BECOMING FIRST AMERICANS: EXPLAINING A POLYBIAN-INDIAN MOVEMENT IN THE AMERICAN SOUTHEAST

By

REYDA L TAYLOR

A DISSERTATION PRESENTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

2010
To my husband, sisters, parents, and grandparents
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many people deserve thanks for helping guide me in the production of this dissertation. First, I would like to thank my PhD advisor, John Moore, for his support and guidance throughout this process and throughout my years at the University of Florida. I would also like to thank current committee members, Bron Taylor, Peter Collings, and Augusto Oyuela-Caycedo, as well as past committee member Gene Thursby, for their direction, advice, and encouragement. Of course, I would never have arrived at the study of anthropology if not for the support of my undergraduate instructors and advisors while at Ouachita Baptist University, particularly Randall Wight, Randolph Smith, Trey Berry, and Mary Beth Trubitt. I would also like to acknowledge my husband, Joe Gardial, for his unwavering support and late night editing. Thanks also go to my parents, Jim and Karen Taylor, for their encouragement and support. Finally, I would like to thank all of the participants in the many organizations, powwows, rendezvous, and primitivist events who so graciously included me in their activities and shared with me their insights.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

| Acknowledgments | ...... | 4 |
| List of Figures | ...... | 7 |
| Abstract | ...... | 8 |

## CHAPTER

1. **INTRODUCTION**
   - Southeastern Polybian Indian Movement ..... 12
   - Outline of Chapters ..... 17

2. **THEORY AND METHODS**
   - Power and Ideas ..... 20
   - Polybianness ..... 27
   - Methods ..... 31

3. **HOBBYISTS, WANNABES, AND THE SOUTHEAST SYNDROME**
   - Wannabeism and Appropriation ..... 38
   - The Idealization of Indians and Indian Hobbyism ..... 40
   - The Southeast Syndrome and Florida ..... 49
   - A Note on Nomenclature ..... 55

4. **INDIANS IN AMERICAN MYTHOLOGY AND AMERICAN ETHNOGENESIS**
   - The Noble Savage ..... 63
   - From Red Men to Boy Scouts ..... 70
   - Fraternal Pan-Indianism ..... 80
   - What is Being Appropriated ..... 87

5. **FROM COMMODITIZATION TO CLASS CREATION**
   - Institutionalizing Indian Identity ..... 90
   - Indian Arts and Craft Act ..... 97
   - Creating a New Category ..... 102
   - Class Versus Ethnicity ..... 108
   - Subverting Power Through a Market for Things Indian in the Southeast ..... 112
6 REGIONAL NETWORK OF INDIAN ORGANIZING AND RECRUITING .......... 120

Institutions: Organizations and Events .......................................................... 124
Primitivism ........................................................................................................... 128
Powwows and Indian Festivals ......................................................................... 130
Powwow Structure ............................................................................................ 133
Historical Reenactment .................................................................................... 145
Rendezvous Event Structure ............................................................................ 152
Native American Indianist Culture Organizations (NAICOs) ......................... 159
Expanding the Network: Non-Indian Group Participation .............................. 168

7 IDENTITY AND THE INDIAN WAY ................................................................ 178

Indian Identity ..................................................................................................... 180
Revitalization and Indian Education .................................................................. 191
Acquiring Knowledge ......................................................................................... 196
The Indian Way .................................................................................................. 201
Wannabes or Wannaknows .............................................................................. 208

8 COMPETITION, PROFITS, AND DISENCHANTING THE POWWOW ........ 212

Competition and Powwow Production ............................................................... 213
American-Made or Indian-Made ........................................................................ 221
Inversion of Authenticity .................................................................................... 224

9 CONCLUSION .................................................................................................. 229

Identity, Ideology, and Competition .................................................................. 230
Southeastern Polybian Indian Movement: An Ethnogenesis ............................ 234
Indian Versus Non-Indian .................................................................................. 239

LIST OF REFERENCES ......................................................................................... 246

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH ................................................................................... 259
## LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5-1</td>
<td>Indian Grab Bag, Indian pencil, and Indian cigarette or cell phone carrier</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-2</td>
<td>“Indian” style food at Florida powwow</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-1</td>
<td>Map of Florida Powwows and Indian Festivals</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-2</td>
<td>Grand entry ceremonies at Central Florida powwow</td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-3</td>
<td>Indian associated encampment area at a Central Florida rendezvous</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-4</td>
<td>Picture of author’s “camp.”</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-5</td>
<td>Rendezvous “trade blanket.”</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-6</td>
<td>Map of organizing dates for groups that I was aware of during fieldwork.</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-1</td>
<td>Children’s educational set-up at a powwow</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-1</td>
<td>A vendor’s “kids table”</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For decades in Central Florida, there have been a growing number of formal, voluntary groups whose members associate their collectiveness with Indianness and Indian identity, and who are interested in reviving and perpetuating cultural and religious practices that they perceive to be linked to Indians—the Indian Ways, Old Ways, or Red Road. These groups organize and recruit through a substructure of events and activities associated with Indian identity—primarily commercial powwows, but also historical reenactments and primitivist events—where *things* Indian are consumed. Dominant groups in this network appear to be primarily composed of people who are reclaiming or converting to an Indian identity or who do not claim an Indian identity but a shared adherence to lifeways they associate with Indianness. This movement is not simply wannabeism or hobbyism, as outsiders regularly labeled it, nor is it strictly New Age or neopagansim. This movement is a geographically unique nativist new religious movement and includes elements of ethnogenesis—more akin to celtism movements in Europe.

While conducting fieldwork in this network, I encountered numerous individuals and groups who described “legal,” “full-blood,” and “reservation” Indians as an out-group, stereotyped as having lost the Indian Ways and become part of dominant society. This is paradoxical, given that many individuals and organizations idealized Indians, claimed to honor
Indian people, and perceived of themselves as part of a regional Indian community that was especially inclusive.

I believe that the proliferation of these paradoxical ideas, and ideologies that support them, is the result of conflict between legitimated *types* of Indians and people interested in Indian identity that do not have legitimated identities. Organized primarily upon a market for *things* Indian, groups and regional event participants are not only dependent on the valuation of Indian identity, but are also more likely to come into conflict with more legitimated Indian identities, identities that recent federal regulations have significantly empowered in the market. Ideas and ideologies that prejudice against contemporary Native Americans in this regional new religious movement, are intertwined with broader power struggles to harness the profit of social labor in the market of things Indian.
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

For decades in Central Florida, as well as the broader Southeastern United States, there have been an increasing number of formal, voluntary organizations whose members associate their collectiveness with Indian identity or cultural and religious practices that they perceive to be linked to Indians. In my own research among this growing network, whether participants perceived themselves to be Indians or just practitioners of lifeways that they attributed to Indians, groups and individuals often identified themselves as insiders to a regional or national community bound by Indianness—what many labeled the “intertribal” or “multicultural” community.

Participants in these groups and their associated public events often described themselves, their public activities, and the intertribal community to be broadly inclusive, and part of an extensive, loosely networked, national collective of people with similar religious and nationalist interests. Participants in this network were particularly interested in reviving idealized traits they associated with Indians. A few even designated themselves and their activities to be part of an Indian movement, which for some was fulfillment of ancient prophecies. This movement, however, was perceived of as unique from historical Indian or Pan-Indian movements, because it did not exclude non-Indians.

Paradoxically, within this network, community, or movement (however it may be imagined), although participants idealized Indians and depicted themselves as inclusionary, I regularly encountered ideas and ideologies that negatively stereotyped contemporary tribes and Indians who had “full-blood” or “legal” identities. Many participants simultaneously idealized Indians and prejudiced against contemporary Indian people. This dissertation has two primary goals, to explain this paradox and to describe this movement.
In an effort to explain this apparent paradox, I will draw on Eric Wolf, particularly his work in *Envisioned Power* (1999), in which he argued that ideas, social structures, and power are interrelated and vary according to the mode of social labor. I will argue that dominant ideologies, particularly those that prejudice against contemporary Native Americans in this regional movement, are intertwined with broader power struggles to harness the profit of social labor in the market of *things* Indian.

To make my argument I will utilize the approach used by Wolf and developed by Alfred Kroeber called “descriptive integration” (1935). I will locate this case study “in space and time, bring together extant information to exhibit relationships among the domains of group life, and define the external forces that impinge on the people studied” (Wolf 1999:18). Without understanding the development of ideas about Native Americans in American ethnogenic mythology, the history of efforts by interest groups to impose power within the market for things Indian, or the geographic history of Native Americans in the Southeastern United States, it is impossible to understand, simply through an ethnographic account, exactly how such prejudiced ideologies could emerge and become popular within a population whose members profess to be interested in and idealize Indians. Therefore, the scope of this dissertation will be in providing original ethnographic information—particularly focusing on ideology, means of organizing, and access to resources—as well as geographic and historic information from other sources, to explain paradoxical ideologies.

Wolf (1999) analyzed three cases—the extremely flamboyant rituals of the Kwakiutl, the 15th and 16th century rise in human sacrifice among the Aztecs, and the massive slaughter of millions by National Socialist Germany. These cases differ from mine significantly, in that they all represent groups with distinct institutionalized boundaries tied to group identity and control of
resources. The movement and population in focus in this dissertation does not have social boundaries that are powerful enough to be institutionalized, further it is built on a niche commodity market dependent on the exchangeable value of a symbol—Indianness. Nonetheless, I believe I can show that Wolf’s basic argument still has explanatory power.

I will further develop Wolf’s theory by drawing upon Pierre Bourdieu’s theory of practice, Michael Kearney’s reconceptualization of the relationship between modes of production and identity, and Richard Jenkins’ arguments about the relationship between institutions and the construction of identity. Underlying these theorists and theories is a shared Marxian perspective emphasizing materialism, conflict, and relational systems.

This dissertation will not address the reasons why people enter this movement or why they participate in the market for things Indian. Although some data was collected on this, such information is not directly relevant to my argument. This dissertation will also not answer the question “are these people Indian?” My argument does not require answering such a question. On the contrary, my argument points out the ways that such a question is misrecognition of the competition to control profits of social labor in a niche commodity market and how such competition is tied to the construction of ideology and social structure.

**Southeastern Polybian Indian Movement**

This movement is not simply wannabeism or hobbyism, as it was regularly labeled by outsiders, nor is it strictly New Age or neopagansim. I believe this movement is a geographically unique nativist new religious movement (Linton 1943) that includes elements of ethnogenesis—more akin to celtism movements in Europe. To describe this movement and its relationship to modes of production, I am adapting the term “polybian” from Michael Kearney’s *Reconceptualizing the Peasantry* (1996).
In trying to understand the changing perceptions about the peasant as type, Kearney (1996) drew on Bourdieu, to argue that identities within fields are internally differentiated. External types are largely given by the nation-state and are within firm boundaries. Internally differentiated persons are “transforming” and maintain somewhat fluid identities that are suspect and illegitimate (Kearney 1996:141). These internally differentiated persons, who Kearney (1996:143) often termed “polybians,” subvert the hard categories maintained by the nation-state, situating themselves externally, in an ambiguous place that threatens those categories. I will henceforth refer to this movement as the Southeastern Polybian Indian Movement (SPIM).

Many organizations and their associated events have received public recognition by local civic or media entities as legitimate Indian groups or, at least, as local authorities on Indian issues and history. These organizations and the associated event network, however, appeared to be primarily composed of people who did not immediately inherit an Indian identity. Although groups did not appear to organize around perceived kin-based ties, many participants did claim to have some distant Indian ancestry.

Organizations’ official goals often revolved around practicing, learning, and celebrating Indian history, culture, or identity, as well as educating the public about Indians. Unofficially, participants claimed to come together and organize for religious reasons—to learn and share the “Red Road,” “Old-Ways,” or “Indian-Ways.” These are lifeways and beliefs that they associated with authentic Indians, more specifically with indigenous peoples existing on the North American continent in pre-contact and early historic times. The shared identity of members and participants in these groups and communities was not based on similar genealogy or heritage, but rather in similar beliefs about Indianness. Although, many groups claimed an interest in helping
Indians, participants interests in Indianness appeared to be rooted in a shared romanticization and nostalgia tied to American nationalism, rather than interests in Indian rights and activism.

As already described, one of the most fascinating findings that I made while conducting fieldwork, was that legally defined American Indians were often prejudiced against and considered an out-group. “Reservation Indians” and “full-bloods” were commonly given a label of “them” as opposed to “us.” These types of Indians were often depicted as having “sold out” to the dominant society, to “white ways.” Some participants even articulated that people with more Indian blood were actually less likely to be like “true” Indians. Sometimes Social Darwinist theories and ancient prophecies were given as explanations for this perceived correlation. Such prophecies or theories suggested that Indian ways will be lost among its more direct, genealogical inheritors, but would resurge among primarily non-Indian populations or populations of especially diluted Indian blood.

