Dark Sweat, White Gold*. For a look at the growers' perspective during that time, see David Vaught, *Cultivating California: Growers, Specialty Crops, and Labor, 1875-1920* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), and Steven Stoll, *The Fruits of Natural Advantage: Making the Industrial Countryside in California* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1998).

41. Hoxie, *A Final Promise*, 83-145.

42. Talayesva, *Sun Chief*, 118.

43. Despite encountering remarkably diverse work forces in factories and on farms across California, labor inspection forms from the Commission on Immigration and Housing contained blanks for native born Americans, Greeks, Italians, Mexicans, Japanese, Germans, Chinese, Finns, "Hindus," Portuguese, Spanish, Scandinavians, and "Slavonians." It is worth noting that while as many as one hundred Native people from Sherman Institute worked at the Fontana Farms Company in a given year, labor inspectors from the California Division of Immigration and Housing never acknowledged their presence. Report no. 1085, Sept. 9, 1923, Carton 65, Folder: Labor Camps, Operators, Fontana Farms Company, 1923-1933, CDIR, DIH, BL, UCB.

44. Carton 65, Folder: Labor Camps, Operators, Fontana Farms Company, 1923-1933, CDIR, DIH, BL, UCB.

45. Davis, *City of Quartz*, 381.

46. For the best account of the changing ethnic makeup of agricultural labor in California, see Carey McWilliams, *Factories in the Field: The Story of Migratory Farm Labor in California* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000). See also Vaught, *Cultivating California*, 120-57, and Stoll, *Fruits of Natural Advantage*, 124-47.

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47. Tables Showing Various Nationalities Employed in Labor Camps, 1923-1930, Carton 55, Folder 42: Labor Camps, 1923, CDIR, DIH, BL, UCB.
48. Davis, *City of Quartz*, 380-82.
49. Hazel W. Herzberg, *The Search for an American Indian Identity: Modern Pan-Indian Movements* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1971), 1-31.
50. Gunther Peck, *Reinventing Free Labor: Padrones and Immigrant Workers in the North American West, 1880-1930* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).
51. My thinking on this point owes much to historian Andrew Fisher. In his study of indigenous peoples of the Columbia River Plateau, Fisher notes that Indians who moved beyond the boundaries of the reservation during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries tended to “fade from the view” of bureaucrats and the historians who now use their records. See Andrew Fisher, *Shadow Tribe: The Making of Columbia River Indian Identity* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2010), 9.
52. James Clifford, *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late-Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997), 17-46.
53. Hosmer, *American Indians and the Marketplace*, 107.
54. Record of Pupil in School, SCF W.D., Box 99, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
55. Ibid.
56. Outing Timecards for W.D., Records of Boys Outings, 1912-1918 and Time/Pay Worksheets for Outing Pupils, 1917-1929, Boxes 115-123, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
57. While labor inspections from the California Commission on Immigration and Housing show that Fontana Farms charged most white workers \$1 per day, they list room and board as a “negotiated cost” for workers living in “Mexican” camps. It seems safe, then, to assume that the company charged “Mexican” workers (and Sherman students) at least as much as their white counterparts, if not more, for room and board. See Reports no. 1088 and 1089, Sept. 4, 1923, Carton 65, Folder: Labor Camps, Operators, Fontana Farms Company, 1923-1933, CDIR, DIH, BL, UCB.
58. Outing Timecards for W.D., Records of Boys Outings, 1912-1918 and Time/Pay Worksheets for Outing Pupils, 1917-1929, Boxes 115-123, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR; SCF W.D., Box 99, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

59. On per-annum funding, see Office of Indian Affairs Circular no. 240, September 8, 1908, Narrative Reports, Box 106, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR. In 1908, for example, Sherman Institute received \$157 for each student enrolled.

60. Outing Timecards for W.D., Records of Boys Outings, 1912-1918 and Time/Pay Worksheets for Outing Pupils, 1917-1929, Boxes 115-123, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

61. W.D. to Frank Conser, July 15, 1927, SCF W.D., Box 99, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

62. Ibid.

63. Klara B. Kelley and Peter M. Whiteley argue that Navajo or Navajo-Apache people likely began raiding Spanish and Puebloan settlements for livestock during the early seventeenth century. Spanish officials began recording accounts of livestock among the Navajo in the early 1700s. See Klara B. Kelley and Peter M. Whiteley, *Navajoland: Family and Settlement and Land Use* (Tsaile, AZ: Navajo Community College Press, 1989), 13-20.

64. Peter Iverson, *Dine: A History of the Navajos* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2002), 76.

65. O'Neill, *Working the Navajo Way*, 25.

66. Ibid.

67. Ibid., 7-13.

68. The numbers from 1923, 1929, 1931, and 1932 likely provide a strong indicator of the makeup of the Sherman student body throughout the 1920s and early 1930s, as the Office of Indian Affairs did not order Sherman to change the areas from which it recruited its students between 1923 and 1932. Sherman recruited students from California, Arizona, Nevada, Utah, and New Mexico until 1935, when the Office of Indian Affairs recreated its area of recruitment to include California, Nevada, Utah, Southern Idaho, and Arizona groups residing along the Colorado River. See Office of Indian Affairs Circular no. 3081, June 28, 1935, Box 104, General Correspondence, 1933-1948, Folder: "S" (2/3), RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

69. Richard O. Clemmer, *Roads in the Sky: The Hopi Indians in a Century of Change* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1995), 142. Similarly, Anthropologist Alfonso Ortiz argued that during the early twentieth century, one family member could enter into wage labor markets and earn enough cash to provide a Pueblo family with staples such as sugar, coffee, cheese, and soap for an entire year. See Cahill, *Federal Fathers and*

Mothers, 116. Ortiz wrote specifically about the San Juan Pueblo, which fell under the jurisdiction of the Northern Pueblo Agency. In 1926, the average individual at the Northern Pueblo Agency earned \$31 per year—well within the range of average individual earnings for the different agencies on the Navajo Reservation, but significantly less than average annual earnings on the Hopi Reservation. See Institute for Government Research, *The Problem of Indian Administration*, 252-3.

70. Kelley and Whiteley, *Navajoland*, 65-81. It should also be noted here that Navajo people of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries could be accomplished farmers when they had access to reservation lands better suited to farming than stock raising. See Iverson, *Dine*, 78. Moreover, in the years before World War II, significant numbers of Navajo people operated small coalmines or found wage work on railroads, and a few began earning cash from silversmith work as early as 1880. O'Neill, *Working the Navajo Way*, 31-8, and Kelley and Whiteley, *Navajoland*, 78.

71. O'Neill, *Working the Navajo Way*, 16-19.

72. *Ibid.*, 24. While O'Neill sets the benchmark for comfort at one hundred cattle, it should be noted that some Navajo families had far more than one hundred sheep, and some, far less. Within the Southern Navajo Agency in the year 1917, for example, the wealthiest fifteen percent of Navajo families owned 300 or more sheep, while nearly a quarter owned nothing at all. See Kelley and Whiteley, *Navajoland*, 77.

73. Wage labor among the Navajo increased markedly after 1933, when the Office of Indian Affairs began a two-decade-long effort to reduce livestock herds among the Navajo in order to prevent overgrazing of the land. In 1930, Navajo people owned an estimated 760,000 sheep, or twenty per capita. By 1949, that number had been reduced to 414,000, or eight per capita. See Kelley and Whiteley, *Navajoland*, 111. For an environmentally centered examination of the misguided motives behind the livestock reduction program, as well as its tragic consequences, see Marsha Weisiger, *Dreaming of Sheep in Navajo Country* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2009).

74. Sakiestewa Gilbert, *Education beyond the Mesas*, 110-112.

75. Talayesva, *Sun Chief*, 51-2.

76. Scott Rushforth and Steadman Upham, *A Hopi Social History* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1992), 127.

77. For a concise account of the “Orayvi Split,” see Sakiestewa Gilbert, *Education beyond the Mesas*, 51-70.

78. Clemmer, *Roads in the Sky*, 45.

79. Ibid., 94.

80. For an excellent look at Native American men working for railroad companies, see Jay Youngdahl, *Working on the Railroad, Walking in Beauty: Navajos, Hozho, and Track Work* (Logan, UT: Utah State University Press, 2011). Youngdahl argues that various forms of spirituality helped Navajo men to survive the backbreaking and dangerous labor of track work.

81. Clemmer, *Roads in the Sky*, 142.

82. Ibid., 101. It seems likely that agents inflated numbers in order to make Hopis under their watch appear more “civilized.”

83. Cahill, *Federal Fathers and Mothers*, 113.

84. Institute for Government Research, *The Problem of Indian Administration*, 523-25. The Office of Indian Affairs set up an Office of Indian Employment in 1909, placing Peoria Indian Charles E. Dagenett at its head, and began sending teams of Native men from across the southwest to work in the beet fields of Kansas and Colorado shortly thereafter. This likely proved to be one of the primary wage labor options for Hopi and Navajo men between in the 1920s and 1930s. See also Holm, *The Great Confusion in Indian Affairs*, 174.

85. Haas, *Conquests and Historical Identities in California*, 197.

86. Talayesva, *Sun Chief*, 109.

87. Ibid., 119.

88. Records of Boys Outings, 1912-1918 and Time/Pay Worksheets for Outing Pupils, 1917-1929, Boxes 115-123, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

89. Bauer, *We Were All Like Migrant Workers Here*, 1-11.

90. It is important to note that students who visited home in the summer often did so despite opposition from school administrators who feared that time spent on the reservation cause students to “backslide” into indigenous cultural ways. See Bauer, *We Were All Like Migrant Workers Here*, 146-7.

91. Richard L. Carrico and Florence Shipek, “Indian Labor in San Diego County, 1850-1900,” in *Native Americans and Wage Labor: Ethnohistorical Perspectives*, edited by

Alice Littlefield and Martha C. Knack (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996), 208-214.

92. Clifford E. Trafzer, "The Chemehuevi" (unpublished manuscript). See also Nicolas Rosenthal, *Reimagining Indian Country: Native American Migration and Identity in Twentieth-Century Los Angeles* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 16-17. For a thorough look at Native wage labor in Southern California during the nineteenth century, see George Harwood Phillips, *Vineyards and Vaqueros: Indian Labor and the Economic Expansion of Southern California, 1771-1877* (Norman: Arthur H. Clarke, 2010).

93. When students who participated in the outing system took authorized trips home, the outing agent or outing matron from Sherman Institute often sent money from their school bank accounts to cover the fare. See, for example, San Juan Indian School Superintendent Evan W. Estep to M.H., June 24, 1921, SCF M.H., Box 138, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR. See also Remittances to Cover Transportation for Girls on Outing in Los Angeles, Sept. 24, 1923, Box 26, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Records of Fort Yuma, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

94. G.C. to Frank Conser, Sept. 12, 1929, SCF G.C., Box 74, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

95. San Juan Indian School Superintendent Evan W. Estep to M.H., June 24, 1921, SCF M.H., Box 138, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

96. Application for Enrollment, SCF P.S., Box 329, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR; Certificate of Transfer, SCF P.S., Box 329, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

97. Vocational Record Cards, 1923-1926, SCF P.S., Box 329, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

98. Record of Pupil in School, SCF P.S., Box 329, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

99. P.S. to Frank Conser, June 29, 1923, SCF P.S., Box 329, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

100. Frank Conser to P.S., July 6, 1923, SCF P.S., Box 329, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

101. P.S. to Frank Conser, July 16, 1923, SCF P.S., Box 329, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

102. P.S. to Frank Conser, June 1925, SCF P.S., Box 329, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

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103. Time cards for P.S., Records of Boys Outings, 1912-1918 and Time/Pay Worksheets for Outing Pupils, 1917-1929, Boxes 115-123, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
104. Los Angeles Outing Matron Frances Hall to Western Navajo Superintendent Chester L. Walker, Dec. 27, 1926, SCF P.S., Box 329, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
105. Record of Pupil in Sherman Institute, SCF C.G., Box 130, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR; Time Cards for C.G., Records of Boys Outings, 1912-1918 and Time/Pay Worksheets for Outing Pupils, 1917-1929, Boxes 115-123, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
106. Time Cards for C.G., Records of Boys Outings, 1912-1918 and Time/Pay Worksheets for Outing Pupils, 1917-1929, Boxes 115-123, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
107. Fred Long to Frank Conser, April 14, 1930, SCF C.G., Box 130, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR; Bill from E.H. Preston Funeral Home, Riverside, California, April 2, 1930, SCF C.G., Box 130, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
108. Hoxie, *A Final Promise*, 239-44; Nancy Shoemaker, "Urban Indians and Ethnic Choices: American Indian Organizations in Minneapolis, 1920-1950," *Western Historical Quarterly* 19, no. 4 (1988): 439-47.
109. Philip J. Deloria, *Indians in Unexpected Places* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2006), 6-14.
110. My thinking on this point owes much to connections between American Indian history and the historiography of European immigration drawn by historian Nicolas G. Rosenthal. See his *Reimagining Indian Country*, 50.
111. For compelling looks at Native engagement of wage labor markets outside the context of federal Indian boarding schools, see Brian Hosmer and Colleen O'Neill, eds., *Native Pathways*, 1-23, 330-35. See also O'Neill, *Working the Navajo Way*; Bauer, Jr., *We Were All Like Migrant Workers Here*; Rosenthal, *Reimagining Indian Country*, and Usner, *Indian Work*.

Chapter 3

Into the City:

Quechan and Mojave Domestic Workers in Los Angeles

On the morning of September 20, 1916, Mrs. Stannard A. McNeil turned her car down West 28th Street and headed for home after a morning filled with errands. As she reached her modest bungalow between Jefferson and Adams Boulevard, just southwest of downtown Los Angeles, McNeil noticed a strange woman walking briskly down the street, going from door to door. It was the beginning of what McNeil would call “a little unpleasant incident.” “Naturally,” McNeil wrote later, “I took her for a canvasser.” When the woman arrived at her door, Mrs. McNeil did not bother to open it. “Before waiting for the usual little speech,” said McNeil, “I politely informed her that I didn’t care for anything today, thank you—without ever having opened the door.”¹ McNeil refused to speak with unsolicited visitors. That was that.

Neither politics nor sales drew the strange woman to the doorstep of the McNeil home. The visitor was Miss Orrington Jewett, the outing matron from Sherman Institute. She had come to talk about the maid. Three months earlier, the McNeils had joined a growing trend when they acquired live-in domestic help from an American Indian woman—in this case, Rose Moreland, a fourteen-year-old Quechan girl from the Fort Yuma Reservation.²

Native women from across the American Southwest had long worked within a number of capacities in the urban wage labor markets of Southern California.³ Beginning in the early twentieth century, however, reservation and school superintendents from

Truxton Canyon, Arizona, Fort Yuma, Arizona, Fort Mojave, California, and the Colorado River Indian Reservation began sending young women into Los Angeles and other cities to work as domestics. Concerned by the potential for moral and sexual corruption in cities and towns and the possibility that unsavory employers might dupe young women out of their pay, the Office of Indian Affairs assigned outing matrons to supervise Native domestic workers in Los Angeles, Phoenix and Tucson, Arizona, Reno, Nevada, and Albuquerque, New Mexico.⁴ But the first such employee would not come to Los Angeles until 1918. In the years before an outing matron arrived in Los Angeles, Sherman Superintendent Frank Conser sent his outing matron, Orrington Jewett, to check periodically on Quechan and Mojave women in Los Angeles. Jewett, however, lived sixty miles east of Los Angeles in Riverside, and she struggled to keep tabs on the hundreds of young women from Sherman Institute who worked as domestics in Riverside and surrounding communities.⁵ Conser's pledge amounted to little more than a kind gesture to the Superintendents at Fort Yuma and Colorado River. Women who arrived before 1918 braved the waters of domestic employment in a strange city without help from the Office of Indian Affairs.

Rose Moreland arrived at the McNeil home in June of 1916, and she joined three other Quechan women working in three households that stretched from the southwest edge of downtown Los Angeles to Crenshaw Boulevard, five miles west of the city's center. Barbara Boland lived with the Terrile family in a large home on the 900 block of New Hampshire Avenue, three miles north of Moreland's place of work on West 28th Street. Another Quechan woman, Eve Arvaez, lived with the Brewer family on Crenshaw

Boulevard, two-and-a-half miles south and east of the Terrants and Barbara Boland. Finally, Quechan domestic Janice Hawley worked for the McCreary family, one mile straight south of Eve Arvaez and the Brewer family at 2301 Fifth Avenue.⁶ The work sites of these women formed a narrow triangle that stretched five miles west of downtown Los Angeles, bordered by West Adams Boulevard on the south, Vermont Avenue on the east, and West Olympic Boulevard on the north.

When Miss Orrington Jewett knocked at the door of the McNeil home, she came with a stern message. After Mrs. McNeil refused to open the door, Jewett “answered in a very loud voice that she was Miss Jewett, looking for Rose Moreland.” Moreland, said Jewett, could no longer work for the McNeil family, as she and Fort Yuma Indian School Superintendent Loson Odle had decided that the young woman would enroll at Sherman Institute in the fall. Mrs. McNeil reported to Odle that she “apologized profusely” to Jewett, but that the outing matron “seemed unable to get over it.”⁷

The rude response received by Jewett as she knocked on the door may not have been a coincidental reaction from a woman who did not care for “canvassers.” Since they had arrived in the city, Boland, Hawley, Arvaez, and Moreland socialized frequently, often visiting each other at the homes of their employers on Sundays. While the archives show no evidence of personal relationships between the four families who hired Quechan women for the summer of 1916, patrons of the outing system often communicated about Native domestics via word of mouth and then wrote school and reservation superintendents to request workers.⁸ By the time that Jewett reached the McNeil home, she had already visited other outing patrons to notify them that their domestic workers

would enroll at Sherman Institute in the fall, and that they would leave for Riverside in one week.

Did Mrs. S.A. McNeil refuse to open the door because she refused to speak with “canvassers”? Or had she learned from other outing patrons that a woman from the Office of Indian Affairs was coming to take her maid to Sherman Institute? This much is impossible to determine from the flurry of letters that besieged Superintendent Loson Odle in the wake of Orrington Jewett’s visit to Los Angeles. More certain, though, was the apprehension of Mrs. McNeil in allowing her domestic worker to enroll at Sherman Institute. McNeil informed Odle that Rose Moreland felt “quite unhappy at the thought of leaving.” McNeil’s feelings, however, seemed to trump those of Moreland. “Rose has been very satisfactory,” she said. “She has a nice disposition, and she tries to do just as she is told.” McNeil had a child on the way, and noted that it “took quite a little time before one could trust them with a baby.” McNeil closed her letter by asking for a replacement, should Rose leave for Sherman Institute.⁹

Another patron, Mrs. Brewer, wrote a nearly identical letter to Odle after concluding her conversation with Orrington Jewett. Just as she did with Mrs. McNeil, Jewett informed Brewer that her maid, Eve Arvaez, would have to enroll at Sherman Institute in the fall. Apparently unaware of the sixty miles between Los Angeles and Riverside, Brewer said it would be fine, as long as Arvaez returned in the evenings to perform her housework. Jewett responded indignantly that Arvaez would only be on outing during the summer, and that she would attend school full-time during the year. This sent Mrs. Brewer into a tizzy. “I had Eve for three years, and I was instructed to

never return her to the school without an order from you. Eve says she does not know [Mrs. Jewett],” wrote Brewer to Superintendent Odle, “and will not go with her without an order from you.”¹⁰ Like Mrs. McNeil, Brewer finished her note by simultaneously noting the irreplaceability of her maid and asking for a replacement: “Please, Mr. Odle, write me at once and tell me to *keep* Edith or if there is any reason why I *must* give her up, then will you kindly send me another girl?”¹¹

Like so many of the archival records held in the records of the Office of Indian Affairs, the “little unpleasant incident” between Orrington Jewett and Mrs. McNeil raises far more questions than it answers. Why did the Quechan domestic workers not know of Orrington Jewett’s plan to bring them to Sherman Institute? Did Jewett and Sherman Superintendent Frank Conser attempt to bring them to Sherman Institute without their consent? And why did they not know Orrington Jewett at all? Unfamiliarity with Orrington Jewett highlighted the fact that when Quechan women travelled to Los Angeles, they did so alone, with Loson Odle arranging for employers to meet the young women at the train station.¹² This stunning lack of supervision remained normal until at least 1918, when the Office of Indian Affairs assigned an outing matron to Los Angeles for the first time.¹³ As of 1916, however, Orrington Jewett would have been the closest employee charged with looking after young women working on outing, and she resided sixty miles east at Sherman Institute. While Odle sometimes called on Jewett to make arrangements for Quechan women, she rarely assisted maids not affiliated with Sherman Institute.¹⁴ When Jewett showed up at the home of Mrs M.C. Brewer to call Eve Arvaez to Sherman Institute, neither matron nor maid even recognized her.

For Quechan women, then, domestic service in Los Angeles teemed with opportunities for suffering and exploitation. Even when the Office of Indian Affairs established an outing matron in Los Angeles in 1918 and hired two more employees to the outing center in 1930, it provided a minimal staff for the supervision of hundreds of young women spread across a vast swath of metropolis.¹⁵ At the Fort Yuma Indian School, Outing Matron Alice Carter and Superintendent Loson Odle made initial arrangements to send young women three hundred miles away to work in Los Angeles. When Barbara Boland, Eve Arvaez, Rose Moreland, Janice Hawley and others arrived in the city, they had only one another for support as they learned to navigate the opportunities and risks of domestic labor among a new culture in a bustling metropolis. Even in the absence of supervision or assistance from the Office of Indian Affairs, however, Quechan women developed an informal network with one another and other Native women in order to gain at least a modicum of control over their wages and working conditions. In their free time, they tapped into the vibrant, intertribal social scene that developed in Los Angeles during the early twentieth century. Quechan domestic workers in early-twentieth-century Los Angeles used creativity and persistence in order to gain new knowledge and earn substantial wages. Like their male counterparts at Fontana Farms, they managed to draw valuable experiences from a system that appeared to offer only demeaning, exploitative labor.

Barbara Boland became the first Quechan woman to venture into Los Angeles for domestic work when in 1909 she went to work for the Terriles, a well-to-do family who lived on New Hampshire Avenue, just west of downtown Los Angeles. Boland became

the frontrunner in a trend that came to define the lives of many young women from the Fort Yuma Reservation. Between 1909 and 1930, a steady stream of Quechans made the 270-mile train ride north and west through the Southern California desert and into the bustling metropolis of Los Angeles. Most who found work in the city were between the ages of fourteen and twenty, and many attended the Fort Yuma Indian School or Sherman Institute. Los Angeles quickly became a popular destination for young women from Fort Yuma. In many years during the early twentieth century, every unmarried Quechan woman on the reservation above the age of fourteen left to work and earn money.¹⁶

Fort Yuma Boarding School Superintendent Loson Odle and Field Matron Alice Carter gladly sent these women to work in Los Angeles. Just as Harwood Hall and Frank Conser believed that outing labor would help students from Sherman Institute to shed their Indian roots, Odle believed that living and working with white families in Los Angeles and attending public schools there would steep Quechan women in the mores and customs of white, Protestant America. A straightforward and laconic administrator, Odle never went to the lengths of Richard Henry Pratt in describing how the outing system would benefit young women from his reservation. Still, his correspondences with young women working in Los Angeles clearly revealed that he shared Pratt's emphasis on the power of the environment to transform Native people. Odle argued insistently that time spent working in Los Angeles prepared young Quechan women to become "the people... the Yuma Indians will have to look up to," and that conversely, time spent on the reservation had a negative affect on the character of young Quechans.¹⁷

After the arrival of Barbara Boland in 1909, a steady trickle of Quechan women made their way to Los Angeles during the second decade of the twentieth century. While most women worked in Yuma, Arizona, which bordered the reservation, significant numbers made their way to Southern California. In 1913, for example, five of the twenty-six Quechan women who found work as maids did so in Los Angeles, with the remainder working in Yuma.¹⁸ Los Angeles-bound women travelled first to Sherman Institute, where they lived in the school dormitories and waited for Superintendent Odle to secure them placements in the city. Emma Baker, an assistant matron at the school, reported that women paid little attention to the school's strict disciplinary codes. "If a Mojave or a Yuma girl was corrected," reported Baker, "she would turn and try to knock me down." Baker also noted that Quechan students were "an especially loose lot."¹⁹

While the cast of characters changed throughout the second decade of the twentieth century, a handful of Quechan women who worked as domestics remained in Los Angeles at all times. As the summer of 1916 came to a close, Barbara Boland lived and worked with the Terrant family, and Eve Arvaez remained on Crenshaw Boulevard with the Brewer family. Janice Hawley continued her education closer to home at the Fort Yuma Indian School. Meanwhile, Fort Yuma Superintendent Loson Odle answered the supplications of Mrs. McNeil, as he sent Quechan woman Geraldine Sampson to take the place of Rose Moreland. He also sent Quechan Millie Dean, a recent graduate of Sherman Institute, to take Janice Hawley's place with the McCreary family.²⁰ In the absence of an outing matron, or any other employee from the Office of Indian Affairs, for that matter, Loson Odle relied on Babara Boland to facilitate the movement of Quechan

women from reservation to Los Angeles and back. More importantly, Odle had Boland intervene when problems arose between Quechan domestics and their employers.

In the winter of 1916, Quechan domestic worker Millie Dean butted heads with her employers, the McCrearys. Mrs. McCreary wrote to Loson Odle and complained that Dean used foul language. Moreover, said McCreary, Dean could not be trusted to take care of her young son when she and her husband left the house. Dean would have to be replaced.²¹ When Barbara Boland heard about Dean's troubles, she already had a new employer in mind for her fellow domestic worker. A few weeks earlier, Boland had informed Odle of Mrs. Johnson, a woman from Santa Monica who sought to hire a Quechan domestic worker.²² As soon as Odle caught wind of the growing rift between Dean and her employers, he wrote to Barbara Boland and asked her to find Dean a new place to work.²³ Boland promptly called Mrs. McCreary and informed her that Mary Dean would be leaving her in favor of Mrs. Johnson. Faced with the loss of her maid, McCreary suddenly had a change of heart. Boland, however, pressed on with arranging the switch. During the first week of November, Boland arranged for Mrs. Johnson and Millie Dean to meet at the Hill Rail Station on 4th Avenue and make the final move from the McCreary household to Johnson home, located at 1443 Ocean Avenue in Santa Monica.²⁴ For reasons unknown, Dean never showed. She finally transferred to the Harris household in Spring 1917.²⁵ A short time later, however, Boland facilitated successful changes of venue for fellow Quechan and domestic workers Geraldine Sampson and Eve Arvaez when the two ceased to get along with their employers.²⁶

Boland's position as an intermediary within the outing system in Los Angeles illustrates both the power and peril of domestic labor for Quechan women during the second decade of the twentieth century. More than any employee of the Office of Indian Affairs ever would, Boland sought to help her Quechan friends and relatives escape their employers when a working environment turned sour or abusive. Boland also brandished one of the few negotiating tactics available to domestic workers when she helped to coordinate a campaign for higher wages by sharing information about wages among Quechan domestics.²⁷

For all of her skill in cultivating new employers for dissatisfied Quechan domestics, Boland still lacked the ultimate authority to enforce any proposed changes. Obstinate employers such as the McCrearys could simply refuse to cooperate with little threat of legal repercussion. Boland, then, could do little to alter the fundamental flaw of the earliest version of the outing system in Los Angeles: when problems arose, Quechan women had little recourse but to write a letter to Loson Odle and wait for help to arrive. Most often, it never came. Matilda Ewing became the first outing matron to serve the Office of Indian Affairs in Los Angeles in 1918. Until then, Barbara Boland would be the closest thing to a supervisor and protector that Quechan women had as they worked and lived in Los Angeles. As historian Margaret Jacobs has noted, even small battles waged and won by Native domestics against negligent employers came within a larger system that aimed to eradicate Native cultures and put them at great risk in the process.²⁸ The expertise of Barbara Boland in manipulating the bureaucracy of the outing system certainly improved the lives of her fellow domestic workers in the short term. She could

do little, however, to change the harsh realities of the form and function of the outing system.

The struggles of Quechan domestic Geraldine Sampson illustrate the special kind of vulnerability experienced by Quechan women as they entered domestic service in Los Angeles. In 1916, Sampson began working for the McNeil family on West 28th Street in the West Adams district of Los Angeles. It did not take long for problems to develop. In late October, less than two months after arriving at the McNeil household, Sampson wrote Loson Odle to register a bevy of complaints against her new employers. “They always leave me here with the baby till eleven or twelve o’clock in the night,” wrote Sampson. “I don’t hardly have enough sleep, and that makes me feel nervous. It’s eleven o’clock, and here I am, sitting up again.”²⁹ Sampson went on to complain that her wage of nine dollars per month did not compensate her fairly, considering the difficulty of her work, as Mrs. McNeil often went out all day and left Sampson to take care of her young baby. Would it be possible, Sampson asked, to be placed with a new employer?³⁰

Sampson apparently received no help from Odle, as she wrote again in February of 1917 to make another request for a change of venue.³¹ Her second effort proved more successful. In collaboration with Orrington Jewett, Odle began looking for a new employer for Sampson. In late June, Sampson began working for the Van Dam family at 627 West 18th Street.³² Upon hearing that she would soon lose Geraldine Sampson to another employer, Mrs. McNeil wrote to refute Sampson’s claims. McNeil claimed that Sampson had no reason to feel tired, as she “never got up before seven o’clock.” Even when Sampson worked, she did so “at the speed of an Indian”—in the eyes of the

McNeils, not fast enough to cause fatigue. Interestingly, McNeil did not deny leaving Sampson alone at night, noting that she often had Geraldine “sleep in the room with my little boy, seventeen months old,” when she and her husband remained out at night.³³ Long days of cleaning and watching after a one-year-old baby turned into long nights of babysitting while the McNeils socialized into the early morning hours. One can only imagine the loneliness and worry that Sampson felt as she sat up alone at night, and the fatigue and nervousness that plagued her as she worked away the days.

Janice Hawley endured a similar experience as she worked for the McCreary family. Writing in August of 1916, Hawley informed Fort Yuma School Superintendent Loson Odle that the McCrearys took a two-week vacation to Big Bear, a resort town in the San Bernardino Mountains some sixty miles northeast of Los Angeles. Apparently unconcerned with their nominal responsibility to aid Hawley in her “uplift,” the McCrearys left Hawley in Los Angeles. Alone in the city, it did not take long for trouble to find Hawley. Just a few nights after her employers left town, Hawley reported that a man came to the door and asked her “to go out with him.” Hawley declined and informed the man that she “did not come to Los Angeles to run around.” When the strange man told Hawley that he would return the next night, she informed him that “if you come around here again I will phone the police.” Hawley’s threat worked, and she had no more unwanted visits for the remainder of her time alone.³⁴

The solitude that Geraldine Sampson and Janice Hawley experienced in Los Angeles highlights an important point: During the first ten years of outing system in Los Angeles, employers got away with egregious breaches of their duties in supervising and

“uplifting” Native domestic workers. Both the Harris and McCreary families understood that Quechan domestics had little recourse when left alone for long periods of time. Sampson and Hawley did the only thing they could—write a letter to their reservation superintendent. By mail, investigation of the accusations and decisions on whether to let the young women switch employers over their grievances took months, and in the interim, Sampson and Hawley continued to perform arduous, low-wage work within an environment made tense by alternating periods of conflict and isolation. The McCreary family exposed Janice Hawley to serious danger, as at least one man from the neighborhood knew she was alone in the house. For Sampson and Hawley, any pretense of “uplift” through domestic work quickly disappeared, as their employers put them in serious danger. They were low-wage workers, laboring in risky situations—not “white people in training.”

If isolation threatened young women working on outing, so too did male household members. No evidence exists to suggest that any Quechan domestic workers became targets of sexual advances from men in the families for which they worked. Four years before Quechan domestic worker Eve Arvaez arrived to work at the Brewer household in 1914, however, the family’s son was accused of impregnating a Hualapai woman who worked for the family.³⁵ The Brewers vehemently denied the charge that their son had fathered the woman’s baby, arguing that “they had proof that a Jap was the father of the child.”³⁶ Yet, they agreed to pay the woman twenty-five dollars each month until her child reached eighteen years of age. News of these allegations apparently did not travel the 230 miles from the Truxton Canyon School to the Fort Yuma School. By 1916,

the Brewers had managed to secure the services of Eve Arvaez. Truxton Canyon Indian School Superintendent Charles Shell informed Odle of the allegations against the Brewer family in October 1916. It took Odle a full two months before he finally sent Sherman Institute Outing Matron Orrington Jewett to remove Arvaez from the Brewer household.³⁷

The Brewers denied the charges against their son until the day that Orrington Jewett took Eve Arvaez from their household, calling them “a piece of spite work.”³⁸ Regardless of the veracity of the allegations, the Brewer episode reveals the depth of the sexual vulnerability faced by Quechan domestic workers in Los Angeles. In 1917, almost ten years after agencies in Southern California and Western Arizona began sending young women to work in Los Angeles, the outing bureaucracy remained so ill planned and operated that it could not even pretend to protect Native domestics from threats of violence, whether they came from within or without the families of their employers.