Just as interesting, I found that participants often expressed millenarian or apocalyptic views to justify their participation in the Indian community, as well as to justify efforts to share Indian ways or knowledge with outsiders. Many described the United States, or even the entire world to be in spiritual, moral, and environmental decay, for which the Indian-Way was a solution. For many participants, a belief that Native Americans are not sharing or have lost the Indian-Ways justified proselytizing ideal Indian life-ways to the public. I believe these findings are the result of conflict between two classes of people who are interested in Indian identity.

Groups and individuals in this movement organized through a network of consumer-based events—primarily commercial powwows—where a fascination for things Indian was a primary element of the consumption experience. Other consumption-based events, such as historical reenactments and primitivist events also played an important role in creating a large network of
communication and interaction between people interested in Indians. In addition to consuming things Indian, an important element of the consumption experience at many regional network events was the ability to consume a commodified Indian identity.

The market for things Indian—more specifically Indian-style arts and crafts—is currently estimated to be a one-billion dollar a year industry (Henson, et al. 2008:302). I believe that it is the market for things Indian that not only keeps this community in existence, but it is competition in this market that underlies these paradoxical ideologies. Although communitas and proselytizing are the main reasons participants gave for participation in events and organizations, many also recognized that the community could not exist without access to the market for things Indian—particularly through the production of commercial powwows.

The market for things Indian has been loosely regulated in the United States. Perhaps most important in this market’s history is a recent attempt to regulate this industry by influencing the value of the identity of producers through the Indian Arts and Crafts Act of 1990. This act prohibits misrepresentation by the producer, of his or her identity. An “Indian-made” product is defined as any craft or art made either by (1) a member of a federally or state-recognized Indian tribe or (2) a nontribal member artisan certified by an Indian tribe as such, or (3) a legally established Indian arts and crafts organization composed of members of Indian tribes. [Henson, et al. 2008:303]

The agency responsible for implementation of this act defines an Indian producer “as a member of any federally or State recognized Indian Tribe, or an individual certified as an Indian artisan by an Indian Tribe” (Indian Arts and Crafts Board 2008). Of course, this ties the ultimate value of the product to the producer’s identity—it is “Indian-made.”

This form of regulation focuses on identity—particularly empowering people who have recognition through legitimating institutions (i.e. tribal recognition) and reduces the profitability
of those without such legitimization. This disparity has created two classes of people who have interests in the market: those with legitimated recognition and those without.

Those who compose the regional polybian Indian movement appear to be primarily of the class without legitimization. Although not all participants in this movement are directly linked to the market of things Indian—either as producers or merchants—their interests are in continuing the existence of their community, thus, as a collective they are influenced by power struggles in this market. Perturbations to this competition have come in the form of federal regulation and reinforcement of Indian-made identity, shifts in international trade affecting production costs, fluctuation in consumption activities, and the impact of new competitors from both classes entering the regional market.

I believe that the American Southeast, and Central Florida in particular, is a geographic niche for polybian Indians to organize and grow their ranks. This geographic niche also allows them to construct ideologies and social structures that subvert not only the power of the legitimated class but also the power of institutions that legitimize the upper class (i.e. 1976 Recognition Act empowering tribes with government recognition and 1990 Craft Act empowering tribal members competing in the market for things Indian).

The lack of access to legitimating institutions, but also the lack of pressure by organized groups from the legitimated class, such as federally recognized tribes, has created a leveled field of competition in Central Florida. Anyone with interests (broadly conceived in Bourdieuan terms) in Indians and Indian identity can organize to not only seek out the capital invested in such identity, but can also construct and perpetuate in-group definitions of Indianness and ideologies supporting those definitions according to their own interests, without direct pressure imposed by institutions with legal power of exclusion (i.e. tribes, government agencies). The
indirect pressures imposed by authoritative institutions, as well as competition in the regional market, influence the means by which local participants pursue interests associated with Indian identity and how participants construct ideologies that legitimate their claims to Indianness. Groups have constructed ideologies that are subversive, paralleling strategies to both access capitals in this marketplace and increase profit.

As this dissertation will describe, a dependence on subversive strategies in this marketplace have produced a dependence on commercial powwows as the primary community event and encouraged a growth in spectacle at powwows. This dissertation will explain how these circumstances have influenced what ideas about Indian identity can prosper within the community—particularly how ideas that prejudice against Native Americans can paradoxically emerge within a movement whose members not only profess a shared idealization of Indians, but also interests in possessing Indianness.

Outline of Chapters

The goal of this dissertation is to explain how ideas and ideologies that prejudice against contemporary Native Americans commonly existed within a nativist new religious movement composed of participants who profess to idealize Indians, follow perceived Indian life-ways, and work to be perceived as Indians or possessors of Indianness by outsiders. The following chapters will rely greatly on my fieldwork to describe the population studied, but will also draw from previous scholarship in order to place the ethnographic subject in time and space.

Following the first two chapters, this dissertation is primarily organized into two sections. The first section (chapters 3-5) primarily utilizes other sources to position the subject in the scholarly literature. I will describe the historical and contemporary issues that have affected the population in focus. The second section (chapters 6-8) is primarily ethnographic. These chapters
provide original research and description in order to support my larger argument. I will flesh this argument out in the second and fifth chapters, then summarize, and reinforce it in chapter nine.

Chapter 2 will describe the concepts and ideas that are crucial to my argument. I will focus primarily on ideas set forth by Eric Wolf, but will also draw from Michael Kearney’s engagement with Wolf’s political economic perspective and articulation theory. I will also describe and critically evaluate the methods used in my research.

In chapter 3, I will describe the common types of people—whether by self-identification or ascription—commonly excluded from legitimacy as “Indian.” I will link these categories to literature on American Indians in the Southeastern United States. I will also explain my reasoning for nomenclature.

Chapter 4 will address the Western history of the construction of the Noble Savage and how it has been utilized and appropriated in popular American culture, consumerism, and ethnogenesis. I will particularly focus on the history of ideas linked to institutions that gave rise to groups of people commonly associated with delegitimized categories of Indianness, and whom I often found linked to groups and events that I found in the regional network.

In chapter 5, I will analyze the late twentieth-century shifts in status for “legal” definitions of Indian identity. These shifts greatly affected the growth of the market for things Indian and competition to control the profits of social labor in the production of things Indian. I will further develop Wolf’s perspective by drawing on Bourdieu, Kearney, and Jenkins.

In chapter 6, I will begin an ethnographic account of the network of regional intertribal community. I will describe how participants in the regional network were organized, primarily focusing on ethnographically describing types of events and groups through which individuals
interacted. In chapter 7, I will describe participants’ concepts of identity and meaning of being Indian. I will describe the Indian-Way, as well as how groups recruited and proselytized.

Commercial powwows are especially important means of organizing for this population, thus, in chapter 8, I will describe how competition on the regional network affects group organization. The relationship between identity construction and efforts to control profits are clearest in the production of powwows. Finally, in chapter 9, I will conclude by drawing the many chapters together and pointing to the ways that ideology and economic strategies in the regional network parallel one another. These parallels illuminate competition in structural power.
CHAPTER 2
THEORY AND METHODS

On the first page of Envisioning Power (1999), Eric Wolf stated “I want, in this book, to explore the connection between ideas and power” (1). This dissertation shares Wolf’s goal; I intend to explore the relationship between paradoxical ideas that I consistently encountered in my fieldwork and the role of power. This chapter will set forth the theories that have influenced my conclusions and methods, as well as provide a critical examination of the limitations of my methods and conclusions.

Power and Ideas

Although prolific, Eric Wolf’s most comprehensive work is Europe and the People Without History (1982)—a sweeping political-economic analysis of the effects of European mercantile and capitalist development and expansion throughout the world. In Europe and the People Without History (1982), Wolf lays out many of the theoretical paradigms and definitions that he later used in Envisioning Power (1999).

In Europe and the People Without History, Wolf asked what difference would it make:

to our understanding if we looked at the world as a whole, a totality, a system, instead of a sum of self-contained societies and culture; if we understood better how this totality developed over time; if we took seriously the admonition to think of human aggregates as ‘inextricably involved with other aggregates, near and far, in weblike, netlike connections’ (Lesser 1961:42). As we unraveled the chains of causes and effects at work in the lives of particular populations, we saw them extend beyond any one population to embrace the trajectories of others—all others. [Wolf 1982:385]

As Europeans expanded across the globe, interacting through “convergent activities,” people of diverse origins were forced to construct a new, common world (1982:385). As Wolf stated in his introduction:

The central assertion of this book is that the world of humankind constitutes a manifold, a totality of interconnected processes, and inquiries that disassemble this totality into bits and then fail to reassemble it falsify reality. Concepts like “nation,”
“society,” and “culture” name bits and threaten to turn names into things. Only by understanding these names as bundles of relationships, and by placing them back into the field from which they were abstracted, can we hope to avoid misleading inferences and increase our share of understanding. [Wolf 1982:3]

I believe that, just as “nations” and “culture,” Indian “wannabes” and “hobbyists” are bundles of relationships that are regularly and falsely turned into things. A secondary goal of this dissertation is to place these abstractions back into the field from which they came and provide a deeper understanding of their meaning and power.

The “bundles of relationships” concept is key to Wolf’s interpretation of Marx and his understandings of modes of production. Humans are part of nature and are linked to one another through social relationships (Wolf 1982:73). Humans impact nature through culture—technology, organization, and ideas—and, in turn, as humans change nature, that transformed nature affects human culture (Wolf 1982:73-74).

Labor is the concept Marx developed to grasp this connection between humans and nature. Humans work by expending energy to produce energy, and labor is the social organization and mobilization of work. Humans engage nature through socially organized means, and, in so doing, create and re-create social ties that affect change on the environment (Wolf 1982:75).

As Wolf pointed out, Marx’s concept of production also incorporated ideology. As thinking beings, humans have intentionality. They plan and conceptualize the labor process, which requires meaning and information (Wolf 1982:75). As humans labor to change nature, “the deployment of social labor, in turn, reproduces both the material and the ideational ties of human sociality” (Wolf 1982:75).

With an understanding of social labor, it is possible to recognize variations in the way
humans organize production—various *modes of production*. Wolf defined a mode of production as:

> a specific, historically occurring set of social relations through which labor is deployed to wrest energy from nature by means of tools, skills, organization, and knowledge. [Wolf 1982:75]

One benefit of the concept of modes of production is that it permits us to “visualize intersystemic as well as intrasystemic relationships” (Wolf 1982:76).

Throughout *Europe and the People Without History* (1982), Wolf examined the spread and impact of the capitalist mode of production upon other societies, particularly societies ordered by the tributary modes and kin-ordered modes. In the process of seeing how the capitalist mode interacted with and eventually achieved dominance over other modes, it is possible to recognize that the interaction between Europeans and other populations was dynamic. According to Wolf, “the process linked victims and beneficiaries, contenders and collaborators” (1982:76). This reflects Wolf’s relational, systems perspective, which was influenced by a world-systems approach.

Wolf critically engaged world-systems approaches developed by Andre Gunder Frank and Immanuel Wallerstein. Wolf (1982:85) was particularly critical of Wallerstein’s and Frank’s (as well as Max Weber’s) argument that the development and eventual dominance of a capitalist mode of production was the direct result of the expansion of medieval European mercantilism in the 15th century. In Wallerstein’s world-systems theory a world-wide capitalist economy emerged in the late fifteenth century, coming to dominance in the mid-twentieth century, through cycles of unequal exchange between networks of different profit seekers (Wolf 1982). This differentiated labor in the world-economy into the core and the periphery—the core exploiting the labor of the periphery for profit.
As Wolf argued, “mercantile wealth did not function as capital as long as production was dominated by either kin-ordered or tributary relations” which it still was during the 15th and 16th centuries (1982:85). For this reason, Wolf (1982) countered Wallerstein’s history of capitalism, by arguing that a capitalist mode of production was not only a novel mode of mobilizing social labor, but also that it did not come into existence until the late 18th century. Although merchants had expanded routes of circulation and channels of exchange, they relied on political and military power in competition and expansion, and did not create a labor market (Wolf 1982:88).

Thus, mercantile wealth did not alter the mode of mobilizing social labor and remained wedded to the tributary mode. That dependence would not be severed until new political and economic circumstances promoted the rise of industrial capitalism. [Wolf 1982:88]

Wolf drew on an articulationist perspective of modes of production, particularly that of Ernest Mandel, to reach this conclusion. Mandel defined a system dominated by a capitalist mode as “an articulated system of capitalist, semi-capitalist, and pre-capitalist relations of production, linked to each other by capitalist relations of exchange and dominated by the capitalist world market” (as quoted by Wolf 1982:297). Wolf used Mandel’s model to counter Wallerstein and Frank who he argued:

define capitalism as a system of production for the market, propelled by the search for profit realized by nonproducing entrepreneurs who pocket the surplus of the direct producer. Both writers therefore focused on the process of surplus transfers rather than on the mode of production under which surpluses are generated… These models collapse the concept of the capitalist mode of production into the concept of the capitalist world market. Furthermore, in defining capitalism as production for a market in order to earn profits, this approach identifies the expansion of the European since the fifteenth century with the rise of capitalism in its entirety. [Wolf 1982:297]

In Envisioning Power (1999), Wolf carried on the theoretical work he already prepared for in the afterword to Europe and the People Without History (1982). Wolf dedicated the afterword—roughly only six pages—to a brief analysis of the role of ideology in relation to
modes of production and to the concept of “culture” (1982). Wolf argued that ideology making “occurs within the determinate compass of a mode of production deployed to render nature amenable to human use,” rather than simply in the mind (1982:388). Each mode of production entails essential distinctions between humans, which provide a structure upon which ideology can be constructed (Wolf 1982:389). Ideologies codify these distinctions, not only in human relations, but also in a larger cosmology that explains nature (Wolf 1982:389). Wolf argued that our concept of “culture” cannot escape this. The meaning of culture, as constructed in anthropology, must be understood in context of the modes of production that influenced the time and geography in which it was constructed (Wolf 1982:387).

In Envisioning Power, Wolf claimed that upon writing Europe and the People Without History (1982), he became “convinced that structural power in any society entails an ideology that assigns distinctions among people in terms of the positions they occupy in the mobilization of social labor” (1999:15). By structural power, Wolf was referring to one of four “modalities” of power that all work differently at different levels of relations. The other three modalities of power are the power of individuals, power of interactions and transactions between people to impose will, and power that controls contexts in which people interact with others (Wolf 1999:5).

Wolf argued that power was not a Leviathan or a machine, but was “an aspect of all relations among people” (1999:4). Structural power is the:

power manifest in relationships that not only operates within settings and domains but also organizes and orchestrates the settings themselves, and that specifies the direction and distribution of energy flows… In Marxian terms, this refers to the power to deploy and allocate social labor. [Wolf 1999:5]
Thus, Wolf’s goal in *Envisioning Power* was to “trace out the ways in which relations that command the economy and polity and those that shape ideation interact to render the world understandable and manageable” (1999:6).

As Wolf (1982:6) argued, this goal cannot be accomplished without examining communication—both non-verbal and language based modes of communication—because ideas are only given substance through discourse and performance. Further, to understand ideas one must also be able to recognize cultural and linguistic codes, which vary by social context.

Wolf (1999:8) pointed out that while semiotics and linguistics investigate the mechanics of communication, those forms of inquiry do not explain what a communicatory act is *about*. This is where ethnography becomes important. Wolf wrote:

> It is part of the ethnographer’s task to bring together the different pronouncements thus made, to note their congruence or disjunction, to test them against other things said and done, and to guess at what they might be about. It should also be his or her task to relate these formulations to the social and political projects that underwrite discourse and performance and to assess the relevance of these projects to the contests over power in social relations. These contests involve ideational repertoires; stress on one repertoire over another can affect the outcome of power struggles, opening up opportunities to one set of claimants, foreclosing them to another. [Wolf 1999:8]

This is exactly the task of this dissertation: to not only document the disjunction between paradoxical ideas—the existence of prejudice against Indians within a population who idealize Indians—but also to relate this disjuncture to broader social and political projects that affect the population in which these ideas were found. By relating this paradox to broader contexts of social and political interests, the role of structural power in national and local competitions over Indian identity becomes more evident.

As Wolf argued, to make such connections requires going beyond the ethnographic present, situating these ideas and the people studied in a much larger context—placing them in time and space. Wolf accomplished this by utilizing the approach “descriptive integration,” as
developed by Alfred Kroeber, to examine three historical case studies—the extremely flamboyant rituals of the Kwakiutl, the 15th and 16th century rise in human sacrifice among the Aztecs, and the slaughter of millions by National Socialist Germany (1999). As Wolf described it, in using descriptive integration, he located the case studies in “space and time,” bringing together “extant information to exhibit relationships among the domains of group life, and define the external forces that impinge on the people studied” (1982:18).

According to Wolf, the best place for interpretation of such evidence is within the “contexts of social and cultural life situated within the parameters of a determinate political economy” (1999:18). In order to do this, “we must pay attention to who commands the labor available to the society and how this labor is marshaled through the exercise of power and the communication of ideas” (Wolf 1999:18). By doing so, Wolf was able to show that the ideologies that emerged in the case studies were carried forward by elites, and were fashioned out of pre-existing cultural materials, but they are not to be understood as disembodied schemata. They addressed the very character of power in society, specifically the power that structured the differentiation, mobilization, and deployment of social labor, and they rooted that power in the nature of the cosmos. [Wolf 1999:274]

The specific case studies chosen by Wolf were particularly:

- amenable to an analysis that stresses how ideas intertwine with power around the pivotal relationships that govern social labor. In each case, that structural power engendered ideas that set up basic distinctions between the organizers of social labor and those so organized, between those who direct and initiate action to others and those who had to respond to those directives. The dominant mode of mobilizing social labor set the terms of structural power that allocated people to positions in society; the ideas that came to surround these terms furnished propositions about the differential qualifications or disqualifications of persons and groups about the rationales underlying them. [Wolf 1999:275]

In reviews of Envisioning Power (1999), Wolf has been criticized for the particular case studies that he analyzed. The cases were all too obviously “drenched in power,” thus Wolf’s argument might be more useful if he had selected case studies where the relationship between
structural power and ideology were not so easily identifiable (Barrett et al. 2001). As Wolf himself regularly pointed out, the studies were “extreme” examples of how groups responded to crises with the development of ideologies of “extreme expression” (1982).

I believe that this is where my own research topic can be useful, by filling a gap. Wolf’s cases differ from mine significantly, in that they all represent groups with distinct institutionalized boundaries tied to group identity and control of resources and social labor. The regional polybian Indian network, and the movement arising from within it, does not have social boundaries that are powerful enough to be institutionalized. The mere fact that they lack such power is an important aspect of the study. Further, the community and movement are built on a niche commodity market that is dependent on the exchangeable value of a symbol—Indianness—which is influenced by broader, popular culture. I believe that competition in this market affects not only how participants define Indian identity, but also how participants construct an idealized Indian-Noble Savage.

The population that I study is not an “extreme” example, and, although the relationship between structural power and ideology is perhaps less immediately evident, I believe that I can provide an explanation utilizing Wolf’s theory. In order to do so, I will draw on British anthropologist Richard Jenkins and French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu. My dependence on these theorists will emerge within the following chapters, particularly in chapter 5. First, however, I must further develop my perspective by drawing on Michael Kearney.

**Polybianness**

I would like to augment Wolf’s systems perspective by drawing on Michael Kearney’s claims about the relationship between identity and articulationism. I will return to Kearney in chapter 5 as well, where I will draw upon his ideas to make my argument about Indian identity.
and class construction in relation to commercial powwowing. For now, Kearney will simply
serve as a means of expanding on Wolf.

In *Reconceptualizing the Peasantry: Anthropology in Global Perspective* (1996), Kearney’s
primary objective was to complicate the anthropological concept of *peasant*, particularly as
described by Eric Wolf in his 1966 book *Peasant Wars of the Twentieth Century*. Kearney
(1996) argued that peasant—as a conceptual type—was based on an us-versus-them dualism,
constructed at a time in anthropology when the primitive-type construct was losing usefulness.
Kearney argued that anthropology’s turn toward studying the peasant-type saved the discipline,
but, much like the primitive-type construct it displaced, the peasant construct is no longer as
useful in an increasingly globalized world. To make his argument, Kearney drew primarily from
his own fieldwork in Mexico. He argued that:

> Today an adequate ethnography of seemingly rural Mexican communities must
situate them within transnational and global contexts that effectively dissolve old
intellectual oppositions such as rural-urban, modern-traditional, and peasant-
nonpeasant… if current conditions do not support peasant as type in Mexico, then
perhaps we should also reevaluate their status elsewhere. [Kearney 1996:3-4]

Rather than anthropology’s dualistic construction of peasant, and post-peasant studies’
Attempts to create external typologies of peasants, Kearney (1996) argued for a scholarly turn
toward “internal differentiation”—where individuals and networks are the primary focus of
study. For his argument, Kearney described issues of migration and transnationalism, and drew
on an articulationist perspective about modes of production. Kearney argued that individuals are
given identity by the nation state, but that:

> Internal differentiation threatens to weaken this categorizing power and therefore
the authority of the state. The internally differentiated subject defies categorization
and therefore documentation. And since documentation is the prerequisite of
governance, the internally differentiated subject is categorically subversive of the
power of the state to perpetuate the differentiation that is inscribed in its official
categories. The internally differentiated subject is a *transforming* entity whose fluid
identity is suspect and illegitimate… to denote the identities of complex
transforming types such as migrants, who move back and forth from ‘peasant’ to ‘proletarian’ life spaces, is to speak of them as amphibians… whereas the kinds of categorical migrants with which we are dealing move in and out of multiple niches and are therefore more correctly called polybians. [Kearney 1996:141]

The polybians, Kearney continues:

defy constructed social bounds; they cross out of their “proper” places and enter into marginal spaces. And by populating these border areas they threaten normal social categories that the state has responsibility to maintain. The state responds to these violators of boundaries, these “illegals,” these “aliens” by denying them official recognition, by saying to them in effect that you will be this or that or nothing. [Kearney 1996:142]

Of course, the concept of peasant was constructed from a perspective that incorporated articulation theory. Articulation theory helped to open up the bounded categories associated with class identity, however, it still worked on a dualistic construction—always two modes of production are articulated (Kearney 1996:145).

Whereas binary classification is based on a hierarchically branching binary logic of either-or, social types defined by articulation theory were attributed ambiguous both-and identities that were disruptive of the neat logic of binary thinking. But such theoretical types and the logic that defines them are best thought of as a way station on the road to appreciation of the yet greater complexity of polybians. Whereas articulated identities are imagined as existing in distinct dual fields (e.g. modes of production), polybians are formed within complex reticula that in terms of positions, classification, connections, and flows have more in common with hypertexts than with hierarchical branching structures. [Kearney 1996:133]

Such a critique of articulationist dualisms can be leveled at Eric Wolf in *Europe and a People Without History* (1982). However, Wolfian anthropology deals with differentiation in a unique way. As Kearney (1996:88) noted, although paradoxically articulating explicit versions of peasant essentialism, Wolf was also one of the earliest and most consistent anthropologists to deconstruct such essentialism.

With his deconstruction of the peasant-type and articulationism, Kearney did not argue that class is no longer a useful concept. Kearney argued that:
This analysis does not, however, lead to discarding of class as the fundamental dimension for the analysis of subjective identity. To the contrary, this low saliency of class consciousness requires a reconsideration of class as an objective basis of differentiation and of the ways in which this differentiation is not so much reflected but rather refracted in consciousness, in some cases as alienation and anomie in others as ethnicity and the motive force of new social movements. [Kearney 1996:146]

Kearney argued that class, “as a structuring of subject positions within differentiated fields of value-power”—a concept he likened to Bourdieu’s “capital”—is a valid concept (1996:168). Class, as Kearney conceived it, was extremely complex and multi-dimensional. Internal differentiation, for Kearney, recognized this complexity. Communities are not primarily organized around class, but in today’s globalization, are largely organized as social and communication networks, which defies the classical dualism of articulationism (1996:168). For Kearney,

Class relations exist among internally differentiated persons who gain and lose value vis-à-vis others who, like them, are situated within reticula, within which sharp planes of cleavage are rare… Indeed, it is the flow of general value, in its various forms (surplus labor, money, information, goods, services, energy, style), through reticula that forms them. Thus, one’s class position is defined as his or her location within such reticula. Clear lines of demarcation between winners and losers are also muted by the fact that most persons are winners vis-à-vis some persons and losers vis-à-vis others, all of whom are knit together in reticula within which value is differentially produced and consumed. It is this differential distribution of value that constitutes the class system. [Kearney 1996:174]

With this abstractness of class, Kearney (1996:174) argued that it should be of no surprise that class is rarely a subjective basis for subaltern collective identity, regardless of how primary it is in the underlying connection between individuals. Rather than class, ethnicity is a major symbol utilized to express social similarity or cohesion (Kearney 1996).

Kearney, with his concept of polybian, appears to be attempting to work in the same realm as Wolf—deconstructing previous categories and trying to articulate a new, perhaps more useful category to recognize shifts in the relationship between individuals and communities and modes
of production. I hope to do something quite similar in this dissertation. However, I will be following in the vein of Wolf’s *Envisioning Power* (1999), in that I hope to acknowledge the role of ideology in relation to structural power.

**Methods**

Using ethnographic methods, primarily participant observation and unstructured interviews, the official data collection occurred during 2006 and 2007. Geographically, the majority of the data collection occurred in the central part of peninsular Florida. For further exploratory purposes and supplemental data, I did travel to events in Ohio, Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina. Unlike classical ethnographic research, I did not live with the population I studied. This limited my ability to observe behavior only at the public events, organizations’ activities, or during interviews.

My initial experience with this type of social phenomenon was in Arkansas during 2003, as an undergraduate student working on an unrelated ethnographic project. Through that research project, I became familiar with networks of people who participated in powwows, primitivism, and historical reenactment where they portrayed Native identities but had not inherited such identities. In preparation for my research, I also spent time, during 2005, traveling to and attending public events in Florida, Kentucky, Oklahoma, and Alabama. I found those events, as well as other events attended during official data collection, through national powwow and reenactment event directories published on the internet or in magazines bought at events. I will further describe these sources and process in chapter 6.