While extreme isolation and the threat of sexual advances from male household members affected more than a few domestics, the sadness of being far from home communities and loved ones ran steadily through correspondences written by Native women who worked under the outing system in Los Angeles. Most women lived and worked in Los Angeles because they wanted to. Still, domestics often lobbied their reservation superintendents for the right to return home to visit loved ones. For Quechan women in the city, the results of their efforts often depended upon the whims of Fort Yuma Superintendent Loson Odle. Convinced that any amount of time visiting the relatives on the Fort Yuma reservation would cause young women to “backslide” from

the civilizing benefits of outing labor, Odle often proved reluctant to allow Quechan domestics to visit home. When Odle allowed home visits, he did not let young women spend evenings with their families. Instead, he forced them to spend their nights the Fort Yuma Boarding School, which the Office of Indian Affairs had strategically placed on the reservation, but away from Quechan village sites. Located on the south side of the reservation atop Fort Yuma Hill, the boarding school would have put Quechan domestics just beyond the reach of their friends and family members. Looking north from the windows of the dormitory building, women staying at the school would have seen mountains sacred to the Quechan people— Pilot Knob, Cargo Muchachos, Indian Pass, Pichacho, and Castle Dome, among others. At night, they would have seen the flickering lights and campfires of their friends and relatives at Fort Yuma’s main village site, located two miles to the north.³⁹ Moreover, Odle required Quechan domestics to pay the two-way fare between Los Angeles and Yuma. The trip from Los Angeles took ten hours by rail, and it cost between \$20 and \$30 during the 1910s and 1920s—a full month’s wages for many domestics working in the outing program. When Quechan domestic Eve Arvaez secured permission to travel home to the Fort Yuma Reservation from her full-time outing position, it must have felt at least somewhat bittersweet. An expensive train ticket and twenty hours of travel bought her daytime visits with her family, and nights spent just beyond the reach of the people and places she loved.⁴⁰

The restrictions set forth by Superintendent Odle did not always dictate the actions of Quechan women who visited home from Los Angeles. In August of 1919, Quechan domestic worker Millie Dean left her employers, the McNeil family, to visit her

ailing grandmother on the Fort Yuma Reservation. Apparently frustrated by the oppressive restrictions on her visit, Dean refused to follow the conditions for home visits set by Superintendent Odle. Shortly after arriving home on the reservation, she stopped spending her nights at the boarding school. Moreover, she stretched her two-week visit to nearly two months before returning to work at the McNeil household.⁴¹

Other domestic workers in the outing program simply left their jobs to visit friends and family rather than engage in the bureaucratic back-and-forth required to gain official permission from administrators. In March of 1937, Mojave domestic worker Helen Laughlin left her job in Los Angeles to visit a friend in Prescott, Arizona. Rather than write to Clyde Gensler, the superintendent of the Colorado River Reservation, and wait weeks for a verdict, she packed a bag and told her employers, the Rogers family, that she would be back in a few weeks. A friend accompanied Laughlin to the Greyhound station, and she boarded a bus to Parker, Arizona, where she visited her parents briefly before continuing on to Prescott. Only after arriving in Prescott did Laughlin call to notify Kathryn Von Hinzmann, the social worker responsible for her supervision in Los Angeles, of her whereabouts. Asked why she departed so suddenly, Laughlin informed Von Hinzmann that she “just wanted to go.” For Laughlin, at least, escape proved as simple as a bus ticket.⁴²

For those who chose to secure permission before leaving jobs in the city to visit home, the threat of running away often became a valuable chip in the negotiation process. Quechan domestic worker Viola Johnson visited Los Angeles Outing Matron Grace Viets in October of 1922. Johnson wanted to see her family at the Fort Yuma Reservation, and

she informed Viets that she would travel home whether or not she received permission to do so. Viets did not doubt her. A day later, Viets wrote to Fort Yuma Superintendent Loson Odle and suggested that he grant Johnson the permission to visit home. "I am afraid if she is not permitted to go," wrote Viets, "she will run away." A short time later, Johnson received official permission to visit her family.⁴³

While Native domestics working in Los Angeles during the first decades of the twentieth century faced significant challenges, life in the city was far from all bad. Even if Quechan women found themselves in positions of little power as they entered the world of domestic work, many saw serious benefits in living and working in urban Southern California. Janice Hawley, who began working with the McCreary family in June of 1916, angled to stay full time in the city in August of the same year. Hawley began a long and detailed letter to Superintendent Odle by assuring him that she enjoyed her time in Los Angeles. "By golly you just don't know how happy I am over here!"⁴⁴ Hawley informed Odle that upon arriving in the city, she "was never homesick," and that she preferred the cool nights of Los Angeles to the scalding heat and ever-present dust of Southwestern Arizona. "Every time I think of Yuma," she wrote, "I sneeze for a while."⁴⁵ Barbara Boland felt much the same. In June of 1916, she wrote to inform Loson Odle that she would not visit her family at the end of August, as Quechan women on outing often did. Boland preferred to take weeklong vacation with her employers at the beach in Ocean Park, California, rather than return home to the suffocating dust and heat of Yuma.⁴⁶ A year later, Boland again spent the month of August in Ocean Park with her

employers, the Terrile family. This time, she expressed her love of the beach even more clearly. “I am very glad,” wrote Boland, “that I did not go to Yuma and roast.”⁴⁷

Quechan women cited more than the picture-perfect weather of Los Angeles as they sought to remain in the city. Janice Hawley informed Fort Yuma Superintendent Loson Odle that time spent working for the McCreary family had vastly improved her grip on the English language. “I do not wish to go back,” she wrote. “I am learning more English down here than I did in school [at Fort Yuma]. I tried very hard down there, believe me.”⁴⁸ Hawley held up her friend and fellow domestic worker Rose Moreland as an example of the language skills gained outing. “She never talked English when someone asked her something,” wrote Hawley. “Now she can talk good English.”⁴⁹ Later, Quechan domestic Fannie Smith made a similar point to Superintendent Odle. Even though life in Los Angeles could get “kind of lonesome,” Smith argued that “it is wise for us to be away from home once in a while,” as Quechan women could “learn how to do some things that we don’t get in school.” Smith closed her letter to Odle by asking permission to visit her family and then return promptly to Los Angeles to continue working. She also informed Odle that the rest of the Quechan women in the city would like to do the same.⁵⁰

In highlighting the skills gained on outing, Janice Hawley and Fannie Smith engaged in the kind of “uplift” rhetoric that they often heard from Superintendent Odle and others within the Office of Indian Affairs. Odle, in particular, preferred to keep young Quechan women on outing, rather than have them come home to the reservation. Writing to Barbara Boland, Odle congratulated her for staying year-round in Los

Angeles, and bemoaned that he “wished all of our larger girls were there,” and that time spent on outing made Quechan women “a credit to their people.”⁵¹ Later, in an attempt to get Geraldine Sampson to stay away from the reservation, Odle confided to her employer that there “was nothing for her here,” and that she should keep working as a domestic rather than return to Fort Yuma.⁵² Officials at the Office of Indian Affairs gave even more effusive praise to the positive power of life and work in the city. Writing in 1918 to Matilda Ewing, the newly appointed outing matron for Los Angeles, Assistant Commissioner of Indian Affairs E.B. Merritt boasted that the outing system helped to remove young women from “the restraining influence of the government boarding school.” Outing, argued Merritt, helped Quechans and others to “enter the life and experience of the world at large,” and to “cope with... new problems when she will come into contact with people and conditions of a different type.”⁵³ As Janice Hawley and Fannie Smith requested to stay in Los Angeles rather than return to Fort Yuma, they showed a keen grip of both the ideology that undergirded the outing system and the language that bureaucrats used to describe and operate it.

Even if Hawley and Smith smartly used assimilationist rhetoric as they requested to remain on outing, their emphasis on learning new language skills and cultural perspectives should not be dismissed as mere jockeying. For these women and many others, Los Angeles offered the chance to learn new skills that would benefit both themselves and the Quechan people. Anthropologist Renya K. Ramirez argued that for many Native people, a city can act as “a hub of peoples’ new ideas, information, culture, community, and imagination.” Ramirez contended that indigenous people who have lived

and worked in cities have shared new knowledge and perspectives with their home communities, helping to “strengthen and reinvigorate” Native cultures and identities.⁵⁴ While Ramirez wrote about contemporary connections between urban Indians and reservations, her ideas provide valuable perspective on Quechan women in Los Angeles during the early twentieth century. At the very least, fluency in English put Hawley, Smith, and Moreland in better positions to acquire work as domestics in Los Angeles or Yuma. Paired with language skills, a better understanding of white, Protestant cultural mores and practices also put these young women in position to help their families and communities navigate the cultural and political changes that came to the Quechan people during the early twentieth century. Loson Odle may have been speaking the company line of the Office of Indian Affairs when he asserted that the outing system would help to make Quechan women into leaders among their people. In more ways than one, however, this assertion likely contained a grain of truth.

At least some evidence suggests that Quechan parents shared the alacrity of their daughters for the outing system. In a letter to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Cato Sells, Fort Yuma School Superintendent Loson Odle noted that while Quechan parents often “did not look favorably” on sending their children to off reservation boarding schools, they were “very much in sympathy with the girls going on the outing system to learn to keep house, cook, and perform other domestic duties.”⁵⁵ Mojave parent Mae Richards took her enthusiasm for the outing program even further. If young women had to be away from home in order to absorb the benefits of white, Protestant society, then why not make money for it? In July of 1934, Richards wrote to Colorado River Reservation

Superintendent Clyde Gensler in search of contact information of Los Angeles Outing Matron Frances Hall. She informed Gensler that she planned to travel with her daughter to Los Angeles, where the two would seek domestic employment together.⁵⁶

Historians and Native autobiographers have noted that students at boarding schools often took great joy at the chance to earn and spend money via the outing system.⁵⁷ Quechan women who worked in Los Angeles fit into this trend. Viola Johnson replaced Barbara Boland at the Terrile home in September of 1921. For her first three months on the job, Johnson received one-third of her eighteen dollars per month, with the remainder going into her bank account at the Fort Yuma Indian School. “Of course,” wrote Johnson, “I couldn’t really get anything I wanted with six dollars.”⁵⁸ After saving assiduously for three months, Johnson quickly spent all the money she had on hand: a dress for \$12.50, a pair of new shoes for \$5, and a pair of stockings for \$1.25. If Johnson expressed happiness at the prospect of wearing new clothing, her letter also revealed the constraints of an outing system that only allowed laborers to keep one-third of their wages. Johnson wrote to Odle that her shopping trip left her “flat broke,” and that she still needed a few more items. “It feels funny when everybody wears a hat, and I go without it,” wrote Johnson, who also noted that she still needed to buy Christmas gifts for her mother and sisters back in Yuma.⁵⁹

Odle did not forward Johnson any money from her bank account at the Fort Yuma Indian School, electing instead to have her employers front her a few dollars. In Los Angeles, Johnson likely had access to material goods and styles not found in Yuma. Yet, limited control of her wages meant that she still had to pull bureaucratic strings in order

to purchase basic necessities such as clothing and Christmas gifts for her family. Johnson's plight also makes clear how outing changed as it moved westward from its original origins at Hampton Institute and Carlisle Industrial School. There, Captain Richard Henry Pratt provided clothing and school materials for students as they lived and worked on outing. By the 1920s, Loson Odle and other reservation superintendents forced outing laborers to provide their own clothing. For Odle and others, saving money on operational costs appeared to be every bit as important as providing Native women with the "uplifting" benefits of life among white, Protestant people.⁶⁰

Alongside material goods, domestic outing in Los Angeles provided Quechan women with access to wages, however paltry they may have been. During the second decade of the twentieth century, Quechan women working as domestics in Los Angeles made between \$15 and \$20 per month.⁶¹ Throughout the 1920s, average monthly wages for Quechan domestic workers climbed above \$20, with more experienced women making as much as \$30 per month.⁶² The economic depression of the 1930s saw wages fall again. By 1934, most young women from Sherman Institute who worked on outing had difficulty earning more than \$12 per month.⁶³ At first glance, it appears as though Quechan domestics would have earned significant amounts of money, more than enough to either help out their families or prepare to live independently in Los Angeles or at home on the reservation. Costs of living, however, including clothing, recreation, and transportation for visits back to the Quechan Reservation, often cut into their already meager earnings. In the summer of 1925, for example, ten Quechan women spent the summer working on outing in Los Angeles. Of the ten, none managed to save the

equivalent of one month's wages.⁶⁴ Time spent in Los Angeles may have allowed Quechan women to improve their English skills and gain better understandings of white, Protestant culture. It did not, however, provide access to significant wages. In this way, the experiences of Quechan women on outing proved different from those of male students at Sherman Institute, who often earned hundreds of dollars per summer working on industrial farms across Southern California during the 1920s.

For most of the 1910s, the outing system in Los Angeles placed women into relatively isolated positions, where they had little supervision from officials in the Office of Indian Affairs.⁶⁵ Once they settled into the city, however, Quechan women quickly located one another and made time to socialize, even if only for one or two days each week. Barbara Boland arrived in the city and began working full time in the Terrile household in the fall of 1909. By 1916, she had become adept at mining officials from the Office of Indian Affairs for information regarding the whereabouts of her Quechan friends and relatives in Los Angeles. In July of that year, she wrote to Superintendent Loson Odle and asked him to tell her where her cousin, Eliza Chilton, lived. "I heard she is here," wrote Boland, "but I don't know where she is at."⁶⁶ Boland may have leaned on Odle for information regarding her newly arrived cousin, but she already knew the whereabouts of other Quechan people living in Los Angeles. Boland reported that she had seen her uncle, Oswald McKeown, earlier in the week. McKeown, she wrote, was "fine as ever, and still on the job yet."⁶⁷ Boland also expressed excitement at a pair of new arrivals from the Fort Yuma Indian School. She informed Odle that the recently arrived Janice Hawley was "all right" at the McCreary household. Finally, Boland

expressed special excitement at the arrival of another relative, now stationed three miles south on West 28th Street with the McNeil family: “Glad to see one of my relatives here, too! I mean Rose Moreland!”⁶⁸ Moreland was not the first relative to join Boland on outing in Los Angeles. That title went to Eve Arvaez, who began working for the Brewer Family on Crenshaw Avenue in 1913.⁶⁹ After seven years in Los Angeles, it seemed that Boland had grown adept at locating her friends and relatives through informal social networks. When she struggled to locate someone, however, she did not hesitate to ask Superintendent Odle for his help.⁷⁰

Barbara Boland’s impressive knowledge of other Quechan people in Los Angeles raises important questions. Boland may have known the whereabouts of all of her Quechan co-workers and relatives, but how often did she actually see them? And, more broadly, what kind of social lives did Quechan domestics lead in early-twentieth-century Los Angeles? Evidence suggests that Quechan women saw one another fairly frequently. Whenever Quechan women wrote to Fort Yuma School Superintendent Loson Odle to make requests or to update him on their working situations, they almost always shared news of their fellow tribal members living and working in the city. Barbara Boland, who communicated most frequently with Odle, usually began by informing the superintendent of the health and disposition of her fellow Quechan domestic workers.⁷¹ Writing in August of 1916, Janice Hawley informed Odle that she, Eve Arvaez, and Rose Moreland were all “happy as can be.”⁷² Perhaps more tellingly, Hawley informed Odle that she and Rose Moreland had recently gone to Venice Beach, where they rode a merry-go-round

for the first time. Hawley and Moreland had such a fine time that they “felt like staying there all night.”⁷³

Hawley and Moreland did not stay out all night on their visit to Venice Beach. Other Quechan outing workers sometimes did stay out late. In fact, late night social lives often became points of contention between employers and Quechan domestic workers. In January of 1917, Eugenia Harris wrote to Fort Yuma School Superintendent Loson Odle to complain about her domestic worker, Millie Dean. Dean, said Harris, had been staying out much too late with fellow Native domestic workers—past midnight on most evenings. Dean’s late-night forays into the city flew directly in the face of instructions from Loson Odle’s instructions “not to let the girl go out after dark or sit in a park.” Harris closed her complaint with a request for further instructions from Odle. How could she stop Dean from going out at night?⁷⁴

Odle apparently responded to the letter by writing to the Brewer family, who employed Eve Arvaez, to check on the veracity of Harris’s complaint. It did not take long for Eve Arvaez to receive word that Harris family had accused her friend and fellow domestic worker of staying out too late and consorting with white men. When Arvaez learned of the accusations, she fired off a letter to Fort Yuma Superintendent Loson Odle. “To tell the real truth,” Arvaez wrote, “I’ve been with Mary ever since I’ve been here, and I’ve never seen a white boy with us.”⁷⁵ Arvaez informed Odle that “there are lots of Indians here and we talk with them. But of course we can’t turn our heads away from them. We’re not so proud as that!” Presumably referring to other Native

people, Arvaez finished her letter acerbically. “We are always glad to meet with girls and boys.... Whoever told you that should have their eyes treated.”⁷⁶

The controversy surrounding the social life of Millie Dean sheds further light on the central flaw of the outing system in Los Angeles as Quechan domestic workers experienced it during the second decade of the twentieth century. Odle had no employees posted in Los Angeles in order to supervise Quechan women working there. When he received word of Dean’s alleged misconduct, Odle had little recourse but to start writing letters in order to investigate. Even if he had been working more closely Sherman Institute Outing Matron Orrington Jewett, she still resided sixty miles east at Sherman Institute. For the first twenty years of the twentieth century, then, Quechan domestics occupied precarious posts. When conflicts arose with their employers, or if they got into trouble while out socializing at night or on days off, they could not rely on speedy assistance from the Office of Indian Affairs. The conflict between Dean and the Harris family took many weeks and multiple letters to sort out. If things had gone terribly wrong, and Dean no longer felt safe in the Harris home, she would have had few choices beyond fleeing into the city to take harbor with a fellow domestic worker. Purchasing a ticket back to Yuma provided another option, but only if she had the prerequisite fifteen dollars—nearly a full month’s wages—to pay for the fare.⁷⁷ Officials from the Office of Indian Affairs used grand rhetoric to describe the “uplifting” benefits of domestic employment within the outing system. Yet, they sent students to work in Los Angeles with virtually no supervision, and no way to intervene quickly if young Quechan women found themselves in danger. In the eyes of the Office of Indian Affairs, such risks

apparently paled in comparison to the benefits of assimilation that came from living and working with a white family.

If Eve Arvaez defended her friend Millie Dean against accusations of socializing with white men, she certainly did not deny that Millie had been going out late at night to meet with Native men living in Los Angeles. On the contrary, Arvaez confirmed that she and Dean were “glad to meet” other Indians living and working in Los Angeles. The two apparently spent many nights together socializing with other Indians. One year later, Mrs. A.H. Peir wrote to Loson Odle to file a similar complaint against Arvaez. Peir wrote Odle to “call attention to the hours Edith has been keeping.”⁷⁸ Peir informed Odle that “at first, once in a while, she would get home a little later than midnight. But lately her return runs into the early hours of the morning and on occasion she did not get home until the next morning at seven o’clock.”⁷⁹ Millie Dean and Eve Arvaez maintained active social lives that often moved beyond the Victorian boundaries put in place by those who administered the outing system. If lack of supervision placed Quechan women at significant risk, it also allowed them to conduct their social lives beyond the watchful eyes of officials from the Office of Indian Affairs.

Women on outing in other cities did not always socialize so freely. In her study of the outing system in Tucson, Arizona, Victoria K. Haskins noted that outing matrons Minnie Estabrook and Janette Woodruff attempted to enact tight control over the sexuality of Tohono O’odham domestic workers between the years of 1914 and 1929. Estabrook listened closely for rumors, and then attempted to locate O’odham women as they socialized with men of whom she disapproved. Woodruff, on the other hand, invited

O'odham men into her home for dances and socials, where she attempted to match young women to "acceptable" men.⁸⁰ For Woodruff, ideal potential suitors of Tohono O'odham outing workers were young, Native men who had jobs. She especially disapproved of Native women dating Mexicans. Many employers in Tucson preferred to put up their maids in exterior porches or carriage houses. Woodruff, however, required young women to sleep within their homes as a precondition for employment, as such arrangements made it more difficult for young women to sneak out and socialize with other Tohono O'odham people under cover of the night. To be sure, Tohono O'odham women still managed to choose romantic partners independently of the watchful eye of Janette Woodruff. Still, the relatively small size of Tucson and her proximity to the O'odham village meant that Woodruff likely impacted the courses of many romantic relationships with her insistence on Victorian sexual mores.⁸¹

Quechan women and others working in the outing system in Los Angeles did not deal with the same degree of surveillance as their Tohono O'odham counterparts working in Tucson. First and foremost, the Office of Indian Affairs had no employees posted in Los Angeles until 1918. When the Office of Indian Affairs finally hired Outing Matron Matilda Ewing, she faced the daunting task of supervising women from five reservations and Sherman Institute who worked for employers across huge city that grew more densely populated seemingly by the day.

If regulations can be read as indications of recurring problems within an organization, then the rules set forth for young women on outing in Los Angeles suggest that more women than Millie Dean and Ave Arvaez spent late nights socializing in the

city. In 1927, Outing Matron Frances Hall sent outing employers a form letter with detailed instructions for regulating the social lives of Indian domestic workers. She informed employers that when domestic workers had permission to leave the house alone, they were not to stay out later than six o'clock. On days off, which usually included Thursday and Sunday afternoons, an outing employee "should not be permitted to go to public parks or other places of amusement unless she is chaperoned by an adult member of the family." Regulations also dictated that chaperones should also accompany domestics on any miscellaneous trips into town. For administrators in charge of the outing system, the possibility of sexual encounters for Native women working as domestics in urban areas loomed larger than perhaps any other problem.⁸²

The lived experiences of Quechan domestic workers in the outing system provide insight into why and how outing matrons formulated these rules. If the experiences of women such as Millie Dean and Eve Arvaez teach us anything, then Quechan women did not always return home early in the evening. Many found ways to slip into the city alone, and most did not seek out the supervision of a chaperone in order to go shopping, see a movie, or eat at a restaurant. Given the oppressive nature of domestic labor under the guise of racial "uplift," one can only imagine the significance of time spent with other Native people. Writing about the black working class in the Southern United States during the early twentieth century, historian Robin D.G. Kelley theorized that African American workers sought out spaces where they could engage with others who "had a shared knowledge of... cultural forms, people with whom they felt kinship, people to whom they told stories about the day or the latest joke, people who shared a common

vernacular filled with a grammar and vocabulary that struggled to articulate the beauty and burden of their racial, class, and gender experiences in the South.”⁸³ Kelley’s analysis calls attention to the possible significance of time that Native domestics spent away from their employers, teachers, and bureaucrats from the Office of Indian Affairs.

In the dimly lit spaces of public parks, Native domestic workers could momentarily escape the sexual circumscriptions enforced by their employers, the sexual threats of white male employers, the drudgery of scrubbing toilets and cleaning up after screaming children. Exactly what these young women did while away from their employers remains beyond the reach of the historian’s eye, as bureaucrats, matrons, and disciplinarians did not follow and document their every move. Probably wary of school and reservation officials who monitored mail correspondence, domestic workers in the outing system rarely wrote of their private social lives in Los Angeles. Still, the unknowable nature of their social lives is much more than an annoying dark spot within a historical narrative. Rather, it is one of the most historically significant features of the lives of Native domestic workers in Los Angeles. Despite their participation within a coercive employment system that served as a key cog in a government system geared toward eradicating indigenous cultures, these women found ways to carve out social lives with other Native people. In parks, movie theaters, and dance halls, their late-night lives functioned independently of their employers and the Office of Indian Affairs.

TELLING INDIAN LEGENDS - INDIAN SONGS
AT A WHITE Y.W.C.A. CAMP



**GIRLS
PLACEMENT
SERVICE**

PLACEMENT GIRLS
OUTING TO CATALINA
ISLAND



AT A HOME



LEAVING FOR LOS ANGELES



AT A PLACEMENT PARTY



SHERMAN

Figure 3.1. Girls' Outing Program, ca. 1933. A page from the 1933 yearbook for Sherman Institute captures common moments within the outing program. At top left, a young woman cares for two white children. At middle right, young women pose in front of the bus used to take them to the outing center in Los Angeles (buses replaced trains in the early 1930s as the most common form of transit from Sherman into Los Angeles for outing workers). At top right, young women ride a boat to Catalina Island, one of the weekly field trips for outing workers put on by Outing Matron Frances Hall. At bottom left, young women attend a weekly social gathering for outing workers at the outing cottage of Frances Hall. Image courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.

Documentary records do not open windows into the social worlds that Native domestics made during their time away from work. They do, however, provide at least a few glimpses at relationships formed by Native people living and working in Los Angeles during the early twentieth century. On September 24, 1917, Orrington Jewett sent a shocking update to Loson Odle. Mrs. McNeil had reported that one week earlier, Geraldine Sampson had “stayed out all night with a Yuma Indian man, and... the two wished to be married.”⁸⁴ Little did Jewett know that Sampson and the “Yuma Indian man,” James Mitchell, had already been married for two days by the time she wrote to Odle.⁸⁵ Two days later, on September 26th, Jewett learned of the marriage and wrote to inform Odle. “All is well that ends well,” she wrote, revealing a penchant among outing officials for seeing young Native people get married and leave reservations in favor of the city. “They are just as much married as though I had attended to it.”⁸⁶

The experience of Geraldine Sampson illustrates the complexity of the challenges faced by Quechan women on outing in Los Angeles. Each day, Sampson faced hard work, loneliness, and low pay. When things went wrong, she had little recourse but to write to her reservation superintendent, some three hundred miles east at Fort Yuma, and then wait days and weeks for his reply. Even when the outing matron from Sherman Institute, Orrington Jewett, stepped in to help, it took Sampson four months to finalize her move to a new employer. Yet, the frequent absences of her employers, the McNeils, apparently had benefits, as Sampson managed to spend significant time away from the house, and to cultivate a romantic relationship with James Mitchell, a fellow Quechan living in the city. A lack of documentation makes it impossible to know for how long the

two dated, or how their relationship developed into a marriage. Once again, however, this might be precisely the point. In a substantial note of irony, the inattentiveness of her employers and the inept structure of early outing bureaucracy in Los Angeles allowed Sampson to carve out time and space in the city to build up her relationship with Mitchell.

Geraldine Sampson was not the only Quechan domestic to find romance with a fellow Quechan in Los Angeles. Rose Moreland eventually married Oswald McKeown, a Quechan man who lived and worked in Los Angeles for at least a portion of the time that Moreland called the city her home.⁸⁷ Moreland arrived in the city and began working for the McNeil family in 1917. Within a week of her arrival, she connected with Barbara Boland, her cousin and the informal matron for Quechan women in Los Angeles. That week, Boland reported in a letter to Fort Yuma Reservation Agent Loson Odle that she had spent time with both Moreland and her uncle, Oswald McKeown.⁸⁸ Whether Moreland and McKeown met that week, or even while they lived in Los Angeles, is uncertain. Still, the union of Moreland and McKeown highlights some important trends. Like Geraldine Sampson, Moreland found time to escape the drudgeries of domestic work and socialize with other Quechan people in Los Angeles, whether for romance or friendship. Just as importantly, Moreland's experiences challenge historical conceptions of indigenous social lives during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. During her formative years, Rose Moreland's networks of friendship, romance, and kinship stretched well beyond the confines of the Fort Yuma Reservation, dotting and crisscrossing the teeming neighborhoods of the largest metropolis in the American

Southwest. Like migrants the world over, Moreland built lives in two different places and managed personal relationships across vast swaths of time and space.

The social lives of Geraldine Sampson and Rose Moreland proved to be far from unique. Correspondences from Quechan domestics make it clear that they often met up with other Quechan people when they ventured into the city to socialize. Even if they socialized primarily with people from their own tribe, Quechan women on outing almost certainly came into contact with Native people from across the United States who came streaming into Los Angeles to look for work during the early twentieth century. In 1920, the federal census counted in Los Angeles Native people from California, Arizona, New Mexico, and Oklahoma, with smaller numbers coming from the American Midwest and South.⁸⁹ While the federal census counted just thirty-five and 133 Native American people in Los Angeles in the years 1920 and 1930, respectively, this was likely a vast undercount of indigenous people in the city, as census takers attempted to identify the race by sight alone. The 1928 tribal census performed by the State of California, in which Native people self-identified to census enumerators, found 704 Native people living in Los Angeles.⁹⁰

Like migrants from all ethnic groups who migrated to Los Angeles, and like the female domestic workers themselves, most Indians came to the Southland looking for work. Between 1910 and 1940, the population of Los Angeles mushroomed from just shy of one million people to 2.2 million, with the city's film, oil, and service industries driving economic growth. As the population grew, so too did the need for goods and services. The city's manufacturing sector grew rapidly during the 1920s, with factories

spreading southward from the edge of the downtown core to industrial suburbs such as South Gate, Torrance, and Bell, California.⁹¹

Historian Nicolas Rosenthal has noted that significant numbers of students from Sherman Institute found employment in Los Angeles after the onset of World War Two.⁹² Records from Sherman Institute indicate that connections between Sherman Institute and Los Angeles developed as early as the first and second decades of the twentieth century. Sherman students and alumni in Los Angeles included domestic workers, of course. But young men also found their way into the city to look for jobs, with many finding employment at Llewellyn Iron Works, a foundry located first on Spring Street in downtown Los Angeles. Later, the company moved to Torrance, California, an industrial suburb located just south of the city. Others worked for the Firestone Company, a tire company that opened a plant in South Gate in the early 1920s.⁹³ Galen Townsend, a former teacher at Sherman Institute whose parents attended the school in the 1920s, confirmed that many alumni and their families settled in industrial suburbs south of Los Angeles, including Torrance, Huntington Park, Bell Gardens, and Santa Fe Springs.⁹⁴

Quechan women and other Native domestics working under the outing system in Los Angeles provide rare glimpses into urban indigenous life before World War Two. Since the 1990s, historians Donald L. Fixico, James B. LaGrand, and others have provided pioneering accounts of indigenous migrations to urban locations, paying special attention to federal relocation programs that aimed to assimilate Native people by dropping them into major urban centers and placing them in wage labor positions.⁹⁵ More recently, historian Douglas K. Miller has drawn attention to the strategies used by

Native communities in order to navigate relocation programs and bend them toward their own purposes.⁹⁶ While these historians have pioneered the study of urban indigenous communities after World War Two, scholarship on Native people in cities during the early twentieth century remains sparse.⁹⁷ The experiences of Quechan and other Native domestic workers in Los Angeles suggest at least a pair of important possibilities within the study of indigenous peoples in American cities. They confirm that indigenous peoples began reclaiming Los Angeles as an indigenous space well before the middle of the twentieth century. And, just as significantly, narratives from the lives of Native domestic workers reveal that the federal government began its attempts to solve the Indian problem by assimilating Native people via urban living and wage labor well in advance of the relocation programs of the 1950s and 1960s.

Between 1920 and 1930, most Quechan women in Los Angeles lived just south and west of downtown Los Angeles, within the West Adams district. The homes of their patrons formed a semi-circle that sat north of the campus of the University of Southern California. It seems likely that young women such as Millie Dean and Eve Arvaez would have known that the Los Angeles's Native world stretched southward from downtown. Los Angeles featured what historian Becky Nicolaides has called "an impressive two-pronged transportation system" beginning in 1910. From the southwest edge of downtown, then, the south suburbs were only a thirty-five-cent, half-hour ride away.⁹⁸ When Quechan domestic workers left the homes of their employers to visit friends and family, did they head south toward Torrance and Llewellyn Iron Works?

Whether or not Quechan domestics ventured into the working class outskirts south of Los Angeles is uncertain. It seems more likely, though, that they would have made their way to meetings and dances held by the Wigwam Club, a “progressive” Indian organization that sought to instill white, middle-class values among young Native people. Composed primarily of alumni from Sherman Institute and other federal Indian boarding schools, the group sought to “teach Indians how to behave” in an environment free from “the lowest classes of the ‘dark races.’”⁹⁹ While the Wigwam Club may have promoted assimilationist ideas to some extent, it also provided Native people in the city with a place to socialize. Sherman Institute expressly forbade students from attending the meetings, and it seems likely that Fort Yuma School Superintendent Loson Odle would have discouraged young Quechan women from frequenting Wigwam Club dances and socials, which took place every other Saturday night.¹⁰⁰ Still, outing correspondences make it clear that Native domestics in the city often managed to create time and space for their own purposes. Visits to the Wigwam Club certainly would not have been out of the question.

Native people formed a small minority of immigrants to Los Angeles during the early twentieth century. Domestics from the Quechan Reservation and Sherman Institute found themselves among a diverse patchwork of peoples who came to call Los Angeles home during the early twentieth century. With the exception of the mostly white suburb of South Gate, the swath of industrial neighborhoods that stretched south of downtown Los Angeles, sometimes called the “central neighborhoods,” featured many African

American families, alongside Native families and whites from the American south and Midwest.¹⁰¹

To the north and east of the West Adams district, across the north-south thoroughfare of Hoover Street, a patchwork of multiethnic neighborhoods wrapped around the city's core. North and west of downtown lay Sonoratown, a neighborhood that once housed mostly Mexican families during the late nineteenth century. By the second decade of the twentieth century, Latinos shared the area with immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe, as well as a smattering of whites and African Americans. Just to the south lay Chinatown, home to the city's vice trade and "skid row." Still further south was Bunker Hill, once home to the city's affluent during the mid-nineteenth century, but now a cluster of apartments filled by multi-ethnic, working class families. The Boyle Heights district stretched east of downtown, home to a diverse population of Mexicans, Jews, Japanese, and Russians who lived in a mixed stock of housing that ranged from converted mansions to tiny shacks.¹⁰²

Quechan domestics left ample evidence of their interactions with other Native people in the city. They wrote less, however, about their experiences of multiethnic Los Angeles. One anecdote came from Janice Hawley, a Quechan woman who worked for the McCreary family on Fifth Avenue in the West Adams District. In a letter to Fort Yuma School Superintendent Loson Odle, Hawley reported that a "colored lady" told her that "the lady I work for goes out with another fellow."¹⁰³ Hawley's exchange with the woman may seem rather insignificant—and it probably was. Hawley doubted the veracity of the woman's story, and moved on quickly after writing only a few lines about it. Still,

though, her brief story points to broader possibilities within the daily lives of Native domestics who lived and worked in Los Angeles through the outing system. Even during the second and third decades of the twentieth century, the city played host to peoples from a myriad of ethnicities. As Native domestics shopped, socialized, and ran errands for their employers, they made countless contacts with people who practiced different cultures, spoke different languages. Like their male counterparts at Fontana Farms, Native domestics likely came to view the world, and their places within it, much differently as a result of their time spent in the outing system. Far from being isolated on reservations or totally isolated within the homes of their employers, it seems almost certain that Native domestics in the outing system would have experienced Los Angeles in all of its messiness and complexity.

Janice Hawley and others like her encountered multi-ethnic Los Angeles in passing. Sherman student and domestic worker Edith Woods, on the other hand, experienced the confluences of peoples and cultures in a much more personal way. Of mixed Chemehuevi, Mojave, and white descent, Woods enrolled at Sherman Institute at the age of thirteen in 1923. Beginning in 1925, she worked as a domestic in Los Angeles, Glendale, and Santa Ana, California, and attended public schools while she worked.¹⁰⁴ Like so many other domestic workers, official records reveal little about Woods's social life as she crisscrossed California's Southland. Until 1927, that is, when a marriage controversy generated a firestorm of correspondences between Sherman Institute Superintendent Frank Conser and Clyde Gensler, Woods's agent at the Colorado River Reservation.

On September 4, 1928, Sherman Superintendent Frank Conser received a phone call from Woods's mother, Ruth Ennis. Woods, it seemed, had made plans to marry an African American man. Conser rushed to the office of the Riverside County Clerk, warning county officials of Woods's plan to marry across racial lines. "I believe," he later wrote, "there is a law prohibiting the granting of a license for marriage between a white person and a negro.... The ruling here was that she was more of a white person than she was an Indian and therefore not eligible for a license."¹⁰⁵ Woods and her husband-to-be arrived at the County Clerk's Office in Downtown Riverside later that day. The clerk turned them away. Worried that the two might make the fourteen-mile journey north to obtain a marriage license in the neighboring county of San Bernardino, Conser wrote to Colorado River Agency Superintendent Clyde Gensler to apprise him of the situation. "I consider it a shame for a girl like Edith Woods to throw herself away with a negro," wrote Conser. "If her father wishes to take action in the matter, I advise that he do it immediately and take it up with the County Clerk's Office at San Bernardino in case she should apply there for a license."¹⁰⁶ Archival records do not reveal if, when, or where Woods and her fiancé finally wed. They do, however, provide a window into the racially charged atmosphere that outing employees navigated in early-twentieth-century Los Angeles. Woods's experience suggests that those who dared to love across lines of race or ethnicity could face heartbreaking consequences.

Edith Woods felt the sting of racism perhaps more than most who engaged the outing system. Yet racism and segregation doubtless became important parts of how all Native domestic workers experienced Southern California during the early twentieth

century. Historian Eric Avila has argued that as business boosters and Progressive Era planners envisioned the future of the city, they foresaw Los Angeles as “an outpost of white supremacy.”¹⁰⁷ To be sure, architects, builders, and city planners paid a kind of homage to California’s past with red tile roofs, tours of abandoned Catholic missions, and popular productions such as the Ramona pageant, which portrayed the plight of an Indian princess who served as an intermediary between Native people and Spanish newcomers. Boosters and city planners carried many of these cultural ephemera well into the twenty-first century. They did so, however, with the belief that Californios, Mexicans, and Native Americans had faded into the past, and would never again pose a threat to the seemingly ever-ascending White, Protestant order of the city.¹⁰⁸ Los Angeles, asserted Los Angeles *Times* publisher Harry Chandler, would be the “white spot of America.”¹⁰⁹

Pushing the multicultural elements of Los Angeles safely into the past required massive, state-sponsored projects that aimed at subduing and segregating people of color. In 1907, a coalition of progressives and church leaders established the Los Angeles Housing Commission in hopes of eradicating slums in the neighborhoods south of downtown and replacing them with single-family cottages. Families living in housing deemed “unacceptable” were evicted, and their homes razed. This was the case for a group of 200 Mexican people living in the flood plain of the Los Angeles River, east of downtown. Beginning in 1913, the State of California established the California Commission on Immigration and Housing, which sought to Americanize immigrants by teaching them to farm, speak English, and practice Victorian gender ideals—much like their contemporaries in Indian affairs attempted to do with Native people.¹¹⁰

The effort to remake Los Angeles into “the white spot of America” did not always come from above. In the Los Angeles suburb of South Gate, citizens, not city officials, led the push for segregation. Concerned that a burgeoning black community in nearby Watts would spill into South Gate and thereby decrease property values and cause tax increases, white citizens pushed throughout the 1920s for the hardening of the racial covenants attached to home titles.¹¹¹ At least one Native domestic worker under the supervision of the Office of Indian Affairs lived and worked in South Gate amid the racial turmoil that troubled the city during the late 1920s.¹¹²

Anti-Asian racism also plagued California during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, the Gentleman’s Agreement of 1907, and the California Alien Land Law Acts of 1913 and 1920 effectively closed the United States to Chinese and Japanese immigrants around the turn of the century. Restrictions against Asian immigration hardened with the passage of the Immigration Act of 1924, which essentially closed the United States to all Asian immigrants.¹¹³

Hysteria over the presence of Asians and other people of color affected more than abstract plans for city development. Concerned over how the presence of Asian immigrants and their children might affect the image and reputation of Los Angeles, officials from the Los Angeles County Health Department developed plans to “cleanse” the city of Asian interlopers. During the first decade of the twentieth century, a small fleet of inspectors attempted to “clean up” Chinatown and its surrounding environs by shutting down Chinese vegetable stands and restricting Chinese laundries to newly zoned business districts.¹¹⁴ Despite legislative restrictions on Asian immigration, twelve

thousand Japanese people and two thousand Chinese people lived in Los Angeles as of 1920.¹¹⁵ If Millie Dean or Barbara Boland would have headed a few miles east along West Jefferson Avenue and across Hoover Street, they might have walked past one of the twelve Chinese-owned and operated laundries still in operation during the second decade of the twentieth century, remnants of a trade dominated by the Chinese before their systematic exclusion.¹¹⁶

During the 1920s, in the wake of restrictions against Chinese and Japanese immigration, public health officials shifted their attention away from Asians and toward a fast-growing population of Mexicans in the city. In a phenomenon that historian Natalia Molina has called a “general pathologizing of Mexican culture and Mexican spaces,” city officials often blamed family structures and parenting practices—not poverty—for the presence of diseases such as typhus within Mexican neighborhoods.¹¹⁷ In Los Angeles, then, public officials cultivated a close association between race and illness.