The IRB approved protocol for this research was titled “Lived Indianism: An Ethnographic Study of Contemporary Idealization of North American Indians by Non-Natives.” For interviews, I received written informed consent, although such consent was not required for participant observation. Most participant observation and interviews were conducted at public
events and organizations’ activities. I did conduct some interviews at participant’s homes, however, the vast majority of fieldwork was conducted in public spaces.

I initiated my fieldwork by participating in public events, at which people sold native themed products, dressed in native themed clothing, costume, or regalia, and that I suspected were organized by non-natives and hobbyists. Some of these events did carry hobbyist labels, however, most did not. I used these events (powwows, “Native American arts festivals,” living-history events such as battle reenactments and Fur Trade rendezvous, and primitive technology events such as knap-ins) to network into organizations that hosted, collectively participated in, and organized these events. This networking also led me to other types of events where “Indianism” was present—any activity or event where the idealization of Indians was observable. I also used the internet, especially public websites of the organizations through which I was networking, to follow links to other organizations and events. Many organizations published event dates, newsletters, and meeting minutes online.

Through events and organizations, I also networked through individual participants and informal groups of participants. I was able to attend approximately 35 events or organization activities at which I collected data. I also attended a few organization meetings or group activities at the behest of participants, but without collecting data. I did this in order to maintain rapport or provide personal support to informants, but not keep documentation of activities or behaviors that I was concerned could directly threaten the subject population.

Of course, the events at which I collected data often included hundreds if not thousands of participants, thus, it is safe to say, most participants at public events did not know that I was conducting ethnographic research. However, I did not hide my researcher identity, nor did I hide the type of subject matter that I was studying. Especially through the first few months of official
fieldwork, I focused on making it clear to primary participants, particularly leaders and specialized informants, that I was conducting research and requested that they share that information with other participants. I believe that, by the conclusion of my fieldwork, my identity as a researcher had spread widely. Indeed, some participants even nicknamed me “college girl.”

This “student,” “researcher” identity and my subject matter did impede my ability to collect some interviews, as some participants were wary of my identity and interests. However, to my knowledge I was not restricted from observing or participating in any activities because of my researcher identity. Indeed, I suspect that this researcher identity—part of my “personal equation” (Bernard 2006:375)—was seen by some as a form of legitimization for their organization, activity, or event.

Interviews were typically open-ended and semi-structured or unstructured. I did not interview children in this study. Although, as an ethnographic study, many public events and organizational activities at which I conducted participant observation did have children present, either as audience members or as part of group members’ families and guests. Based on these experiences, I believe that a comparative longitudinal study following a control population and people in these communities from childhood to adulthood would likely be one of the few means of discovering why participants’ convert their identities to Indian. Explaining such conversion was an original aim of my research, however, I now believe that the methods I used would not provide such an explanation.

My ability to conduct interviews at public events and group meetings, which typically occurred on weekends (Friday, Saturday, and Sunday) and which were quite busy, was limited. My early intentions were to collect interviews primarily during weekdays, when I assumed
participants would have more time for such a tedious activity. However, as my fieldwork progressed it became clear that such an option was impractical. Important or key informants were often busy working or traveling during the week. Further, participants did not live near one another, but came together on weekends from numerous, often geographically quite distant places, to socialize and conduct business activities. This geographic dispersion—in addition to being a student and lacking funding—restricted me to focus my research energy primarily on participant observation at events and organization meetings or at activities to which I was invited. I conducted interviews whenever practical, typically at events. I was able to officially interview 22 participants.

In preparation for writing the dissertation, I analyzed my fieldnotes and interviews using simple open coding. I also coded the texts for five major themes: concepts about nature, America, religion, military experience or attitudes, and patriotism/nationalism. I specifically coded for these themes because during fieldwork it appeared that they were important elements of both conflict and idealization of Indians. Of course, this also means that my note taking could have been biased toward looking for these themes. In addition, I generally coded my notes for concepts and attitudes about Native Americans and Indianness.

There are many methodological and theoretical limitations to this project that must also be acknowledged. Originally, the primary intentions of my research were to understand why non-Indians idealize Indians, how they construct the Noble Savage, and how or why non-Indian people convert their identities to Indian ones. However, through methodological constraints that I encountered once in the field, I discovered that both my own and participants’ concepts of Indian identity were biased. I found that individual and group identities did not neatly conform to the constructed definitions under which I was originally working. Given these constraints, I do not
believe that I can accurately draw conclusions about my original goals, particularly about why participants converted their identities. I believe that a longitudinal study, combining methods from social psychology, ethnography and social network analysis would be the most ideal means of answering such questions.

I also conducted the majority of the research and the research proposal without being aware of important literature on Indian identity conflicts in the American Southeast. My original interests were in conducting future comparative work in European Indian hobbyism. Undoubtedly, this created bias in my research design and implementation. Although the research was not originally intended to be focused on the American Southeast, without funding and simultaneously taking coursework while conducting fieldwork, a great deal of my ethnographic work was geographically limited to the Southeast.

Not only did my awareness of the conflicts over Indian identity widen while conducting research—due to my expanding knowledge of the issues and literature in the American Southeast—but my own field experience complicated the construction of Indian identity to me and the definitions under which I had been working. While I do believe that this was extremely limiting, I believe that it was coincidentally beneficial. Becoming aware of such bias later, during fieldwork, allowed me to reassess my fieldnotes and become more aware of the power of economic competition in the construction of Indian identity. I hope that this dissertation accurately expresses the contradictions in competition to control Indian identity. Although often most powerfully controlled by institutions on a national scale, contradictions emerge to influence identity and economic competition differently in different local scales.

With this limitation in mind, I would like to return to Eric Wolf. Of course, Wolf’s approach is quite broad and requires selection of evidence for descriptive integration that is
subjective and reflects the theoretical position of the researcher. Certainly, this dissertation deserves similar criticism. Recognizing these errors, however, does not mean that such work should be dismissed. Although highly theoretical, I believe that my conclusions or assumptions can be tested by studying current populations—particularly in groups that display elements of nativistic ethnogenesis. Utilizing Wolf’s perspective, particularly among groups that are deemed imagined communities—groups which lack agency to have their claimed identities recognized by more powerful institutions—might actually provide greater insight into how those communities can be empowered without necessarily reducing the agency of other groups that they might be perceived as threatening.
CHAPTER 3
HOBBYISTS, WANNABES, AND THE SOUTHEAST SYNDROME

The scope of this dissertation is not to address the long history of conflict and competition between native populations and federal, state, and local governments in North America. The part of that history that cannot be excluded from this dissertation, however, is the conflict between native populations following attempts, in the 20th century, by interest groups to define and regulate Indian identity. This regulation has resulted in two classes of people with interest in Indian identity—those with “legal” recognition and those without. While legal recognition has been associated with higher status as an Indian, policy shifts in the 1970’s and the Craft Act of 1990 created classes of Indians within the market for things Indian.

The Red Power movement of the 1960’s and 1970’s transformed and empowered the meaning of Indianness, spurred a cultural renaissance, popularized Indian identity reclamation, and led to institutionalization of Indian ethnic renewal (Nagel 1997). However, the resulting institutionalization only legitimized certain types of claims to Indian identity, creating a controversial status hierarchy, and particularly elevating the power of the “tribe” as a political, cultural, and economic entity.

This institutionalized hierarchy has been greatly complicated and threatened by a growing number and broad diversity of individuals who have reidentified, or are in the process of reidentifying as American Indian (Henson, et al. 2008; Thornton 1997). The 1976 Recognition Act and the 1990 Indian Arts and Craft Act—two legal events which occurred following the Red Power Movement—have had a particularly powerful impact on this hierarchy by not only defining Indian group and individual identity, but by providing a reference point for the meaning of “appropriation.”
Wannabeism and Appropriation

Within the lower strata of the hierarchy of Indian identity exists a pejorative, yet popular label “Indian wannabe” used to classify anyone who is not considered legitimately Indian. As Eva Marie Garroutte stated, “it is one thing to claim identity as an Indian person, and it is quite another for that claim to be received by others as legitimate” (2003:6). Wannabeism is situational and highly diverse groups of people exist in this classification—often generalized as the “wannabe tribe.” The “wannabe” label is ascribed to people who lack legitimization of their self-proclaimed or desired Indian or part-Indian identity.

Often people who are ascribed a wannabe category, lack access to more widely powerful forms of institutional, formal legitimization, such as tribal membership or certification as an Indian artisan by a tribe or organization composed of tribe members. Ascribed wannabes often lack this more formal legitimacy because they did not immediately inherit their claimed Indian identity. They must rely on reciprocal validation through individuals within personal social networks, such as extended kin who do have formal legitimization or wider community recognition. However, even people who have reidentified as Indians later in life and who have successfully substantiated kin-ties to a living, validated Indian person are commonly labeled “wannabes.” Without institutional recognition of their own, these individuals can have difficulty reestablishing their Indian identity upon relocation to an area with a different social network (Fitzgerald 2007; Krouse 1999). Legal legitimacy—recognition by a tribe—is the most powerful form of legitimization.

Even less legitimacy is afforded to those who claim Indian identity through social networks that are not reciprocated or cannot be substantiated. For example, many individuals claim Indian identity by alleging to have an extended or distant, often deceased relative, such as a grandparent or great-grandparent, whom they believe to have been an Indian. This form of
wannabeism has been variously labeled the “Indian grandmother phenomenon” (Krouse 1999) and “Indian Granny Factor” (Wernitzning 2003). Even lower in legitimacy are those who claim Indian identity based on supernatural ties, such as in reincarnation.

A person does not have to claim Indian identity to be labeled a wannabe. Many ascribed wannabes may not actually self-identify as Indians but are highly interested in Indian associated cultural practices or cosmologies and participate in activities associated with Indian identity. These individuals might even perceive themselves to posses (or aspire to posses) some form of Indianness and incorporate symbols associated with Indian identity into their personal appearance. Individuals or groups tied to movements perceived as New Age or neopaganism, and who are especially interested in recreating religious practices that they associate with Indians, are commonly called Indian wannabes (Green 1988).

Often distinguished as “Indian hobbyists”—there are also many who portray and represent alleged Indian material or social culture, but not necessarily in religious practices and who are not necessarily involved in a counterculture group. Joan Weibel-Orlando (1999), in her ethnographic description of powwowing in Los Angeles, described Indian hobbyists as being more accepted than wannabes by Indian communities. Weibel-Orlando defined Indian hobbyists as non-Indians who do not identify as Indian or part-Indian, and who “have studied powwow traditions, assembled elaborate costumes, and mastered the intricacies of various war, medicine, and contest dance steps” (1999:135). She (Weibel-Orlando1999:136) contrasts these self-acknowledged outsider participants with wannabes, who claim Indian or part-Indian identity that is suspected to be false by insider participants. This suspicion is particularly elevated if such individuals previously did not involve themselves in other Indian communities (Weibel-Orlando 1999:136).
Based on both my ethnographic experience and review of the literature on wannabes and hobbyists, as this chapter will show, the lines between etic labels of wannabeism and hobbyism are not always clear. Weibel-Orlando’s definitions do not acknowledge the variations in point of view by those who are ascribed wannabe and hobbyist labels. Few people who might be categorized with such delegitimizing labels self-ascribe to either term. Further, the current histories of both phenomena overlap. Understanding this history will provide an important backdrop to discuss the institutionalization of “legitimate” Indian identity, evolution of alternative institutions to provide recognition, and how such distinctions are important in access to the market for things Indian.

The Idealization of Indians and Indian Hobbyism

In the latter part of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century, the western constructed association between Native Americans and the noble savage began to receive widely popular appeal in the United States. As chapter 4 will describe, this construction, with roots far older than Columbus’ first voyage, has become a powerful symbol appropriated for normative goals across a large swath of American, European, and indigenous societies. Particularly beginning in the latter part of the twentieth century and early twenty-first century, many scholars from diverse academic backgrounds have analyzed this historical construction, exploring potential precipitates, comparing preceding paradigms, and documenting its many variants and uses (Berkhofer 1978; Bordewich 1996; Clifton 1990; Ellingson 2001; Krech III 1999; LeBlanc and Register 2003). As will be described in Chapter 4, the appropriation of constructed native identities by non-natives has deep Western and American roots. This chapter will analyze hobbyism and wannabeism, which are only a small part of that history.

While many scholars have analyzed the non-native construction of native images, appropriation of native identities has received far less scholarly attention. Volume 4, entitled
“History of Indian-White Relations,” of the seminal *Handbook of North American Indians* (Sturtevant 1988), dedicated a set of chapters to “conceptual relations.” However, in this section of ten chapters, only two focused on non-native appropriation of native identities, the rest were on the construction itself. The two chapters on appropriation focused on Indian hobbyists, both in Europe and in the United States.

Writing about Indian hobbyists in the United States, anthropologist and hobbyist William K. Powers (1988:557), attributed much of the practice’s origins to scouting movements at the turn of the century. As will be discussed in the following chapter, some of these scout movements also had links to early fraternal pan-Indian organizations (Hertzberg 1972). According to Powers (1988), Boy Scout groups who focused primarily on Indian lore were given an ultimatum by the national Scout office in the early 20th century: de-emphasize Indian lore or secede. Groups that refused fissioned, becoming original nuclei for American hobbyist organizations (Powers 1988:558).

Through early 20th century routinized scouting offshoot groups, hobbyist publications emerged, spreading hobbyism across the United States, and allowing for hobbyist groups to turn inward for knowledge production (Powers 1988). Subcultures of hobbyists developed, producing their own powwows and other activities, modeled after pan-Indianism (Powers 1988). By the middle of the 20th century, there was also a clear split at hobbyist powwows, in which some participants focused on modern powwow competition styles and others preferred to impersonate historic images of Native Americans.

Interestingly, Powers noted that by the 1950’s and 1960’s Indian hobbyism had become so socially powerful, that many of its subcultures had produced a full generation of children raised in hobbyist communities, in which “it was difficult to separate non-Indian from Indian culture”
Powers (1988:557) mentioned that, although no statistical data on hobbyism exists, distribution of various hobbyist publications suggested that at least one hobbyist organization was present in every major city at the time of his publication, with greatest clustering in the Midwest. However, even with generations of participants in hobbyist activities, a true “national” movement never occurred, despite attempts to create one (Powers 1988).

Within hobbyist organizations, there were debates over what to properly label their activities. As “hobbyist” became unacceptable, some turned to the phrase “Indianist,” however, according to Powers, that label did not stick (1988:561). By the 1970’s, many hobbyist groups were beginning to focus on educating the public about Native Americans (Powers 1988:561). Powers also noted that although some of this education was focused on dispelling the negative myths about Native Americans, much of it actually reinforced existing stereotypes (1988:561).

European Indian hobbyism has received far more scholarly analysis than its American counterpart. The second chapter on Indian hobbyism, in the fourth volume of the Handbook of North American Indians, focused primarily on Europe. As compared to Power’s chapter on American Indian hobbyism, Colin F. Taylor (1988) analyzed the social, personal, and individual identities involved in European hobbyism. Taylor (1988:562) emphasized that although called “hobbyists,” those participating in European Indian hobbyism did not typically see their activities as equitable to leisure, but instead involved a deep, life-long commitment and life-style.

Taylor (1988:562) mentioned that, in Europe, the use of “Indianist” to self-describe, had gained some acceptance. According to Taylor (1988:562), most hobbyists in Europe were blue-collar workers and typically male. Taylor (1988:566) also mentioned that many participants expressed a deep spirituality in their activities, often focusing on concerns of environmental degradation, cultural survival of minority groups, and spiritual awareness. Many European
groups also participated in active support of Indian causes in the United States. For instance, the Nederland Actiegroep Nord Amerikaanse Indianen group, founded in Holland in 1973, worked to inform Dutch people about political struggles of native peoples in North America (Taylor 1988:568).

Taylor (1988) primarily attributed the genesis of hobbyism in Europe to popular romantic literature, in which Native Americans were major subjects and characters. The works of George Catlin, Ernest Thompson Seton, and Archibald Belaney (Grey Owl) were particularly popular in the United Kingdom, while Karl May was especially popular in Germany (Taylor 1988). Taylor (1988:564) suggested that, although present, youth scouting in Europe never developed Indian lore in their activities to an extent similar to their American counterparts.

Taylor is certainly not the first or last to write about Indian hobbyism in Europe. Compared to the minimal scholarship on hobbyism in the United States, academic interests in European Indian hobbyism abounds. Much of this academic interest focuses on Germany’s Indian hobbyists.

In 1999, at Dartmouth College, a group of scholars from German studies and Native American studies came together to organize a conference with the intent to address the cliché-ridden interaction between, and beliefs about, Native Americans and Germans. The conference spread beyond the original set boundaries and resulted in a book, *Germans and Indians: Fantasies, Encounters, and Projections* (2002), edited by the conference’s original collaborators, Calloway, Germunden, and Zantop.

Often at the center of the book’s many chapters, was this issue of “becoming Indian” as part of a cultural conversion of social identity. According to one author, Christian Feest, the ultimate European activity for “becoming Indian” was hobbyism, which many participants have
recently begun to call “Indianism” (2002:30). The appropriation of Indian identities by non-natives, especially Germans, was pictured as part of a broader nationalism. Attached to clichéd images of Native Americans were also clichéd images of Germans; the idealization of one went hand in hand with the idealization of the other.

Hartmut Lutz called the yearning for, fascination with, and romanticizing about things Indian, “deutsche Indianertumelei” or “German Indianthusiasm” (2002:168). Lutz stated that:

German “Indianthusiasm” is racialized in that it refers to Indianness (Indianertum) as an essentializing bioracial and, concomitantly, cultural ethnic identity that ossifies into stereotype. It tends to historicize Indians as figures of the past, and it assumes that anybody “truly Indian” will follow cultural practices and resemble in clothing and physiognomy First Nations people before and during first contact. Relatively seldom does Indianertumelei focus on contemporary Native American realities [Lutz 2002:169]

Many authors in *Germans and Indians* (2002) recognized that there are different forms and networks of Indianists in Germany. Most authors separated Germany’s Indian hobbyism into two geographical regions, East vs. West, each with its own separate origins and thematic evolutions. Katrin Sieg (2002) articulated that these differences were exemplified by two umbrella organizations, one in each part of the formally divided Germany. Sieg stated that the eastern Germany umbrella group focused exclusively on Indian cultures while the western umbrella group comprised an identification with “anything Western – including scouts, mountain men, military (both Union and Confederate soldiers), and cowboys” (2002:223). Sieg (2002:222) also noted that there are German hobbyist groups that have primary focuses on ecological activism— a group type she was unable to interview for her research.

During ethnographic work on Germany’s Indianists, Marta Carlson also noted differences between eastern and western groups. Carlson concluded that, although all hobbyists are “making entertainment out of genocide,” East Germany’s Indianists form of hobbyism is “less appropriative and is upheld as appreciative, such as duplication of clothing and crafts,” while
West German Indianists’ form of hobbyism is “pure appropriation of the West” (2002:215). According to Carlson (2002:215-216), East Germany’s hobbyism is more like the United State’s museumization form of hobbyism, and is related to the usage of Native Americans as team mascots.

Interestingly this museumization of Native Americans appears to be the primary assumption about hobbyism in the United States. In the United States, the form of hobbyism similar to what is described as occurring in Western Germany is often distinguished as “wannabeism.” Hobbyism in Germany, and its distinctions, is somehow all too often assumed to be different from hobbyism forms in America.

In a major article entitled “The Tribe Called Wannabee: Playing Indian in America and Europe,” Rayna Green noted that:

"It is in Germany that the most highly elaborate forms of hobbyism take place; yet, unlike in America, the hobbyist movement is accompanied by a passion for contemporary Indian politics and literature as well as for the material and dramatic culture of the Plains. [Green 1988:42-43]

Green went on to quote a witness to a German encampment of this “most highly elaborate form” of hobbyism as saying that “‘the aura of the historical figures impersonated by those people showed clearly that… the Western hobby is much more than a masquerade, it is an earthly philosophy of life’” (1988:43).

Although rarely recognized, different forms of hobbyism have not gone unnoticed in the United States. As Powers (1988) noted, by the middle of the 20th Century there was a clear split among hobbyists. Philip Deloria categorized these two forms as “object hobbyism” and “people hobbyism” (1998:135). Object hobbyism museumized Native Americans, “favoring replication of old Indian artifacts and costume” (Deloria 1998:135). According to Deloria, object hobbyists: were generally uninterested in dancing and singing with native people, seeing Indians in classic antimodern terms as exterior figures. Racially different and
temporally separate, Indians were objects of desire, but only as they existed outside of American society and modernity itself. [Deloria 1998:135]

This is in comparison to “people hobbyists” who:

enjoyed the intercultural contact and boundary crossing they found at contemporary powwows. Emphasizing cultural boundary blurring, the people hobbyists constructed interior, us versions of the Indian Other, well inside contemporary America… Unlike earlier groups, the people hobbyists had to reconcile their cultural imaginations with the real Indian people they wanted to see dancing next to them in the powwow circle. [Deloria 1998:135]

According to Deloria, people hobbyists’ activities, what he termed the “white hobbyists powwow highway,” involved criss-crossing mutualism between Native Americans and non-natives (1998:129). Natives participated, although with economic incentive, in hobbyist events, and often hobbyists participated in native events on reservations (Deloria 1998). According to Deloria, through this criss-crossing, Native Americans were the judges for cultural authenticity. Many people hobbyists of the 1960’s formed unique social identities revolving around their Indianness and their cultural criss-crossing; social identities that, especially for the elite hobbyists or “superhobbyists,” permeated their individual personal and professional lives (1998:150).

This criss-crossing mutualism in people hobbyism was short lived. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, many Indians began exercising local power, excluding non-Indians from powwows on reservations and in urban communities (Deloria 1998:153). Although object hobbyists had little association with Indians, people hobbyists began to also isolate from the mutualism that had, a generation before, defined their form of hobbyism (Deloria 1998). Deloria stated that “giving up smidgens of social and cultural power to Indians was one thing, giving up the power to define some part of one’s identity was quite another” (1998:151). People hobbyists, especially “weekend warriors,” turned even further inward to their fellow hobbyists for judgment on authenticity (Deloria 1998:151).
Unfortunately, in his analysis of hobbyism in *Playing Indian* (1998), Deloria concluded with the 1970’s, when the mutualism between people hobbyists and Native American participants dissolved. For Deloria (1998), the next historical chapter of identity appropriation focused on forms of American counter-culture emerging in the 1960’s and 1970’s. As with Deloria, interests in more contemporary forms of identity appropriation in the United States are now focused on wannabes who are described as, and considered to be religious charlatans (often depreciatively called “plastic medicine men” or “astro turf shamans”) who practice forms of “Native American Spirituality” in New Age and neopagan networks (Aldred 2000; Jenkins 2004; Porterfield 1990). Hobbyism in the United States is often considered historical behavior or, if seen as modern, is assumed to be museumization in form. Like Carlson’s (2002) and Green’s (1988) assumptions about playing Indian in the United States, Sieg articulated that object hobbyism is the typical American form, while people hobbyism is the most common form in Germany (2002:237).

The New Age is a broad, loosely linked range of ideas and groups that became particularly popular in counterculture movements of the 1960’s and 1970’s and, since the 1990’s, have become well established in the United States (Heelas 1996). Groups associated with the New Age share similar ideas within their separate, often competing, ideologies. New Age groups share beliefs that there is a new era drawing near which will offer a better life and that the most basic spiritual authority lies within the individual self—a *lingua franca* that Heelas described as “self-spirituality” (Heelas 1996).

Age and Neopaganism by two primary ideological attributes. First, New Age ideologies seek a transcendent metaphysical reality while neopaganism seeks a more immanent locus of deity (York 1995). Second, New Age ideologies stress innovation, newness, and distinction, and not being beholden to specific traditions while neopaganism stresses links to the past and continuance of earlier practices or traditions (York 1995). As York (1995) put it, the New Age is about *awakening* and neopaganism is about *reawakening*. York (1995:164) also argued that the greatest overlap between New Age and neopaganism lies in the idealization of Earth Religions, Native American Spirituality, and Shamanism.

Although many individuals and groups claiming Indianness in Florida can also be considered practitioners of New Age and neo-pagan traditions of Native American Spirituality, the networks of interaction in which they are embedded and which they publically organize through are also hobbyist. However, they are not hobbyist, as stereotyped in the United States—as only object hobbyists—but are like the people hobbyist manifestations described in Germany—where stereotypes about wannabes and hobbyists appear to bleed into one another.

Perhaps what is most important in this short historical overview is the point that hobbyism and wannabeism are both misnomers. Such labels delegitimize the authenticity of the motivations or interests of the people to which they are ascribed. These labels are completely inadequate to describe the polybian Indian movement that I believe is currently thriving in Florida. Nonetheless, the same institutions and social movements that have been labeled hobbyist and wannabe, or as contributing factors to hobbyism and wannabeism—particularly scouting, New Age, and neopaganism—are important in this regional polybian movement today. As I will describe, networks of people and organizations with ties to such institutions have provided an important social and economic infrastructure for the regional movement. Further, sources of
knowledge that participants draw upon to construct their identities appear to be primarily from these types of popularly accessible institutions, rather than knowledge constructed in tightly controlled kin-based or placed-based networks. Flying under the radar, these institutions and the conflict which participants encounter about authentic Indianness, dominates not just the social identities of its practitioners, but also the in-group boundaries and interests publically ascribed to Native American “Others.”

**The Southeast Syndrome and Florida**

I am, by far, not the first to recognize this controversial social phenomenon in Florida, or the greater region of the American Southeast, nor the first to associate it with hobbyism and wannabeism. There is quite divisive literature addressing the issues of authenticity and Indianness, specific to the American Southeast. Within this literature, many authors have pointed to a unique social phenomenon of native identity appropriation or reclamation in the American Southeast. Perhaps one of the most controversial descriptions being William Quinn Jr.’s article on what he coined the “Southeast Syndrome” (1990b).