As young women from the Quechan reservation and Sherman Institute ventured into Los Angeles, they found themselves immersed within a civic culture awash in racism. Public health campaigns sought to marginalize communities of color as places of danger and disease, and race-based property covenants hardened spatial divides between white people and all others. Those in charge of outing often placed students in homes within sections of the city that remained predominantly white during the early twentieth century. Most worked in the western half of the city, within a broad swath of neighborhoods that stretched westward from the West Adams neighborhood south and west of downtown to the beach communities of Santa Monica and Venice Beach.¹¹⁸

Though they may have lived and worked far from the communities of color targeted by ethnocentric public health campaigns, Native domestics working in the outing system still felt the harsh effects of racism, Los Angeles-style. After a few months of living in the city and working in the McCreary household, Quechan domestic Janice Hawley informed Fort Yuma School Superintendent Loson Odle that for the first time, her daily routine involved two baths each day—one in the morning, and one at night. This came despite the relatively “nice and cool” weather of Los Angeles. “I always take a bath before I go out,” wrote Hawley, “because I was afraid they will call me a dirty girl.”¹¹⁹

For Janice Hawley, fears of being called “dirty” permeated everyday life within the public spaces of Los Angeles during the second decade of the twentieth century. By the 1930s, the notion that Native Americans and other people of color acted as vessels for contagious disease had impacted the very form and function of the outing system. Before young women from the Fort Yuma Reservation journeyed across the desert and into Los Angeles to work as domestics in white households, they underwent detailed physicals, in which doctors searched for signs of chicken pox, diphtheria, measles, tuberculosis, typhoid, scarlet fever, smallpox, and whooping cough.¹²⁰ In and of themselves, these inspections did not necessarily indicate racial prejudice against Native people. Rather, they verified the health of student-laborers so that they might be able to attend Los Angeles public schools while they lived and worked in the city. Within the context of Los Angeles’s prolonged and public campaigns that associated people of color with contagious disease, however, the physicals took on far more pejorative meanings. It seems likely that as students lived and worked in the city, employers, and others viewed

Native domestics as potential vectors of dirt and disease. A certificate of good health, signed by a medical doctor, became a racialized and symbolic passport from Native worlds into white, Protestant Los Angeles.

For Mojave domestic worker Sarah Williams, not even a clean bill of health from a medical doctor could assuage the fears of potential employers who worried obsessively over the prospects of young, Native women bringing disease into their homes. Fourteen years old in the spring of 1934, Williams sought to make her first trip into Los Angeles, as did many Mojave women did at her age. Medical records for Williams indicate that she had once suffered from trachoma, a painful, potentially blinding, and highly communicable disease of the eye, but that the problem had cleared up by the time she prepared to go on outing. On May 29, 1934, Anna Nettle, the agency doctor at Colorado River, declared Williams to be perfectly healthy.¹²¹ Soon, then, she would sojourn some 300 miles west to begin working in Los Angeles.

Things soon became more difficult for Williams. Before departing for Los Angeles, she scratched herself on a bush, and came away with scabs on her legs.¹²² Williams arrived at the home of her employer in the early morning hours of June 14. Her employer sent her away “within a few hours on account of it being discovered that she had several sores on her leg.”¹²³ Ripples of panic spread through the households receiving domestics from the Colorado River Reservation. By morning, Mojave domestic worker Felicia Hicks had also been returned to the outing center. Within hours of her arrival in Los Angeles, Hicks’s employers had heard of the “sores” on the leg of Sarah Williams.

Apparently concerned that Hicks would spread some unknown disease to their household, Hicks's employers sent her away just as quickly as she had arrived.¹²⁴

Over the next two weeks, Outing Matron Frances Hall placed Sarah Williams in three more homes.¹²⁵ Each time, Williams's new employers sent her away once they learned of the scabs on her legs. "This incident had been rather unfortunate," wrote Hall. "One lady tells another and we have had considerable trouble in placing those two. In fact, they have been returned several times and are here now, but we are hoping to be able to place them again today."¹²⁶ Hall reported that "it is always ladies with children who take these girls, and they are very particular about any blemish of the skin, sore eyes and health in general, on account of their own children."¹²⁷ Another trip to the doctor and another clean bill of health for Williams was not enough to soothe the fears of paranoid potential employers. Sarah Williams returned to the Colorado River Reservation on June 30 having never worked a full day.¹²⁸

The racialized landscape of early-twentieth century had very real effects on the lives of Native domestics who worked there on outing. Multiple baths per day and repeated rejections from employers wary of a scabby leg sent a clear message: regardless of the quality of their work, young women in the outing system would always be viewed as possible vectors of disease. Richard Henry Pratt, who helped to build the template for outing at the Hampton Industrial School and the Carlisle Indian Industrial School, envisioned outing as a tool that would help Indian women to shed tribal cultures. In Pratt's mind, time spent cooking and cleaning for white, Protestant families would "uplift" young, Native women, and allow them to bring domestic ideals to their peoples.

The experiences of women working on outing in early-twentieth-century Los Angeles suggest that Pratt's vision had faded fast. While Native women who worked in Los Angeles proved desirable as cheap, pliable labor, white, Protestant Angelenos viewed them as suspicious by virtue of their race alone. In California's southland, a new brand of racialized hysteria swallowed whole the vision for assimilation once espoused by Richard Henry Pratt.

Quechan domestics in Los Angeles faced circumstances that could swing wildly between opportunity and peril, adventure and tedium. In many ways, the outing system during the first two decades of the twentieth century showcased some of the starkest failings that the Office of Indian Affairs could muster. As Fort Yuma School Superintendent Loson Odle sent Quechan women to live and work within white households in Los Angeles, he offered them virtually no support and no protection from the many dangers of the city. For Geraldine Sampson and Janice Hawley, long days of work gave way to even longer nights of loneliness and isolation. Left alone by their employers, Sampson and Hawley never knew when trouble might knock at the door. Millie Dean, on the other hand, faced greater risk when her employers remained in the house, as she lived with a man who had allegedly impregnated another domestic four years earlier. When Quechan women ventured into the streets of Los Angeles, they experienced an increasingly segregated city, one filled with a special breed of paranoia over the presence of immigrants and people of color. Finally, Janice Hawley's concern over being seen as "dirty" suggests that city programs and public programs which portrayed people of color as carriers of dirt and disease might have had real effects on

lives of Quechan domestic workers. The outing system that sent Quechan women into Los Angeles offered many experiences, but “racial uplift” and preparation for membership in white, Protestant majority were certainly not among them.

The words of Barbara Boland, Janice Hawley, Millie Dean, Geraldine Sampson, and Rose Moreland point to the ambivalent and sometimes contradictory nature of the outing system in Los Angeles. As they participated in a program sponsored and operated by the Office of Indian Affairs, Quechan women operated within a branch of a vast and far-reaching bureaucracy that damaged and restricted the lives of Native peoples throughout the United States. Barbara Boland, however, provides an important reminder: participation within the outing system in Los Angeles did not necessarily entail submission to total domination from employers and distant bureaucrats. However manipulative, misguided, and ethnocentric the outing system may have been, Quechan women such as Boland became experts at working within it. Boland and her cohorts shared information in order to drive up their wages. They found new prospective employers so that if and when things went wrong in their households, they could bargain for better conditions or leave. Janice Hawley and Rose Moreland used time spent in Los Angeles to work on their English language skills. As Quechan women ventured into the city, they encountered views and perspectives of working class people from across the globe. Perhaps more importantly, they created social spaces of their own making. Millie Dean and Geraldine Sampson found other Native people in the city. They developed friendships and romances. They were young people, and the Office of Indian Affairs could not stop them from acting like it.

During the first twenty years of the twentieth century, the outing system in Los Angeles remained a small enterprise. Reservation superintendents from Arizona and California sent small handfuls of young women into the city on a case-by-case basis. In 1918, however, the Office of Indian Affairs hired an outing matron to expand the outing system in the city. From there, outing grew rapidly in Los Angeles. By 1926, a field matron named Frances Hall scrambled frantically to keep tabs on a workforce of hundreds of young women, spread evenly across the western half of the vast city. It is to her story we turn next.

Endnotes

1. Mrs. Stannard A. McNeil to Fort Yuma School Superintendent Loson A. Odle, September 20, 1916, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, Records of the Fort Yuma Agency (hereinafter referred to as FY), BIA, RG 75 NAR.
2. Application for Enrollment in a Nonreservation School, SCF R.M., Box 245, CCF, RSI, BIA, NAR.
3. For a good account of patterns of indigenous labor in nineteenth-century Southern California, see George Harwood Phillips, *Vineyards and Vaqueros*. See also Lisbeth Haas, *Conquests and Historical Identities in California*, 1-89, and Richard Carrico and Florence Shipek, "Indian Labor in San Diego County, California."
4. See Haskins, *Matrons and Maids*, 89.
5. Frank Conser to W.M. Coleman, April 14, 1919, Box 3, 2143-1919, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NADC.
6. Addresses are taken from correspondences in Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
7. Mrs. S.A. McNeil to Loson Odle, September 20, 1916, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
8. See, for example, Mrs. R.M. Breeden to Loson Odle, November 26, 1916, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR. The files of Colorado River Reservation Superintendent A.F. Duclos contain letters from women seeking domestics, many of them having heard from friends or family about the availability of such workers through the Office of Indian Affairs. See, for example, Mrs. P.C. Dorland to Colorado River Reservation Superintendent A.F. Duclos, November 5, 1916, Box 177, Central Classified Correspondence, Folder: Outing System, Records of the Colorado River Agency (hereinafter referred to as CRA), BIA, RG 75 NAR.
9. Mrs. S.A. McNeil to Loson Odle, September 20, 1916, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
10. Mrs. M.C. Brewer to Loson Odle, September 20, 1916, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
11. Ibid.

12. Loson Odle to Mrs. S.A. McNeil, June 7, 1916, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR. While the Quechan had an outing matron of their own, Alice Carter, she focused the majority of her energy on women working in Yuma.

13. Frank Conser to Matilda Ewing, November 16, 1918, LSR, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

14. For a rare example of Jewett going into Los Angeles to assist a Quechan woman on behalf of Loson Odle, see Orrington Jewett to Loson Odle, June 17, 1917, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR. Jewett went to resolve a dispute between Quechan domestic worker Geraldine Sampson and her employers, the McCreary family.

15. Copy of report sent to Civil Service Board, n.d., Box 1, Coded Correspondences of Supervisor Holst, 1928-1929, Folder: Outing Los Angeles, Records of the Supervisor of Indian Education, 1928-1929 (hereinafter referred to as RSIE), BIA, RG 75, National Archives, San Bruno, California (hereinafter referred to as RG 75 NASB).

16. Fort Yuma Indian School Field Matron Alice Carter to Fort Yuma Indian School Superintendent Loson Odle, June 30, 1913, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

17. Loson Odle to R.M., E.A., and B.B., June 27, 1916, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

18. Alice Carter to Loson Odle, June 30, 1913, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1923-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

19. Emma Baker to W.M. Coleman, March 25, 1919, Box 3, 2143-1919, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NADC.

20. Loson Odle to B.B., October 14, 1916, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

21. Mrs. McCreary to Loson Odle, n.d., Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

22. B.B. to Loson Odle, October 4, 1916, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

23. Loson Odle to B.B., November 4, 1916, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

24. B.B. to Loson Odle, November 9, 1916, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR; Loson Odle to B.B., November 14, 1916, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

25. Mrs. Eugene Harris to Loson Odle, May 10, 1917, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

26. Loson Odle to B.B., November 4, 1916, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR; B.B. to Loson Odle, July 23, 1917, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

27. Mrs. S.A. McNeil to Loson Odle, November 17, 1917, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR. Historian Victoria K. Haskins notes that the practice using the threat of changing employers to negotiate for higher wages proved common among domestic workers of all ethnicities, both in the United States and elsewhere. See her *Matrons and Maids*, 94. For a more general look at the practice of changing employers among domestic workers, see David M. Katzman, *Seven Days a Week: Women and Domestic Service in Industrializing America* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1981), 270.

28. Margaret Jacobs, "Working on the Domestic Frontier," 178-79.

29. G.S. to Loson Odle, October 27, 1916, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75.

30. Ibid.

31. G.S. to Loson Odle, February 24, 1917, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75.

32. Mrs. Fred Van Dam to Orrington Jewett, June 24, 1917, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR; Orrington Jewett to Loson Odle, June 27, 1917, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

33. Mrs. Stannard A. McNeil to Loson Odle, June 24, 1917, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

34. J.H. to Loson Odle, n.d., Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

35. Truxton Canyon Indian School Superintendent Charles Shell to Loson Odle, October 5, 1916, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

36. Ibid.

37. Loson Odle to Orrington Jewett, December 1, 1916, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

38. Mrs. M.C. Brewer to Loson Odle, January 10, 1917, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

39. Clifford E. Trafzer, e-mail message to author, April 16, 2014.

40. For conditions imposed on domestics who left Los Angeles to visit their homes on the Fort Yuma Reservation, see Loson Odle to Mrs. W.H. Brewer, June 7, 1916, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR; see also Loson Odle to G.S., March 5, 1917, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR. For cost and time of travel between Los Angeles and Yuma, Arizona, see Los Angeles Outing Matron Frances Hall to E.W., June 11, 1926, SCF E.W., Box 383, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

41. Mrs. S.A. McNeil to Fort Yuma Superintendent Loson Odle, October 14, 1919, Box 12, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing-General, 1918-1920, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

42. Kathryn Von Hinzmann to Colorado River Superintendent Loson Odle, March 16, 1937, Box 180, Central Classified Correspondence, 1924-1951, Folder: Field Matron, Los Angeles, CA, CRA, BIA, RG 75 NAR; Kathryn Von Hinzmann to Colorado River Superintendent Loson Odle, March 17, 1937, Box 180, Central Classified Correspondence, 1924-1951, Folder: Field Matron, Los Angeles, CA, CRA, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

43. Los Angeles Outing Matron Grace Viets to Fort Yuma Indian School Superintendent Loson Odle, October 9, 1922, Box 26, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing Pupils, 1920-1923, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

44. J.H. to Loson Odle, n.d., Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

45. Ibid.

46. B.B. to Loson Odle, June 6, 1916, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

47. B.B. to Loson Odle, October 1, 1917, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

48. J.H. to Loson Odle, n.d., Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

49. Ibid.

50. F.S. to Loson Odle, January 5, 1919, Box 14, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Schools, Riverside, 1918-1920, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

51. Loson Odle to B.B., July 13, 1916, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

52. Loson Odle to Mrs. S.A. McNeil, October 2, 1917, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

53. Assistant Commissioner of Indian Affairs E.B. Merrit to Matilda Ewing, November 4, 1918, Box 12, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing, General, 1918-1920, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

54. Renya K. Ramirez, *Native Hubs: Culture, Community, and Belonging in the Silicon Valley and Beyond* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2007), 2. For additional looks at the relationship between city and reservation within Native communities, see Myla Vicenti Carpio, *Indigenous Albuquerque* (Lubbock: Texas Tech University Press, 2011), and Susan Lobo, "Is Urban a Person or a Place? Characteristics of Urban Indian Country," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 20, no. 4 (1998): 89-102.

55. Loson Odle to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Cato Sells, November 3, 1914, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

56. M.R. to Clyde Gensler, July 16, 1934, Box 180, Central Classified Correspondence, 1924-1951, Folder: Field Matron, Los Angeles, CA, CRA, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

57. Coleman, *American Indian Children at School*, 170; Talayesva, *Sun Chief*, 130-41. See also Kevin Whalen, "Labored Learning: The Outing System at Sherman Institute, 1902-1930," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 36, no. 1 (July 2012): 151-76.

58. V.J. to Loson Odle, December 5, 1921, Box 16, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: 26, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

59. Ibid.

60. On the provision of clothing and school materials within Pratt's version of the outing system, see Trennert, "From Carlisle to Phoenix," 272.

61. Alice Carter to Loson Odle, June 30, 1913, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

62. Rilla DePorte to Fort Yuma Indian School Superintendent Byron Sharp, September 22, 1925, Box 26, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing Pupils, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR. In 1924, M.L. made \$30 per month working for the Arkush family at 416 South Hoover Street. Rilla DePorte to Loson Odle, May 5, 1924, Box 26, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing Pupils, 1920-1923, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

63. Frances Hall to Clyde Gensler, June 5, 1934, Box 180, Central Classified Correspondence, 1924-1951, Folder: Field Matron, Los Angeles, CA, CRA, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

64. Rilla DePorte to Byron Sharpe, September 22, 1925, Box 26, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing Pupils, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

65. Very little documentation exists regarding the structure of the outing system in Los Angeles before the Office of Indian Affairs hired an outing matron there in 1918. Correspondences from Loson Odle suggest that the Alice Carter, the field matron from the Fort Yuma Indian School, sometimes accompanied Quechan women into Los Angeles in the fall and inspected the households of their employers before returning to Arizona. Loson Odle to B.B., July 13, 1916, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR. At other times, Odle sent young women to Los Angeles alone and had employers meet them at the train station. Loson Odle to Mrs. S.A. McNeil, June 7, 1916, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

66. B.B. to Loson Odle, July 16, 1916, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

67. Ibid.

68. Ibid.

69. B.B. to Loson Odle, June 6, 1916, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

70. Historian and anthropologist Michael Tsosie has noted that Mohave people, too, quickly became adept at finding one another in Los Angeles. Tsosie recalled that at the Colorado River Reservation, relatives would compile lists containing the names and locations of Mohave people living and working in Los Angeles. Mohave people living in Los Angeles could write or call home whenever they needed to locate one of their own in the city. Michael Tsosie, personal communication with the author, February 15, 2010.

71. B.B. to Loson Odle, June 6, 1916, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR; B.B. to Loson Odle, July 12, 1916, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR; B.B. to Loson Odle, October 4, 1916, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

72. J.H. to Loson Odle, n.d., Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

73. Ibid.

74. Eugenia Harris to Loson Odle, May 10, 1918, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

75. E.A. to Loson Odle, April 8, 1917, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

76. Ibid.

77. For the price of a train ticket from Yuma to Los Angeles in 1925, see Voucher for Transportation of Passengers, Southern Pacific Company, Box 26, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing Pupils, 1923-1925, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

78. Mrs. A.H. Peir to Loson Odle, February 22, 1918, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

79. Ibid.

80. Haskins, *Matrons and Maids*, 54-106.

81. Ibid., 85-92.

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82. Rules Governing School Girls Who Are In Families and Attending Public Schools, Box 180, Central Classified Correspondence, 1924-1951, Folder: Field Matron, Los Angeles, CA, CRA, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
83. Robin D.G. Kelley, *Race Rebels: Culture, Politics, and the Black Working Class* (New York: The Free Press, 1994), 47.
84. Orrington Jewett to Loson Odle, September 24, 1917, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
85. B.B. to Loson Odle, October 1, 1917, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
86. Orrington Jewett to Loson Odle, September 26, 1917, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR. On connections between outing and marriage, see Haskins, *Matrons and Maids*, 99-101, 115.
87. Sherman Institute Superintendent Myrthus W. Evans to Yuma Methodist Indian Mission Pastor Vernon W. Bradley, May 15, 1962, SCF R.M., Box 245, CCF, RSI, BIA, NAR.
88. B.B. to Loson Odle, July 16, 1916, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
89. Rosenthal, *Reimagining Indian Country*, 21.
90. Ibid., 20. On the chronic undercounting of Native people by census takers, see Lobo, "Is Urban a Person or a Place?"
91. See Becky Nicolaides, *My Blue Heaven: Life and Politics in the Working-Class Suburbs of Los Angeles, 1920-1965* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 48. For more on economic and industrial growth in early-twentieth-century Los Angeles, see Robert Fogelson, *The Fragmented Metropolis: Los Angeles, 1850-1930* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967), 78-129. See also Mike Davis, "Sunshine and the Open Shop: Ford and Darwin in 1920s Los Angeles," in *Metropolis in the Making: Los Angeles in the 1920s*, edited by Tom Sitton and William Deverell (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2001), 96-122.
92. Rosenthal, *Reimagining Indian Country*, 26-29.
93. In 1922, for example, Los Angeles Field Matron Matilda Ewing complained that "Indian boys and men at Torrance, California, working in the Llewellyn Iron Works

come to the city Thursdays and Sundays when girls have the p.m. off and many times keep the girls out all night.” Matilda Ewing to H.W. Palmer, June 22, 1922, Personnel File for Matilda Ewing, NPRC. Ewing’s successor, Grace Viets, wrote to Colorado River Superintendent Leo Crane that there were “many Mojaves employed at the iron works at Torrance.” Grace Viets to Leo Crane, December 29, 1922, Box 180, Central Classified Correspondence, 1924-1951, Folder: Field Matron, Los Angeles, CA, CRA, BIA, RG 75 NAR. Outing records kept by Sherman Institute show that at least five men from the school worked full time for Llewellyn Iron Works between 1912 and 1930. See Outing Timecards, Records of Boys Outings, Boxes 115-122, Records of Sherman Institute, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

94. Galen Townsend, Personal interview with the author, February 16, 2010.

95. Donald L. Fixico, *The Urban Indian Experience in America* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2000); James B. LaGrand, *Indian Metropolis: Native Americans in Chicago, 1945-1975* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2002); Joan Weibel-Orlando, *Indian Country L.A.: Maintaining Ethnic Community in Complex Society* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999).

96. Douglas K. Miller, “Willing Workers: Urban Relocation and American Indian Initiative, 1940-1960s,” *Ethnohistory* 60, no. 1 (2013): 51-76.

97. For a pair of important exceptions, see Rosenthal, *Reimagining Indian Country*, and Shoemaker, “Urban Indians, Ethnic Choices.”

98. Nicolaides, *My Blue Heaven*, 71.

99. Rosenthal, *Reimagining Indian Country*, 108.

100. Ibid.

101. Mark Wild, *Street Meeting: Multiethnic Neighborhoods in Early Twentieth-Century Los Angeles* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2005), 14.

102. Ibid., 10-14.

103. J.H. to Loson Odle, n.d., Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

104. Application for Enrollment in a Nonreservation School, SCF E.W., Box 383, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR; Frank Conser to Ruby Jennings, June 16, 1925, SCF E.W., Box 383, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR; Rilla DePorte to Frank Conser, December 16, 1925, SCF E.W., Box 383, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR; Frank Conser to D.W., May 20, 1926,

SCF E.W., Box 383, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR; Frank Conser to Clyde Gensler, September 17, 1926, SCF E.W., Box 383, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR; Clyde Gensler to Frank Conser, September 23, 1926, SCF E.W., Box 383, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

105. Frank Conser to R.E., September 4, 1928, SCF E.W., Box 383, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

106. Frank Conser to Clyde Gensler, September 4, 1928, SCF E.W., Box 383, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

107. Eric Avila, *Popular Culture and White Flight: Fear and Fantasy in Suburban Los Angeles* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2004), 21.

108. On the rise of the so-called “Spanish fantasy past” during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, see Phoebe Kropp, *California Vieja: Culture and Memory in a Modern American Place* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2006). See also William Deverell, *Whitewashed Adobe: The Rise of Los Angeles and the Remaking of Its Mexican Past* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2004).

109. Wild, *Street Meeting*, 38.

110. *Ibid.*, 47-49.

111. Nicolaides, *My Blue Heaven*, esp. 272-327.

112. Sixteen-year-old R.L. worked for the Ardouin family and attended South Gate Grammar School during the 1929-1930 academic year, earning nine dollars per month for domestic labor performed at nights and on weekends. Girls Attending School in Los Angeles, 1929-1930, Box 3, Administrative Subject Records, 1929-1932, Folder: Outing Center—Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB.

113. For an excellent survey of policies toward Asian immigration in the United States, see Roger Daniels, *Guarding the Golden Door: American Immigration Policy and Immigrants Since 1882* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2004). See also Adam McKeown, *Melancholy Order: Asian Migration and the Globalization of Borders* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), and Ngai, *Impossible Subjects*.

114. Natalia Molina, *Fit to be Citizens? Public Health and Race in Los Angeles, 1879-1939* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2006), 15-45.

115. *Ibid.*, 7.

116. Ibid., 42.

117. Ibid., 77.

118. Copy of report sent to Civil Service Board, n.d., Box 1, Supervisor of Indian Education, 1928-1929, Folder: Outing Los Angeles, Coded Correspondences of Supervisor Holst, 1928-1929, BIA, RG 75 NASB.

119. J.H. to Loson Odle, n.d., Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

120. Medical Certificates, Box 180, Central Classified Correspondence, 1924-1951, Folder: Medical Certificates—Found loose in box, CRA, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

121. Medical Certificate for S.W., Box 180, Central Classified Correspondence, 1924-1951, Folder: Medical Certificates—Found loose in box, CRA, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

122. Clyde Gensler to Frances Hall, June 18, 1934, Box 180, Central Classified Correspondence, 1924-1951, Folder: Field Matron, Los Angeles, CA, CRA, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

123. Frances Hall to Clyde Gensler, June 14, 1934, Box 180, Central Classified Correspondence, 1924-1951, Folder: Field Matron, Los Angeles, CA, CRA, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

124. Ibid.

125. Frances Hall to Clyde Gensler, June 20, 1934, Central Classified Correspondence, 1924-1951, Folder: Field Matron, Los Angeles, CA, CRA, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

126. Frances Hall to Clyde Gensler, June 14, 1934, Box 180, Central Classified Correspondence, 1924-1951, Folder: Field Matron, Los Angeles, CA, CRA, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

127. Ibid.

128. Frances Hall to Clyde Gensler, June 30, 1934, Box 180, Central Classified Correspondence, 1924-1951, Folder: Field Matron, Los Angeles, CA, CRA, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

Chapter 4

“Like a Mother’s Duty, My Work is Never Finished”: Outing Matrons in Los Angeles, 1918-1929

In October 1928, a dejected Frances Hall climbed the stairs to the bedroom of her bungalow, located just west of downtown Los Angeles. She had no time for sleep, however. Instead, Hall sat down at her typewriter to end an already too-long day of work. The Office of Indian Affairs hired Hall, the wife of former Sherman Institute Superintendent Harwood Hall, to work as the outing matron for the City of Los Angeles in 1926. For the last two and a half years, she had been tasked with supervising hundreds of Native domestic workers spread across the urban sprawl of Los Angeles. Exhausted from almost non-stop inspections of the homes where outing employees cooked, cleaned, and cared for children, Hall sat up late into the night and filled out a standardized form to report the state of her work in Los Angeles. She poured her frustrations onto paper.¹

Hall’s workload was superhuman. Each day, she rose at seven and worked well past midnight. In the spring, before outing workers arrived, she screened applications from prospective patrons, interviewed the most promising candidates, and inspected the homes of those who met the requirements for hiring her workers. Early summer brought the trials and tribulations of shepherding hundreds of Native women into the city from boarding schools and reservations across California and Arizona and placing them into homes where they worked as domestics. Many of these women spent nights in Hall’s cottage as they awaited their appointments. Through June, July, and August, she rode buses, cabs, and trolleys throughout the western side of Los Angeles to supervise

domestic workers and mediate conflicts between employers and employees. When young women wished to visit home to meet family obligations or attend ceremonies, Hall arranged for their travel. If Native domestic workers took sick, Hall brought them to her outing cottage and cared for them. When employers paid the their domestic workers, they gave one-third to the young women and sent the remainder to Frances Hall, per the archaic policy put in place by outing pioneer Richard Henry Pratt nearly half-a-century earlier. Frances Hall ran a one-woman labor agency.²

Letters and phone calls consumed an even larger portion of Hall's day than did paperwork. Between arranging for transportation for young women to come to Los Angeles, securing them employers, scheduling visits home to reservations, and assisting those who wished to leave the city and return home for good, Hall penned an estimated fifteen letters each day. Finally, Hall reported that her phone rang "almost constantly throughout the day and evening," and that she spent between two and six hours on the phone each day. The more time Hall spent on the phone during business hours, the more paperwork she pushed into the evening hours. Most nights, the bewildered outing matron worked into the morning hours. As Hall wrote to inform the Office of Indian Affairs about the status of her outing center, she closed with a grim assessment: On the average day, she spent sixteen hours on her work. "Like a mother's duty," wrote Hall, "my work is never finished."³

The report of Frances Hall to the Office of Indian Affairs captured the promise and peril of the outing system as it grew in Los Angeles during the 1920s and into the early 1930s. During the 1910s, the outing program in the city had been a fractured,

haphazard venture in which superintendents from reservations and boarding schools sent young women to work in Los Angeles with little or no supervision. Beginning in 1918, the Office of Indian Affairs hired a series of outing matrons to direct the placement of Native women into the homes of white Angelenos as domestic workers. Those efforts came to their apex under the direction of Frances Hall, who received her appointment in 1926. In conjunction with reservation and Indian school superintendents, Hall placed hundreds of young women as domestic workers each year between 1926 and 1933. Just as Quechan and Mojave women had in earlier decades, women from around the American Southwest used the services of Frances Hall and the outing system to earn wages, gain new skills and perspectives, and experience life in Los Angeles. Many also gained access to the public schools of Los Angeles, which proved far superior to those provided by the Office of Indian Affairs. Despite the dogged efforts of Hall, young women in the outing system during the late 1920s and early 1930s experienced many of the same problems as the workers who had preceded them during the 1910s and early 1920s. It took all that Frances Hall had to find places of work for the young women and shuttle them to and from their employers. Once these young women took their places across the twenty-five mile radius of the city, it became nearly impossible for Hall to adequately supervise them.

The worried words of Frances Hall suggest the limits of individual agency among the young women who ventured into the city to work as domestics. As the Office of Indian Affairs institutionalized and expanded the movement of Native women into Los Angeles, it provided minimal, even pitiful infrastructure for the care and protection of the

women it claimed to “uplift” through outing labor. Many women likely experienced outing in the same way as the Quechan and Mojave women who ventured into the city with little or no support during the first decades of the twentieth century. Like their predecessors, Native domestic workers of the 1920s and 1930s often fought successfully to draw new skills and perspectives from outing experiences. Those who managed to draw positive outcomes from outing did so despite the shrunken, chronically underfunded bureaucracy of the outing system.

During the first two decades of the twentieth century, Superintendents at Sherman Institute and the Fort Yuma and Colorado River Agencies sent handfuls of women to work as domestics in Los Angeles. Like his predecessor, Harwood Hall, Sherman Institute Superintendent Frank Conser preferred to keep young women who participated in the outing system at least somewhat close to home. In the years between Harwood Hall’s departure as Superintendent of Sherman Institute in 1909 and the establishment of the Los Angeles Outing Center in 1918, the vast majority of domestics from Sherman Institute worked in Riverside or nearby cities such as Corona and Redlands, California. When the Office of Indian Affairs appointed the first outing matron to Los Angeles in 1918, for example, just four of Conser’s students worked as domestics in Los Angeles.⁴

Colorado River Agency Superintendent Clyde Gensler and Fort Yuma School Superintendent Loson Odle proved less reluctant in sending young Mojave women to live and work in Los Angeles in the absence of an outing matron. Beginning in the first decade of the twentieth century, they sent groups of young women to work virtually unsupervised in the city each summer. Before the formal establishment of an outing

center in Los Angeles, these students worked under the nominal supervision of Orrington Jewett, the outing matron from Sherman Institute who lived sixty miles east in Riverside. Born in 1871 in rural Shelbina, Missouri, Jewett had joined the Indian service as a seamstress at the Navajo Agency in Fort Defiance, Arizona, in 1903.⁵ By 1909, when Jewett arrived at Sherman Institute and began working as an outing matron, she had earned steady praise from her bosses at Fort Defiance and the Pima Agency in Sacaton, Arizona. In Riverside and Los Angeles, she threw herself headlong into the difficult work demanded of an outing matron. "Through this work," wrote Jewett, "the whites are learning to know and appreciate the Indian as they could never know them in any other way, and it means an education on both sides and for the general good."⁶ Official policy dictated that the outing system would prepare Native people to shed their cultures in favor of white, Protestant ways. For Jewett, however, assimilation would require adjustments from both Native people and the majority culture that received them.

No matter how dedicated and enthusiastic Jewett may have been, she still resided sixty miles away from the women she supervised in Los Angeles. If a domestic worker ran in to problems with an employer, they could expect little in the way of immediate help. Most often, Jewett came to the work sites of Quechan and Mojave maids only if they were to attend Sherman Institute rather than return to their home reservations during the next school year.⁷ Rather than rely on the distant Jewett for help in such pressing situations, Fort Yuma Indian School Superintendent Loson Odle used older, more experienced domestics to help find places and smooth out conflicts for younger workers. During the first decades of the twentieth century, then, Native women on outing in Los

Angeles had virtually no supervision, and could count on help from the Office of Indian Affairs only in times of crisis. Even then, help proved slow in coming.

While reservation agents and school superintendents arranged domestic work for Native women for at least ten years prior to the arrival of Ewing, no infrastructure existed within Los Angeles to supervise indigenous domestic workers or keep them safe. Blurred lines of jurisdiction complicated things even further. For example, Sherman Outing Matron Orrington Jewett held a formal affiliation with the Fort Yuma Agency and Fort Mojave Agencies, but not the Colorado River Agency. Nonetheless, Jewett occasionally helped young women from Colorado River during times of distress.⁸ Moreover, women often came to Los Angeles from the Fort Yuma or Colorado River Reservations at the beginning of summer, and then enrolled at Sherman Institute in the fall. In 1918, then, the thirty or so Native women spread across a five-mile arc along the west side of downtown Los Angeles formed an amoeba of young women in motion—from their home reservations to their places of work, from employer to employer, from their employers to Sherman Institute. Jewett rarely saw or helped any of them.

Matilda Ewing became the first outing matron in Los Angeles in November of 1918. The outing system must have seemed an ever-shifting shape as she took her post as Outing Matron in the city. In addition to the smattering of Mojave and Quechan women located west of downtown Los Angeles, Frank Conser, the Superintendent of Sherman Institute, informed Ewing that four of his older students lived and worked in Los Angeles full time. The Office of Indian Affairs set her up with a cottage at 1144 South Westlake Avenue, directly between Pico and Olympic Boulevards, just west of the city's core. Not

coincidentally, the new outing cottage rested in the geographic center of the thirty or so Native women who worked along the western side of Los Angeles.⁹

The establishment of an outing center in Los Angeles took place as part of a broader expansion of the outing system into urban areas, as the Office of Indian Affairs hired Outing Matron Bonnie V. Royce to monitor Native domestic workers in the San Francisco Bay Area in the same year. Just as it did for Ewing in Los Angeles, the Office of Indian Affairs purchased for Royce a small home in Berkeley, California, to serve as an outing center where young women could spend nights as they transitioned from reservation to city and back again.¹⁰ The establishment of outing centers in Los Angeles and Berkeley followed a pattern created in Tucson, Arizona, where Outing Matron Minnie Estabrook began operating from a six-room bungalow in 1914.¹¹

Born in 1856 in Crawfordsville, Indiana, Matilda Ewing neared the end of a lifelong career in education as she arrived in Southern California. Ewing had taught for nearly two decades in Crawfordsville before entering the Indian service as a matron at Red Lake, Minnesota, in 1905. The conscientious matron earned almost universal praise as she climbed the ranks of the Office of Indian Affairs. After six years at Red Lake, she worked briefly as a matron at the Genoa Indian School in central Nebraska before landing at the famed Carlisle Industrial School in 1915.¹² At Carlisle, Ewing earned praise as she took charge of the largest outing system in the Office of Indian Affairs.¹³ As administrators in the Office of Indian Affairs prepared to open a new outing center in Los Angeles, then, Ewing rose to the top of a substantial pile of applicants for what proved to be a very desirable position among Indian service employees, with many employees of

the Office of Indian Affairs seeking to escape remote agencies in favor of cosmopolitan locations such as Los Angeles.