In the *American Indian Quarterly*, Quinn (1990b:147) presented a self-labeled “informal description,” based on his years working as an ethnohistorian for the Bureau of Indian Affairs’ Branch of Acknowledgment and Research. Quinn described a general burgeoning of Indian or pan-Indian identity in the American Southeast—the Southeast Syndrome—in which individuals converting to native identities (with questionable claims to native ancestry) were forming into what he called “Indian descendent recruitment organizations” (1990b). According to Quinn (1990b), the catalyst for this identity phenomenon was the federal recognition process.

Quinn (1990b:150-151) described participants in these Indian descendent recruitment organizations as “enamoured” with a romanticized noble savage image of being Indian, taking on “bambi-like” Indian names, and assuming plains-style costume and dress. Further, Quinn
(1990b:150) noted that these groups followed, and proliferated, an ideology best described as the “Indian Way,” which is analogous to philosophies espoused by fraternal organizations. According to Quinn (1990b:152), these recruitment organizations consisted of membership drawn from poor or lower socio-economic populations and often required some kind of ancestral descent from any of the federally recognized tribes. Quinn (1990b:154) concluded with a warning that the phenomenon of native identity appropriation is harmless, until individuals form into these descendent recruitment organizations, see themselves as tribes, and then claim to be guardians of Indian rights and causes.

In the following volume of the American Indian Quarterly, William Starna (1991) pointed out many of the holes and potential biases in Quinn’s article. Describing Quinn’s article as “alarmist” (1991:499), Starna admonished Quinn for an “inexplicable, mean spirited rebuke” of the people and behaviors that he analyzed (1991:494). Starna (1991:498) also asserted that there is no proof that Indian descendent recruitment organizations pose a threat to the federal acknowledgement process.

Regardless of Starna’s rebuke, a few scholars have recognized and referenced Quinn’s work for examples of native identity appropriation (e.g. Nagel 1994; Paredes 1995). In the 1995 article “Paradoxes of Modernism and Indianness in the Southeast,” describing typologies of Indian groups, identity issues, and the associated biases of ethnography in the Southeast, Anthony Paredes pointed to two ethnographic works that described culture groups that he believed might be examples of Quinn’s Southeast Syndrome. Paredes (1995) first pointed to Penny Jessel’s (now Penny Phillipi) unpublished manuscript “Powwowing, Florida Style” (1992) and then to a 1994 article by Zug Standing Bear, “To Guard Against Invading Indians: Struggling for Native Community in the Southeast.”
In her “report of the Florida powwow scene” (1992:2), the product of four years of ethnographic work, Penny Jessel concluded that much of Florida’s powwow community was actually non-native and part of the Southeast Syndrome. However, Jessel maintained that Quinn’s description of the Southeast Syndrome needed further development, as it failed to take into account legitimate claims of groups such as the Miccosukee and the Poarch Creek, and failed to acknowledge the role of Central American refugees, and non-native appropriation, in the form of hobbyism, “Indian religious cults,” and volunteer organizations (1992:12).

In “Powwowing Florida Style” (1992), Jessel described powwow events in Florida, but also spent a great deal of time describing types of “self-proclaimed Indians” and the organizations through which they asserted their Indianness. Jessel briefly described issues of identity and authenticity that plagued these organizations. According to Jessel, one especially interesting organization used a concept of “psycho-genetics” to justify their Indian identity (1992:18). In this organization’s “science” of psycho-genetics, even the slightest amount of inherited DNA can perpetuate the personality of one’s specific ancestors and guide the inheritor to his or her ancient roots (Jessel 1992:18).

As compared to Jessel, who produced a generalized report on Florida powwowing, Zug Standing Bear (1994), a criminologist, described one specific organization—the Deer Clan of Georgia. The Deer Clan formed in the 1970’s, appealing to people who claimed, but could not prove, Native American heritage. The Deer Clan, which still exists and has links in Florida’s powwow network, is related to a larger umbrella organization (also based in Georgia) with many sub-groups or “bands” throughout the United States.

Standing Bear’s article provided a basic overview of the history and structure of the group as it moved from an informal collection of individuals to a formal non-profit organization.
Standing Bear (1994:318) also described many of the group’s internal dilemmas of identity and authenticity, associated with religion, screening of new members, and defense against federally recognized Native American groups. Standing Bear (1994:310) described the group’s final membership requirements as dependent on cultural identity—open to anyone claiming Native American ancestry or who professed a Native American cultural orientation, and who primarily identified as following a Native American lifestyle.

As an insider—claiming Metis ancestry, reidentifying as Indian later in life, being associated with the Deer Clan for many years, and being married to one of the “clan mothers”—Standing Bear had unique access and perspective (1994). Standing Bear placed the Deer Clan, at least as it was founded by the original leadership, in a less appropriative light. He (Standing Bear 1994:311) referenced the Deer Clan’s unwillingness to completely remove themselves from dominant society as a source for prejudice by outsiders who perceived the group to be wannabes—a prejudice of which he directly pointed to Quinn’s Southeast Syndrome article as an example. As opposed to the “Southeast Syndrome,” in his conclusion, Standing Bear referred to the Deer Clan as part of a recent growth in “Native American culture organizations” that have arisen in the past 25 years (1994:319).

Finally, a 2007 published book Beyond White Ethnicity: Developing a Sociological Understanding of Native American Identity Reclamation by Kathleen J. Fitzgerald should also be noted here. Primarily using interview data she collected in Missouri at powwows and from members of a university-based native student group and a Cherokee culture organization, Fitzgerald (2007) analyzed the content and themes in native identity reclamation narratives. The individuals interviewed come from varied backgrounds with varying ties to Native American society, and may or may not have immediately inherited a native identity, but were
predominantly converting their identities from a “white” one. Fitzgerald (2007) was trying to understand whether a white-ethnic movement is emerging that has been pushing some people out of the dominant Anglo-American culture, and, if so, whether those people pushed out were turning to an Indian identity.

Fitzgerald (2007) found several major themes pervasive in the Indian identity reclamation narratives she analyzed. Participants emphasized oppression and forced assimilation by the dominant, often white, society, and particularly focused on familial stories of land loss and Anglicization of names (Fitzgerald 2007). For individuals, taking an Indian name was an especially important act of reclaiming and legitimating their Indian identities, and rejecting dominant society (Fitzgerald 2007). Religion and spirituality, especially spiritual connections with nature and the role of dreaming, were also important aspects of individual reclamation (Fitzgerald 2007).

Fitzgerald (2007) noted that although religion was a dominant theme, how pervasive it was, varied between narratives. For some interviewees, religion and their identity reclamation were synonymous. For others, religion was important because in their rejection of their inherited religions, particularly Christianity, they were led to their native heritage. The relationship between religion and ethnic identity was key (Fitzgerald 2007). Participants regularly felt that, at least for themselves, it was incongruous to be both Native and a practicing Christian (Fitzgerald 2007). Fitzgerald (2007:118) concluded that this perceived incongruity was prevalent in reclaimer narratives, because, as opposed to non-reclaiming Natives, reclaimers needed greater demarcation from dominant society in order to legitimate their Indianness. For many, being in tune with a mystical side of life was confirmation of their Indianness (Fitzgerald 2007:132).
Fitzgerald (2007) did not attribute the activities and identities of her participants to wannabeism or hobbyism, nor did she reference such literature, however, she did dedicate an entire chapter to participants’ feelings about being perceived as wannabes. Many participants—just like those in the population I studied—perceived themselves as authentically Indian and were frustrated with accusations of wannabeism by traditionally identified Indians, as well as dominant society.

In Fitzgerald’s work (2007), interviewees did not blame their ancestors for assimilating, but instead blamed the larger cultural system. Many described difficult upbringings (e.g. alcoholic parents) or alternative family structures (e.g. being raised by grandparents) and accounts of family trauma (Fitzgerald 2007). Interestingly, according to Fitzgerald (2007:143), participants often blamed these negative experiences on dominant society’s oppression of native people and attributed their personal situations to being a sign of their nativeness. Fitzgerald (2007:145) acknowledged a surprise at the number of family trauma accounts but attributed the prevalence to a racist society’s oppression of minorities.

Based on my own fieldwork and interviews, these themes were also prevalent among the populations I worked with in Central Florida, and which I will address in the second section of this dissertation. I do not doubt participants’ stories of personal or family trauma. However, Fitzgerald takes at face value, participants’ claims to Indian ancestry. As research has shown, although such assumptions can often be made about the accuracy of claims to ethnic heritage, individuals’ claims to Indian ancestry are not reliably accurate in the United States. Unlike other ethnic identities, claims made by individuals to Indian ethnicity are often not supported by other family members’ perspectives (Hahn, et al. 1996).
None of this, of course, means that there is not a relationship between oppression of minorities and reclaimers’ experiences of family trauma and alternative structures. However, that the relationship is a sign of Indian heritage is questionable. Experiences of alternative family structures and trauma are present among many class-based minority groups, including racially perceived whites who are in lower socio-economic categories (Wray and Newitz 1997). Just as identity, crafts, religious practices, and ideology, the meta-narrative of colonial oppression can also be appropriated. As the next chapter will describe, historical American nativist movements have both constructed and appropriated both this narrative and Indian identity. However, what I hope to put into perspective with the next chapter, is that the term “appropriation” is confounded.

The accusation that wannabes and hobbyists have appropriated the meta-narrative of oppression by tying it to their personal identities, is a misrecognition of the historic process of American mythology construction. If such a meta-narrative has been weaved into the American myth, and become an important part of popular culture, what is actually being appropriated? Are participants in the regional movement appropriating Indian identity, or are they participating in American ethnogenesis? As I will argue in chapter 5, this question is important when discussing the development of a class structure and competition in the market for things Indian.

A Note on Nomenclature

Before moving to the next chapter, I must first make an important point about nomenclature. As is clear, I am not using the labels Indian descendent recruitment organizations, reclaimers, Native American Culture Organizations, wannabes, or hobbyists. I have concluded that any label given to this social phenomenon, even “Indian” or “Native American,” will be controversial. Further, I feel that focusing on native reclamation, as did Fitzgerald, would be inappropriate because the movement or network that I am describing is composed of people from numerous and diverse self-claimed identities and ethnic backgrounds. Many participants do not
claim an Indian ethnic identity, but only an Indian way of life or cultural orientation. As Deloria’s descriptions of people hobbyism show, just because an individual does not claim an Indian ethnic identity, of course, does not mean that Indianness is not an important element of the construction of his or her personal identity. Further, as Standing Bear described, just because a group might be composed of people who do not claim Indian ethnicity does not mean that the group is not perceived of as “Indian” by its members and outsiders.

I believe that Standing Bear’s use of “Native American culture organizations” (1994) to describe the dominant regional group formations, might be the most respectful, and perhaps only emic label in the literature. However, I fear that its ascribed usage is too broad and could include other types of organizations that do not associate themselves and their activities with Indian cultural or ethnic identity nor depict themselves as being members of an Indian community or movement. I would prefer to utilize the label “Native American-Indianist Culture Organization” (NA-ICO) to describe the specific type of organizations that dominate the regional movement. This label references the dichotomous boundary that is being contested—Indian versus non-Indian—but also the range of identities being constructed and explored by participants.

I hope this label can accommodate a concept of change or becoming that is vital to understanding the conflicts of identity in this movement. I have settled on the NA-ICO label primarily because it refers to the controversial and ambiguous boundaries and field of struggle that this movement engages, while still trying to accommodate previous labels from the literature. Negotiating an Indian and non-Indian identity is at the crux of this movement and the organizations that dominate the regional Indian community.

I would not apply the NA-ICO label to organizations that are closely linked to object-hobbyism—such as craft guilds, Order of the Arrow scout troupes, historical reenactment
societies, and primitive arts or skills organizations. While there may be many participants in such organizations who depict themselves as Indian, if a group’s members do not associate their *collectiveness* with Indian identity—whether culturally, religiously, or ethnically—I would not consider the group to be a NA-ICO.

Of course, these other types of object-hobbyist organizations do play an important role in the regional community, particularly through cross membership with NA-ICOs and being a major source of consumers and potential recruits. Further, these other types of organizations are important in the regional movement because they can evolve into a NA-ICO. Many organizations in Florida that I would consider NA-ICOs initially formed as consumer groups with object-hobbyist orientations. Over time, these groups or fissioned groups moved toward a collective *Indian* identity.

I agree with Jessel (1992), that Quinn’s description of the Southeast Syndrome is too narrow. Rather than use Quinn’s “Southeast Syndrome” (1990b), a criticized and pejorative label suggestive of a psychological or physical disorder, I would prefer to describe this phenomenon as a geographically unique polybian movement—the Southeastern Polybian Indian Movement. As already noted, I am using a term coined by Michael Kearney (1996).