As Ewing arrived in Los Angeles, a letter from Assistant Commissioner of Indian Affairs E.B. Merritt made clear the immense challenges that awaited her. Merritt bluntly instructed Ewing to “take charge of all the girls who are placed under the outing system in the vicinity of Los Angeles,” including young women from Sherman Institute, Fort Yuma, Fort Mojave, and Colorado River, and Mission Agencies of Southern California. Whether or not Ewing knew it as she read Merritt’s letter, coordination of employment for women from so many jurisdictions would require countless hours of painstaking correspondence and chaperoning as young women transitioned from reservation or boarding school to city and back again.¹⁴

Getting young women to and from their posts formed only a part of Ewing’s workload. Once workers took their posts, Ewing visited their employers so that she would “know the conditions” in which the young women worked. The Indian Office instructed Ewing rather vaguely that if the “moral welfare, health, or practical affairs” of the young women failed to live up to the standards of the Office of Indian Affairs, she would need to “remedy matters which are not as they should be.”¹⁵ In what would become perhaps the most time consuming duty of the position, Ewing also provided assistance to any Native person in Los Angeles who requested her help, regardless of their age or whether or not they participated in the outing system. Finally, Merritt informed Ewing that she would be required to submit each year at least one narrative report on her activities as outing matron.¹⁶

Agency and school superintendents from California and Arizona did not hesitate to utilize Ewing's services. Frank Conser, the superintendent of Sherman Institute, eagerly used Ewing to supervise the students he already had in Los Angeles. Shortly after her appointment in November 1918, Conser sent Ewing the names and locations of domestic workers from Sherman who worked year-round in the city.¹⁷ Moreover, Conser informed Ewing that he would be "pleased to have the benefit of placing girls from this school out to work in Los Angeles."¹⁸ Conser also sent Orrington Jewett, the outing matron at Sherman Institute, to meet and share information with Ewing, and a short time later, Ewing made a visit to Sherman Institute.¹⁹

Before the arrival of a full-time outing matron in Los Angeles, Conser had been reluctant to send his students there to work as domestics. Almost since Sherman Institute had opened in 1902, the school had received a steady stream of requests for domestic workers from across Southern California, including many from Los Angeles. Both Conser and his predecessor, Harwood Hall, preferred to keep female student-laborers close to Riverside. Now, Conser quickly expanded Sherman's outing system into the city. Rather than turning away Angelenos who requested student-laborers as he had in the past, Conser forwarded their requests to Ewing. Ewing corresponded with the requestors, interviewed them, and inspected their homes. Instead of making individual arrangements, Conser sent groups to Ewing at the end of each school year, and Ewing shepherded them to prearranged places of employment.²⁰



Figure 4.1. Los Angeles Outing Matron Matilda Ewing, n.d. In 1918, the Office of Indian Affairs tasked Ewing with supervising all Native women working as domestics in Los Angeles. Photo courtesy of the National Archives Personnel Records Center, St. Louis, MO.

Almost as soon as Ewing arrived in Los Angeles, Conser began requesting that she make personal visits to the four students he had placed there before her arrival. In June of 1919, Ewing received a terse letter from the superintendent. Reyna Cabrera, a Quechan student from Sherman Institute who had been working for the Bierce family in Pasadena, California, made a two-day visit to a friend in Riverside without first obtaining permission from her employer. To make matters worse, Cabrera did not bring enough money to pay for her return fare. "While Reyna has had the reputation of being a good girl," wrote Conser, "such methods of handling her by the patron will soon result unfavorably." Conser finished with a demand. "Take the matter up with Mrs. Bierce and inform her that we cannot permit this method of handling our girls."²¹ In December 1918, Conser wrote Ewing to inform her that one of his favorite alumni had recently begun working as a domestic in the city. "About a week ago Alice Sims, a Pima girl who was a student at this school a few years ago, went to Los Angeles to work," wrote Conser. "I thought you would like to know about Alice who was a very nice little girl while she was here, and it might be possible that she would need your assistance at some time."²² Requests such as these quickly added to an already considerable workload for Ewing.

Superintendents from the Fort Yuma Indian School and the Colorado River Indian Reservation also began sending more young women to work as domestics in Los Angeles following the arrival of Matilda Ewing.²³ In 1919, Fort Yuma Indian School Superintendent Loson Odle sent fifteen young women from his school to work as domestics in Riverside under the supervision of Sherman Outing Matron Orrington Jewett.²⁴ As the summer outing season approached in 1920, Odle wrote to Frank Conser,

his counterpart at Sherman Institute. Could he do so again this year?²⁵ Conser informed Odle that he expected to send out more Sherman students than ever to work under Ewing's care, and that he "was wondering whether it was possible for you to place your girls with Mrs. Ewing in Los Angeles this summer."²⁶ By 1919, Odle had been sending young women into Los Angeles to work as domestics for a full decade. Still, the exchange between Odle and Frank Conser suggested that the presence of an outing matron in the city meant that Los Angeles would play an even greater role within the outing systems of Sherman Institute, the Fort Yuma Indian School, and Indian agencies throughout Western Arizona and Southern California.

Complete responsibility over a group of young women who came from all over the southwestern United States and worked all over Los Angeles likely proved to be a daunting task. As the first outing matron to be stationed in Los Angeles, Matilda Ewing had no blueprint to follow. Just as significantly, she tackled her job without assistance. Harried and alone, Ewing kept few written records. Still, important trends can be gathered from Ewing's time as outing matron. For at least a decade, reservation agents and school superintendents had sent Native women to work in Los Angeles with no supervision, no safety net in the event of an abusive employer or a serious illness. From the arrival of Ewing onward, domestic workers in Los Angeles would have at least some semblance of the supervision and care promised to them by the Office of Indian Affairs.

Demand for indigenous domestics grew quickly, and so too did the outing system. By the summer of 1921, Ewing supervised eighty Native domestic workers as they lived and worked in the city. She struggled to place all of these women into white homes in

June, and the work did not become easier in the months that followed. Ewing answered constant phone calls from domestic workers and their employers. She made frequent house calls, whether in attempts to soothe homesick women, defuse runaway plots, investigate pregnancies, or discourage romances that went beyond boundaries of acceptability set forth by employers and the Indian Office. At the end of each month, Ewing collected two-thirds of the paychecks earned by domestic workers under her watch—a vestige of the outing program as it operated at the Carlisle Industrial School. On Thursday and Sunday afternoons, Ewing required employers to grant their domestic workers free time in the afternoon so that they could gather and socialize at her outing cottage on Westlake Avenue. Finally, Ewing travelled each day to check on the conditions faced by domestic workers as they lived and worked in the city—a job made more difficult by what Ewing called “the remarkably rapid” growth of Los Angeles in the early 1920s. Some women worked as far away from Los Angeles as Ventura and Ojai, California, located some sixty miles west of Los Angeles.²⁷

By the summer of 1922, Ewing had more work than she could handle. The aging outing matron reported that she often took telephone calls from disgruntled domestic workers and their employers from five in the morning until midnight. “Unless I had breakfast by five or earlier,” wrote Ewing, “I ate mostly on the way to and from the phone.”²⁸ Where Ewing once seemed to enjoy her job, she had been worn down by conflicts between employers and their domestic workers. She reported that coordinating with police in order to search for runaways occupied many working days. Ewing complained that domestic workers “would become dissatisfied and would leave their

places and would disappear as if by magic.” Others would pretend not to understand orders from their employers, or simply refuse to work, forcing Ewing to arrange for transfers. She also reported difficulty in policing the sexual lives of domestic workers, who seemed to arrange frequent meetings with Native men living in the city, many of whom worked at Llewellyn Iron Works in Torrance, California, just south of Los Angeles. Ewing used her own money to hire Lolita Bisbitaoui, a graduate of Sherman Institute, to help with day-to-day operations at the outing center. Still, she remained swamped with work. Ewing wrote that in order to properly care for all the Native domestic workers in Los Angeles, she would need a car and driver, a stenographer, and a worker to clean the house and care for her lawn.²⁹

More than a heavy workload hampered Ewing. Correspondences suggested that the aging outing matron struggled with memory loss and dementia during the first years of the 1920s. William Thackery, the agent from the Fort Mojave Reservation, faced extreme difficulty in dealing with Ewing as he attempted to place young women from his reservation to work in Los Angeles. After accompanying six women by train to Los Angeles, Thackery reported that Ewing appeared completely overwhelmed in attempting to place the young women with the prospective employers who met them at the train station. Thackery noted that when the employers attempted to introduce themselves to the young women, Ewing “would order them to keep back from... the girls, and was so nervous that it was impossible to check them to the patrons.” Thackery also complained that Ewing failed to keep track of where the women worked, how much they earned, and when they would return to Fort Mojave.³⁰ In September, Superintendent Leo Crane of the

Colorado River Reservation complained that he kept better track of his domestics from his office in Parker, Arizona—a full 260 miles east of Los Angeles—than Ewing did from her cottage in the city.³¹ In response to complaints from Thackery and Crane, Ewing admitted that she “placed students in homes that she know nothing of.”³² She also lost track of return train tickets, forcing Thackery to purchase new ones. Ewing, wrote Thackery, was “a sick lady.” At sixty-six years of age, after seventeen years in the Indian service, Ewing’s mind was failing her.³³

Seeking a lighter workload for an aging Matilda Ewing, the Indian Office transferred her to the Santa Fe Indian School, where she became head matron.³⁴ Ewing’s lack of record keeping made for a rocky transition. On October 23, 1922, a full three weeks after her arrival in Santa Fe, Ewing wrote frantically to Fort Yuma Indian School Superintendent Loson Odle. Three Quechan domestics had not yet received their wages from summer outing work, and Odle had written Ewing earlier for the names of their employers and the monthly wages that the young women should have been paid. Ewing responded with an incoherent gush of information. “I think I had a check given me for Henrietta Sharp,” she wrote, “which I held for a time to see if she would have to be sent back to you and if I have not sent it heretofore I must have left it at L.A. or it is yet in my things which I have not yet unpacked.”³⁵ As Ewing continued, she launched into an apology that revealed the full extent of her lack of organization. “It may seem that I did not take as good care of the salaries as I should,” she wrote, “but every Thursday I hid the checks in what I thought a safe place and I did but I may have failed to find them later.”³⁶

Overworked and overmatched after four years in Los Angeles, Matilda Ewing could no longer take adequate care of the money earned by domestic workers under her watch.

Grace Viets replaced Matilda Ewing, and the outing system in Los Angeles grew in organization and sophistication under her direction. The daughter of Andrew J. Viets, a longtime bureaucrat within the Office of Indian Affairs who rose to prominence as the Superintendent of the Santa Fe Indian School, Viets had spent most of her life in the Indian Office. She began her career as a field matron at the Hopi Agency in 1901 at the age of twenty. Viets followed her time on the Hopi Mesas with stints as a matron at the East Farm Sanatorium at the Phoenix Indian School, the Choctaw and Chickasaw Sanatorium in Tahahina, Oklahoma, and the Carson Indian School in Reno, Nevada.³⁷

In late December of 1922, within a few weeks of arriving at her new post, the new outing matron travelled south of the city to the industrial suburb of Torrance, California. Viets had heard of Native men working there at Llewellyn Iron Works, and so she went to investigate. A short time later, Viets reported her findings to Leo Crane, the Superintendent of the Colorado River Indian Reservation. She provided Crane with the name and contact information of one of the foremen at the plant, noting that the boss “would gladly give you any information you wished” concerning the Mojaves at Llewellyn Iron Works.³⁸ Native people had been working at Llewellyn Iron Works since the beginning of the twentieth century, when it was located at Spring Street in downtown Los Angeles. Romaldo LaChusa, a Cahuilla Indian and the first graduate of Sherman Institute, worked for Llewellyn for much of the early twentieth century, until at least 1919.³⁹ Many Native men—Sherman graduates and otherwise—had followed suit in the

coming years. In promptly visiting the Iron Works in Torrance, then, Viets monitored an important hub for indigenous Angelenos. Matilda Ewing had struggled to keep track of domestic workers. Now, Viets raised the profile and the demands of the position.

Viets attended more thoroughly to the tasks that had already been a part of the job during Matilda Ewing's tenure. She coordinated home visits for students during important events on the reservation.⁴⁰ She also worked hand-in-hand with reservation agents to make sure that the young women had appropriate clothing for the winter season, and to provide agents with more precise information regarding the number of young women for whom she could find work as the summer outing season approached.⁴¹

While Grace Viets took quickly to the difficult work she faced as an outing matron, she lasted only a short while in Los Angeles. After two long stints in sanatoriums run by the Office of Indian Affairs, Viets struggled with chronic tuberculosis. Worn down by around-the-clock work, Viets's health took a drastic turn for the worse in January of 1923, just three months after taking her new position. She died in March.⁴² In less than a year, however, Viets developed intimate knowledge of Native workers in Los Angeles. She used her knowledge of Indian bureaucracy to open stronger lines of communication between the outing office and the reservation and school superintendents who used its services.



Figure 4.2. Los Angeles Outing Matron Grace Viets, n.d. Viets took over the Los Angeles Outing Center in 1922, but lasted less than a year in the position before she died of tuberculosis. Photo courtesy of the National Archives Personnel Records Center, St. Louis, MO.

Rilla DePorte replaced Grace Viets in May 1923. Of Sac and Fox descent, DePorte was born Rilla Meek in Shawnee, Oklahoma, in 1892. An A student, she graduated from Haskell Institute in Lawrence, Kansas, in 1912. After a brief stint working as a clerk for the American Sugar Beet Company in Rocky Ford, Colorado,

DePorte entered the Indian service as a music teacher at Haskell in 1913. DePorte made stops at the Seger Agency and the Shawnee Agency, both in Oklahoma, and she married Joseph DePorte in 1919. The newlywed couple took jobs at Sherman Institute in 1920—Joseph as a disciplinarian, and later printer, and Rilla as a teacher.⁴³ When Rilla received her new post in Los Angeles, Joseph quit his job at Sherman Institute and opened a small print shop in the city. The move went smoothly for the pair, who had already developed extensive connections with indigenous people in Los Angeles through involvement with the American Indian Progressive Association, a group that sought to educate non-Indians about the plight of indigenous peoples and push for citizenship and equality among Native peoples.⁴⁴ Shortly after the DePortes arrived in Los Angeles, the Office of Indian Affairs relocated the Los Angeles outing center two miles north to 134 North Benton Way.⁴⁵

Like Ewing and Viets before her, the Indian Office assigned DePorte with the primary duty of arranging and supervising employment for young women from the Colorado River, Fort Mojave, Fort Yuma, and Mission Agencies. As part of her appointment, Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles Burke informed DePorte that Native people living in the city but not technically affiliated with any outing program “should receive your services in such ways as your judgment will dictate.”⁴⁶ This, too, mirrored the responsibilities assigned to DePorte’s predecessors.

DePorte’s tenure in Los Angeles saw the continued growth in cooperation between the outing center in Los Angeles and Sherman Institute. When Matilda Ewing arrived in Los Angeles in 1918, only a handful of women from Sherman Institute worked

as domestics in the city. By 1924, twenty-seven women came from Sherman to Los Angeles to work for at least part of the year.⁴⁷ In addition to the growing stream of students who ventured from Riverside to Los Angeles while DePorte watched over the outing center, the flow of young women from the Fort Yuma and Colorado River Reservations held steady. In 1923, just after DePorte's arrival, nineteen women came from the Fort Yuma Indian School to work for the summer. The group included women from the Pima, Tohono O'odham, Quechan, and Mojave tribes.⁴⁸

As in years past, at least a handful of women from both the Fort Yuma and Colorado River Agencies remained in the city and under DePorte's care year-round rather than returning to their respective reservations. In a sign of things to come, many of these women attended public schools in Los Angeles and worked for room, board, and a small paycheck.⁴⁹ Despite the growing number of domestic workers affiliated with the outing center, DePorte managed to develop a strong rapport with the young women under her care. Like Ewing and Viets before her, however, DePorte struggled to keep thorough documentation on when and where domestics in Los Angeles worked. Still, she earned consistent praise from inspectors and her superiors in the Office of Indian Affairs.⁵⁰

In 1926, forces beyond the control of Rilla DePorte led to her transfer from the position of outing matron to clerk in the Office of Indian Affairs' Irrigation Division in Los Angeles. Harwood Hall, the former Superintendent of Sherman Institute, retired from his post of Superintendent at Chemawa Indian School in Salem, Oregon. Hall held powerful connections after a nearly forty-year career in the upper echelons of the Indian Office. Before retiring, he secured the position of Outing Matron for his wife, Frances,

who had worked on and off as a matron at the schools where he held posts, including the Phoenix Indian School, Sherman Institute, and Chemawa Indian School, among others.⁵¹ Rilla and Joseph DePorte had allies of their own, and the pair orchestrated a slew of letters to political representatives in Washington, D.C., calling it a “grave injustice” to replace a Native employee in favor of a bureaucrat’s wife. Their efforts bore no fruit, however, and DePorte served the remainder of her career in the Indian Office as an embittered clerk within the Irrigation Division.⁵²



Figure 4.3. Los Angeles Outing Matron Rilla DePorte. DePorte (Sac and Fox) became the first Native employee to assume control of the outing center in Los Angeles when she replaced the deceased Grace Viets in 1923. She remained there until 1926, when she lost her position so that the wife of a retiring Superintendent could fill it. Photo courtesy of the National Personnel Records Center, St. Louis, MO.

Frances Hall replaced Matilda Ewing at the helm of the Los Angeles Outing Center in April of 1926. As Hall took over the Outing Center, she oversaw its move to another modest bungalow, this time at 155 South Normandie Avenue, one mile west of the older location on Benton Way.⁵³ Upon arrival, she sent a warning shot to the superintendents of the Colorado River Indian School and the Fort Yuma Indian School. The level of organization with which Gensler and DePorte had operated in years past would no longer be acceptable. Hall requested that Gensler forward her a small packet of biographical information on each domestic worker before he sent them to the outing center in Los Angeles: “A little history of each girl, stating whether or not she has been here before... and what wages she received, with whom she worked, and the address of each patron.”⁵⁴ Hall also requested the “qualifications of each girl,” and an estimation of how much each prospective domestic worker should earn during her summer of work. Hall planned to become individually acquainted with each outing employee. Until then, however, she would have to make placements based on the pay recommendations of “some qualified person.”⁵⁵ Hall closed with a shot across the bow of her predecessor. “I understand last year there was a great amount of confusion on account of so many girls arriving here at one time with no previous arrangements for definite places,” she wrote. “I wish to avoid a repetition of this confusion.”⁵⁶

Decades of experience in the Indian service gave Frances Hall the confidence and experience to articulate a definite vision for the Los Angeles outing center before her work even began in earnest. In Los Angeles, it quickly became apparent that Frances Hall’s work ethic matched her wellspring of experience. From 7 a.m. until 11 p.m. each

day, Hall took on a superhuman to-do list. While her hours remained insufferably long all year round, tasks varied by season. In April and May, Hall worked frantically to arrange for the employment of each young woman who would arrive after school let out for the summer. She screened applications for Native domestic workers, inviting only the most promising prospective employers to her home to be interviewed between the hours of 8 a.m. and noon. In the afternoons, Hall ventured into Los Angeles to inspect the homes of prospective patrons. Each year, she inspected as many as fifty houses in preparation for the arrival of domestic workers from Sherman Institute and reservations throughout the southwest. With no car provided by the Office of Indian Affairs, Hall carefully timed each journey to catch rail cars and buses. After days spent crisscrossing Los Angeles, she retired to hours of phone calls and paperwork at her bungalow on Normandie Avenue.⁵⁷

The most intense work came with the close of the academic year in June. For the first three days of the month, Hall ushered hundreds of Native domestic workers into the city. They came in groups of as many as seventy. Hall collected the newcomers at the train station, brought them back to her outing cottage, and then called on employers to come to the house and pick up their workers. “Seventy phone calls,” bemoaned Hall, “require a great many hours of work.”⁵⁸ In 1928 alone, Hall found places for 207 domestic workers.⁵⁹ After brief stays at Hall’s home on Normandie Avenue, indigenous domestics worked for employers in homes that covered a 25-mile radius. While a few still worked in the West Adams district, which encompassed Hall’s home, most lived and worked in the more affluent areas west of downtown Los Angeles, including Beverly Hills, Hollywood, Glendale, Santa Monica, and Ocean Park. In what likely qualified as

an understatement, Hall described her job as “a tremendous responsibility that requires a great deal of physical and mental labor.”⁶⁰

Three days of making fifty or more phone calls and shepherding carloads of young women from the train station to her home on Normandie Avenue must have left Hall feeling frazzled and exhausted. But welcoming hundreds of young women into the city was only the beginning. After the initial work of placing young women with employers, Hall worked almost around the clock to smooth out conflicts that stemmed from high expectations among employers and cultural adjustments required of domestic workers. “After initial placement,” reported Hall, “I have a great deal of adjustment and many misunderstandings to settle between patron and girl.”⁶¹ During the summer months, the more than 300 domestic workers under Hall’s supervision often kept her on call day and night. When workers fell ill, they came to Hall’s home to rest and receive care until they became well enough to work again. Concerned over the spread of disease into their households, employers often forced their maids to stay with Hall until their health could be verified. Other young women roomed with Hall as they transitioned between jobs in the city and boarding school or reservation. “Serving meals and caring for those people in my home adds greatly to my duties,” reported Hall to the Office of Indian Affairs. During June 1928, for example, Hall had overnight guests for twenty-five out of thirty nights.⁶²

Continuing a tradition started by Matilda Ewing, Hall opened up the outing cottage for domestic workers to socialize with each other each Thursday. She reached into her own pockets to pay for food and party favors. During the peak summer season of outing, attendance averaged between sixty-five and seventy.⁶³ Hall also coordinated with

the Y.W.C.A. to arrange weekly field trips for domestic workers under her watch. Destinations included Catalina Island, Griffith Park, and an alligator farm, among others.⁶⁴ After the majority of domestic workers returned to their boarding schools or reservations in mid-September, Hall used the outing cottage to host social events for those women who worked in the city but did not attend public schools. Each Thursday during the winter months of 1928, four groups of twenty-five women cycled through the house on Normandie Avenue.⁶⁵ Finally, Hall invested additional hours of labor in order to throw lavish holiday parties for Christmas, New Years, and Easter. The gatherings were no small affairs, as Hall had to call workers to extend invites and purchase refreshments, party favors, and prizes for games. Hall informed her superiors that she performed “all the personal labor necessary and incidental to a party... completely alone.”⁶⁶

Historians Victoria Haskins and Margaret Jacobs have noted that outing matrons in Tucson, Arizona, and Berkeley, California, used social gatherings at their outing cottages as attempts to control and constrain the sexuality of Native domestic workers. If young women came to supervised outing centers on their nights off, the reasoning went, then they might not encounter the dangers and vices that supposedly came with spending time with other Indians in the city.⁶⁷ Hall held no such illusions about the function of her gatherings. After all, her outing center was far from the only source of entertainment for Native people in Los Angeles. Hall herself noted that a pair of organizations run by “Progressive” Native women—the Wigwam Club and the Progressive Club—regularly gave social affairs, picnics, and dances “where older Indian boys and girls have a chance

to meet.” Hall noted that the dances put on by the Progressive Club often featured all-Native jazz orchestras, and that they were “quite largely attended by the young men and women who have recently left school.”⁶⁸ While regulations put in place by the Office of Indian Affairs attempted to prevent outing workers from attending these events, a total lack of supervision meant they were free to go if they pleased.⁶⁹

None of this seemed to bother Frances Hall all that much. She noted approvingly that many Native people met, fell in love, and got married through the social events put on by the Wigwam Club and the Progressive club, and that those who made homes in the city would be less likely to return to what she felt were the degrading influences of the reservation. Hall wrote confidently that marriage and urban relocation among outing students “solves the ‘Indian Problem’ so far as these couples are concerned.”⁷⁰ Even if she could not supervise the love lives of her charges as matrons in Tucson attempted to do, Hall believed that romances forged in Los Angeles would prove more beneficial to domestic workers than relationships that might bring them back to the supposedly degrading environments of their home reservations.



Figure 4.4. Los Angeles Outing Matron Frances Hall, n.d. Hall worked tirelessly from her outing cottage on West Normandie Boulevard. Photo courtesy of the National Archives Personnel Records Center, St. Louis, MO.

The young women who arrived from reservations and boarding schools to work during the summer comprised only a part of Hall's work as outing matron for Los Angeles. In 1928, for example, the 207 young women arrived in June to work for the summer came in addition to 119 Native women who lived and worked in Los Angeles

full time.⁷¹ Of those who lived and worked in the city all year, fifty chose to enroll in Los Angeles public schools, mostly in the junior high grades. Those numbers held relatively steady into the early 1930s. One hundred and fifty women found employment via the outing center in 1931. Of these, 57 lived in Los Angeles full time and attended public schools there. Hall assisted another one hundred women who held no formal affiliation with the outing center, bringing the number of women with whom Hall worked in 1931 to well over 300.⁷²

Table 4.1. Domestic Workers Attending School in Los Angeles

	Women in Public Schools	No. Public Schools	Women in Post Secondary Schools
1927-1928	77	19	23
1928-1929	100	25	
1929-1930	57	24	13
1930-1931	51		

Sources: For 1927-28 and 1928-29, see John H. Holst to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles Burke, November 12, 1928, Box 1, Coded Correspondence Records of Supervisor Holst, 1928-1929, Folder: Outing Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB; For the 1929-30 school year, see Frances Hall to Carl Moore, September 30, 1929, Box 3, Administrative Subject Records, 1929-1932, Folder: Outing—Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB. For the 1930-31 school year, see Carl Moore to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles Rhoads, January 26, 1931, Box 3, Administrative Subject Records, 1929-1932, Folder: Outing—Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB.

Under Hall’s watch, then, attending public schools became an important component of the outing system in Los Angeles. This had not always been the case. Quechan and Mojave women who ventured into the city between 1909 and the mid-1920s often worked full time, but only rarely did they attend school in the city. Now, Hall presided over a significant number of women who attended public schools in Los

Angeles and performed domestic labor for room, board, and a small wage. Between the 1927-28 and 1930-31 school years, anywhere between 51 and 100 young women lived in Los Angeles full time and attended public school (See Table 4.1).

The availability of public schools played a significant part in the process by which the Frances Hall chose households for Native women working under her supervision. Hall personally inspected prospective schools for these women, consulting with teachers and administrative staff regarding appropriate grade placements.⁷³ Once Hall deemed a school satisfactory, she placed at least two women there in hopes that they might support one another until they made other friends. After the young women settled into routines of work and daily schooling, Hall attempted to keep them connected with one another by hosting social events for them once a week at her outing cottage.⁷⁴

Hall's predecessor, Rilla DePorte, had placed just a few year-round domestic workers into public schools. Hall, however, displayed an unabashed enthusiasm for what she saw as the transformative powers of public schooling for young Native people. In September 1929, Hall informed Supervisor of Indian Education Carl Moore that she had over fifty young women working full time and attending public schools in the city. "I wish," she wrote, "I had twice that many." Outing program architect Richard Henry Pratt believed that the environments in which Native people lived and worked would transform their character. Now, half a century later, Hall applied Pratt's environmentalist ideals to the classroom. Time spent in public schools, extolled Hall, "changes the girl and places her where she has a much broader vision and an entirely different outlook. She learns from the close contact with other students." Hall finished her pitch for public schools

with a flourish that would have surely made Richard Henry Pratt blush: “I have marveled at the fast development of self confidence in our Indian girls, and their ability to fit into the environment when attending public schools.”⁷⁵ It was this enthusiasm that led Hall to dramatically expand cooperation between the Los Angeles outing center and public schools in the city.

Hall’s preference for placing Native students into public schools rather than boarding schools fit neatly into a broader trend within Indian affairs. Boarding schools, especially those that operated beyond reservations, had come under increasing scrutiny since the turn of the twentieth century. Reform-minded legislators and activists lampooned the schools as expensive relics that featured antiquated curricula. For many, including education expert Will Carson Ryan, public schools would provide the answer to the problems presented by boarding schools. Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles Rhoads appointed Ryan as Director of Education for the Office of Indian Affairs in 1930, and Ryan quickly moved to streamline relationships between states and the federal government in order to ease the process of sending Indians to public schools. While the federal government had paid schools for taking on Indian students since 1891, it did so on a district-by-district basis. Ryan quickly began laying the groundwork to negotiate public school contracts for Indian pupils on a state-to-federal government basis. His efforts bore fruit in the form of the Johnson-O’Malley Act of 1934.⁷⁶

The State of California began efforts to enroll more Native students in public schools as early as 1929, and in 1934, it became one of the first states to sign on under the terms of Johnson-O’Malley Act.⁷⁷ The new federal legislation focused on providing

aid to public school districts that encompassed non-taxable reservation lands from which they could not obtain funding. As of 1929, public schools in Los Angeles received no assistance from the federal government for enrolling American Indian students. Still, Los Angeles schools did not charge tuition from the Native women in the outing system, as some schools elsewhere in California did for Native students.⁷⁸ Hall turned this to her advantage, as she bragged to her superiors at the Office of Indian Affairs that enrolling students under the supervision of the Los Angeles outing center in public schools for the year 1927-1928 had saved the federal government an estimated \$7,500—far more than the annual operating budget for the outing center during the late 1920s.⁷⁹

By championing public schooling for Native domestic workers in Los Angeles, Hall positioned herself wisely within the changing currents of Indian policy. Writing to her superiors in the Office of Indian Affairs, she trumpeted the successes of the young women who had been chosen with “proper discrimination” for full-time outing and placed in the proper grade. Despite the relatively advanced age of many of the young women on outing, the majority entered junior high in Los Angeles. Once properly placed, Hall reported that the young women excelled. “The Indian girls,” she proclaimed, “are popular with students and teachers. They are well behaved and always do their best.”⁸⁰ Supervisor of Indian Education Carl Moore bought wholesale into Hall’s efforts at placing young women into public schools in Los Angeles. “The opportunity to earn their own way through school,” proclaimed Moore, “develops a spirit of self-reliance that promotes success, while the effect of the boarding school system is to create a spirit of dependence.”⁸¹

Alluding to one of the primary barriers to placing Native American students into public schools near reservation communities, Hall proclaimed often that there “seems to be no race prejudice at all” toward Native students in the classrooms of Los Angeles.⁸² As historian Margaret Connell-Szasz has noted, attitudes towards Native students in public schools varied by location. For example, the state of Nevada refused to facilitate or fund the movement of Native students into public school classrooms, while young people from the Flathead Reservation in Montana attended public schools with little difficulty from the early twentieth century onward. More often than not, however, American Indian students faced stifling racism in white-dominated public schools, with many teachers afraid to swim against the currents of the racial mores of the communities in which they lived and worked.⁸³ As she sold administrators from the Office of Indian Affairs on the merits of year-round outing and public school in Los Angeles, Hall repeatedly emphasized the lack of racism faced by Native students in city public schools.

While outing records reveal no signs of overt racism faced by Native students attending schools in Los Angeles, race played an important role as Frances Hall placed the young women into schools. By the early 1930s, Hall had moved the bulk of her students away from the West Adams district and outward, toward the whiter, more affluent, western parts of Los Angeles. As she sold the merits of the Los Angeles outing center to her superiors in the Office of Indian Affairs, Hall emphasized that she sent the young women under her supervision in the “best residence sections of the city and surrounding towns”: Beverly Hills, Hollywood, Glendale, and Culver City, among other locations.⁸⁴ After visiting the outing center in February of 1931, Supervisor of Indian

Education Samuel H. Thompson lauded Hall's astute placement of the young women away from the city's downtown and within "what might be termed the professional aristocratic section of Los Angeles."⁸⁵ Young women in the outing system may have worked at low-paying jobs. In the eyes of Frances Hall, though, it was much better if they did so within uplifting, even "aristocratic" surroundings. In Los Angeles, Native domestic workers could seemingly have the best of all worlds: schools that proved superior to those operated by the Office of Indian Affairs, and the benefit of close contact with the children of white, Protestant families.

The politics of the Indian service may have led Frances Hall to tout the benefits of placing Native domestic workers in public schools. High participation rates among domestic workers in the outing system suggest that Native women also saw benefits to living, working, and attending school in Los Angeles the whole year round. Between 1927 and 1931, the number of women attending school in the city hovered between 50 and 100 (see Table 4.1). Letters written by domestics who lived and worked in the city year-round suggest that at least some women saw serious benefits in attending public schools.

As early as 1924, when Rilla DePorte supervised just a handful of women who worked full time and attended school in the city, Native domestic workers requested to attend public schools. Irene Weber, a Quechan woman living and working in Hollywood, couched her request in the language of logistics. "Just want to know if I can stay here and take public school here," asked Weber, "so that I am not going back to Yuma just to come back in the summer."⁸⁶ Weber was far from the only domestic worker to ask about

living, working, and going to public school in the city full time. As the summer of 1924 came to a close, seven of Weber's fellow domestic workers wrote to ask Odle if they could remain in the city rather than return to Fort Yuma Indian School or Sherman Institute.⁸⁷ In May of 1926, Mojave Edith Woods wrote to Sherman Institute Superintendent Frank Conser in hopes of securing another year of working as a domestic and attending public school in the Los Angeles suburb of Glendale, where she had spent the past year under the supervision of Frances Hall. Woods highlighted the benefits of attending public school in Glendale. "I am doing very well in my school work here, and I am very much interested in all of my subjects that I take," wrote Woods. "My shorthand seems to be getting very easy for me, and so is my typing." To highlight the quality of her education in the city, Woods astutely noted the professional presentation of her letter to Hall. Where most students scratched out their letters in longhand, Woods "[typed] business forms in my letters just as I'm doing this one. It's not so very hard but it takes practice."⁸⁸

Young women who attended public schools formed only a small fraction of outing workers who lived and worked year-round as domestics in Los Angeles. Throughout Hall's time as outing matron in Los Angeles, women of all ages from reservations throughout the southwestern United States often journeyed independently to the city. Some found work through their own networks of relatives and family members, as Quechan domestics often managed to do during the first two decades of the twentieth century. Others, however, sought employment via Frances Hall and the Office of Indian Affairs. Hall preferred finding work for young women from Sherman Institute and other

federal Indian schools. Yet, Hall also reported that she dealt with “a large number of adult girls and women... who will drift in here from Arizona and elsewhere.”⁸⁹ Hall helped even those with no prior arrangements. “If they request placement,” she wrote to Sherman Superintendent Donald Biery, “I am compelled to take care of them.”⁹⁰ In 1928 and 1931, Hall found places of work for 109 and 100 women who came to Los Angeles without any formal affiliation to a reservation or school superintendent.⁹¹ “Any Indian girl or woman who comes into the city alone... many times it is necessary for me to take them to my home and get in touch with their friends or people, or provide work for them. This,” reported Hall, “is a big step toward protection for these girls and women coming into the city alone.”⁹² Hall did more than find work for these women. By 1928, she took an estimated average of forty to fifty “advisory calls” each month, in which she assisted Native people with “domestic or financial troubles.”⁹³ Finally, many indigenous Angelenos called on Frances Hall for help in navigating the murky waters of the municipal and state legal systems. Hall helped an estimated 40 to 50 Native people with legal troubles each year.⁹⁴

During the summer months, after all of the young women who came from reservations and boarding schools in order to find domestic work had been placed into jobs, Hall dealt with a flood of bookkeeping and clerical work. Per the policy of the Office of Indian Affairs, young women on outing received only one-third of their wages. The remainder came to Hall, who forwarded the wages to the appropriate school or reservation agent in order to be deposited in individual savings accounts. In the summer months of 1928, Hall received and forwarded over \$2,000 in wages each month. To deal

with the massive amount of paper work that came along with the task, Hall used what she called a “cross-index system of cards,” with separate sets of cards kept for employers and domestic workers. “It is a very difficult matter to assign the girls, give needed information to the patrons, and keep data in my office at the same time,” said Hall. “But it must be done.”⁹⁵

As the years passed and Frances Hall settled into her duties at the house on Normandie Avenue, she became increasingly frustrated with lack of support for her herculean set of daily tasks. Placing and supervising hundreds of young women throughout the vast urban swath of Los Angeles and working on behalf of Native people already in the city took its toll. To make matters worse, her husband, Harwood Hall, died suddenly of a stroke.⁹⁶ By the summer of 1928, Hall had reached a breaking point. She needed more money and more support from the Office of Indian Affairs. In October, she penned a bitter plea to John H. Holst, the new supervisor of Indian schools. Hall bemoaned that it would be “impossible... to convey on paper anything like the *scope* of my work.” But, she tried. “My work is increasing all the time,” she wrote. “When I consider the responsibility I carry all alone, and the long hours I work, I wonder how I have held up physically as well as I have.”⁹⁷

Eventually, Hall transitioned from complaints to forceful requests. As outing matron, Hall made \$100 each month, \$15 of which went toward rent for her outing cottage. This “very meager salary,” she informed Holst, would no longer do.⁹⁸ She needed at least one additional employee to help with clerical work. Phone calls alone, informed Hall, were enough to take up an eight-hour day for a single employee.⁹⁹ While

the Office of Indian Affairs had given Hall a small amount of money to hire an assistant earlier in the year, the money had come too late to help ease the rush of the peak outing season in late June. Moreover, it only covered an employee for six hours each week—barely enough to make a dent in the crushing weekly grind of her work routine.¹⁰⁰ Hall closed with a demand for assistance with hosting outing workers in her cottage for weekly social gatherings. “I have borne all this expense out of my personal funds for two years,” she wrote, “and it has counted up considerable out of my small salary.” Hall considered the gatherings to be of great importance in keeping outing workers from feeling isolated and lonely, but she needed financial assistance to keep hosting them.¹⁰¹

In the coming weeks, Hall grew bolder in her requests. In a letter to Supervisor Holst, Hall compared her job to her colleagues who performed similar tasks as social workers for the city of Los Angeles. Social workers for the city of Los Angeles worked forty-hour weeks and made between \$200 and \$300 per month, in addition to having their living expenses covered. Hall, on the other hand, worked six twelve-hour days each week, made \$100 per month, and paid \$15 per month for housing at the outing cottage.¹⁰² Hall finished with a plea. The Office of Indian Affairs had employed her for over twenty years, many of those spent alongside her husband, Harwood Hall, who served as superintendent of several boarding schools, as well as a supervisor of Indian schools. Deep experience in Indian work and an incredibly demanding position merited a pay increase and a change of title from “Field Matron” to “Indian Welfare Worker and Placement Advisor.”¹⁰³

Hall's campaign for increased support of the outing center bore at least some fruit. Her pleas swayed Supervisor Holst, who wrote at least twice to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to request the creation of a full-time clerk position at the Los Angeles outing center.¹⁰⁴ While Hall did not receive a pay increase or an additional permanent employee, she did eventually get a larger discretionary fund— \$1,200 per year—for hiring additional help. She used the money to hire Beatrice Colton, a Native woman whom she had hired for six hours per week in 1928, to work at the outing center on a full-time basis.¹⁰⁵ Still, it was not enough. Hall continued her campaign for increased support into 1929. In June, she wrote again to Holst. With so many women coming and going, it was impossible to keep the outing cottage clean with only Hall and Mrs. Colton at the center. Hall insisted that it was “imperative” that she receive an extra \$40 per month to hire a housekeeper.¹⁰⁶ The money never came.

In May of 1929, Supervisor Holst instructed Hall to look for a new, larger outing cottage. Hall resisted the move to a larger house, as she feared that women on outing would seek to stay at the outing center on a permanent basis, rather than cycle through as they found places in the city or returned to their home reservations or boarding schools.¹⁰⁷ Just as significantly, a larger house would be more difficult to clean, and she would have to lobby the Office of Indian Affairs for an extra \$900 to furnish extra bedrooms and a larger living room. Despite her reservations, Hall quickly settled on a large, craftsman-style home at 101 South Normandie Avenue, just down the block from the location occupied by the outing center since Hall had come to Los Angeles in 1926. A full two months before she moved in, Hall began pestering the Indian office for extra

funds to buy furniture.¹⁰⁸ It was an omen of things to come: officials with the Office of Indian Affairs wanted to expand the Los Angeles outing center and its operations and extend the “uplifting” benefits of household labor to more Native women. They did not, however, want to spend the additional money necessary to move these women to and from their jobs, and to keep them safe once they started working.

In some respects, challenges that met Frances Hall mirrored struggles faced by women working throughout the vast bureaucracy operated by the Office of Indian Affairs. As historian Patricia A. Carter has written, gender inequality pervaded the Office of Indian Affairs during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. “Men,” Carter noted, “moved up the ranks faster and higher than women.” As Hall attempted to secure a pay raise and furniture for her cottage, she added two skirmishes to a bureaucratic battlefield filled with women from across the Office of Indian Affairs who sought pay and recognition that more closely matched the benefits provided to their male counterparts.¹⁰⁹

As with any job, challenges faced by women working for the Office of Indian Affairs depended upon the contexts in which they worked. Women working at remote day schools faced isolation among Native people, and had to learn to operate under the cultural mores and traditions of the communities in which they labored.¹¹⁰ Others faced greater peril from male co-workers bent on Victorian notions of female submission, sexual harassment, or worse.¹¹¹ Still others fell into rivalries and spats that stemmed from the politics of everyday life within the Office of Indian Affairs.¹¹²

While Hall's work brought her to the brink of exhaustion each day, her challenges differed from those faced by most women working for the Office of Indian Affairs. Most significantly, the bureaucratic isolation of Hall's position saved her from many of the aforementioned occupational hazards. Hall had no bosses to deal with on a daily basis. Aside from the occasional help of an assistant or with social workers from the Y.W.C.A., she had no co-workers at all. In Los Angeles, then, Frances Hall had no superiors bent on sexual harassment, no subordinates who jealously sought her position. Just as importantly, Hall did what she pleased with the enormous lists of rules and regulations that filtered down from the Indian office.¹¹³ Where most employees ran the risk of being reported whenever they failed to follow the letter of the law laid forth by the Office of Indian Affairs, Hall operated in a bureaucratic vacuum. The Indian office only knew of what Hall wrote to them, or news from the occasional inspection by a supervisor. Hall was, in many senses, her own boss—a rare level of autonomy within a bureaucracy run by men.

Hall's location also set her apart from most of her co-workers in the Indian Service. Many employees of the Office of Indian Affairs complained of isolation among Native people. Hall, of course, lived in one of the most cosmopolitan and diverse cities in the western United States—women working under her watch were likely the only Native people she saw on most days. Hall experienced a different brand of isolation. Twelve-hour days left her little time for her family, or to enjoy any of the urban amenities that employees of the Indian service who worked in remote locations so often missed.

A comparison of Hall's duties with those of Tucson Outing Matron Jeannette Woodruff illustrates the uniqueness of her position. Woodruff worked in a smaller town, and she had the benefit of working almost exclusively with Tohono O'odham people, many of whom resided within a distinct area just south of the city. Woodruff dealt primarily with O'odham people, and she found herself among familiar faces each day. In Tucson, the life of Jeanette Woodruff became intertwined with a community of Tohono O'odham people, even if only on its margins. The same could not be said for Hall, who chased hundreds of young women from a plethora of tribal groups across a vast swath of metropolis each summer.¹¹⁴

Four hundred miles to the north of Los Angeles, Bonnie Royce ran the Berkeley outing center under conditions that more closely matched those faced by Frances Hall. Like Hall, Royce worked with young women from a wide array of tribal groups.¹¹⁵ Like Hall, Royce worked in a large, metropolitan area—larger than Los Angeles, in fact, as the population of the Bay Area soared above one million people during the 1920s. And, Like Hall, Royce struggled mightily to adequately supervise and protect the hundreds of domestic laborers under her care. Even more than Hall, Royce worked with outdated facilities—she had no dining room and no room to host visitors, forcing her to hold social events across town at the Y.W.C.A. in Oakland.¹¹⁶ Supervisor of Indian Schools Carl Moore visited Royce in 1930, and he expressed alarm over the lack of support given to the Berkeley Outing Center. Moore reported to a colleague that Royce was “very much overworked” and that “the extent of her territory is so great that no one person can begin to do justice to the work planned for the outing system.”¹¹⁷ In 1929, just as Frances Hall

initiated her push for an additional employee at the Los Angeles outing center, Bonnie Royce did the same in Berkeley. Like Hall, Royce only received a discretionary fund to hire temporary help, and like Hall, she used that money to hire a full-time assistant in 1929.¹¹⁸

Even if Frances Hall and Bonnie Royce faced similar conditions, their professional lives differed at least somewhat. In Los Angeles, Hall supervised over three hundred domestic workers in many years during the late 1920s and early 1930s. Royce, on the other hand, had only 130 workers under her watch in 1929, including summer-only and full-time workers.¹¹⁹ Still, Frances Hall and Bonnie Royce lived two variations within a larger, bleak theme. In Los Angeles and the San Francisco Bay Area, the Office of Indian Affairs expected one person to supervise hundreds of women working in households spread across vast cities. No matter the location, this was not a blueprint that promoted health and success for matron or maid.

A steady stream of requests for more support from even a seasoned veteran of the Office of Indian Affairs such as Frances Hall did little to alter the fundamental shortcomings of outing in Los Angeles. Hall may have won an additional \$1,200 per year to hire her assistant, Mrs. Colton. But one assistant did little to solve the central problem of the Los Angeles outing center. One, two, or even three employees provided little more than cursory supervision of young women working on outing. Hall worked tirelessly—frantically, even—to arrange for placements, facilitate transportation to and from schools and reservations, and supervise the young women while they worked. Yet, with over three hundred workers spread across a vast and growing metropolis, Hall had no way to

keep the women safe, to see that their living situations promoted the program's stated goals of assimilation and "uplift." At school and at work, Native women in the outing system were islands unto themselves. Whatever came their way, good or bad, the domestic workers could expect little help or encouragement from Frances Hall. The Office of Indian Affairs may have built a fledgling outing center, but little had changed from the days when reservation agents sent young women into the city alone.

This is not to say that Native women who secured domestic employment in Los Angeles via the outing system found themselves in a helpless state. Surely, this was anything but the case. While the records of the Los Angeles outing center reveal little about the women who engaged the outing system during the late 1920s and early 1930s, the continued participation of these women speaks for itself in many ways. Women came from across the southwestern United States to find work and earn money in the city. Many jumped at the opportunity to attend public schools in Los Angeles, where they found better instruction and less discrimination than in schools close to their home reservations.

Still, in Los Angeles, Frances Hall's steadfast, ethnocentric belief in the "uplifting" powers of the city, its household employment opportunities, and its schools ran head-first into the harsh realities of the underfunded and unresponsive bureaucracy of the Office of Indian Affairs. Historian Adrea Lawrence has aptly noted that the contexts in which colonial projects take place can profoundly affect their outcomes.¹²⁰ This insight proves especially valuable for the outing system as it played out in Los Angeles during the late 1920s and early 1930s. Frances Hall had no guns, and she took no prisoners. She

had no desire to punish or harm the Native women with whom she worked. On the contrary, Hall believed whole-heartedly that time spent in Los Angeles would help her wards by preparing them for lives spent living and working among the urban, white, Protestant majority. Still, the results of Hall's tenure at the Los Angeles outing center proved tragic. Hall worked frantically, day and night, and yet she could provide little guidance, little protection to the women whom she placed to work in white households. By 1930, she suffered a nervous breakdown from exhaustion and overwork.¹²¹

Meanwhile, the women under her care received little attention. With virtually no staff and little money, Hall could do little to see her vision of assimilation and uplift carried to fruition for the hundreds of women spread across the west side of Los Angeles. In the end, then, a system designed to improve young, Native women and bring them into the body politic only placed them at risk. Frances Hall lost her health and sanity as she tried desperately to operate a massive employment agency without help. Nobody won.

If things were bad for Frances Hall in 1931, they would only get worse. As Los Angeles and the rest of the United States sank into economic depression, ideas within the Office of Indian Affairs about the place of Native people in the United States changed dramatically. Since the turn of the twentieth century, Native peoples across the Southwest had learned to use federal bureaucracies to benefit themselves and their communities. Now, amid economic crisis and educational reform, they would need to do so all over again.

Endnotes

1. On the start of Hall's tenure as outing matron in Los Angeles, see Hall to Colorado River Agency Superintendent Clyde Gensler, April 8, 1926, Box 180, Central Classified Correspondence, 1924-1951, Folder: Field Matron, Los Angeles, CA, CRA, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
2. Copy of report sent to Civil Service Board, n.d., Box 1, Coded Correspondence Records of Supervisor Holst, 1928-1929, Folder: Outing Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB.
3. Ibid. With her maternalistic rhetoric, Hall positioned herself as protecting and "uplifting" the young women under her watch. Since the 1990s, a host of scholars have examined how white, middle class women utilized the concepts of femininity and domesticity within efforts to subjugate and/or assimilate indigenous peoples as western nation states expanded their imperial reaches during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. For example, see Jane E. Simonsen, *Making Home Work*; Ann Laura Stoler, ed., *Haunted by Empire: Geographies of Intimacy in North American History* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006); Amy Kaplan, *The Anarchy of Empire in the Making of U.S. Culture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005); Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Context* (New York: Routledge, 1995). Variations of trends pointed out by these scholars played out at the Los Angeles outing center. Frances Hall and her fellow matrons used Euro-American norms of domesticity and femininity in order to demonstrate the superiority of white, Protestant culture over indigenous cultures. Moreover, Hall pushed young, indigenous women towards difficult, low-paying jobs. This study, however, is less concerned with how white employees of the Office of Indian Affairs positioned themselves in relation to the expanding nation state, and more concerned with the day-to-day challenges presented by the outing system and the strategies utilized by Native women to navigate outing experiences.
4. Frank Conser to Matilda Ewing, November 16, 1918, LSR, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
5. Record of Employee in Indian Service, Personnel File for Orrington Jewett, NPRC.
6. Orrington Jewett to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Cato Sells, August 12, 1918, Personnel File for Orrington Jewett, NPRC.
7. Orrington Jewett to Loson Odle, September 23, 1916, Box 11, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing System, 1913-1917, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
8. Jewett resided full time at Sherman Institute, but she received half of her annual pay from Sherman Institute, and half from the Fort Mojave Agency, with the idea that she

would care for Mojave women from Fort Mojave who lived and worked in Los Angeles under the purview of the outing system. Record of Employment, Personnel File for Orrington Jewett, NPRC; Frank Conser to Office of Indian Affairs Inspector F.S. Coleman, January 8, 1916, Box 3, Folder: 2143-1919, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NADC.

9. Frank Conser to Matilda Ewing, November 16, 1918, LSR, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

10. Jacobs, "Working on the Domestic Frontier," 173-4.

11. Haskins, *Matrons and Maids*, 58.

12. Personal Statement of Employee, Personnel File for Matilda Ewing, NPRC; Record of Employee in Indian Service, Personnel File for Matilda Ewing, NPRC.

13. Efficiency Report, Personnel File for Matilda Ewing, NPRC.

14. E.B. Merritt to Matilda Ewing, November 4, 1918, Box 12, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing—General, 1918-1920, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

15. Ibid.

16. Ibid.

17. Frank Conser to Matilda Ewing, November 16, 1918, LSR, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

18. Ibid.

19. Frank Conser to Matilda Ewing, February 18, 1919, LSR, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

20. Frank Conser to Mrs. A.L. Gore, December 20, 1918, LSR, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR; Frank Conser to Edna Ivy Nohes, February 8, 1919, LSR, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

21. Frank Conser to Matilda Ewing, June 28, 1919, LSR, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

22. Frank Conser to Matilda Ewing, December 18, 1918, LSR, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

23. Along with Sherman Institute Superintendent Frank Conser, Fort Yuma Indian School Superintendent Loson Odle and Colorado River Indian Reservation Superintendent Clyde Gensler began corresponding liberally with Ewing about the placement of their young women in Los Angeles. And, like Conser, they relied on Ewing to make placements, rather than making arrangements themselves or allowing the women to find their own places to work as they had done in prior years. See, for example, Clyde Gensler to Matilda Ewing, June 7, 1922, Box 180, Central Classified Correspondence,

1924-1951, Folder: Field Matron, Los Angeles, CA, CRA, BIA, RG 75; Matilda Ewing to Loson Odle, September 19, 1922, Box 26, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Supervisors and Inspectors, H.B. Peairs, Supervisor of Education 1925-1926, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

24. Loson Odle to Frank Conser, May 6, 1919, Box 14, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1920, Folder: Schools—Riverside, 1918-1920, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

25. Loson Odle to Frank Conser, May 13, 1920, Box 14, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1920, Folder: Schools—Riverside, 1918-1920, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

26. Frank Conser to Loson Odle, May 18, 1920, Box 14, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1920, Folder: Schools—Riverside, 1918-1920, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

27. Matilda Ewing, Annual Report of Los Angeles Outing and Field Matron, October 10, 1921, Personnel File for Matilda Ewing, NPRC.

28. Matilda Ewing to Special Disbursing Agent H.W. Palmer, June 29, 1922, Personnel File for Matilda Ewing, NPRC.

29. Ibid.; Matilda Ewing to William Thackery, July 1, 1922, Personnel File for Matilda Ewing, NPRC.

30. William Thackery to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Cato Sells, July 1, 1922, Personnel File for Matilda Ewing, NPRC.

31. Leo Crane to Matilda Ewing, September 12, 1922, Box 180, Central Classified Correspondence, 1924-1951, Folder: Field Matron, Los Angeles, CA, CRA, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

32. Matilda Ewing to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles Burke, July 3, 1922, Personnel File for Matilda Ewing, NPRC.

33. William Thackery to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles Burke, July 1, 1922, Personnel File for Matilda Ewing, NPRC.

34. Assistant Commissioner of Indian Affairs E.B. Merritt to Matilda Ewing, May 5, 1922, Personnel File for Matilda Ewing, NPRC.

35. Clyde Gensler to Matilda Ewing, June 7, 1922, Box 180, Central Classified Correspondence, 1924-1951, Folder: Field Matron, Los Angeles, CA, CRA, BIA, RG 75; Matilda Ewing to Loson Odle, September 19, 1922, Box 26, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Supervisors and Inspectors, H.B. Peairs, Supervisor of

Education 1925-1926, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR; Matilda Ewing to Loson Odle, October 23, 1922, Box 26, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing Pupils, 1920-1923, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

36. Matilda Ewing to Loson Odle, October 23, 1922, Box 26, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing Pupils, 1920-1923, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

37. Robert Newburne to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Cato Sells, June 17, 1920, Personnel File for Grace Viets, NPRC; Record of Service, Personnel File for Grace Viets, NPRC.

38. Grace Viets to Leo Crane, December 29, 1922, Box 180, Central Classified Correspondence, 1924-1951, Folder: Field Matron, Los Angeles, CA, CRA, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

39. Frank Conser to Romaldo LaChusa, May 26, 1919, LSR, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR. For more on LaChusa, see Rosenthal, *Reimagining Indian Country*, 11.

40. Grace Viets to Loson Odle, November 22, 1922, Box 26, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing Pupils, 1920-1923, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR; Grace Viets to Loson Odle, December 3, 1922, Box 26, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing Pupils, 1920-1923, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

41. Grace Viets to Loson Odle, October 29, 1922, Box 26, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing Pupils, 1920-1923, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR; Grace Viets to Loson Odle, March 3, 1923, Box 26, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing Pupils, 1920-1923, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

42. Irrigation Agent H.W. Palmer to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles Burke, March 27, 1923, Personnel File for Grace Viets, NPRC.

43. Personal History of Employee in Indian Service, Personnel File for Rilla DePorte, NPRC; Reinstatement File for Rilla DePorte, September 23, 1915, Personnel File for Rilla DePorte, NPRC.

44. On the American Indian Progressive Association, see Rosenthal, *Reimagining Indian Country*, 101. For more on the DePortes, see Richard A. Hanks, *This War is For A Whole Life: The Culture of Resistance among Southern California Indians, 1850-1966* (Banning, CA: Ushkana Press, 2012), 131. The DePortes also took active roles in a pair of related activist groups, the Mission Indian Federation and the Society of American Indians.

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45. Rilla DePorte to Loson Odle, September 3, 1924, Box 26, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing Pupils, 1923-1935, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
46. Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles Burke to Rilla DePorte, May 26, 1923, Box 26, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing Pupils, 1920-1923, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
47. Rilla DePorte to Loson Odle, October 23, 1924, Box 26, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing Pupils, 1923-1925, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
48. Girls from the Fort Yuma Indian School, 6/15/23, Box 26, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing Pupils, 1923-1925, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
49. Rilla DePorte to Fort Yuma Indian School Superintendent Byron A. Sharp, August 15, 1925, Box 26, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing Pupils, 1925-1926, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
50. See, for example, Rilla DePorte to Loson Odle, September 5, 1923, Box 26, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing Pupils, 1923-1925, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
51. Harwood Hall to Assistant Commissioner of Indian Affairs H.B. Merritt, November 27, 1925, Personnel File for Harwood Hall, NPRC; Rilla DePorte to Commissioner of Indian Affairs John Collier, January 8, 1934, Personnel File for Rilla DePorte, NPRC; Personal History of Employee in Indian Service, Personnel File for Frances Hall, NPRC; John H. Holst to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles Burke, September 12, 1928, Box 1, Coded Correspondence Records of Supervisor Holst, 1928-1929, Folder: Outing Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB.
52. Senator Samuel Shortridge to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles Burke, February 15, 1926, Personnel File for Frances Hall, NPRC; Burke to Shortridge, March 16, 1926, Personnel File for Frances Hall, NPRC; Office of Indian Affairs Irrigation Engineer A.L. Wathen to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles Burke, October 31, 1928, Personnel File for Rilla DePorte, NPRC.
53. Frances Hall to John H. Holst, October 23, 1928, Box 1, Coded Correspondence Records of Supervisor Holst, 1928-1929, Folder: Outing, Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB.
54. Frances Hall to Clyde Gensler, April 8, 1926, Box 180, Central Classified Correspondence, 1924-1951, Folder: Field Matron, Los Angeles, CA, CRA, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

55. Ibid.

56. Ibid.

57. Copy of report sent to Civil Service Board, n.d., Box 1, Coded Correspondence Records of Supervisor Holst, 1928-1929, Folder: Outing Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB.

58. Ibid.

59. Ibid.

60. Ibid.

61. Ibid.

62. Ibid.

63. Ibid; Frances Hall to John H. Holst, October 23, 1928, Box 1, Coded Correspondence Records of Supervisor Holst, 1928-1929, Folder: Outing Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB.

64. Schedule of Girls' Recreation Days While on Outing in Los Angeles During Summer of 1928, Box 1, Coded Correspondence Records of Supervisor Holst, 1928-1929, Folder: Outing Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB.

65. Frances Hall to John H. Holst, October 23, 1928, Box 1, Coded Correspondence Records of Supervisor Holst, 1928-1929, Folder: Outing Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB.

66. Ibid.

67. Haskins, *Matrons and Maids*, 54-77, 85; Jacobs, "Working the Domestic Frontier," 185.

68. Frances Hall to Carl Moore, October 22, 1929, Box 3, Administrative Subject Records, 1929-1932, Folder: Outing Center—Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB.

69. Frances Hall to Carl Moore, October 22, 1929, Box 3, Administrative Subject Records, 1929-1932, Folder: Outing Center—Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB. On Office of Indian Affairs regulations, see Rosenthal, *Reimagining Indian Country*, 106-108.

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70. Frances Hall to Carl Moore, October 22, 1929, Box 3, Administrative Subject Records, 1929-1932, Folder: Outing Center—Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB. On the Wigwam Club, see Rosenthal, *Reimagining Indian Country*, 44, 106-108.
71. Frances Hall to John H. Holst, October 23, 1928, Box 1, Coded Correspondence Records of Supervisor Holst, 1928-1929, Folder: Outing Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB.
72. Etta M. Long to Carl Moore, January 18, 1932, Box 38, Folder: Outing System, 1932-1933, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR; Samuel H. Thompson to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles Rhoads, February 3, 1931, Box 3, Administrative Subject Records, 1929-1932, Folder: Outing Center-Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB.
73. Copy of report sent to Civil Service Board, n.d., Box 1, Coded Correspondence Records of Supervisor Holst, 1928-1929, Folder: Outing Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB.
74. John H. Holst to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles Burke, November 12, 1928, Box 1, Coded Correspondence Records of Supervisor Holst, 1928-1929, Folder: Outing Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB.
75. Frances Hall to Carl Moore, September 30, 1929, Box 3, Administrative Subject Records, 1929-1932, Folder: Outing Center—Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB.
76. For a good overview of Native students in public schools, see Margaret Connell-Szasz, *Education and the American Indian: The Road to Self-Determination* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1999), 89-105.
77. Ibid.
78. Frances Hall to John H. Holst, October 10, 1928, Box 1, Coded Correspondence Records of Supervisor Holst, 1928-1929, Folder: Outing Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB.
79. John H. Holst to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles Burke, November 12, 1928, Box 1, Coded Correspondence Records of Supervisor Holst, 1928-1929, Folder: Outing Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB.
80. Frances Hall to Carl Moore, September 30, 1929, Box 3, Administrative Subject Records, 1929-1932, Folder: Outing Center—Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB. In 1931, 31 out of 57 women placed into primary school entered junior high.

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81. Carl Moore to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles Rhoads, January 26, 1931, Box 3, Administrative Subject Records, 1929-1932, Folder: Outing Center—Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB.
82. Frances Hall to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles Rhoads, May 21, 1929, Box 1, Coded Correspondence Records of Supervisor Holst, 1928-1929, Folder: Outing Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB.
83. Connell Szasz, *Education and the American Indian*, 102. For a broader look at racial and legal tensions between Americans and white people living on or adjacent to reservation lands, see Thomas Biolsi, *Deadliest Enemies: Law and the Making of Race Relations on and off the Rosebud Reservation* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2001).
84. Copy of report sent to Civil Service Board, n.d., Box 1, Coded Correspondence Records of Supervisor Holst, 1928-1929, Folder: Outing Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB.
85. Samuel H. Thompson to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles Rhoads, February 2, 1931, Box 3, Administrative Subject Records, 1929-1932, Folder: Outing—Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB.
86. I.W. to Loson Odle, August 1, 1924, Box 26, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing Pupils, 1920-1923, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
87. C.O. to Loson Odle, n.d., Box 26, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing Pupils, 1920-1923, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR; L.D. to Loson Odle, August 8, 1924, Box 26, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing Pupils, 1920-1923, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR; E.C. to Loson Odle, July 24, 1924, Box 26, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing Pupils, 1920-1923, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR; V.G. to Loson Odle, June 22, 1924, Box 26, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing Pupils, 1920-1923, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR; M.J. to Loson Odle, July 27, 1924, Box 26, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing Pupils, 1920-1923, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR; A.L. to Loson Odle, July 18, 1924, Box 26, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing Pupils, 1920-1923, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR; M.J. to Loson Odle, July 17, 1924, Box Box 26, Administrative Subject Files, 1907-1926, Folder: Outing Pupils, 1920-1923, FY, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
88. E.W. to Frank Conser, May 18, 1926, SCF E.W., Box 383, CCF, RSI, BIA, NAR.
89. Frances Hall to Sherman Institute Superintendent Donald Biery, May 17, 1934, Box 3, School Inspection Records, 1929-1934, Folder: Los Angeles Supervisor's Letters, 8-5-31 and 7-15-31, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB.

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90. Frances Hall to Donald Biery, May 15, 1933, Box 37, Folder: Miscellaneous Student Matters, 1933, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
91. Frances Hall to John H. Holst, October 23, 1928, Box 1, Coded Correspondence Records of Supervisor Holst, 1928-1929, Folder: Outing Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB.
92. Frances Hall to John H. Holst, October 23, 1928, Box 1, Coded Correspondence Records of Supervisor Holst, 1928-1929, Folder: Outing Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB.
93. John H. Holst to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles Burke, November 12, 1928, Box 1, Coded Correspondence Records of Supervisor Holst, 1928-1929, Folder: Outing Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB.
94. Ibid.
95. Frances Hall to Carl Moore, October 22, 1929, Box 3, Administrative Subject Records, 1929-1932, Folder: Outing Center—Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB.
96. Chief Clerk W.B. Acker to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles Burke, April 21, 1928, Personnel File for Harwood Hall, NPRC. Harwood Hall's death likely did not come as a surprise, as he had been in ill health for four years leading up to his death. Hall had his prostate removed in 1924. He retired shortly thereafter, and for the remainder of his life, Hall suffered from high blood pressure, dizziness, and weakness in his muscles. Dr. F.H. Thompson, Memorandum Concerning Harwood Hall, December 19, 1925, Personnel File for Harwood Hall, NPRC.
97. Frances Hall to John H. Holst, October 10, 1928, Box 1, Coded Correspondence Records of Supervisor Holst, 1928-1929, Folder: Outing Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB.
98. Ibid. Total rent for Hall's cottage came to \$100, with the Office of Indian Affairs covering \$85.
99. Ibid.
100. Ibid.
101. Ibid.

102. Frances Hall to John H. Holst, October 23, 1928, Box 1, Coded Correspondence Records of Supervisor Holst, 1928-1929, Folder: Outing Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB.

103. Frances Hall to John H. Holst, November 6, 1928, Box 1, Coded Correspondence Records of Supervisor Holst, 1928-1929, Folder: Outing Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB.

104. John H. Holst to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles Burke, November 12, 1928, Box 1, Coded Correspondence Records of Supervisor Holst, Folder: Outing Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB; John H. Holst to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles Burke, March 11, 1929, Box 1, Coded Correspondence Records of Supervisor Holst, Folder: Outing Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB.

105. Assistant Commissioner E.B. Merritt to Frances Hall, April 3, 1929, Box 1, Coded Correspondence Records of Supervisor Holst, Folder: Outing Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB. While Hall often noted that Colton was of indigenous ancestry, records do not reveal her tribal affiliation.

106. Frances Hall to John H. Holst, June 22, 1929, Box 1, Coded Correspondence Records of Supervisor Holst, 1928-1929, Folder: Outing Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB.

107. Frances Hall to Edna Graves, May 21, 1929, Box 1, Coded Correspondence Records of Supervisor Holst, 1928-1929, Folder: Outing Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB.

108. Ibid.

109. Patricia A. Carter, "Completely Discouraged: Women Teachers' Resistance in the Bureau of Indian Affairs Schools, 1900-1910," *Journal of Women's Studies* 15, no. 3 (1995): 77. It is important to note that many women employed by the Office of Indian Affairs made more money than they otherwise could have, and expressed great satisfaction with their salaries. See Cahill, *Federal Fathers and Mothers*, 69.

110. Carter, "Completely Discouraged," 74. For an outstanding case study of a woman working in remote conditions for the Office of Indian Affairs, see Adrea Lawrence's study of the day school at Santa Clara Pueblo, *Lessons from a Day School: Negotiating Colonization in Northern New Mexico, 1902-1907* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2011). See also Cahill, *Federal Fathers and Mothers*, 63-81, and Simonsen, *Making Home Work*, Kindle edition, location 1439/3619.

111. Carter, "Completely Discouraged," 76.

112. For an excellent exploration of conflicts between agency employees, see Adams, *Education for Extinction*, 70-82.

113. On the restrictive gamut of rules and regulations as faced by women employees of the Office of Indian Affairs, see Carter, "Completely Discouraged," 70.

114. Haskins, *Matrons and Maids*, 78-106.

115. Jacobs, "Working the Domestic Frontier," 167.

116. Bonnie Royce to Frederic Snyder, November 14, 1930, Box 3, Administrative Subject Records, 1929-1932, Folder: Outing Center—Berkeley, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB.

117. Carson Indian School Superintendent Frederic Snyder to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles Rhoads, May 22, 1930, Box 3, Administrative Subject Records, 1929-1932, Folder: Outing Center—Berkeley, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB.

118. *Ibid.*; Jacobs, "Working the Domestic Frontier," 174.

119. School Girls on Outing, Summer 1929, and Indian Girls and Women Employed Permanently, September 1929, Box 3, Administrative Subject Records, 1929-1932, Folder: Outing Center—Berkeley, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB.

120. Lawrence, *Lessons from a Day School*, 1-14.

121. Carl Moore to Mary Stewart, August 6, 1931, Box 3, School Inspection Records, 1929-1934, Folder: Los Angeles (Supervisor's Letters, 8-6-31 and 7-15-31), RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB.

Chapter 5

Indians “Should Not Go There”:

John Collier, The Great Depression, and the Death of an Idea in Southern California

On the morning of September 1, 1933, a moving truck rumbled down Los Angeles’s Normandie Avenue and came to a stop in front of the small cottage that had been operated by Outing Matron Frances Hall for the past seven years. Citing “drastic cuts in the employment budget,” new Commissioner of Indian Affairs John Collier had decreed a month earlier that the outing center would close. Now, with the assiduous Hall providing guidance, a pair of hired hands from the Office of Indian Affairs unfurled themselves from the cabin of the vehicle and began the burdensome work of carrying objects large and small from house to truck.¹

For the next hour, the things they carried provided brief sketches of what had what the outing center had been under the direction of Hall, and what it would be no more. Five beds—one twin and four double— provided rest to Native women from across the American Southwest as they arrived in Los Angeles. Many came to the city without having made arrangements for places to live, places to work. These women stayed at the cottage, usually for less than a week, as they searched for and found jobs in laundries, factories, white households where they worked as domestics. Others had been in Los Angeles for months and years, but needed a place to stay as they changed jobs or looked for new housing. Still others spent nights at the outing center to get through hard times of unemployment and hunger.

Twenty-four steel folding chairs and four folding tables had made places to sit for Native women who attended monthly social gatherings in Hall's parlor. Alongside the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), Hall's cottage served as a social hub for Native women working in the city. Each month, Hall had hosted two separate gatherings; one oriented toward younger women who maintained an affiliation with a federal Indian boarding school via an outing program as they worked as domestics, and another for the mostly older women who had ventured into Los Angeles to find work. A large kitchen table, a refrigerator, and a gas stove rounded out the largest of the items to move from house to truck. For eight years, these items helped to provide food when Native women came to the outing cottage, whether to live for a week or two and get on their feet, or to merely stop by for a visit. Now, Frances Hall stood at the curbside and watched as the giant steel door of the moving van slammed shut. The items would continue to serve the Indian office, as the moving crew took them sixty miles south to the hospital on the Soboba Reservation.²

Hall did not have to move far. Her new office would be less than a third of a mile away, just around the corner on Beverly Boulevard. If the distance between the outing cottage and her new office proved small, however, changes in her duties would be much more significant. For seven years, Hall had been harried to the point of physical illness as she placed and monitored Native domestics across the increasingly indigenous metropolis of Los Angeles. While Hall continued to place Native women to work as domestics in white homes, the process changed in some fundamental ways. Where Hall had hosted women in her outing cottage as they transitioned from reservation and boarding school to

city and escorted them to their new places of work, now she only located potential employers and forwarded their information to reservation agents. Much as they had before the outing center opened in 1918, Native women would now make their way to the city alone, with only directions from their reservation agent or boarding school superintendent to guide them. Where Hall had once worked to assist Native people in need of help—whether in the courtroom or the doctor’s office—she would now refer them to social service agencies in the city. The grind of deeply involved, twenty-four-hour, hands-on labor would give way to the detached, professionalized, nine-to-five tasks of the social worker. In more ways than one, then, an era came to an end as the moving truck rounded the corner onto Beverly Boulevard and rumbled out of sight.³

Less than a year after her change in duties, Frances Hall reached sixty-five years of age and took her mandatory retirement from the Office of Indian Affairs. Had she wanted to, Hall could have easily secured an exemption from the mandatory retirement policy of the Indian Office. Hall’s superiors in the Office of Indian Affairs made clear to her that they wanted her to keep working past the age of sixty-five. In the five years leading up to her retirement, however, Hall had suffered the loss of her husband and two episodes she termed as “nervous breakdowns.” While she remained dedicated to her work, seven years spent under the burden of a monumental workload and little support from the Office of Indian Affairs left her in difficult shape. Hall reported that her “health demanded that my responsibilities be lightened.”⁴ On September 1, 1934, less than a year after the Office of Indian Affairs reduced her duties and changed her title from “Outing Matron” to “Social Worker,” Frances Hall retired. After twenty-four years of service, she

would receive an annual pension of just short of one thousand dollars.⁵ Hall's office on Beverly Boulevard sat empty until thirty-four-year-old Katherine Mahn took her place in August of 1935. Like Hall in her last year, though, Mahn's mostly worked to find jobs for Native people in the city, and she did very little to monitor or assist them once they began working.⁶

After sixteen years and thousands of placements of indigenous people into jobs, the outing center was no more. Deepening economic depression played a large part in the closure of the much-used employment center. While Native people from across the American southwest continued streaming into California's Southland, they found fewer and fewer jobs available. Indigenous men faced difficulty in securing manual labor jobs that had been plentiful during the boom years of the 1920s, and Native women found fewer households with enough disposable income to hire live-in help. As the 1930s wore onward, then, Frances Hall struggled to find job opportunities for Native migrants as they arrived in Los Angeles.⁷

If a plummeting economy left fewer opportunities for indigenous people in Los Angeles, so too did changing ideas about Native people and their places in American society. John Collier, the precocious new Commissioner of Indian Affairs, saw indigenous migrants to Los Angeles as anomalies. Indians, Collier argued, belonged on reservations, where their communities could demonstrate viable alternatives to the greed and materialism fostered by industrial capitalism. In the years to come, Collier would abandon institutionalized support for Native people as they searched for housing and

work in urban areas. Instead, Collier would seek to return to the spaces in which he felt they belonged: reservations.