As the presented literature on wannabes, hobbyists, and the Southeast Syndrome has shown, and which I hope this dissertation will further elucidate, the individuals and groups that are part of the regional polybian movement are highly diverse, not only in claims to Indian heritage, but also in self-ascription, beliefs, organization, and in public presentation. However, regardless of this diversity, they do share a similar situation in the hierarchy of Indian identity and are subject to powerful rules that relegate them to a lower class of categorization.
The divisive nature of authentic native identity makes ethnography of organized groups who claim native identity, yet have few points of access to legitimatization, dangerous and controversial. As Charles Briggs noted, invention of tradition and imagined communities research—to which Garoutte tied research on the Southeast Syndrome (2003:165 n. 17)—threatens the authority of self-identification of people in lived experience of the traditions or communities being researched (1996:467).

Of course, I acknowledge and heed Briggs’ warnings. A constructionist perspective is only possible, argued Briggs (1996:459), due to the socio-economic, elite, transnational position of those who can see invention by crossing barriers not possible for participants. However, it is precisely the lack of access to the power to have one’s self-identity legitimated, which makes such research subjects worth analyzing. Ethnographic work within populations whose claimed identities are deemed counterfeit, can provide deeper insight into the process of identity construction and group organization as it relates to variables of power. Such research can be an important means of recognizing political and economic variables that might give agency to the population studied, but reduce potentials for conflict with other interest groups.

To associate a group’s beliefs, identity, or behaviors with the imaginary or invalid is to invoke power. I agree with Richard Jenkins, that “a community can never be imaginary (even though it can never be anything other than imagined)” (2008:141). The local Indian community is not imaginary, regardless of the many, often-paradoxical forms that both insiders and outsiders might imagine it to be. Authenticity of identity is both constructed and relative to power. After all, what are the differences between organized native identity appropriation and some forms of ethnogenesis?
CHAPTER 4
INDIANS IN AMERICAN MYTHOLOGY AND AMERICAN ETHNOGENESIS

On the evening of July 4th, 2006 on the West Lawn of the U.S. Capitol, to a sprawled crowd of celebrating veterans and families, and of course a large television audience, singer/actress Vanessa Williams belted out the Grammy winning song “Colors of the Wind” from Disney’s 1995 animated film Pocahontas. A quote from Benedict Anderson, in Imagined Communities, might give insight to this performance:

Nations… have no clear identifiable births, and their deaths if they ever happen, are never natural. Because there is no Originator, the nation’s biography cannot be written evangelically ‘down time,’ through a long procreative chain of begetting. The only alternative is to fashion it ‘up time’—towards Peking Man, Java Man, King Arthur, wherever the lamp of archeology casts its fitful gleam. [Anderson 2006]

I believe that Anderson is onto something, which might help explain the inclusion of “Colors of the Wind” in such a high profile national celebration. The performance of “Colors of the Wind” on the nation’s “birthday,” at the epicenter of the nation, reflects a historical trend in the United States—the concentration of ideas, over time, which results in an ideology that both apotheosizes American Indians (as a stereotype) and appropriates Indian identity (and thus history) for the purpose of legitimizing America.

As Eric Wolf stated, “ideologies suggest unified schemes or configurations developed to underwrite or manifest power” (1999:4). Further, communication of ideas is important because ideas are only given substance through discourse and performance (Wolf 1999). The national stage is a powerful platform for communication, particularly communicating a message of national identity.

In the song “Colors of the Wind,” whilst repudiating imperialism, Pocahontas explains to John Smith the wonders and intimacy of nature. The song opens with a stab at Smith’s global reach: “you think I’m an ignorant savage and you’ve been so many places… but I still cannot see
if the savage one is me” (Schwartz 1995). It concludes, after many illusions to spiritual insights of nature, with a highly watered down critique of imperialism: “You can own the Earth and still all you’ll own is Earth until you can paint with all the colors of the wind” (Schwartz 1995).

What an ironic song to sing on the nation’s “birthday!” “Colors of the Wind” is the product of a children’s cartoon, produced by one of the most powerful corporations in the world—Walt Disney—a company that deals in the business of spectacle and myth. A company that, along with McDonalds, is often pointed to as a key player in cultural imperialism and associations between globalization, homogenization, and Americanization (Bryman 2006:321; Ritzer 2004). But what is more “American?” Disney or Indians? Do its lyrics, in such a setting, offer absolution of the evils of imperialism as long as the natives’ insight is appropriated? As Richard Slotkin pointed out:

The story of the evolution of an American mythology is, in large measure, the story of our too-slow awakening to the significance of the American Indian in the universal scheme of things generally and in our (or his) American world in particular. [2000:17]

The road to this apotheosization and construction of American Indians as a consumable symbol on equal footing with “Mom’s apple pie” has deep roots, far older than Walt Disney World or even Columbus’s first voyage. These roots are firmly bedded in political and economic dynamics that are global, yet inspire unique nationalist social movements that germinate locally in the United States today and draw upon this mythology to legitimate their interests and identity.

This draws me back to this dissertations’ topic, the regional polybian Indian movement. The regional Indian community, within which the polybian movement has emerged, is composed of people who are often perceived as wannabes and hobbyists by outsiders—an ascribed status that, like Disney and the American government, has been associated with “cultural imperialism” and even genocide by some scholars and Native Americans (Belk and Costa 1998, Green 1988,
Talliman 1993). Interestingly, the song “Colors of the Wind” was also popularly sung at Florida Indian community events, especially powwows.

As the previous chapter depicted, the labels of wannabeism and hobbyism are misnomers, and do not accurately depict the motivations and identities of people in the highly complicated and diverse regional Indian community. Nonetheless, as later chapters will describe, this regional community is dominated by individuals and organizations composed of individuals who did not immediately inherit an Indian identity through kin-based networks. Few maintain social networks with people and institutions that have powerful forms of legitimization, such as tribes and reservations. This means that many participants not only lack such legitimization of their identities, but also lack access to the knowledge that is communicated through kin-based and place-based institutions and networks where participants are bound by a shared sense of Indian identity.

Although participants in the regional community, regularly articulated that being Native American is about a lived moral state or life-style, participants also linked being Indian and their regional community to a shared history of victimization and colonial oppression. Fitzgerald (2007) also found such claims in her analysis of reclaimer narratives. Participants linked themselves, collectively, to a larger meta-narrative and social memory. However, to logically claim this social memory for oneself, without supernatural aids such as reincarnation which many also claimed, requires a more direct genealogical connection to being Indian—social networks and institutions through which social memory is stored and transferred. I rarely witnessed participants access and retell these social memories through such inherited resources and institutions, such as passed down family or national stories, myths, and rituals. Instead, participants regularly utilized generic and popular resources such as films, historical fiction,
museums, and scouting lore. Along with identity, symbols, rites, names, ceremonies, roles, and power were not transferred between persons through a kin-based or genealogical mode, but appeared arbitrary among local participants.

The focus of this particular chapter is on some of the ideas and institutions that have been especially important in producing a popular American mythology in which Indian identity and victimization has been both commodified and conflated into an *American* ethnic identity. Understanding this history is important to place the current polybian movement in context. This history is also important in order to understand the parallels between the development of a market for things Indian by encouraging consumer demand and the growth of consumption based enclaves, such as hobbyism and New Age or neopaganism.

Upon looking at the history of where Indian hobbyism, wannabeism, and American mythmaking intersect, attempts to typologize the regional Indian community become even more complicated. Through a global, political-economy lens it becomes apparent that perhaps this movement is as “American as mom’s apple pie”—and begs the question: “what is being appropriated?” If this is a revitalization movement, what is being revitalized? I argue that participants are drawing on American ethnogenic mythology to revitalize American culture and society. This mythology is a construction born out of interaction between both Indian and non-Indian peoples, and constructed by both Indian and non-Indian people.

In this chapter, I will first describe the conflation of the noble savage symbol with ultimate Americana—the ethnogenic construction—and its transformation into a commodity. This ethnogenic symbol, and the ideas and institutions that helped produce it, are products of global dynamics and international competition. I will conclude by looking at the globally produced
symbol of the Indian as it relates to hybridization concepts—particularly pointing to how power and American mythology intersect to subvert dominant definitions of Indian identity.

**The Noble Savage**

Popular knowledge often points to 18th century scholar Jean Jacque Rousseau as the seminal figure in the development of the Western association of the “Noble Savage” with indigenous peoples of the Americas. However, this construction has far older roots that are linked to 16th century figures such as Spanish priest Bartolome De Las Casas (Kallandorf 1995:460), French writer Michel Eyquem de Montaigne (Confer 1964:355), Flemish engraver Theodore De Bry (Keen 1969:717), and French lawyer Marc Lescarbot (Ellingson 2001). All of these authors described indigenous peoples of the Americas in romanticized light and placed them in sharp contrast to the dominant European political and religious institutions of that time, such as the Roman Catholic Church hierarchy, colonialism, and social elite in Europe.

Drawing on 16th century accounts of travelers, theologians, and missionaries, during the 17th and 18th centuries, international competition over space in the “New World” created a unique social environment for use of the Noble Savage symbol by propagandists. Information about the “New World” was circulated across European borders in order to promote colonial efforts of the home country and demonize the colonialism of competitor nations (Gilmore 1976:520). Promotional material often contained allusions of the Americas being reminiscent of the “Golden Age” and the natives as being simple, kind, and good (Lefler 1967:17). Prior to publication, New France traders’ accounts of their experiences were often highly edited in efforts to portray the Indians as more romantic than the original accounts might project (Saum 1963:559). Often in efforts to promote colonization, even the Jesuit Relations were manipulated by editors before distribution to the public (Healy 1958:155).
The Noble Savage was also conflated with American indigenous peoples visually. “New World” engravers often took artistic liberty as propagandists, twisting figures and landscapes to look more familiar and thus appealing to a potential emigration audience (Harley 1988:68). In propaganda literature, illustrators—who had never been to the New World themselves—drew on images of Greeks and Romans in a mythic “Golden Age” and images of the “Wild Man” to illustrate the verbal descriptions they were given (Colin 1989). In Medieval Europe, the folkloric “wild man” figure embodied the Noble Savage construction. The wild man was indigenous to the liminal space between human civilization and wild nature, on the periphery of society, but could be tamed by a beautiful maiden and Christian salvation (Colin 1989).

Just as the Indian-Noble Savage, the Wild Man-Noble Savage was a powerful symbol appropriated and utilized for nationalist causes in opposition to dominant systems. For example, after the rediscovery of Cornelius Tacitus’s first century ethnographic account of Germania, 15th and 16th century German humanists and poets conflated the popular medieval Wild Man folk figure with Tacitus’s descriptions of tribal peoples in Germanic territories. German mythmakers used the Wild Man figure as a missing civic genealogical link between a claimed Greco-Roman Golden Age and contemporary society (Leitch 2008).

Tacitus described the German tribes in a dualistic fashion, as opposites to Roman civilization—a people who did not appreciate the value of metals, lacked temples, lived in field dwellings (as opposed to urban cities), and lived based on war and pillage (Leitch 2008; Rowe 1965). Tacitus’s description was initially used by church apologists to criticize early German character, pointing to the contemporary situation in Germany as socially and morally better due to Christianization (Leitch 2008). However, those negative descriptions were quickly
romanticized by nationalist poets and humanists who conflated the Wild Man figure with early Germans to construct the *ur*-German (Leitch 2008).

The first encounters of Europeans to the “New World” coincided with the height of the Renaissance and the “print revolution.” Many would invoke the image of the “Golden Age” with “discoveries” of the Americas. Thus, like the Wild Man figure, many of the indigenous peoples were interpreted as living connections to a noble human past—a Golden Age. The Noble Savage myth, as tied to the Americas, developed out of the over-romanticization of the Americas as a whole but also of symbols representing the purity of antiquity and its contrast with European civilizations at the time.

Not only had iconographers and mythmakers drawn directly from this already constructed Wild Man-Noble Savage to depict and explain the state of native peoples in the Americas, but, just as in Germany, nationalists in North America began to use the Indian-Noble Savage as a sympathetic symbol. As the relationships between colonists and English authorities soured, the already constructed association of American Indians with Noble Savages became an important symbol used in nationalist causes. Colonists found more reason to identify themselves with Native Americans.

Philip Deloria has written extensively on the historical development of this constructed association. English political cartoons most often depicted the colonies as an Indian Queen (Deloria 1998; Green 1988). However, when the cartoons were reprinted by New World presses, the Indian Queen’s skin was often lightened and clothed in Greco-Roman robes (Deloria 1998:30). In New England cartoons the Indian Queen was also used as a symbol for the colonies; however, she was often depicted as a noble savage enslaved, oppressed, vulnerable, and abused.
(Deloria 1998:30). As the revolution neared, the Indian Queen took on more resolute and powerful traits (Deloria 1998:31).

At the beginning of the 18th century, English colonists were drawing on images of Native Americans for actual acts of rebellion. In 1734, in New Hampshire, in rebellion against the Mast Tree Land policy—when trees which were typically used for basic resources by colonists were acquired for exclusive use by the British Navy—colonists dressed as Indians, attacked British troops (Deloria 1998:11). According to Deloria (1998), these “faux-Indians” were likely the first recorded colonists to utilize Indian identities to protest or rebel against European authorities. However, the most infamous use of Native American identity as a protest tool was a colonial response to the Stamp Act of 1765—the Boston Tea Party.