As the tides of federal Indian policies shifted away from efforts to assimilate Indians through living and working in urban areas, many Native people had their own ideas for the future. In the half-century between 1880 and 1930, indigenous communities had become experts in dealing with federal schemes established in hopes of controlling, improving, and erasing them. Native people had strategically approached labor programs of the Office of Indian affairs, sometimes even using outing programs at boarding schools and in cities to benefit themselves and their communities. As the federal government abandoned efforts to “uplift” Indians through living and working in the city, indigenous communities continued their efforts to make the Office of Indian Affairs more responsive to their needs. If the government would no longer facilitate the movement of indigenous people into cities, then they would turn their energies back to an area in which the Office of Indian Affairs would likely prove more supportive: education. With no jobs available in the city, a small but influential cadre of boarding school graduates presented the federal government with a new idea: send us to college. As federal policies shifted, then, indigenous communities creatively adapted their seemingly never-ending struggle to draw benefits from the colonial apparatus that paid little attention to their desires.

As the crushing veil of economic depression settled over Los Angeles during the early 1930s, Frances Hall worked frantically to keep pipelines running from reservations and boarding schools to jobs in the city. The market for domestic workers became flooded in Los Angeles, and fewer households hired maids. Still, young, Native women

from across the American Southwest continued to find their way to the city in search of work. Even with fewer domestic workers under her watch, Hall still had more responsibilities than she could handle on her own. In May of 1930, Hall received the new title of “Senior Placement Officer” and a \$400 raise that brought her annual salary to \$2,000.⁸ Still swamped with work, however, she set her sights on acquiring a permanent assistant matron and a maid to cook and clean for the outing center. Just as she had during the boom years of the 1920s, then, the outing matron kept up her never-ending flood of letters to the Office of Indian Affairs in search of additional money and employees for the perpetually overburdened outing center.⁹

Carl Moore replaced John H. Holst as Supervisor of Indian Education in 1931, and Frances Hall quickly earned his support. Within months of his appointment, Moore began lobbying on her behalf. Moore wrote to Mary Stewart, the Assistant Director of Indian Education, and asked her to direct more money into the Los Angeles outing center. “If you can possibly find funds,” he wrote, “I urge you to provide this help.”¹⁰ In addition to support from Moore, Office of Indian Affairs Inspectors Samuel H. Thompson and Dorothy Ellis encouraged the Indian Office to provide increased support of the outing center.¹¹ Much like her work in supervising the hundreds of young women scattered throughout households of West Los Angeles, Hall’s drive to capture more money to support the Los Angeles outing center never seemed to slow. Her dogged pursuit of increased support also reveals that even if the Great Depression slowed demand for domestic workers, there remained a significant demand for Native maids. If Hall had less

to do than in the boom years of the 1920s, she nonetheless remained saddled with an unrealistic workload.

Hall attempted to cope with reduced demand for domestic workers by looking to move the women under her watch into industries outside of domestic work, including laundries, restaurants, and textile factories. Her efforts met with little success. Hall blamed her difficulties in breaking women into the laundry and textile business on the Native women themselves, complaining that they lacked speed and “stick-to-a-tive-ness.” It seems more likely, however, that the women chose housework because it provided better pay, as well as room and board. In 1931, for example, the average steam laundry in Los Angeles paid \$64 per month. Meanwhile, an experienced domestic worker could earn between \$50 and \$75 per month on top of room and board. Native women who used the outing center to find work did not resist laundry or factory work out of some sort of genetic shortcoming. Rather, they did so because when they could get domestic work, it paid just as well and provided them with a place to live.¹²

Despite the difficulties presented by the depression, Native women continued finding domestic work in Los Angeles via the outing center. In the winter of 1931, Hall supervised 300 women in Los Angeles, with fifty-seven attending public schools in the city. Most earned around ten dollars a month, plus room and board.¹³ By the summer of 1931, however, the number of women working under Hall’s supervision dropped to 200. Still, Hall claimed to have found positions for all the women who had requested work. This was “a pretty good showing,” she wrote, “considering the labor depression.”¹⁴

While records kept by Frances Hall and the Office of Indian Affairs do not reveal the exact number of women placed on outing between 1932 and 1934, they nonetheless show that significant numbers of women continued to find employment under the supervision of the outing center. By September of 1933, for example, Hall informed Sherman Institute Superintendent Donald Biery that she had secured twenty-two jobs for students who wished to work year-round in Los Angeles and attend public school there. Moreover, she travelled to Riverside that spring to conduct interviews with prospective domestic workers and match them with employers. That year, more students from Sherman Institute found full-time employment in Los Angeles than ever before.¹⁵

Even if Hall placed fewer women into jobs as the depression worsened, she still had more work than she could handle on her own. In May of 1932, Hall continued her barrage of requests for an additional employee to assist her and her assistant, Beatrice Colton. This time, she wrote to C.L. Ellis, the Mission Agency Superintendent under whose jurisdiction she worked, for additional help.¹⁶ “As you know,” she wrote, “every day this past year I have had more than it was possible for me and Mrs. Colton to do, and the work has been piling up for some time, and I have not been able to get one day’s vacation.” Hall informed Ellis that she must have funds to hire an office assistant for the oncoming rush of Native women who would arrive in the city in need of placements.

Wrote Hall,

There are many homes to inspect, applicants to interview here in the placement center, contacts to be made, trains to be met, a heavy daily correspondence to be taken care of, several hundred circulars and notices to be mimeographed and mailed out. The sixty girls who are attending school in Los Angeles must be interviewed and arrangements made as to their returning home, or plans made for the summer and their continuing school next year; public schools to be contacted,

arrangements made for graduations and transfers; wages to be collected for the school girls, and two-thirds to be transmitted to the savings accounts at their various schools, and much bookkeeping in connection with this. Besides all this, daily placement work for a large number of adult women to carry on, which takes one person's time almost constantly at the telephone answering the numerous calls and arranging for interviews between adult Indian women and employers.

Hall finished her plea by notifying Ellis that she would hire an additional office assistant, whether or not the Office of Indian Affairs gave her permission to do so. "Of course," she finished, "if the Office does not give its approval, I will bear the expense myself."¹⁷ And bear the expense she did. After visits to the outing center, Supervisor of Indian Education Samuel H. Thompson and Office of Indian Affairs Inspector Dorothy Ellis concurred with Hall, and they joined her in lobbying the Indian Office for increased support for the outing center.¹⁸ Insistent upon money from the Indian Office to make her own hire, Hall turned down an offer from Sherman Institute Superintendent Donald Biery to send two of his employees to help with the oncoming rush of outing participants in May and June, noting that she would rather have help from her daughter than have to "break in" an "inexperienced person."¹⁹ Employment for Native domestic workers may have dropped off slightly during the first, worst years of the Great Depression. Records suggest that Native women from across the American Southwest still had at least some success in finding domestic work during the early 1930s—more than enough to keep Frances Hall busy.

The structure of the economy in Los Angeles helped to keep the outing center alive, even as employment opportunities for Native men dwindled. Industries such as agriculture, oil production, and manufacturing struggled in the southland, yet people kept hiring domestic workers. As the Great Depression wore onward, a significant section of

the economy in Los Angeles, including banking, real estate, and the film industry, remained relatively healthy. And, while economic malaise settled over Southern California, the weather remained nearly perfect, drawing thousands of tourists during the early 1930s. Los Angeles hosted the Olympic games in 1932, which drew 384,000 visitors and roughly \$44 million to the city.²⁰ American Indian men struggled to find work in the crippled factories and withering farms of Los Angeles and adjacent communities, but Native women continued to find domestic work on the city's affluent west side, or as California Superintendent of Indian Education Samuel H. Thompson called it, "the professional aristocratic section of Los Angeles."²¹ Popular destinations for domestic workers affiliated with the Los Angeles Outing Center during the 1930s included Beverly Hills, West Hollywood, Burbank, and Glendale—a far cry from the working-class neighborhoods near downtown that had been the epicenter of Native domestic labor in earlier decades.²²

Bankers, film industry employees, and real estate agents continued hiring domestic workers, even as the economy slowed. Indigenous men who worked in factories and on farms had no such luck during the first, worst years of the Great Depression. In January of 1931, Supervisor of Indian Education Carl Moore visited the Midnight Mission, a homeless shelter near Los Angeles's Skid Row. Moore reported that of the 600 men who visited the Midnight Mission each month in search of food, shelter, and assistance in finding a job, at least thirty were Native men. "A considerable number of these," reported Moore, "are boys from our [federal Indian] schools."²³ Moore went on to advocate for the placement of an outing agent in Los Angeles to help Native men in

finding jobs and housing. George P. LaVatta, a placement agent for the Office of Indian Affairs who worked out of Salt Lake City, Utah, sometimes ventured into Los Angeles to facilitate employment for Native men. But he did so only occasionally, wrote Moore. “One of the chief reasons why our boys are not giving as good an account of themselves as the girls,” he continued, “is that they are receiving little or no attention in locating themselves in remunerative positions.”²⁴

Noting that “few white girls” sought out employment as domestic workers in Los Angeles, Moore argued that there existed no equivalent employment opportunities for Native men. Without an outing center to help young men navigate the difficulties of the depression-era labor market in Los Angeles, Native families would not be able to establish themselves in the city. The return of increasing numbers of Native families to reservations following the completion of their boarding school years, wrote Moore, would “promote the corruption of the Indian race and neutralize the good instruction given in our schools.”²⁵ Less than a year later, Frances Hall echoed Moore’s argument about the need for an outing center for American Indian men in Los Angeles, noting that “on account of the financial depression and scarcity of work for men and boys, there is a great deal of welfare work to be looked after for our Indian families who are living in Los Angeles.”²⁶ Inspector Dorothy Ellis also felt that, in the absence of a new outing center for Native men, the existing center on Normandie Avenue should host an additional outing agent to work specifically with indigenous men.²⁷

The Office of Indian Affairs did not send an additional outing employee to work with young men in Los Angeles. Even if it had, such an employee would have faced a

nearly impossible task during the first, worst years of the depression. As the Great Depression tightened its grip on the United States in the later months of 1929 and into 1930, business and political leaders in California clung to variations a philosophy President Herbert Hoover termed “cooperative individualism.” A businessman by training, Hoover believed that individuals should help themselves, and if their own efforts failed, then those in need should be able to turn to their wealthier brethren for a helping hand. Federal and state governments, argued Hoover, should provide guidance in efforts to help the poor and unemployed, but should in no way interfere with local efforts.²⁸ The conservative establishment in Southern California held views similar to those of President Hoover. In lieu of using tax revenues to provide support to the unemployed via welfare payments and work relief, officials in the City of Los Angeles and Los Angeles County relied on non-government organizations such as the Red Cross, the Catholic Welfare Bureau, and the Community Chest to provide assistance to those without work. Meanwhile, businesspeople and politicians loudly asserted that the depression would be short-lived, and that people should spend money in order to keep the gears of the local economy moving.²⁹

Policies based on the ideals of cooperative individualism did little to halt the economic free-fall in the Southland. As the year 1930 moved onward, the vicious cycle of depression worsened in Los Angeles. Little money circulated, consumer demand dropped, and so did wages and employment.³⁰ Bread lines formed by June of 1930. By May of 1932, 344,000 Angelenos—one third of the working-age population—found themselves unemployed.³¹ Unemployment hovered between thirty and sixty percent in

the canning, sawmill, and petroleum industries, all of which would have likely hired Native men in the city leading up to the economic crash.³² For those who held jobs, wages fell by one-third between 1929 and 1933.³³ In 1931 and 1932, food prices dropped so precipitously that farmers allowed unemployed workers to form cooperatives to harvest and keep their crops, which otherwise would have rotted in the fields.³⁴ As the city and county began spending money to help the poor and unemployed, the elites of Los Angeles stubbornly resisted the imposition of taxes to balance sagging budgets.³⁵ Starting in 1933, a slew of federal initiatives introduced by Franklin Delano Roosevelt began to stimulate the national economy.³⁶ During the early 1930s, however, those who worked in the city's manufacturing and service industries—Native or otherwise—found few opportunities to work for wages.

Despite the economic malaise of the early 1930s, the Los Angeles Outing Center nonetheless continued to serve a pivotal role, both for the Office of Indian Affairs and indigenous people living in the city. The center remained an important social hub for Native women living in Los Angeles, even as Native domestic workers travelled further west from the West Adams neighborhood and Hall's outing cottage to find work. Just as significantly, Frances Hall found herself helping Native men and their families to weather the difficult times of unemployment and search for new jobs as the depression worsened and fewer jobs remained available for indigenous men in the city. Hall had more work than ever, and the outing center remained a crucial resource for Native people living in the city. Why, then, did the Office of Indian Affairs choose to shutter such a crucial Native hub at the height of its utility?

The vision of longtime Indian reformer and newly appointed Commissioner of Indian Affairs John Collier had much to do with the downfall of the outing center in Los Angeles. Franklin Delano Roosevelt appointed Collier in March of 1933, and the new commissioner quickly moved to close the Los Angeles Outing Center. Activities carried out at the center, said Collier, would be “greatly curtailed owing to drastic cuts in the employment budget.”³⁷ Collier’s concern over budgets rang somewhat hollow, however, as the budget for the Office of Indian Affairs had climbed to an all time high of \$11 million just a year earlier.³⁸ As Collier shared more of his thoughts on the outing center, it became increasingly apparent that more than money lay behind the decision to shutter the outing cottage. “While the need of economy has been responsible at this time for discontinuing the housing feature of our placement work,” wrote the new commissioner, “it is possible that the elimination during the current year may prove a blessing in disguise by removing one of the features drawing to Los Angeles girls who should not go there.” Collier informed Hall that she should no longer look to arrange employment for Native people. Instead, he said, Hall should focus her energies on “securing cooperation from local social agencies to help girls in need.”³⁹

If the sudden closure of the outing center flew in the face of a substantial and well supported effort within the Office of Indian Affairs to provide more resources to the Los Angeles Outing Center, it also revealed a significant philosophical shift that John Collier’s leadership would bring to the Office of Indian Affairs. For nearly half a century after Richard Henry Pratt began the United States government’s misguided experiment in assimilation through education, officials within the Office of Indian Affairs had pushed

policies that sent young, indigenous people beyond the reservation. In white-owned households, businesses, and farmsteads, Native people lived among the supposedly uplifting influences of white, Protestant culture. Now, John Collier brought to Indian country a set of ideas that differed radically from the status quo of the past five decades. Change came most visibly with Collier's Indian Reorganization Act, which reshuffled tribal administrations among groups who ratified the legislation, and with repeals of edicts that had restricted the open practices of indigenous languages, cultures, and religious ceremonies.⁴⁰ Once subject to almost constant suspicion and scorn from officials within the Office of Indian Affairs, Native cultures abruptly received respect and admiration from John Collier and his administration.⁴¹

But if John Collier appreciated Indian cultures, he also held a narrow view of them. Indians, he believed, "should not go" to Los Angeles or any other city. Instead, they should remain within their reservation homelands, where indigenous family and community models and deep connections to landscapes and natural resources would provide alternatives to what Collier perceived as the degrading influences of industrial capitalism. In less than one year, then, the Office of Indian Affairs performed an about-face with regard to Indian culture. Rather than send Native people to cities in hopes of facilitating their assimilation into white, Protestant culture or enlarging a Native working class, the Indian Office now sought to preserve indigenous cultures by keeping tribal peoples tied to their reservation homelands.

While Collier's meteoric rise within Indian affairs pleased some indigenous communities, it must have proven bittersweet to those who had learned to use

government labor programs as funnels into jobs and housing in Los Angeles and other cities. Collier fashioned himself as a crusader for indigenous peoples and their cultures, but he could not account for the crucial places that migration and wage labor had taken within the cultures of many Native peoples. As the struggle to maintain indigenous cultures became less pressing, Native communities would have to adjust to life without the outing programs that had provided jobs and housing as they moved between urban areas and reservations.

A strange blend of tragedy and eccentricity formed John Collier's almost mystical reverence for indigenous cultures. Collier was born in 1884 to Charles Collier, a prominent Atlanta lawyer and businessman, and Susie Rawson Collier, the daughter of a wealthy New England family. Charles Collier became mayor of Atlanta in 1895, and he quickly found himself embroiled in financial scandal. Depressed and angry with her husband, Susan Rawson Collier became addicted to laudanum, an over-the-counter-opiate that remained widely available well into the twentieth century, and died of an overdose in 1897. Not long after, a devastated and destitute Charles Collier took his own life. Scarred by the deaths of his parents, John Collier ventured into the Appalachian Mountains after graduating high school, where he took solace in the tranquility of the wilderness. The traumatic events of his childhood deeply affected John Collier. His life would be marked by a deep suspicion for the acquisitive, capitalistic values that derailed the lives of his parents.⁴²

After high school, Collier drifted across the eastern United States for the better part of a decade. He studied literature at Columbia University, where a growing disdain

for the trappings of material wealth drove Collier toward the writings of socialist thinkers such as Peter Kropotkin and William Morris. He travelled to Belgium, France, and Ireland, paying special attention to labor and cooperative movements in all three countries. In 1907, Collier settled into a job as a social worker at the People's Institute in New York City, where he worked to protect the city's immigrant communities from what he saw as the degenerative effects of industrial capitalism on family and community life. In a prelude to the salvation Collier saw in indigenous cultures, he sought to use immigrant institutions such as the family, the neighborhood, and the church as stalwarts against what he called the "starvation of the soul" that came with the privileging of machine over man. In his spare time, Collier rubbed elbows with leftists and radical thinkers at a Fifth Avenue salon hosted by Mabel Dodge, an influential writer with whom he would maintain a lifelong connection.⁴³

Collier moved west to California in 1919, taking a job as an adult educator for the City of Los Angeles, where he lectured often about the negative changes caused by industrial capitalism. After a year, he moved north to teach sociology and psychology at San Francisco State University. During his time in California, Collier took vacations to Northern New Mexico, where he visited Mabel Dodge. Dodge had traded the salons of New York City for the Pueblos and mountain vistas of Taos, New Mexico, where she became part of a fast-growing community of writers and thinkers who revered Pueblo culture and its perceived alternatives to the ills of industrial capitalism.

For Collier, Pueblo culture appeared to provide answers to questions that had haunted him ever since the death of his parents.⁴⁴ Pueblos, Collier said, "possessed the

fundamental secret of human life—the secret of building great personality through... social institutions.”⁴⁵ In Pueblo communities, Collier saw cultural elements that had elsewhere been trampled by the inexorable forward march of industrial capitalism—emphasis on the family, deep spirituality, and profound connection to the land.⁴⁶ Collier believed he had found in New Mexico the kind of communal bliss that he could not construct in the settlement houses of New York City. He set out to protect “the beauty and purity of Pueblo civilization... from the encroachments and absorption of white neighbors.”⁴⁷ Collier believed that if he could preserve indigenous cultures and languages in what he perceived as their primordial states, then Native communities might provide viable political alternatives to what he perceived as the depravity and soullessness of modern industrial culture.⁴⁸

By 1921, Collier had thrown himself headlong into the Indian reform movement. He led the charge against the 1922 Bursum Bill, which proposed to illegally grant title to Pueblo lands to non-Native squatters. He founded and led the American Indian Defense Association, an organization he led until Franklin Delano Roosevelt appointed him as Commissioner of Indian Affairs. As Collier made his rapid political ascent, his reverence for Native American cultures could not be questioned. He held firm to the conviction that all Americans could learn from “the cultural and human values of folk different from ourselves.”⁴⁹

New visions for indigenous education and labor existed near the heart of the new commissioner’s agenda. Collier left a trail of ideas on Native education and labor in his

brief career in Indian affairs, the most significant coming at a 1923 meeting of reformers in the Los Angeles suburb of Azusa, California. There, he proposed

remaking the school system both primary and secondary; basing it more largely on esthetics and on arts-and-crafts, on rural industry... and carrying it out so as to strengthen rather than mutilate the tribal relationships. We have a wonderful chance here to develop “socialized schools” which would have an influence on the whole school system of the country.⁵⁰

As Collier rose to power within the National Indian Defense Association and the Office of Indian Affairs, he touted a unique blend of ideas about Indian education. In one sense, he picked up where the last Commissioner of Indian Affairs had left off. Charles Rhoads took office in the wake of the Meriam Report, a system-wide investigation of the Indian School Service. The report, authored largely by progressive educator Will Carson Ryan, accused the Office of Indian Affairs of maintaining dangerously unhealthy conditions within its schools, and of snuffing out the cultural diversity of its students with an inflexible, uniform curriculum. Rhoads briefly outlawed physical punishment of students, attained more federal funding for agency schools, and softened rules against the use of Indian languages and cultures in the classrooms of federal Indian schools.⁵¹

In a strong acknowledgement of the need for reform within the Office of Indian Affairs, Rhoads hired Will Carson Ryan, his longtime chief critic, as Director of Indian Education in 1930. Ryan advocated for the closure of boarding schools and the use of on-reservation day schools as cultural hubs for Indian communities. Like Collier, he saw no use in Indian children studying subjects such as math, geometry, and ancient history. In a return to the educational philosophies of former Superintendent of Indian Schools Estelle Reel, Ryan pushed instead for what he termed a “realistic” curriculum, one that would

prepare students for life on Indian reservations by complementing training in subsistence agriculture with coursework on only the most basic academic skills.⁵² While Collier remained an ardent critic of the Office of Indian Affairs, his opinions on Indian education largely mirrored those of Rhoads and Ryan. So, too, would his policies as Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

John Collier took office as Commissioner of Indian Affairs in 1933. In one of his first hires, Collier brought on progressive educator and John Dewey-ite Willard Beatty as his Director of Indian Education.⁵³ While Ryan, Collier, and Beatty secured a larger budget that allowed for a better trained and equipped faculty and staff, they scaled back the goals and aims of federal Indian schools.⁵⁴ All three sought to drastically reduce the number of off-reservation federal Indian boarding schools, and the new leadership team within the Office of Indian Affairs closed six boarding schools within a year of taking office. In keeping with his fixation on indigenous community life, Collier sought to build more on-reservation day schools and transform them into thriving centers from which Native communities could shine the light of their cultures into the industrialized depravity of the urban United States.⁵⁵

Alongside a drastic reduction in the number of boarding schools in operation, Collier and his advisers sought to fundamentally change the pedagogical practices of those still in existence. With full approval from Collier, Willard Beatty doubled down on the calls for “practical education” that had long echoed through the Office of Indian Affairs. But where “practicality” had once entailed preparing students to assimilate by joining the industrial working class, Beatty and his staff of Indian educators aimed to

prepare students almost exclusively to return to the reservations from which they hailed. Indians, asserted Beatty, should not seek to secure the precious few jobs that existed in depression-racked cities and towns of the American West. Instead, Collier and company sought to prepare young American Indians to face the challenges of reservation life. Boarding schools would no longer train their students to become farm hands, mechanics, and maids. Instead, they would attempt to teach students the skills at which many indigenous families and communities had long ago become proficient: gardening, subsistence farming, hunting, fishing, and gathering.⁵⁶

Collier and Beatty drew their visions for Indian education from vastly different ideological wellsprings. Beatty seemed anxious to keep Indians from competing for the precious few jobs available to non-Native laborers in towns and cities. Collier, on the other hand, wanted to keep Indians on reservations so that they could live in what he saw as their “natural” state of community cooperation and harmony, providing a shining example of the possibilities of communal life for a downfallen capitalist society. Despite the disparate intentions of Collier and Beatty, their visions dovetailed into a new set of practices within federal policies on Indian education and labor. Indians, it seemed, belonged on reservations.

The new vision trickled slowly but steadily into labor and education policies of the Office of Indian Affairs. John Collier pushed for a grand reform in Indian Affairs with the Wheeler-Howard bill, which would eventually become the Indian Reorganization Act. Alongside a reorganization of tribal leadership, the legislation sought to roll back the Dawes Act, which had promoted the allotment and dispossession of

reservation land bases since the late nineteenth century. Collier proposed a revolving credit fund from which Native communities could borrow funds to purchase lands lost under the Dawes Act and return them to communal control. Here, Collier's romanticized view of indigenous peoples shone through again. With jobs becoming scarcer with the deepening of the economic depression, re-consolidation and communal control of Indian lands would simultaneously accomplish a pair of goals. Indians would return to their "natural" homelands and rejoin more perfect indigenous community lives, and the precious jobs taken up by Indians in cities would be made available to workers of other ethnicities.⁵⁷

Transformations came slowly within federal Indian schools, many of which remained staffed by employees whose working identities had been formed in the crucible of older assimilationist ideas proposed by Richard Henry Pratt. Still, changing expectations for indigenous peoples filtered steadily into education policy. In 1938, Beatty circulated a directive urging staff and faculty at each of the remaining twenty-eight off-reservation boarding schools to visit the home reservations of their students. Beatty instructed employees to "familiarize themselves with home and community conditions..." in order to facilitate "intelligent planning for educational experience related to realistic needs of the students."⁵⁸

Slowly but surely, the visions of Collier and Beatty travelled from the hallways of power in Washington, D.C., to the remote outposts of the Indian schools. If they had ever sought to integrate Native peoples into the body politic of the United States, federal Indian schools would do so no longer. Instead, they would teach Indians to be Indians. A

full continent away from Washington, D.C., in Southern California, Sherman Institute Superintendent Donald Biery promptly complied with the changes laid forth by Collier, Beatty, and friends.⁵⁹ Between 1939 and 1941, Biery sent employees to gather information on the conditions on the home reservations of Sherman students. The trail of documents left by these missions would reveal as much about the efforts of Sherman administrators to align themselves with the politics and policies of John Collier's Office of Indian Affairs as they would about conditions on the reservations.⁶⁰

The first of the reservation fact-finding missions began on May 31, 1939, when Industrial Teacher Robert Sneddon and Girls Industrial Teacher Edna A. Schnarr departed Riverside for the reservation at Hoopa Valley, California, some seven hundred miles to the north. From the very start of their trip, Sneddon and Schnarr demonstrated a keen awareness of the philosophical changes in the education agenda of the Office of Indian Affairs under the leadership of Collier and Beatty. The pair began their official report on their trip by borrowing exact verbiage from a circular issued by Beatty in regard to proposed curricular changes in the boarding schools, as Sneddon and Schnarr proclaimed they would "famalarize [sic] ourselves with the home and community conditions, work possibilities, and other factors necessary for the intelligent planning for educational experience related to realistic needs of the students."⁶¹

Winding their way through the communities in and around the Hoopa Valley Reservation, Sneddon and Schnarr produced a genre-bending narrative that rode somewhere between ethnography and adventure novel. They punctuated vivid descriptions of the landscape with dire accounts of poverty among the indigenous

residents of the area. Surveying employment conditions, Sneddon and Schnarr noted that men on the Hoopa Valley Reservation migrated frequently to pursue work within the fishing, lumbering, and construction industries, and that many pursued work with the Civilian Conservation Corps and the Works Progress Administration. Their assessment of the smaller communities along the Klamath River proved even less positive. “The prospects for the Indians on the Klamath River,” they speculated, “are not very hopeful because there is very little chance for remuneration for working for wages or cultivation of the land.” They took note of the availability and quality of public schools in both places. Sneddon and Schnarr prefaced the closing of their account by sounding two calls that would become characteristic of the many “educational tours” that would follow over the next two years. Both reflected a strong sense of self-awareness as they attempted to protect the continued existence of Sherman Institute among the anti-boarding-school furor within Collier’s administration. First, and perhaps most predictably, the pair of teachers claimed that Sherman would provide the young Indians of Hoopa Valley and the Klamath River with a much stronger education than public schools ever could. And second, Sneddon and Schnarr claimed that the visit to Hoopa Valley and the Klamath River would “increase our efficiency in the guidance and usefulness to the Indians from that jurisdiction.”⁶²

As Sneddon and Schnarr proposed to change the curriculum at Sherman to make it more “useful” to students from Hoopa Valley and the Klamath River, their blueprint for curricular change spoke more to Collier and Beatty’s romanticized visions of indigenous life than the realities of the reservations and Rancherias they had just visited.

“Homemaking for girls,” they began, “should consist of a more primitive type, as wood stoves were all we found in the homes on the entire trip.” Yet again presaging future reports from “educational tours” of reservations, Sneddon and Schnarr asserted that young men should be trained for proficiency in small-scale subsistence farming. “More emphasis,” they said, “should be placed on vegetable gardening, fruit raising... chickens, rabbits, turkeys, cows, goats, and sheep.”⁶³

While training in subsistence farming surely provided some usable skills to those students who chose to return to the reservation after leaving Sherman Institute, these recommendations ignored one of the crucial pieces of information gathered by Sneddon and Schnarr: by and large, Indians at Hoopa Valley and the Klamath River earned their livelihoods within the fishing, lumber, and construction industries. Like indigenous communities across the western United States, Native peoples in Northern California had integrated mobility and wage labor into their cultural and economic lives in order to cope with the economic difficulties of reservation life. Yet training for industrial labor no longer fit the mandates that came from Collier, Beatty, and the Office of Indian Affairs. Even if Sneddon, Schnarr, and others found that indigenous peoples at Hoopa Valley and elsewhere frequently left reservations to earn wages, they produced reservation inspection narratives and curricula that fit the romanticized views of Indian people that came down from the Indian office. If Collier and Beatty wanted teachers and administrators at federal Indian boarding schools to prepare Indians to eek out marginal existences on impoverished reservations, then that was what they would do.⁶⁴

Subsequent “educational tours” conducted by staff and administrators from Sherman Institute followed the formula provided by Sneddon and Schnarr. Visiting the Toulumne Rancheria near Sacramento, California, in June of 1941, Superintendent Donald Biery noted that most Indian families there drew their livelihoods from migrant labor within the lumber or agricultural industries. Yet, his prescription for the economic improvement of the community centered on a vision of Native subsistence farmers who would live in harmony with nature. “I feel that this place could be a very prosperous community,” he said, “if the people were taught how to live by subsistence methods.”⁶⁵

As he toured Indian communities between Redding and Sacramento, California, Biery found only two kinds of families: those who kept subsistence-oriented gardens, and those who did not. Commenting on a home near Loyaltan, California, he described an idyllic, subsistence-centered scene: “They live in good homes, raise chickens, berries, and vegetables. Two of the boys had been fishing in a lake near the sawmill and had caught several fair sized trout.” Later, he described a family near Quincy, California, who chose wage labor over extensive gardening. “These families do not live in very good homes,” he wrote. “They do not have any gardens or other means to assist them with the small yearly income they earn working in the forests.”⁶⁶

Even if he did so in an oblique way, Biery followed the lead of Sneddon and Schnarr. By commenting positively on those families who chose subsistence agriculture and chiding those who engaged in seasonal patterns of migration and wage labor within the logging industry, he subtly reaffirmed the vision for Indian education that had trickled down from Collier, Beatty, and the rest of the Office of Indian Affairs for nearly a

decade. In Collier's imagined future, Indian peoples would inhabit distinctly indigenous spaces of reservations and live by performing distinctly indigenous forms of labor, such as hunting, gathering, and engaging in small-scale subsistence farming. As Sneddon, Schnarr, Perkinson, and Biery toured reservations and Rancherias, they played on the romanticized visions of Collier in order to better position themselves for continued funding from the Office of Indian Affairs. If Collier wanted distinct Indian communities, doing distinctly Indian things, then Sherman Institute would be happy to oblige. They would teach Indians to be Indians.

By the end of the 1930s, the romanticized visions of indigenous peoples espoused by John Collier finally penetrated the classrooms of Indian schools operated by the Office of Indian Affairs. At Sherman Institute, teachers and administrators paid close attention to the mandates of John Collier and Willard Beatty. As Edna Kelly-Schnarr, head of the Household Science Department, prepared for the 1938-1939 school year, she prefaced her annual curriculum with words that almost perfectly captured the curricular changes prescribed by the Office of Indian Affairs. "It is with the hope," she said, "that this course of study will better fit the girls for life among their own people after leaving Sherman Institute."⁶⁷ For the most part, the girls' vocational program at Sherman continued to function much as it always had. Young women spent the first half of the day in academic instruction—English, history, mathematics, and home sciences—and the last half performing basic labor related to the upkeep of the school. These tasks included doing laundry, cooking and serving food, and sewing and maintaining school uniforms, among other things. A lucky few took courses in nursing and cosmetology. However, much of

the curriculum became colored by the explicit goal expressed by Schnarr—to prepare students for “life among their own people.”⁶⁸

So what exactly did life among Native communities look like in the eyes of Edna Schnarr? In 1939, Schnarr surveyed female students at Sherman on the material condition of their childhood homes. The questions addressed by Schnarr revealed much about her plans for the curriculum at Sherman Institute. What kinds of stoves did their parents use? Did they have hot water? Did they have electricity? Did they live in cities, towns, or on rural reservation plots? Her survey indicated that most students had grown up in homes with wood burning stoves, no hot water, and no electricity. Instead of teaching the skills and perspectives that might have helped young women at Sherman to achieve better material conditions, Schnarr crafted a special home science curriculum designed to prepare young women at Sherman for lives spent in the same conditions under which they had spent their early years. In her advanced foods course, Schnarr taught her students to raise, prepare, and preserve their food, including vegetables, grains, and poultry. Schnarr also compiled a list of twenty-six “Indian” recipes. Her students practiced preparing these meals in her food science course.⁶⁹

None of this is to suggest that preparing students for undertaking subsistence agriculture on isolated reservation lands proved useless to Sherman students. To be sure, Schnarr’s courses more than likely provided some usable knowledge to the young women of Sherman Institute. For example, Schnarr presented students with important information with regard to health, hygiene, and disease.⁷⁰ Still, her curriculum suggested a very particular vision for the futures of Sherman students, one that differed

fundamentally from the ideas that had driven curriculum development in schools run by the Office of Indian Affairs during the preceding half-century. Where Sherman had once focused on bringing young Native Americans to behave less like Indians and more like white, Protestant Americans, it now worked to funnel students into one, very particular space—the reservation.

During the Collier administration, training Native students to produce curios for sale became an important component within a larger push to funnel Indians back to reservations after they left federal Indian boarding schools. Alongside the erosion of academic curricula and growing emphasis on teaching skills suited to reservation-based, subsistence lifestyles, the development of a curriculum in Indian curio trades rounded out efforts to prepare Indians to live on reservations rather than in cities. The integration of indigenous curios within school curricula had not always drawn support from the Indian Office. Rather, the Office of Indian Affairs looked at Indian art with skepticism during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Throughout the 1920s, Indian reformers Elizabeth Huff and Clara True pushed for the incorporation of indigenous art into the curricula of government Indian schools. In 1928, authors of the Meriam Report blasted the Office of Indian Affairs for keeping Indian art out of its curriculum.⁷¹ Shortly thereafter, federal Indian schools around the country quickly began incorporating Indian art into their curricula. Sherman Institute was no exception. Systematic instruction in the production of Indian arts and crafts took place as early as 1930, when the school employed a Navajo matron who taught female students to weave rugs and embroider “in regular Indian fashion.”⁷² In the fall of 1931, Sherman Superintendent of Vocational

Instruction Herman Snodgrass returned from a conference on Indian education ready to make the production of Indian curios a central element of girls' vocational training at Sherman. "In promoting the development of a self-supporting Indian," declared Snodgrass, "the value of handicrafts are recognized as a factor worth cultivating."⁷³

As Sherman administrators and teachers attempted to incorporate "Indian handicrafts" into the female vocational curriculum, they did so in the midst of a contentious debate over the role of art within indigenous communities. Reform-minded white artists and educators argued bitterly over whether indigenous communities should use art as a means of cultural preservation or to make money.⁷⁴ Administrators at Sherman Institute searched for a middle ground between utility and authenticity as they developed a handicraft curriculum. Snodgrass asserted that training in handicrafts should serve first and foremost to "promote the economic advancement of the Indian."⁷⁵ Even as Snodgrass prioritized profit, he recognized the need for the perception of authenticity among perspective consumers of Indian curios. He argued that the colors and shapes of Indian curios could be modified "to satisfy the buying public," but that "the Indian designs and its [sic] religious significances must be recognized." Concerned with the possibility of inauthentic vendors creating cheap knockoffs of crafts produced at off-reservation boarding schools, Snodgrass argued that the Office of Indian Affairs should develop a standardized trademark for curios produced at federal Indian boarding schools in order to protect their "historic and other meanings."⁷⁶ Looking to boost perceived authenticity of crafts produced at boarding schools, Snodgrass suggested that Indian employees should teach the courses wherever possible. Finally, Snodgrass argued that

curios produced at boarding schools should be marketed and sold only by boarding school staff or reservation superintendents.⁷⁷ If students at Sherman Institute were to gain “self-sufficiency” through the manufacture and sale of Indian handicrafts, they would do so only with employees of the Office of Indian Affairs dictating price and authenticity of their products. The brand of economic independence proposed by Herman Snodgrass proved a strange one indeed.

By 1936, concern among Sherman administrators for producing authentic Indian crafts had largely subsided. In her curriculum for the 1936-1937 school year at Sherman Institute, Indian Arts and Crafts teacher Carmen Griffin declared that “the object of the class was not to perpetuate the old forms of Indian arts and crafts entirely, but to study them, understand and appreciate them, and develop new forms related to and worthy of succeeding the old ones.”⁷⁸ For basic grounding within “Indian” techniques and designs, students consulted books written by white anthropologists.⁷⁹ They produced distinctly “Indian” crafts, such as buckskin moccasins, Pueblo-style pots, and cradles, using distinctly “Indian” techniques: weaving, beadwork, cross-stitching, and embroidery, among others. On top of these items, students produced everyday household objects spruced with “Indian” designs. These items included neckties, couch throws, scarfs, shawls, towels, and tablecloths.⁸⁰

The crystallization of an Indian arts curriculum at Sherman reveals some important trends. Adherence to tribally specific ways of producing curios took a backseat to notions of profitability. Students worked only nominally within tribal traditions, as the items they produced and the techniques they used to produce them came mostly from

white anthropologists and teachers, not tribal elders. Yet, even if students churned out items that bore little relationship to the ways in which tribal peoples produced, used, and sold the material objects alternately labeled as “handicrafts” or “arts and crafts,” they nonetheless undertook these activities with the understanding that they would “better fit the girls for life among their own people after leaving Sherman Institute.”⁸¹ In the eyes of school administrators, after leaving Sherman Institute, women would perform distinctly “Indian” labor within distinctly “Indian” spaces. Just as Sherman’s academic curriculum reflected the notion that Indians did not need intense academic training, and just as Sherman’s vocational curricula sought increasingly to channel students into reservation-based, subsistence-style lives, the development of the curio trade curriculum at Sherman Institute suggested to students that their futures would be tied inextricably to the land bases associated with their racial identities.

Educational curricula at Sherman Institute had not always been so deeply and uniquely tied to notions of “Indian-ness.” Since the late 1960s, historians of education have argued that common and industrial schools of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries served to proletarianize students and provide a cheap, stable, and placid working class—an argument that aptly describes education at Sherman Institute and other federal Indian boarding schools, as has been noted by historian Frederick E. Hoxie.⁸² Historian Tsianina Lomawaima has noted that educational curricula at the Chilocco Industrial School during the early twentieth century sought to furnish menial laborers much in the same way that schools for white and black students did.⁸³ Indian and black vocational education intersected at Hampton Institute, where former soldier and

missionary Samuel Chapman Armstrong urged young Indians and African Americans alike to achieve racial “uplift” through manual labor.⁸⁴ While experiences surely differed at least somewhat by race and region, these authors argued convincingly that educational experiences in the half-century between 1880 and 1930 often centered on the common elements of vocational training and preparation for lives of menial labor.⁸⁵

If education at Sherman Institute shared at least some roots with the common and industrial schools for students of other ethnicities, the curricular changes of the 1930s represented a turn away from broader currents within vocational education. To be sure, curricular goals and strategies at Sherman had always been at least somewhat unique. After 1928, however, critical aspects of the curriculum came to hinge on the idea that native peoples should live within distinctly “Indian” spaces and perform distinctly “Indian” forms of labor. The assimilationist dreams of Richard Henry Pratt had given way to new voices and visions within Indian affairs.

By the end of the 1930s, then, leadership changes within the upper echelons of the Office of Indian Affairs had finally flowed through seemingly every vein of the Office of Indian Affairs. The wild-eyed idealism of John Collier and the sharp ethnocentrism of Willard Beatty combined to extinguish the last remnants of Richard Henry Pratt’s vision for the total elimination of Native cultures, languages, and identities by way of assimilation into the body politic of the United States. On the surface, at least, these changes appeared at least somewhat positive for indigenous communities. The cultures and languages that had once drawn scorn and fear from government officials now received respect, praise, and even calls for preservation.

However well intentioned the visions of Collier and Beatty may have been, they did not always bring positive results to Indian country. To be sure, the ability to freely speak Native languages and practice indigenous forms of culture and spirituality must have proved a refreshing change for many communities. Yet, in the half-century before the drastic reforms of the 1930s, many Native people had become experts in navigating the bureaucracy of the Office of Indian Affairs. If labor curricula and outing programs at federal Indian boarding schools such as Sherman Institute sought in part to erase indigenous cultural identities, they also became valued vessels to jobs and housing in Los Angeles and other cities. Now, however, the strange bedfellows of economic depression and a newfound respect for indigenous cultures brought an end to the outing center in Los Angeles, and Native communities across the American Southwest would have to adjust to these changes.

Relatively few indigenous voices cut through the records related to curriculum changes at Sherman institute between the years of 1928 and 1940. Those that do, however, suggest that students and families connected with Sherman Institute saw little use in the “practical” changes that administrators enacted during those years. As Robert Sneddon and Edna Schnarr jumped between the reservations and Rancherias of Northern California, they noticed a few Native people pushing back against the rising tide of lowered expectations and physical segregation. At the Hoopa Valley Reservation, the pair noted “...a strong feeling that the Indian school is not as efficient as the local public schools. They want to study the same as the white children and they feel that because the Indian school does not pattern after the local white school, they are not being educated.”⁸⁶

Visiting the Susanville Rancheria, Biery noted that Native people there held a different conception of “usefulness” than the one espoused by educators at Sherman Institute. Where officials at Sherman Institute bought fully into the newfound fascination with the Indian subsistence farmer, Native people at Susanville desired new skills to help engage urban wage labor markets. “Many girl students are interested in typing,” noted Biery, “and the boys in trades essential to the defense program.” Another young woman at the Susanville Rancheria stated even more explicitly that Indian education should prepare students for urban life, noting that jobs were plentiful in Los Angeles and that she planned to join her sister there as soon as she had the money to leave.⁸⁷

Filtered through Sneddon, Schnarr, and Biery though they may be, these statements suggest resistance to the tendencies of newer Indian school curricula to train Indians to live within the distinctly “Indian” spaces of reservations and engage in distinctly “Indian” activities such as maintaining subsistence garden plots. After decades spent surviving depressed reservation economies, indigenous families in Northern California had already learned how to subsist on the meager resources at hand. Brule Lakota Ben Reifel captured the sentiment held by many Native people toward the changes in education policy brought by the Indian New Deal when he noted that while students at boarding schools benefited from learning how to raise rabbits and chickens, they often “failed to learn how to read and write” under the new curricula.⁸⁸ As Native American families and communities had for close to a century, these people suggested to Sneddon, Schnarr, and Biery that federal Indian education should provide tools for

economic security and occupational flexibility—not the romanticized subsistence skills that many Native people had already mastered out of necessity.

In Northern California and elsewhere, Native voices that rose in protest against these changes went unheeded. The outing center in Los Angeles closed, and boarding schools sought more than ever to prepare students for lives spent on reservations. Labor programs operated by the Office of Indian Affairs ceased to benefit indigenous communities as they had during the first three decades of the twentieth century. If Native communities were to continue to use the Office of Indian Affairs for the benefit of themselves and their communities, they would have to adjust their approaches to an ethnocentric and unresponsive bureaucracy, just as they had so many times before. As Commissioner of Indian Affairs John Collier fought desperately to garner support for the reforms proposed under his Indian Reorganization Act, opportunities arose in an unexpected area: higher education.

Beginning in the late 1920s, indigenous students at Sherman Institute and other federal Indian boarding schools successfully pushed the Office of Indian Affairs to provide tuition assistance, loans, and housing as they pursued college degrees. Students received loans for housing and tuition on a case-by-case basis until 1933, when John Collier built a fund for educational loans into his Indian Reorganization Act. As opportunities to use programs of the Office of Indian Affairs to obtain wage labor and housing in cities such as Los Angeles waned, hundreds of American Indians used these loans and scholarships to attend colleges and universities across the United States. Many lived on campuses of federal Indian boarding schools and attended classes at nearby

institutions. The significant cohort of students who used Sherman Institute and other boarding schools as conduits into colleges and universities demonstrated a keen ability to navigate government bureaucracies and make them more responsive to the needs of themselves and their communities. As these students moved from Sherman Institute and into colleges and universities, they creatively used an otherwise deeply ethnocentric bureaucracy to forge modern pathways into the twentieth century—just as their predecessors had with school labor programs.⁸⁹

In 1928, five students at Sherman Institute who would soon graduate inquired with superintendent Frank Conser about the possibility of rooming at Sherman and attending the Riverside Junior College.⁹⁰ Conser went to bat for them, writing an impassioned letter to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles Rhoads. Noting that critics of the Office of Indian Affairs highlighted a lack of continuity between boarding schools and colleges and universities, Conser argued that the chance to room at Sherman and attend Riverside Junior College provided “a splendid opportunity for these young people to gain a further education.”⁹¹

After two months of deliberation, the Office of Indian Affairs gave Conser permission to allow students to live at Sherman Institute and attend Riverside Junior College. Like all elements of the Indian bureaucracy, living at Sherman and attending junior college came with a host of regulations. Students would maintain a B average or better to live at Sherman and attend junior college, and they could only room at the school if their presence did not deny places for regular students.⁹² Students attending the junior college could maintain housing at Sherman by working twelve hours a week, or

they could pay \$15 per month.⁹³ Finally, a special stipulation: students would have to appear clean enough as to be “a credit to the Indian race” as they walked the halls of academia.⁹⁴ Over the next two years, a handful of students lived at Sherman Institute and attended Riverside Junior College.

Thanks in part to increasing demand from graduates of boarding schools, Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles Rhoads formalized and expanded the scholarship and loan program between 1929 and 1931. He hired Ruth Muskrat Bronson, a Cherokee woman, to standardize and expand the programs. A graduate of Haskell Institute and Mount Holyoke College, Bronson began her career as an eighth-grade teacher at Haskell Institute in 1925, a position she held until 1930. After a two-year stint working in employment guidance and placement for the Office of Indian Affairs, Bronson began administering college loans and scholarships for the Indian Office in 1932.⁹⁵

In her new position, Bronson oversaw a complicated process. Students requesting support for vocational training or college had to produce a hand-written letter of application, transcripts, four letters of recommendation, and a physical. If a student wanted to live at a boarding school and attend a nearby college or university, he or she needed confirmation from the superintendent of the host institution that they could indeed have a place at the boarding school while they attended college. The application packet went first to a scholarship committee made up of five employees of the boarding school from which the student graduated. If approved, the application went to the superintendent of the student’s home agency, who could reject it or send it to Bronson for

final approval. Students could borrow between \$50 and \$200 per academic year, with total borrowings not to exceed \$1,000 for any individual.⁹⁶

John Collier became Commissioner of Indian Affairs in 1933. Initially wary about the idea of Native people in higher education, Collier turned the scholarship and loans program into a reward for tribes who ratified the Indian Reorganization Act. The Act created a \$250,000 fund for loans related to higher education, which Collier made available to members of tribes who ratified it. Ruth Muskrat Bronson took charge of distributing the money using the process put in place under commissioner Rhoads. In addition, the education division provided students with up to \$75 of scholarship money each year to provide assistance with tuition and fees.⁹⁷

The development of a college loan program by the Office of Indian Affairs proved more than a little ironic, especially from a Collier administration that had become increasingly bent on preparing young Native people to spend their lives within the confines of reservations. Both Collier and Director of Indian Education Willard Beatty agreed, however, that the scholarship and loan program would help to prepare the most qualified graduates of boarding schools for careers in the Office of Indian Affairs.⁹⁸ Under the terms of the Indian Reorganization Act, students continued receiving up to \$200 per year in educational loans, and up to \$75 in scholarships to cover tuition and related expenses such as books, meals, and transportation. Given the costs of attending college during the late 1920s and early 1930s, this was no paltry sum. For example, Riverside Junior College charged \$20 per year in tuition throughout the 1930s, and the cost of books and came in at around \$35 per year.⁹⁹

Table 5.1. Students Residing at Sherman Institute and Attending Riverside Junior College, 1929-1939

Year	No. Students
1929-1930	2
1933-1934	9
1934-1935	22
1935-1936	22
1937-1938	10
1938-1939	11

Sources: For 1929-1930, see Report of Survey of Work at Sherman Institute Made by Carl Moore, Supervisor of Indian Education, January 22, 1930, and February 2, 1930, Box 19, Folder: 8281-1930, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NADC; For 1933-1934, see Donald Biery to Ruth Muskrat Bronson, June 28, 1934, Box 37, Folder: Junior College Students, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR; for 1934-1935, see Grades from Riverside Junior College, 1934-1935, Box 26, Folder: 54787-1934, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NADC; for 1935-1936, see Riverside Junior College Students Living at Sherman Institute, 1935-1936, Box 26, Folder: 54787-1934, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NADC; for 1937-1938, see Sherman Institute Boys' Supervisor A.J. Pellettieri to Homer Howard, January 20, 1938, Box 26, Folder: 54787-1934, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NADC; for 1938-1939, see Donald Biery to California State Superintendent of Indian Education Mary Stewart, December 19, 1938, Box 26, Folder: 54787-1934, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NADC.

The expansion of the loan and scholarship funds under Collier drew more students to the program. The number of students living at Sherman Institute and attending Riverside Junior College grew from two in 1928-1929 to twenty-two in 1934-1935 and 1935-1936 (see Table 5.1). Moreover, the school received applications from students who had never attended Sherman Institute. Most came from reservations in Southern California. Clarence Young and Selma Anderson, both of Cahuilla descent, had attended public high schools in Southern California. Young planned to become a pilot, and Anderson a teacher. Both arrived at Sherman Institute in the fall of 1934, anxious to take prerequisite courses at little or no cost.¹⁰⁰

Others came from as far away as Oregon and Oklahoma to live at the school and attend Riverside Junior College. Kenny Lee Abraham, a Choctaw, hailed from Ada, Oklahoma. He graduated from Haskell Institute in 1934 after earning As and Bs in academic and carpentry courses.¹⁰¹ Abraham's parents died before he finished at Haskell, and so he planned to move to California to be nearer his sister in Fresno. When a mentor at Haskell encouraged Abraham to attend college and study to become a teacher, Riverside Junior College became a natural choice. Abraham lived at Sherman Institute and attended classes at the local junior college. During summers, he stayed with his sister in Fresno, where he worked and saved money.¹⁰² Yakama student Enola Wellesley graduated from Chemawa Indian School in 1933. Planning for a career in nursing, Wellesley took a job as a nursing assistant in the school hospital at Sherman Institute, earning \$1080 per year. A year later, she obtained a \$200 loan, a \$75 scholarship, and room and board at Sherman to attend classes at Riverside Junior College, where she hoped to pass introductory courses before entering a nursing program at a hospital.¹⁰³

As word of the scholarship and loan program spread across Indian country, Native people used government support to attend a growing number of colleges and universities. In California, graduates of Sherman Institute attended Redlands University and the University of California campuses at Santa Barbara, Los Angeles, and Berkeley.¹⁰⁴ At least eight other federal Indian boarding schools replicated the relationship between Sherman Institute and Riverside Junior College (see Table 5.2). Bacone College, a private institution for American Indian students located in Muskogee, Oklahoma, joined Riverside Junior College as a popular destination for graduates of boarding schools.¹⁰⁵

During the Collier years, then, the college scholarship and loan fund became a significant program, one used by a growing number of Native people from across Indian country.

Table 5.2. Colleges and Universities Available to Students on Working Scholarships

Boarding School	Location	Local College/University
Sherman Institute	Riverside, Calif.	Riverside Junior College
Chemawa Indian School	Salem, Ore.	Willamette University
Albuquerque Indian School	Albuquerque, N.M.	University of New Mexico
Mount Pleasant Indian School	Mount Pleasant, Mich.	Central State Teachers' College
Phoenix Indian School	Phoenix, Ariz.	Tempe State Teachers' College
Rapid City Indian School	Rapid City, S.D.	South Dakota School of Mines
Wahpeton Indian School	Wahpeton, N.D.	Wahpeton School of Science
Haskell Institute	Lawrence, Kans.	University of Kansas
Sequoyah Training School	Tahlequah, Okla.	Northeastern State College

Source: “Higher Education Opportunities for Indian Youth,” *Chemawa American* 35, no. 13, March 28, 1934, Box 4, Office File of Mary Stewart, Assistant Director of Indian Education, 1929-1936, Entry 724, BIA, RG 75 NADC.

Elvin Moore provides another window into the lives of Native people who used the Office of Indian Affairs and its boarding schools to gain access to higher education. Born in 1912 to a Cahuilla mother and a Mojave father, Moore moved to Los Angeles with his family following the death of his father in 1918. In 1926, Moore’s mother sent him Sherman Institute. Gregarious and friendly, Moore formed tight bonds with teachers, administrators, and fellow students. He graduated from Sherman in 1929.¹⁰⁶

In the fall of 1930, as the United States spiraled into economic depression, Moore returned to Sherman Institute. Taking advantage of an opportunity that had been available to select graduates of Sherman Institute since at least 1922, he lived at the boarding school and attended the local public high school, Riverside Polytechnic. In doing so,

Moore joined a growing trend. Increasingly frustrated by a perceived lack of progress within federal Indian education, politicians and bureaucrats pushed to get Native students out of expensive, unpopular boarding schools and into public schools. This shift in policy reached high gear just as Moore enrolled at Riverside Polytechnic.¹⁰⁷ By living at Sherman Institute and attending public school, Moore earned the best of both worlds: a more advanced education, and free room and board. Good grades and strong recommendations earned Moore a place at Riverside Junior College in the fall of 1933.¹⁰⁸

By the fall of 1934, Moore had earned a place at the University of California, Berkeley. On a warm night in August, just after he had arrived in the Bay Area, Moore trudged away from the campus of the and into the hills that overlooked the school. He walked a half-mile down College Avenue, a stately boulevard lined with oversized fraternity houses, until he reached the International House, a dormitory that overlooked the 60,000-seat California Memorial Football Stadium. The sounds of football practice and fraternity social events drifting through his window, a weary Moore sat at the desk of his sparsely furnished dormitory and wrote to friends and family back home.¹⁰⁹

Earlier in the day, Moore began his college experience with the crushing boredom and confusion of registration. When he took his place in line at half past ten, the line already stretched for half a mile. Eleven thousand students attended Berkeley in 1934, and Moore estimated that at least half the student body stood in front of him as he waited to choose his classes. By the end of the afternoon, he finally enrolled for courses in botany, zoology, philosophy, and algebra. After a day spent standing, waiting, and

worrying, Moore reported that he felt as if his head “was in the fog” that so often descended over the San Francisco Bay in the winter months.¹¹⁰

In the coming weeks, Moore’s worries grew more intense as bureaucratic snags held up his financial aid. Opportunities for problems abounded as hundreds of application packets passed between admissions committees at boarding schools, Indian agents, the office of Ruth Muskrat Bronson, and finally the colleges and universities to be attended by the applicants. When Moore went to pick up his loan of \$150 from the registrar, the money was not there. After a two-week round of correspondences between Moore, Bronson, and officials at Sherman Institute, Moore discovered that his loan had been sent to the University of California, Los Angeles, rather than the Berkeley campus. Officials at the Office of Indian Affairs explained that they simply assumed that Moore would attend his hometown university, and that the “Berkeley” on his application had been a typo. Moore reported being “a bit on edge in the interim” as he negotiated a month-long reprieve from rent at his dormitory and scrounged for cheap meals.¹¹¹

Alongside the potential for logistical problems, the application process provided bureaucrats with opportunities to place paternalistic imprints on the educational careers of applicants. Alfred Gill, a Paiute Indian and a graduate of Sherman Institute, applied for a scholarship and a loan from the Office of Indian Affairs to attend the National Diesel School in Los Angeles. Ruth Muskrat Bronson, who processed and forwarded all applications for college loans and aid virtually by herself, lost one of Gill’s letters of recommendation. As he waited an entire year to reapply, Gill married Maude Canton, a recently widowed mother of two. Rumor of the marriage between Gill and Canton

percolated from Sherman Superintendent to Indian agent and eventually back to Bronson, who angrily informed Gill that he could no longer receive government aid for his schooling. “Since hearing of your marriage,” wrote Bronson, “we assumed that you would not be interested in continuing in school and have not held out tuition funds for you.”¹¹² The message from Bronson to Gill was both paternalistic and clear: as a father, you will work and earn money—not go to school. A seemingly benign, bureaucratic application process reached its hands into the most intimate details of Alfred Gill’s life. Gill returned to a job that paid him \$24 a week to pack paint into cans, a routine of brutal monotony he had sought to escape by attending diesel school.¹¹³

Lack of academic preparation hampered recipients of loans and scholarships even more than the cumbersome application process. Richard Henry Pratt set the academic blueprint for federal Indian boarding schools when he opened the Carlisle Indian Industrial School in 1878. Pratt believed Indians to be every bit as capable of academic learning as their white counterparts.¹¹⁴ Frustration over the perceived inability of the federal government to assimilate Native people came to a head during the early twentieth century, and curricula at federal Indian boarding schools abandoned any pretense of preparing Native people for intellectual equality.¹¹⁵ Indians would be maids and factory workers, and not much else. At Sherman Institute, Pratt’s academic vision had become a flickering memory by the 1930s. School administrators encouraged teachers to keep curricula mind numbingly simple. In 1928, for example, an assistant principal condemned an English teacher for encouraging students to deconstruct the motivations of characters

within a story. Indians, he said, would only read for pleasure after graduating school. Literary skills would be lost on them.¹¹⁶

Academic curricula fueled by ethnocentrism and low expectations left even the brightest students ill prepared for life at colleges and universities. Elvin Moore received sterling marks at Sherman Institute, and later maintained a B average at Riverside Junior College. During his time at Berkeley, Moore's initial correspondences suggested that his academic success would continue. He balanced a full course load with a job drawing blood from rats in a psychology lab. On weekends, Moore often ventured into neighboring Oakland, where he rubbed elbows with Native people from across the United States at the local YWCA.¹¹⁷ In January of 1935, just as life in Northern California seemed to fall into place, Moore received what he called "a sudden jolt" in the form of poor grades. Writing to Ruth Muskrat Bronson, Moore reported that "Uncle Sam's investment in my academic welfare for the last semester took a dive to a dismal low. Now I know what it feels like to go down in grade points, and plenty of them at one time."¹¹⁸ Moore would not last the full year in Berkeley. The following year, he transferred to UCLA, but his academic struggles continued. Elvin Moore never graduated college.¹¹⁹

Elvin Moore's struggles paled in comparison to those endured by most of his peers. Moore had sailed through courses at Riverside Junior College. Most graduates of Sherman Institute did not perform so well. In the fall of 1934, twenty-two students resided at Sherman Institute and enrolled for classes at Riverside Junior College. Only thirteen would complete the academic year.¹²⁰ Many wrote to Ruth Muskrat Bronson to

break the bad news of their academic troubles and seek advice. Clarence Young enrolled at Riverside Junior College with dreams of becoming a pilot, but introductory math and science courses proved too difficult. “I have been attending junior college for three months now, and I admit that I have found my work hard for me,” wrote Young. “Should I drop out of school, I want you to know that I am not quitting, but that I aim to make good on some other field.”¹²¹

Not all students struggled with grades.¹²² Yet, the travails of Elvin Moore and his fellow loan and scholarship recipients suggest an important truth: For three decades, federal Indian boarding schools geared their curricula toward molding their students into low-wage workers, not doctors, lawyers, or teachers. While the sudden appearance of a scholarship program might have provided graduates of boarding schools with the opportunity to attend colleges and universities, it could not undo the stark inadequacies of academic programs at federal Indian boarding schools.

Still, there is more to the story than just the ill preparation for colleges and universities provided by federal Indian boarding schools. Prospective students across Indian country reacted swiftly to the availability of money for college. Choctaws and Yakamas, Mojaves and Lakotas, Cahuillas and Klamaths shared dreams of becoming teachers, nurses, lawyers and diesel mechanics. They quickly learned to navigate an application process that would likely fluster a contemporary college admissions counselor. Some travelled great distances to receive free room and board while they attended school. In so doing, these students formed a vanguard of Native collegians, one that came well before the sit-ins and strikes of the 1960s.

Higher education narratives from Southern California reinforce another important theme, one that has grown louder within the scholarship of recent years: poverty and isolation did not completely define the experiences of Indigenous communities of the of the early twentieth century.¹²³ At Sherman Institute and elsewhere, Native collegians combined a deep knowledge of federal Indian bureaucracy with elements geographic and social mobility as they became the first significant cohort of American Indians to attend colleges and universities. Native students adjusted swiftly when economic and political shifts brought on the drastic downscaling of the outing center in Los Angeles. In the process, they made government support for college education into one component of a diverse array of strategies for navigating the challenges of the twentieth century.¹²⁴

The closing of the outing center on Los Angeles's Normandie Avenue looked very much like the end of an era for the Office of Indian Affairs and the Native communities who navigated its labor programs. Just as a nose-diving economy left fewer jobs for indigenous migrants to Los Angeles and other urban centers, drastic changes in leadership at the Office of Indian Affairs pushed indigenous peoples away from cities and onto reservations. John Collier clung to a romanticized vision of indigenous life in which subsistence-oriented and reservation based indigenous communities would offer a viable alternative to the greed, materialism, and exploitation of industrial capitalism. Collier's director of Indian Education, Willard Beatty, had a far more simplistic and pessimistic goal: teach Indians the skills needed for reservation life so that they no longer move to cities and take scarce jobs from non-Indian workers.

These changes had real and rapid effects on the ground. In Los Angeles, an outing program that had been painstakingly constructed over the course of two decades came tumbling down almost overnight. The shuttering of her cottage meant no kitchen to prepare meals, no beds to provide rest, no living room to provide a meeting space. Frances Hall would no longer host Native women as a way of facilitating their movements to and from jobs in the city. As Native people continued pouring into Los Angeles from across the Southwestern United States and beyond, they could no longer turn to Frances Hall and the outing center for assistance.

As always, then, Indian policy remained deeply tied to the ebbs and flows of the broader political economy of the United States. Funneling young, Native people into cities to work as manual laborers and domestics made sense to politicians and bureaucrats only insofar as there were plentiful jobs to be had. When the economy went bad, and when those jobs dried up, those in charge of Indian policy did not hesitate in their attempts to staunch the flow of indigenous peoples into cities such as Los Angeles. Connections between the broader political economy of the United States and on-the-ground decisions made by bureaucrats and politicians in charge of the Office of Indian Affairs highlight the limits of indigenous agency in approaching federal labor programs. To be sure, people from indigenous communities across the western United States learned to navigate the programs, and even to use them to the benefit of themselves, their families, and their peoples. But their knowledge of federal bureaucracy could not stop the rapid changes that came with the economic upheaval and political changes of the 1930s.

Even amid the shifting policies and expectations of the Office of Indian Affairs, many indigenous communities took levelheaded approaches to the Office of Indian Affairs and its programs. While changing ideas about Native peoples may have temporarily closed the door to state-sponsored access to urban wage labor markets for the long decade of the 1930s, indigenous peoples from across the United States continued to creatively engage with the United States government in order to sustain their communities and cultures, much as they had for a century and a half. As the door to urban job placements closed, the Indian New Deal opened new pathways into colleges, universities, and technical schools. Between 1928 and 1940, at least 2,500 Native people seized the new opportunities offered to the tribes in return for their ratification of the Indian New Deal.¹²⁵

Considered in isolation, the rise and fall of the outing center in Los Angeles looks somewhat like an aberration. Native people took measured approaches to a deeply flawed federal program and, in many cases, actually managed to draw from it some significant benefits. Almost as quickly as indigenous communities learned to use the outing center for their own good, an economic downturn combined with the changing whims of federal officials led to its closure. The outing center may have been a good thing for many, but it simply did not last.

Viewed from a wide-angle lens, however, the Los Angeles outing center stood as just one of many federal inventions to which Native people acclimated themselves. Since the late nineteenth century, indigenous peoples had demonstrated cultural ingenuity as they adjusted to the rise of the reservation system, the rapid proliferation of federal Indian

boarding schools, and labor programs that sought to turn Indians into a malleable, low-wage working class. The sites of struggle shifted from the affluent homes and factory floors of Los Angeles to the classrooms of Riverside City College and the University of California, Berkeley, but the never-ending battle to creatively engage the Office of Indian Affairs in order to sustain Native communities and cultures continued on.

Endnotes

1. Commissioner of Indian Affairs John Collier to Sherman Institute Superintendent Donald Biery, September 21, 1933, Box 38, Folder: Outing System, 1932-1933, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
2. List of Surplus Furniture and Furnishings, September 1, 1933, Box 99, General Correspondence, 1933-1948, Folder: C-D, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
3. Commissioner of Indian Affairs John Collier to Sherman Institute Superintendent Donald Biery, September 21, 1933, Box 38, Folder: Outing System, 1932-1933, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
4. Frances Hall to Mission Agency Superintendent John W. Dady, June 23, 1934, Personnel File for Frances Hall, NPRC.
5. Claim No. R67693, Service Record and Retirement Division, United States Civil Service Commission, Personnel File for Frances Hall, NPRC.
6. John Collier, Justification for New Position, December 12, 1934, Personnel File for Katherine Mahn, NPRC; F.H. Daiker to Katherine Mahn, June 27, 1941, Personnel File for Katherine Mahn, NPRC.
7. For the most comprehensive account of the Great Depression in Los Angeles, see Gregory H. Mullins, *The Depression and the Urban West Coast, 1929-1933: Los Angeles, San Francisco, Seattle, and Portland* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1991). For a more concise account, see Laura Renata Martin, "California's Unemployed Feed Themselves: Conservative Intervention in the Los Angeles Cooperative Movement, 1931-1934," *Pacific Historical Review* 82, no. 1 (February 2013): 33-62.
8. Service Record Card No. 2, Personnel File for Frances Hall, NPRC.
9. Frances Hall to Mission Agency Superintendent C.L. Ellis, May 9, 1932, Personnel File for Frances Hall, NPRC; Frances Hall to Carl Moore, July 15, 1931, Box 3, School Inspection Records, Folder: Los Angeles Supervisor's Letters, 8-6-31 and 7-15-31, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB.
10. Carl Moore to Mary Stewart, August 6, 1931, Box 1, School Inspection Records, 1929-1934, Folder: Los Angeles (Supervisor's Letters, 8-6-31 and 7-15-31), RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB.

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11. Samuel H. Thompson to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles Rhodes, February 3, 1931, Box 3, Administrative Subject Records, 1929-1932, Folder: Outing Center Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB; Dorothy Ellis to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles Rhodes, January 15, 1930, Box 3, Administrative Subject Records, 1929-1932, Folder: Outing Center Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB.
 12. Frances Hall to Carl Moore, February 26, 1930, Box 3, Folder: Outing Center—Los Angeles, Administrative Subject Records, 1929-1932, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB; Frances Hall to Carl Moore, July 15, 1931, Box 3, School Inspection Records, Folder: Los Angeles Supervisor's Letters, 8-6-31 and 7-15-31, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB.
 13. Samuel H. Thompson to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles Rhodes, February 3, 1931, Box 3, Administrative Subject Records, 1929-1932, Folder: Outing Center—Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB. Since these women attended school during the day and performed domestic labor only at night and on the weekends, they received lower monthly pay than their full-time counterparts.
 14. Frances Hall to Carl Moore, July 15, 1931, Box 3, School Inspection Records, 1929-1934, Folder: Los Angeles Supervisor's Letters, 8-5-31 and 7-15-31, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB.
 15. Carl Moore to Frances Hall, March 3, 1932, Box 38, Folder: Outing System, 1932-1933, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR; Frances Hall to Carl Moore, March 8, 1932, Box 38, Folder: Outing System, 1932-1933, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
 16. The Office of Indian Affairs transferred supervision of the Los Angeles Outing Center from the Irrigation Division to the Mission Indian Agency in 1929. Service Record Card, n.d., Personnel File for Frances Hall, NPRC.
 17. Frances Hall to Mission Agency Superintendent C.L. Ellis, May 9, 1932, Personnel File for Frances Hall, NPRC.
 18. Dorothy Ellis to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles Rhoads, January 15, 1930, Box 3, Administrative Subject Records, 1929-1932, Folder: Outing Center Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB; Samuel H. Thompson to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles Rhoads, February 3, 1931, Box 3, Administrative Subject Records, 1929-1932, Folder: Outing Center Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB.
 19. Frances Hall to Mission Agency Superintendent C.L. Ellis, June 24, 1932, Box 38, Folder: Outing System, 1932-1933, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
 20. Mike Davis, *City of Quartz*, 28-32; Carey McWilliams, *Southern California: An Island in the Land* (Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith Books, 1973), 273-313; Martin,

“California’s Unemployed Feed Themselves,” 45; Mullins, *The Depression and the Urban West Coast*, 87-9.

21. Samuel H. Thompson to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles Rhoads, February 3, 1931, Box 3, Administrative Subject Records, 1929-1932, Folder: Outing Center Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB.

22. Frances Hall to Sherman Institute Superintendent Donald Biery, September 5, 1933, Box 38, Folder: Outing System, 1932-1933, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

23. Carl Moore to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles Rhoads, January 26, 1931, Box 3, Administrative Subject Records, 1929-1932, Folder: Outing Center Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB. By the time Carl Moore visited the Midnight Mission in 1930, it had become one of the primary hubs for relief to unemployed and homeless people in Los Angeles. The shelter provided beds for 130,890 people, and served 315,982 meals in 1930 alone. As historian Gregory H. Mullins has noted, the prominence of shelters such as the Midnight Mission arose in part from the hesitancy of state and county governments in California to provide direct intervention through welfare and jobs programs. By 1931, the Midnight Mission became so overwhelmed with visitors that it began scavenging restaurants for table scraps to supplement its meals. See Mullins, *The Depression and the Urban West Coast*, 32, 68.

24. Carl Moore to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles Rhoads, January 26, 1931, Box 3, Administrative Subject Records, 1929-1932, Folder: Outing Center Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB.

25. Ibid.

26. Frances Hall to Mission Agency Superintendent C.L. Ellis, May 9, 1932, Personnel File for Frances Hall, NPRC.

27. Dorothy Ellis to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles Rhoads, January 15, 1930, Box 3, Administrative Subject Records, 1929-1932, Folder: Outing Center Los Angeles, RSIE, BIA, RG 75 NASB.

28. Mullins, *The Depression and the Urban West Coast*, 1-2.

29. Ibid., 29-44.

30. Ibid., 53.

31. Ibid., 92.

32. Ibid., 87.

33. Ibid., 52.

34. Martin, "California's Unemployed Feed Themselves," 35-45.

35. Mullins, *The Depression and the Urban West Coast*, 96.

36. Federal initiatives introduced by the Roosevelt administration included the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA), the Civil Works Administration, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), the Public Works Administration (PWA), the Home Owners' Loan Corporation (HOLC), and the National Recovery Administration (NRA). FERA and the Civil Works Administration provided relief funds, the CCC and the PWA provided employment, the HOLC helped certain families to adjust their mortgages in order to remain in their homes, and the NRA enacted price controls and other measures in order to speed economic recovery. For more on the slew of policies enacted during the first years of the Roosevelt Administration, see Anthony J. Badger, *The New Deal: The Depression Years, 1933-1940* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1989). See also Steve Fraser and Gary Gerstle, eds., *The Rise and Fall of the New Deal Order, 1930-1980* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), 1-122.

37. Commissioner of Indian Affairs John Collier to Sherman Institute Superintendent Donald Biery, September 21, 1933, Box 38, Folder: Outing System, 1932-1933, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

38. Kenneth R. Philp, *John Collier's Crusade for Indian Reform, 1920-1954* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1977), 129. After reaching a high of \$11 million in appropriations for the fiscal year in 1932, the budget for the Office of Indian Affairs declined slowly and steadily throughout the 1930s, reaching a low of \$10 million in 1940.

39. Commissioner of Indian Affairs John Collier to Sherman Institute Superintendent Donald Biery, September 21, 1933, Box 38, Folder: Outing System, 1932-1933, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

40. For a look at the on-the-ground affects of Collier's Indian Reorganization Act, see Thomas Biolsi, *Organizing the Lakota: The Political Economy of the New Deal on the Pine Ridge and Rosebud Reservations* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1992).

41. For example, see David W. Daily, *Battle for the B.I.A.: G.E.E. Lindquist and the Missionary Crusade against John Collier* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2004), 36-80. See also Lawrence C. Kelly, *The Assault on Assimilation: John Collier and the Origins of Indian Policy Reform* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1983), and Kenneth R. Philp, *John Collier's Crusade for Indian Reform*.

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42. Philp, *John Collier's Crusade for Indian Reform*, 4-7.
43. Ibid., 7-15. For another perspective on Collier's years in New York City, see Kelly, *The Assault on Assimilation*, 199-201.
44. Philp, *John Collier's Crusade for Indian Reform*, 25-28.
45. Kelly, *The Assault on Assimilation*, 120.
46. Philp, *John Collier's Crusade for Indian Reform*, 97.
47. Kelly, *The Assault on Assimilation*, 129.
48. Philp, *John Collier's Crusade for Indian Reform*, 97.
49. Ibid., 131.
50. Ibid., 132.
51. Szasz, *Education and the American Indian*, 23-27.
52. Ibid. For more on Estelle Reel, see Lomawaima, "Estelle Reel."
53. Szasz, *Education and the American Indian*, 29-32.
54. Ibid., 48.
55. Between 1928 and 1933, the number of boarding schools operated by the Office of Indian Affairs dipped from seventy-seven to sixty-five. See Connell Szasz, *Education and the American Indian*, 30-32.
56. Philp, *John Collier's Crusade for Indian Reform*, 128-9.
57. Ibid.
58. Circular from Willard Beatty to non-reservation boarding schools, February 12, 1939, Box 112, Folder: Educational Tour, 1939, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.
59. Frank Conser died suddenly in November of 1931, and Biery replaced him early in 1932. Record of Employment, Personnel File for Frank Conser, NPRC.

60. Biery sent Ralph Johnson, Charles Flint, Robert Sneddon, and Frank Smith on the “educational tours” of the home reservations of Sherman students. Reservations visited included the Colorado River Indian Tribes, Hoopa Valley, Pala, Fort Bidwell, Tule River, Morongo, Santa Rosa, Mesa Grande, Santa Isabel. Rancherias visited included Colusa, Lakeport, Upper Lake, Tuolumne, Auberry, and Le Moore. See Willard Beatty to Donald Biery, n.d., Box 112, Folder: Educational Tour, 1939, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

61. Report on Field Trip, n.d., Box 112, Folder: Educational Tour and Follow-Up of Grads and Dropouts, 1939-1941 (3/3), RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

62. Ibid. On attempts by the Office of Indian Affairs to enroll more students in public schools, see Connell Szasz, *Education and the American Indian*, 89-105. In 1891, the Indian Office began contracting with public schools, paying \$10 per student, per year. Connell Szasz notes that by 1930, 59% of enrolled Indian children attended public schools, compared to 39% in federal Indian boarding schools.

63. Report on Field Trip, n.d., Box 112, Folder: Educational Tour and Follow-Up of Grads and Dropouts, 1939-1941 (3/3), RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

64. Migrant labor appears as an almost constant theme throughout accounts of “educational tours” in Northern California. For example, Mr. McCollum, a farmer who lived near the Susanville Rancheria, argued that working in the timber industry provided the most reliable income to local indigenous people. McCollum stated that “Indian students did not take to agriculture,” and that “many of the students returning permanently or on vacation were employed in the mills and the supporting utilities.” Report on Susanville Rancheria, Box 112, Folder: Educational Tour, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

65. Report on Tolumne Rancheria, June 10, 1941, Box 112, Folder: Educational Tour and Follow-up of Graduates and Dropouts, 1939-1941 (2/3), RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

66. Ibid.

67. Tentative Outline for the Senior Household Science Department, 1938-1939, Box 112, Folder: Vocational Education Reports, 1936-1939 (1/2), RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

68. Ibid. For an excellent account of the girls’ vocational program at Sherman Institute, see Katrina Paxton, “Learning Gender,” 174-86.

69. Edna Schnarr, Girls Vocational Curriculum, 1938-39, Box 112, Folder: Vocational Education Reports, 1936-39 (1/2), RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR; Indian Recipes, Senior and Sophomore Girls, n.d., Box 112, Folder: Vocational Education Reports, 1936-1939, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR. Recipes collected by Schnarr included mission stew, corn fritters,

hominy, wild rice, and acorn mush. Many of the recipes collected relied on foods not available on reservations in the Southwest—especially wild rice.

70. Edna Schnarr, Girls Vocational Curriculum, 1938-39, Box 112, Folder: Vocational Education Reports, 1936-39 (1/2), RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

71. Margaret Jacobs, *Engendered Encounters: Feminism and Pueblo Cultures, 1879-1834* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999), 149-79.

72. S.B. Kienholz to John Collier, December 4, 1930, Box 111, Folder: Vocational Education Surveys, 1930-34, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

73. Proceedings of the Conference on Vocational Education in Indian Schools, Box 111, Folder: Vocational Education Surveys, 1930-1934, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

74. For an excellent summary of battles among white reformers and artists over the meaning of Pueblo art, see Jacobs, *Engendered Encounters*, 149-79. Jacobs argues that anti-modern, feminist artists Mabel Dodge Luhan and Elizabeth DeHuff saw Pueblo pottery as a last vestige of “real” Pueblo, and that Luhan and DeHuff sought above all else to keep Pueblo pottery “authentic.” A second group, spearheaded by Indian day school teacher Clara True, argued that the utility of Indian art outweighed its symbolic value, and that Native communities should use art for profit rather than cultural preservation.

75. Proceedings of the Conference on Vocational Education in Indian Schools, Box 111, Folder: Vocational Education Surveys, 1930-1934, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

76. Ibid.

77. Ibid.

78. Girls Vocational Training Curriculum, 1936-37, Box 111, Folder: Vocational Education Surveys, 1930-34, RSI BIA, RG 75 NAR.

79. References used by students for “Indian” designs included Inez B. Westlake, *American Indian Designs* (Philadelphia: H.C. Pereberg, 1925); Ruth Bunzel, *The Pueblo Potter: A Study of Creative Imagination in Primitive Art* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1929); Charles Avery Amsden, *Navaho Weaving: Its Technic and History* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1929).

80. Report on Indian Arts and Crafts, n.d., Box 112, Folder: Vocational Education Reports, 1936-1939 (1/2), RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR. The production of everyday household objects with “Indian” flourishes began as early as 1906, when Ho Chunk artist Angel

DeCora worked indigenous designs into courses on arts and crafts at Carlisle Industrial School. See Simonsen, *Making Home Work*, Kindle edition, locations 2708-2808.

81. Edna Schnarr, Tentative Outline for the Senior Household Science Department, 1938-1939, Box 112, Folder: Vocational Education Reports, 1936-1939 (1/2), RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

82. See Hoxie, *A Final Promise*, 189-210. For connections between schooling and proletarianization, see Michael B. Katz, *Class, Bureaucracy, and the Schools: The Illusion of Educational Change* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1975); David Tyack, *The One Best System*; Joel Spring, *The American School, 1642-2004* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2004); Clarence Karier, ed., *Shaping the American Educational State, 1900 to the Present* (New York: the Free Press, 1975). Katz, Tyack, Spring, and Karier argue that the schools developed between 1880 and 1930 worked to hinder, rather than enable, class mobility and aimed to provide a cheap, placid pool of workers for industry. Within scholarship on the history of education, the essence of this argument remains intact. For recent reappraisals of the arguments put forth by Katz, Tyack, Spring, and Karier, see *Reconstructing the Common Good in Education: Coping with Intractable American Dilemmas*, edited by Larry Cuban and Dorothy Shipps (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000); *Inexcusable Omissions: Clarence Karier and the Critical Tradition in History of Education Scholarship*, edited by Karen Graves, Timothy Glander, and Christine Shea (New York: Peter Lang, 2001).

83. Lomawaima, *They Called It Prairie Light*, 65. Historian James Anderson discerns a similar process among young African Americans, as he argued that black industrial schools around the turn of the twentieth century promoted the “racially qualified forms of political and economic subordination” of black students. See his *The Education of Blacks in the South*, 3.

84. For black education at Hampton Institute, see Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, 33-78. For Indian education at Hampton, see Lindsey, *Indians at Hampton Institute*. See also Robert Francis Engs, *Educating the Disenfranchised and Disinherited: Samuel Chapman Armstrong and Hampton Institute, 1839-1893* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1999); Richard B. Sherman, “The Teachings of Hampton Institute: Social Equality, Racial Integrity, and the Virginia Public Assemblage Act of 1926,” *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 95 (July, 1987): 275-300; Wilma King, “Multi-Cultural Education at Hampton Institute: The Shawnees, A Case Study,” *Journal of Negro Education* 57 (Fall, 1988): 524-535.

85. In pointing out arguments for educational proletarianization that cut across race, I do not want to overstate similarities between educational systems designed for Native American, black, and white students. For example, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, black vocational schools modeled after Hampton and Tuskegee

sought to prepare black students to become teachers. Indian schools did not. As Vanessa Siddle Walker notes, black teachers and administrators often staffed black schools. After the turn of the twentieth century, Indian schools operated by the Office of Indian Affairs had relatively few native employees. See Walker, *Their Highest Potential: An African American School Community in the Segregated South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 9-10. For information on the employment of Indians within boarding schools, see Ahern, "An Experiment Aborted."

86. Report on Field Trip, Box 112, Folder: Educational Tour and Follow-Up of Grads and Dropouts, 1939-1941 (3/3), RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

87. "From Alturas to Susanville," Box 112, Folder: Educational Tour, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

88. Philp, *John Collier's Crusade for Indian Reform*, 129. For original quote, see Joseph Cash and Herbert T. Hoover, eds., *To Be an Indian: An Oral History* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971), 126.

89. Here, I take important cues from Philip J. Deloria's *Indians in Unexpected Places*, esp. 109-135. Deloria is one of the first to examine the experiences of Native people who attended college during the early twentieth century. See also Joel Pfister, *The Yale Indian: The Education of Henry Roe Cloud* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009).

90. Sherman Superintendent Frank Conser to Charles Rhoads, June 14, 1928, Box 37, Folder: Junior College Students, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

91. Ibid. Conser referred especially to "The Problem of Indian Affairs," (also known as the Meriam Report) a 1928 report from the Institute for Government Relations that alleged major misconduct within federal Indian boarding schools, including poor academic curricula, unsanitary conditions, and inadequate meals. See the Institute for Government Affairs, *The Problem of Indian Administration*.

92. Assistant Commissioner of Indian Affairs E.B. Merritt to Frank Conser, August 21, 1928, Box 37, Folder: Junior College Students, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

93. Ibid.

94. Ibid.

95. Gretchen Harvey, "Muskrat, Ruth (Bronson)," in *Encyclopedia of North American Indians: Native American History, Culture, and Life from Paleo-Indians to Present*, ed. Frederick E. Hoxie (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1996), 413-14.

96. Donald Biery to Ruth Muskrat Bronson, June 7, 1939, Box 26, Folder: 54787-1934, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NADC; Office of Indian Affairs Circular no. 57183, Regulation for Administration of the Educational Loan Fund, September 25, 1931, Box 37, Folder: Junior College Students, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

97. As he took office in 1933, Collier wrote to Sherman Institute Superintendent Donald Biery to inquire as to why students at Sherman Institute needed loans for tuition when they already received room and board free of cost. John Collier to Donald Biery, April 29, 1933, Folder: Junior College, Box 37, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR. Section 11 of the Wheeler Howard set aside \$250,000 per year to provide loans for American Indian people attending trade and vocational schools, colleges, and universities. Tellingly, the bill made only \$50,000 per year available for students in colleges in universities; the remainder went to students in vocational and trade programs. For a concise look at support for higher education provided by the Wheeler Howard Bill, see Connell Szasz, *Education and the American Indian*, 102-103.

98. Director of Indian Education Willard Beatty, who served under commissioners Rhoads and Collier, envisioned the college scholarship and loan program as a means to educate American Indians and attract them into employment positions within the federal Indian bureaucracy. See Mildred Van Every, "Findings from the Educational Staff Conference, Riverside, California, November 14-15, 1938," Box 27, Folder: 54787-1934, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NADC.

99. For costs of attending Riverside Junior College, see Donald Biery to Naomi Hefferman, August 4, 1932, Box 37, Folder: Junior College, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR; Carl Moore to Oscar H. Lipps, June 21, 1932, Box 37, Folder: Junior College, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR; Riverside Junior College Circular of Information, 1929-1930, Box 19, Folder: 46675-1929, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NADC.

100. Request for Allotment, S.A., 1933, Box 10, Folder: 19015-1933, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NADC; Request for Allotment, C.Y., Box 10, Folder: 19015-1933, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NADC.

101. Medical Examination Report, K.L.A., Box 10, Folder: 37188-1934, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NADC; K.L.A., Certificate of High School Study, Haskell Institute, Box 10, Folder: 37188-1934, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NADC.

102. K.L.A. to Ruth Muskrat Bronson, May 9, 1934, Box 10, Folder: 37188-1934, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NADC.

103. Yakima Agency Superintendent C.H. Whitlock to John Collier, August 11, 1933, Box 10, Folder: 37188, 1933, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NADC; John Collier to E.W., September 19, 1933, Box 10, Folder: 37188, 1933, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NADC.

104. While these students did not stay at Sherman Institute, employees from the school occasionally visited them to monitor their progress. See Girls' Advisor Olive E. Ellis to Donald Biery, April 25, 1936, Box 26, Folder: 54787-1934, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NADC.

105. Eight graduates of Sherman Institute received loans of \$308 from the Office of Indian Affairs to attend Bacone College for the 1932-1933 school year. Donald Biery to William Rhodes, June 9, 1932, Box 37, Folder: Junior College Students, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

106. Student Record, SCF E.M., Box 246, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

107. On the increasing popularity of educating students in public schools, see Margaret Connell Szasz, *Education and the American Indian*, 89-105. With the Johnson-O'Malley Act of 1934, the Office of Indian Affairs began entering into contracts with individual states to provide support for Native children in public schools.

108. Grade Reports, Riverside Polytechnic High School, 1932, SCF E.M., Box 246, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR. Moore earned strong grades in his last semester at Riverside Polytechnic—"A"s in band and orchestra, "B"s in chemistry and sociology.

109. E.M. to Donald Biery, August 22, 1934, SCF E.M., Box 246, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

110. Ibid.

111. E.M. to Ruth Muskrat Bronson, n.d., Box 10, Folder: 37188, 1933, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NADC; John Collier to Sherman Superintendent Donald Biery, August 14, 1934, SCF E.M., Box 246, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

112. Sherman Institute Superintendent Donald Biery to Ruth Muskrat Bronson, October 10, 1935, Box 10, Folder: 50784-1934, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NADC; Ruth Muskrat Bronson to A.G., October 24, 1935, Box 10, Folder: 50784-1934, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NADC.

113. Ruth Muskrat Bronson to Los Angeles Social Worker Kathryn Von Hinzmann, August 17, 1937, Box 10, Folder: 50784-1934, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NADC.

114. For a detailed look at the educational philosophy of Richard Henry Pratt, see Adams, *Education for Extinction*, 36-51.

115. On the sudden turn away from the notion that Native American peoples might assimilate completely into the American polity, see Hoxie, *A Final Promise*, 42-120. See also Holm, *The Great Confusion in Indian Affairs*, 1-50. On connections between concerns over immigrants and people of color during the early twentieth century, see Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues*, 180-242. See also Higham, *Strangers in the Land*, 131-94. For a look at how increasingly negative assessments of the intellectual capabilities of indigenous peoples filtered into curricula and classrooms of federal Indian boarding schools, see Lomawaima, *The Called It Prairie Light*, 65-77.

116. Classroom Report on Loretta K. Hurley, January 14, 1929, Box 17, Folder: Supervisory Reports, 1929-1931, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

117. E.M. to Ruth Muskrat Bronson, January 11, 1936, SCF E.M., Box 246, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR. For a fascinating portrait of the community of urban American Indians that coalesced around the Oakland YWCA during the 1930s and 1940s, see the personal interview of YWCA social worker Mildred Van Every, conducted by Susan Lobo, October 35, 1979, Box 2, Folder 8: Oral History Interview, 1979-1980, Mildred Van Every Papers, BANC MSS 99/142, BL, UCB. See also William Willard, "Outing, Relocation, and Employment Assistance: The Impact of Federal Indian Population Dispersal Programs in the Bay Area," *Wicazo Sa Review* 12, no. 1 (Spring 1997), 31. For another take on the intertribal social scene in the early-twentieth-century San Francisco Bay Area, see Jacobs, "Working on the Domestic Frontier," 165-99.

118. E.M. to Ruth Muskrat Bronson, January 11, 1936, SCF E.M., Box 246, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

119. Donald Biery to Ruth Muskrat Bronson, August 17, 1936, SCF E.M., Box 246, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR.

120. Grades from Riverside Junior College, Received 7/21/1935, Box 27, Folder: 54787-1934, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NADC.

121. C.Y. to Ruth Muskrat Bronson, January 26, 1934, Box 10, Folder: 19015-1933, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NADC.

122. From the fall of 1933 to the spring of 1935, Paiute Viola Martinez and Ute Eunice Lynn excelled at Riverside Junior College and the California State Teachers' College in Santa Barbara, where both received scholarship and loan support from the Office of Indian Affairs. After graduating in 1938, both worked as social workers—Maroney for the City of Los Angeles, and Lynn for the California State Relief Agency. Grades from

Riverside Junior College, Received 7/21/1935, Folder: 54787-1934, Box 27, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NADC; Typed excerpt from the *Riverside Press*, March 28, 1935, Folder: 00-1935, Box 20, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NADC. Kathryn Von Hinzmann to Uintah and Ouray Agent Lewis Page, April 7, 1937, SCF Eunice Lynn, Box 219, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR; Carson Agency Welfare Agent Lucille Hamner to Los Angeles Social Worker Kathryn Von Hinzmann, October 2, 1937, SCF Eunice Lynn, Box 219, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR. On the experiences of Lynn and Maroney at the State Teachers' College, see Diana Meyers Bahr, *Viola Martinez, California Paiute: Living in Two Worlds* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2010), 67-87. On the careers of Lynn and Maroney, see Eunice Lynn to Donald Biery, October 25, 1939, SCF Eunice Lynn, Box 219, CCF, RSI, BIA, RG 75 NAR, and Bahr, *Viola Martinez*, 100-120.

123. See especially Deloria, *Indians in Unexpected Places*.

124. To date, indigenous higher education in the early twentieth century has received relatively little attention. See Cary Michael Carney, *Native American Education in the United States* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1999), 43-94; Connell Szasz, *Education and the American Indian*, 102-103; Pfister, *The Yale Indian*. It should be noted here that more than a few scholars have looked at Native higher education in the self-determination era of the 1960s and 1970s. See, for example, Connell Szasz, *Education and the American Indian*, 102-122, 189-239; Vine Deloria, Jr., and Daniel R. Wildcat, *Power and Place: Indian Education in America* (Boulder, CO: Fulcrum, 2001), 123-33; Duane Champagne and Jay Strauss, eds., *Native American Studies in Higher Education: Models for Collaboration between Universities and Indigenous Nations* (Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira Press, 2002).

125. Harvey, "Muskrat, Ruth (Bronson)," 414.

Conclusion

Unthinkable Histories? American Indians, Bureaucracies, and Work

In February of 2012, I sat inside the research room at the National Archives in Perris, California, and worked furiously to finish photographing a box of documents before the end of the day. Months ago, I had been optimistic in my ability to work efficiently at the archives as I scheduled a spring full of travel for research and academic conferences. As it happened, I covered archival ground more slowly than I had anticipated. On that day, I struck up a conversation with the researcher seated next to me, who paged intently through bound volumes of documents, researching an issue related to tribal enrollment. As I listened to the fascinating details of the researcher's tribe and its history, I felt the unique blend of joy and guilt brought by a break from archival monotony for a conversation. Urgency quickly melted away from the task at hand, and I resolved to finish with my research when I returned from my trip.

I could not listen passively forever, however, and after a few minutes, my fellow researcher raised the much-dreaded question. "So," she asked, "what are you working on?" I briefly explained that I was studying Native labor in Southern California, and I mentioned the outing program at Sherman Institute. My new friend's eyes lit up. "Sherman! I know all about Sherman Institute," she said. The woman's uncle had attended the school during the 1930s. I asked her if her uncle had participated in the outing system at the school. "Sure," she said. "He loved it," she said, pausing to reflect for a moment. "He always talked about 'Dear 'Ole Sherman.'" From there, the

conversation took an unexpected turn. “With the things they did to my uncle,” said the woman, “it’s unreal that he would say something like that.” The thought that her uncle might have managed to “turn the power” and gain positive experiences from time spent at such a coercive and ethnocentric school seemed an impossible one.

In more ways than one, the woman I met in the archives that day provided some important reminders about the boarding school experience. Sherman Institute and other boarding schools like it aimed to forever eradicate Native community identities. Sherman broke up families. It attempted to snuff out indigenous languages among its students—sometimes successfully. It beat students. It killed them with disease. At different times and for many different people, Sherman Institute was a terrible place. If my new friend gave some important reminders about the violence done to Native peoples and cultures at federal Indian schools during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, she also raised some troubling questions. How to account for those who shrewdly navigated labor programs, both at federal Indian boarding schools and at the outing centers that appeared in the big cities of the west during the early twentieth century, without downplaying the violence that outing did to Native communities?

The narratives of Native people who negotiated outing systems in Southern California are not stories of pure joy or triumph. Rather, they highlight the difficult choices made by indigenous people who maneuvered creatively within labor programs built atop the deeply ethnocentric goals of erasing indigenous cultures and creating a body of cheap, pliable laborers. At Sherman Institute, Native people from across the western United States dove headfirst into a labor program that aimed to erase their

identities and cultures, to transform them into willing workers who would enter the so-called “ladder of civilization” at the bottom rung. On top of the challenges of communicating through barriers of language and culture, young women faced the constant threat of sexual advances from male members of their outing households. They fought to keep in touch with friends from school, and to maintain ties with their families and communities as they lived and labored within the confines of white households of Riverside and nearby communities. Young men in the outing system at Sherman Institute fought loneliness, isolation, and dangerous working conditions. Many struggled just to receive their hard-earned wages. Yet they often earned more money than they could on or near depressed reservation economies. During the first decade of outing at Sherman Institute, then, Native students and their communities quickly learned to survive the challenges of the outing system, and even to use it for their own purposes.

These trends continued as the outing system spread to Los Angeles in 1918. The outing cottage on Normandie Avenue became a hub for young, Native women from boarding schools and reservations across the American Southwest to find jobs and housing in the city. In many respects, the challenges encountered by young women at the Los Angeles Outing Center mirrored those faced by students who found work through labor programs at Sherman Institute: isolation, the threat of sexual advances by male household members, and frequent difficulty in securing payments from reluctant employers. Just like in Riverside, an underfunded labor bureaucracy staffed by well-meaning but harried employees provided little or no protection from these dangers. Layered atop these difficulties were the incredible challenges of adjusting to life within a

booming metropolis. Far from home, Native women who used the outing center to find employment found themselves spread across the vast, smoggy, noisy expanse of early-twentieth-century Los Angeles.

Despite the hardships of domestic labor in Los Angeles, young women affiliated with the outing center developed tribal and intertribal social networks, which provided opportunities to socialize and find new jobs if and when life became difficult with the employers provided by the Office of Indian Affairs. They fought to create time and space beyond the gaze of their employers, sometimes slipping into the parks and movie theaters of Los Angeles to build friendships and romances. They became adept in the language of federal administrators, touting the “uplifting” benefits of life lived with white employers when school or reservation superintendents tried to call them home before they were ready to leave the city. By the time that changes in leadership at the Office of Indian Affairs and the tightening grip of economic depression brought the outing system in Los Angeles to a close in 1933, Native people associated with the program had become experts in bureaucracy. If outing systems at Sherman Institute and in Los Angeles had been designed to speed the erasure of indigenous cultures and provide a pool of cheap laborers for the businesses and households of Southern California, they failed to live up to their purpose. Instead, outing programs became vessels into jobs, housing, and intertribal social networks in the city.

It is my hope that narratives from the outing centers at Sherman Institute and in Los Angeles help us to reconsider the fundamental experiences of Native communities as they negotiated the complexities of interacting with the colonizing power of the United

States government during the early twentieth century. In Southern California, Native individuals and their communities took clear-eyed approaches to outing labor programs, drawing from them the most that they could. By no means are these stories meant to obscure deeply ethnocentric roots of outing labor. Both the ideological moorings of outing systems and their terrible living and working conditions created stress, pain, and suffering that surely cannot be fully comprehended, let alone communicated, from the cozy armchair of the historian. Stories from the outing systems of Southern California demonstrate that, despite these challenges, many indigenous people managed to creatively engage these programs and bend them—sometimes subtly, other times explicitly—toward their own desires and purposes.

Narratives built around students and communities who creatively engaged government labor programs suggest important possibilities for how we think about relationships between indigenous peoples and the state structures that aimed at different times to control, improve, and erase them. Recent studies have challenged us consider the experiences of Native people who moved beyond reservations as they pursued knowledge, work, and education. In the words of Philip J. Deloria, many Indians often defied historical and contemporary expectations and ended up in “unexpected places.”¹ Stories from the outing systems of Southern California suggest that even when Native people remained within the expected places of government bureaucracies, they could do unexpected things. Some won small victories—stealing hours to go to the movies or forming romantic relationships beyond the prying eyes of employers and outing matrons. Others managed grander feats, using labor programs that meant to erase indigenous

identities in order to make more money than they could on their reservations and return home to live as wealthier Native people. Either way, participation within the outing systems of Southern California did not entail complete domination and subjugation. On the contrary, many Native people managed to maneuver creatively within the structure of the outing system in order to achieve goals and aims of their own choosing.

This is not to argue that those who found themselves working within the outing system had complete control over their own destinies, or that they somehow managed to forge completely positive experiences from time spent working within an ethnocentric and dangerously unsupervised program. Rather, these stories suggest a more complex balance between structure and agency among Native peoples and the myriad structures erected by the federal government to control and change them. Even as they operated within the broader constraints put forth by the federal government and the intimate, sometimes insidious influences of the employees who turned the gears of government programs aimed at Indigenous peoples, Native people managed to shape their own lives, often in ways informed by their cultures.²

In many ways, narratives of those who blended labor, culture, and migration as they negotiated their experiences with the Office of Indian Affairs do not fit within popular, or even scholarly narratives about indigenous communities of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Many of these accounts have become trapped within a conceptual space that historian Daniel Usner has called “the invented opposition between authenticity and annihilation.”³ A potent combination of ideas and arguments holds them there. For hundreds of years, colonial and government officials centered prescriptions for

the “uplift” and assimilation of Native peoples on labor. As missionaries and Indian agents worked desperately to convince Native communities of the merits of agriculture, for example, they overlooked the integral place that cultivated plants already held within the cultures of many indigenous groups.⁴ Much in the same way, as officials from the Office of Indian Affairs preached the importance of hard work to Native people at Sherman Institute and other boarding schools across the American West, they remained blind to the increasingly important place of wage labor on resource-starved reservations and rancherias. Where government officials acknowledged Indians who migrated and worked beyond the boundaries of reservations, they often did so only in service of the notion of assimilation. Indians who traveled and worked for wages, they argued, had shed Native cultures in favor of white, Protestant ways of life. Assimilation had borne fruit. They were Indians no more.

If historical trends have hidden from view the ways in which indigenous peoples migrated and worked, so too have political and economic strategies adopted by some Native people. Historians Paige Raibmon and Erika Marie Bsumek noted that many Native communities integrated ideas about the so-called “vanishing Indian” into their business practices. As Indian arts and crafts became increasingly popular during the first decades of the twentieth century, Native artisans used to their advantage the notion that authentic indigenous wares would be a scarce commodity as fewer and fewer “real Indians” remained. “Participating in the manufacture of authenticity,” noted Raibmon, “could bring economic, cultural, and political gains.”⁵ Moreover, when tribal land bases came under pressure from squatters and speculators, indigenous communities invoked

deep and lasting connections with reservation landscapes in order to protect what land they had left. As Frederick E. Hoxie has noted, by the mid-twentieth century, reservations that had once seemed like prisons had been transformed into places of refuge for indigenous families, their cultures, and their languages. Political, economic, and cultural ties to reservation landscapes have highlighted a distinct set of paths that carried indigenous communities through the difficult years of the early twentieth century and into the era of activism and renewed political sovereignty of the mid to late twentieth century.⁶ Yet, these prominent themes have obscured other, equally important survival strategies that carried Native people beyond the reservation and into the towns and cities of the American West during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The study of federal Indian boarding schools has not been immune from notions of indigenous authenticity. For the most part, the idea that Native students and their communities might have integrated a federal Indian boarding school and its outing system within patterns of migration and wage labor remains an unthinkable one.⁷ To be sure, scholars have done much to unearth Native agency at the schools, demonstrating how Native students managed to hold onto their cultures and build new, intertribal friendships in spite of the tedious, dangerous, and brutally ethnocentric day-to-day routines of the schools.⁸ Others have noted that Native families utilized the schools for food and shelter during times of economic difficulty.⁹ More recently, historian Matthew Sakiestewa Gilbert moved an indigenous culture to the center of the boarding school story in his *Education beyond the Mesas: Hopi Students at Sherman Institute, 1902-1929*. By approaching Sherman Institute through the lens of Hopi culture, Sakiestewa Gilbert

pushed the study of Indian education even further towards the acknowledgement of indigenous agency in navigating the treacherous waters of federal Indian bureaucracy.¹⁰ Slowly but surely, work from Sakiestewa Gilbert and others provided depth and texture to what we know about indigenous approaches to federal Indian education bureaucracies. Outing narratives suggest that even more can be done to unearth indigenous approaches to federal Indian boarding schools and other colonizing structures.

The voices of Native outing laborers in Southern California carry beyond the literatures on Indigenous education and labor and echo toward the broader study of Native America during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Until recently, scholars examined the experiences of Indigenous peoples almost exclusively through the somewhat restrictive lens of government policy. For historians especially, the edicts of politicians and bureaucrats have shaped how and where to look at Indigenous peoples and their histories. As a result, the way that we think about Native peoples of the so-called “Reservation Era” often functions along the lines of the policies that the federal government built in order to solve the so-called “Indian problem.” Indians, then, lived exclusively on reservations. Many went to off-reservation boarding schools, where they remained trapped within the walls of the institutions that sought to change them forever. When their boarding school days came to a close, the story goes, Native people returned to their reservations to live out their lives in isolation and poverty. Colonial structures, then, have been the subjects of too many histories, and Native people only objects.

As a result of policy-oriented approaches, most studies of Native peoples during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries have portrayed indigenous peoples as

isolated from the changes associated with modernity and capitalism, including industrialization, specialization, secularization, and the rise of complex bureaucracies.¹¹ The same blend of rhetoric and practice among government officials and Native communities that have obscured indigenous migration and wage labor have kept words such as “American Indian” and “modern” from being considered in tandem. Government officials treated reservation-based Indigenous communities as culturally backward peoples who had yet to embrace the acquisitive, market-based behaviors associated with “civilized” living. In the eyes of Indian agents and boarding school superintendents, those who farmed, ran stores, or lived on allotments had moved past their Indigenous identities and become just like white, Protestant people. And, within Native communities, the production of curios and the protection of reservation lands and resources sometimes served to widen the divide between indigeneity and modernity. Over time, then, the very notion of “Indianness” became deeply tied to the anti-modern.

By highlighting the agency of Native people as they navigated the complex and ever-changing labor policies of the Office of Indian Affairs, stories from the outing centers of Southern California push back against the false divide between indigenous peoples and modernity. Men and women who braved the outing system bore little resemblance to popular images of indigenous people at boarding schools and on reservations, subject to total control by federal officials, stuck in time and space. On the contrary, Native people who engaged outing systems in Southern California often travelled hundreds and sometimes thousands of miles to find wage labor opportunities. They came into contact with new languages and worldviews as they formed relationships

with working people from across the globe in the neighborhoods of South and West Los Angeles and on the factory-style farms that dotted the city's periphery. By obtaining jobs, housing, and other forms of support from outing centers at Sherman Institute and in Los Angeles, Native people demonstrated nuanced understandings of programs run by the Office of Indian Affairs. This was no small feat, as the Indian Office comprised one of the largest and most complex bureaucracies in the United States—and in the world—during the early twentieth century. As they participated in outing, many Native people worked to maintain connections with their home reservations, their people, and their cultures. Others formed tribal and intertribal communities in the city. In the outing systems of Southern California, mobility, wage labor, and bureaucracy became integral parts of stories that proved to be both modern and Indigenous.

In the end, voices from the outing system in Southern California speak to the question raised as I conversed with a descendant of a student from Sherman Institute in the National Archives. Can we recover the actions and perspectives—*the agency*—of indigenous people who managed to draw benefits from their interactions with the Office of Indian Affairs without obscuring the damage done to Native peoples by the federal government? The answer, I hope, is yes. Either way, the stakes are high. It would be easy to keep those indigenous people who braved the outing system—and all Native people of the late nineteenth century, for that matter— within the familiar tropes of cultural stasis and abject victimhood. But narratives from Sherman Institute and the Los Angeles Outing Center suggest that the story proved to be much more complex. In Southern California and beyond, Native people crafted nuanced and subtle approaches to the

federal government. Sometimes, economic strategies employed by Native individuals and communities took them into the very heart of a bureaucracy that existed to annihilate their identities. During those journeys, they combined indigenous perspectives and cultures with deep knowledge of federal bureaucracy and wage labor in order to survive the hard years of the Reservation Era. These narratives provide a clearer picture of how Native peoples faced down a massive, state sponsored effort at cultural erasure and emerged into the twenty-first century with indigenous identities intact.

Endnotes

1. Deloria, *Indians in Unexpected Places*.
2. My discussion of structure versus agency is informed by historian Devra Weber. See her *Dark Sweat, White Gold*, 1-16.
3. See Usner, *Indian Work*, 145.
4. *Ibid.*, 18-41.
5. Erika Marie Bsumek, *Indian-Made: Navajo Culture in the Marketplace, 1868-1940* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2008); Paige Raibmon, *Authentic Indians: Episodes of Encounter from the Late-Nineteenth-Century Northwest Coast* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), 135-56.
6. Hoxie, *A Final Promise*, 239-44. For a deep examination of the relationship between place and identity within an indigenous community, see Keith Basso, *Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language among the Western Apache* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996).
7. On the concept of “unthinkable histories,” see Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston: Beacon, 1997).
8. See Adams, “The Brighter Side of Boarding Schools,” and Ellis, “We Had A Lot of Fun of Course, But That Wasn’t the School Part.”
9. Child, *Boarding School Seasons*, 15, 23; Vuckovic, *Voices from Haskell*, 123.
10. Sakiestewa Gilbert, *Education beyond the Mesas*, 163-69.
11. See Colleen O’Neill and Brian Hosmer’s discussion of indigenous peoples and modernity in their Introduction to *Native Pathways*, esp. 2-9.

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