In 1773, Boston’s Sons of Liberty, dressed as Mohawks, committed the now infamous act of dumping tea overboard into the Boston Harbor. Historically, the Sons of Liberty movement cannot be distinguished from the separatist group “Sons of King Tammany” (Walsh 1997:87). Originally founded in 1772 in Philadelphia, the separatist group adopted “St. Tammany” as their patron and symbol for rebellion against English rule (MacGregor 1983:395).

“St. Tammany” represents a minor band chief of the Delaware, Tamanend, who was assumed to have been an instrumental figure in the 1683 peace accord between the Lenni-Lenape and Quaker William Penn (MacGregor 1983). In 1732, in order to legitimize their fishing rights to the Schuylkill River, an elitist outdoor recreation club organized by Quakers of Philadelphia claimed that they received direct approval from Tamanend himself (MacGregor 1983:393). The fishing club adopted Tamanend as its patron saint, renaming him “Saint Tammany,” and established a saint’s day celebrating Tammany on the first of May, marking the beginning of official fishing season (MacGregor 1983:393). May Day was spent feasting and dancing dressed
in regalia mimicking Native American styles (MacGregor 1983). The rituals performed by the club are likely syncretistic, related to historical May Day festival traditions, European carnivals and mummers plays, and a plethora of Native American mythology and ritual (Walsh 1997:85-86).

The practice of May Day celebrations spread to other elite social and fraternal organizations throughout the region, and Tammany was further mythologized as a patriot symbolizing the right to defend against injustices made against basic rights (Deloria 1998:14). A practice of choosing or erecting a tall edifice, often a pole or tree (e.g. Liberty Tree), became a popular way to tack complaints and centralize political debates in communities. These “Liberty Poles” were also considered “May Poles,” tying back to Tammany (MacGregor 1983:395).

Already established as an “American hero” through song, poetry, and theater, Tammany was further mythologized as his identity became more deeply associated with colonial rebellion. In general, iconography of Native Americans appeared on military flags, newspaper mastheads, and numerous handbills as the revolution grew (Deloria 1998:31). Pennsylvania adopted Tammany as the colony’s patron saint, as did George Washington’s army during the Revolutionary War (MacGregor 1983:395-396; Walsh 1997:87).

St. Tammany’s symbolic value did not die with the conclusion of the American Revolution. In 1786 a small group of New York businessmen and social elites created “The Society of St. Tammany or Columbian Order.” The society promoted republicanism and patriotism, focusing on developing and documenting a unique American identity and history (MacGregor 1983:398). The society held a major celebration every year on the first day of May to celebrate St. Tammany, in which, like the Sons of King Tammany and the Schuylkill Fishing
Company before them, they dressed in Indian regalia, danced, and feasted (Deloria 1998; MacGregor 1983; Walsh 1997).

The society even funded and built a museum dedicated to American history (MacGregor 1983:403). The Tammany Society also created its own calendrical system, demarcating it by important dates and persons in the newly founded nation (MacGregor 1983:399). Initiating a civil religion, with its ultimate icon being an Indian, the society inaugurated the first celebrations of Independence Day, Columbus Day, and Washington’s birthday (MacGregor 1983:399). The program quickly spread as “Tammany Societies” cropped up throughout the old colonies. Interestingly, MacGregor (1983:402) pointed out that local Tammany Societies would often serve as hosts—putting on “Indian” dances and presentations, to real Indian nation leaders who visited state capitols. Serving a diplomatic function, American civil institutions chose to appropriate Indian associated attributes to represent themselves.

The original Tammany Society gained real political power (surviving until the early 20th century as Tammany Hall) but had to evolve as the nation faced new international foes. With the Spanish American War and a new found ally in Britain, St.Tammany was no longer celebrated, instead replaced by a focus on St. Patrick (Deloria 1998:57). The new international dynamics influenced a turn toward reinforcing Anglo-Saxon identity, to support “Old World” ties (Gossett 1997).

While the Sons of King Tammany began transitioning away from Tammany and Native American identification, numerous other groups moved in to fill the niche. During the War of 1812, Captain James N. Barker and his men rebuilt and occupied Fort Mifflin, a key defense against British forces. While at the fort, the soldiers created a fraternal order modeled after the

Throughout the 1820’s, the new society spread quickly, setting up lodges throughout America and sending out missionaries as far as New Orleans (Deloria 1998:59). The elitist Society of Red Men was a hierarchical society with secret activities, ritual rites of passage, “Indian names,” and community devotion to widows of fallen comrades (Deloria 1998). With threats of the cholera and internal conflict, The Red Men eventually dispersed in the 1830’s and in its place appeared a middle class movement calling themselves the Improved Order of Red Men (Deloria 1998:62). The newest society added temperance, renewed patriotism, and interest in American history to their focus (Deloria 1998:62).

The “Improved Order of the Red Men” (IORM), emerged in the 1830’s and painted itself as “keepers of history,” worthy of maintaining and preserving the nation’s aboriginal roots (Deloria 1998:65). The IORM began detailed, and perhaps elaborative, genealogical and historical documentation, attempting to draw the roots of their society directly to earliest Tammany societies, the Boston Tea Party, the Sons of Liberty, and Native Americans (Deloria 1998:68). The IORM flourished throughout the 19th century.

Although much smaller in size, the IORM, and its women’s’ auxiliary “Degree of Pocahontas,” still has numerous active “tribes” across the United States today. The IORM still celebrates St. Tammany Day and maintains a museum and library at its national headquarters in Texas. They also maintain a high profile through charity work and organizing of “Red Men’s Day” at Arlington National Cemetery. As of 2006, the IORM website mentioned very little about Native Americans and focused more on connecting themselves to the Sons of Liberty. However, on the website’s “Questions and Answers” page, in response to “How is the Improved Order of
Red Men associated with Native Americans?,” they stated: “Only through our customs, terminology, and rituals, which are patterned after early Americans?” (Improved Order of the Red Men 2006).

**From Red Men to Boy Scouts**

The IORM emerged at a seminal period in American history, coinciding with popular attempts to develop uniquely “American” art forms, mythology, and identities, seen as distinct and superior to Europe. Just as during the revolutionary period, various nationalist institutions drew upon Native Americans (as a symbol) to construct a new unique American mythology and identity. The sources drawn upon to develop this myth—making Native Americans the key to “America’s” aboriginality—were Western sources and ironically were either directly from Europe or from Europeans in direct antagonistic positions to Native Americans, such as missionaries, colonists, and military personnel—all on the edge of the frontier (Slotkin 2000).

Interestingly, this new ideological development coincided with aggressive Indian removal policies enacted by the expanding American government. On May 28, 1830, the U.S. Congress approved the Indian Removal Act, in which Native Americans were taken from their territories in the east, and placed on reservations in Oklahoma. The blunt and aggressive expansion of Americans and Europeans into the western territories led to violent conflict with the native populations—the “Indian wars” (Champagn and Pare 1995). With the disappearing visibility of Indian people in the east, and aggressive public removal, the Native American, as icon, began to take on a meaning of nostalgia, leading to what Rayna Green called the “cult of vanishing Americans” (1988). The Native American was just one of the heroes in the “cult of vanishing Americans.”

The first *American* heroes were the Indian Fighter and the Hunter (Slotkin 2000:16), which were propelled by popular myth producers of the 19th century—such as James Fenimore Cooper,
George Catlin, and Buffalo Bill. The myths were institutionalized and given power through influential early 20th century figures who were prominent around the turn of the 20th century, such as Charles Eastman, Earnest Thompson Seton, and Teddy Roosevelt. Also popularly circulating throughout Western countries at the turn of the century were ideas such as Recapitulation Theory and Evolutionary Theory. These ideas influenced the commodification of and institutionalization of the nation’s ethnogenic myth and Native Americans’ role in it. Through these varying (and sometimes competing) historical institutionalizations of Native Americans’ place in the nation’s mythology, a more direct line can be drawn to the activities, organizations, and associated recruitment networks that dominate the structure of the regional polybian community.

As Slotkin (2000:19) pointed out, print was a key format and vehicle for developing the American mythology, a vehicle that was influenced by market and political forces at the international level. In the early 19th century, as America was beginning to establish its own national identity, many called for a unique American literature, one distinguished especially from Britain. Interestingly though, just as during the Revolutionary period, the ideas and idea-production techniques drawn upon to construct this unique identity were originally European.

One of the most widely influential myth producers of the early 19th century was Scottish author Sir Walter Scott, who had a large international and transatlantic audience. Scott was renowned for his romantic blending of fact and invention to initiate the oxymoronic genre of “historical-fiction” (or “historical-romance”) (Rigney 2001:20). Scott’s works performed unique literary tricks that allowed him to claim both history and fictional novel, as well as appeal to a large readership. Scott’s novels reduced the variability of people participating in the historical record to just a few major composite characters (both fictional and historical) and then
condensed the actions of that period into the experience and continuity of storylines between just a few characters (Rigney 2001:28). According to Rigney:

One of the most important side effects of this reduction and condensation at the figurative level is that attention could also be paid, without overburdening the narrative with too much detail, to the private lives and motives of a select number of individuals. This meant that not only could readers be invited to identify with the hopes and frustrations of individuals as the events unfold, but that the novelist could extend his representation of the period into the culture of everyday life, which formed the background to political life. [Rigney 2001:29]

Scott’s work had great success and intellectual power. Reviews of his work seemed unconcerned with historical authenticity, especially as readers tended to view it as an “unofficial history,” praising it for showing the “other side” of historical circumstances (Rigney 2001:38).

This is especially important in light of myth making and nationalism. As Slotkin (1985:82) pointed out, historical romance novels were a form of “recovery” of a specific moment in history but that allowed a projection of current concerns backward, onto that historical moment. The power of the historical romance to facilitate and inspire nationalist causes was key to its appropriation by American authors.

One of the most successful and influential American myth-makers to use Scott’s model was James Fenimore Cooper. Cooper’s *Leatherstocking Tales*, published beginning in the early 19th century, followed a white hero on the late 18th and early 19th century American frontier. The main character, Natty Bumpo, was superior to Indians but learned his special wilderness and survival prowess from noble Indians. One of Cooper’s more superior and noble Indian characters was a Delaware Indian named Tamanend who was to eventually save his race by returning it to purity (MacGregor 1983). Interestingly, Cooper modeled his Indians after Scott’s Highlanders, which many argue were themselves originally modeled after romantic images and stories about Indians written by earlier Europeans (Fulford 2006:196).
The Cooper formula—racializing of morality and purity, the coupling of a superior white male hunter with a noble Indian companion, and the wilderness adventure—has been an important element in American literature and entertainment (Slotkin 1985). The formula was significant in most major entertainment products from dime-novels to Wild West shows, to the Lone Ranger television series (Slotkin 1985). Cooper’s tales create a myth in which the white race of Americans becomes indigenous to the Americas by learning about the land through the Indian who is destined to die due to being an inferior race, which only faces eventual mongrelization in light of incoming civilization (Slotkin 1985:94-97). Natty Bumpo, Cooper’s hero, became the ideal type American hero. Natty Bumpo thrived on the American Frontier, a liminal space that made America unique from other nations in the myth (Smith 1978). The frontiersmen, as exemplified by Leatherstocking/Natty Bumpo, was in a racial struggle for survival.

Cooper’s works were not unique in the ideology that they projected about race and innate moral qualities. For many in the elite of American society, Manifest Destiny meant the cleansing of North America of Indians and the preparation of it for the Anglo-Saxons (Gossett 1997:178). Adding Lamarkian twists, many important figures, such as Teddy Roosevelt, believed that in fighting the Indians on the frontier, the Anglo-Saxons would acquire the martial and indigenous traits of Indians, making them superior to European Anglo-Saxons—making them Americans (Slotkin 1992:38). For Roosevelt, the latent virtues of a race determined history and the latent virtues of the Anglo-Saxon race was superior to Indians but also infused with Indian’s blood through the Indian Wars on the western frontier (Slotkin 1992:43).

At the turn of the century there were many forms of racism and evolutionary theory being mixed in order to justify American nationalism and dispossession of Native Americans.
Paradoxically, many of these beliefs further ennobled Native Americans (or at least some of them) and at the same time tied their death as the “vanishing race” to the rise of an “American” civilization. The myth of the vanishing Indian has been an important idea returning over and over in American justification for political and economic policies regarding Native Americans.

These ethnogenic developments in American mythmaking were emerging at a time when Americans were experiencing considerable economic and social shifts. With the industrial revolution, the “closing of the Frontier,” and considerable migration to urban areas, numerous revitalization movements emerged to prevent what many saw as a degradation of American values. Through these movements, the Indian-Noble Savage construction—particularly the one constructed by Fenimore Cooper—took on new attributes, becoming, not just a powerful warrior and frontier advisory, but also an enlightened spiritualist, naturalist, and craftsman worthy of emulation. Paralleling these revitalization movements was a growth in consumer demand for things Indian, particularly products that embodied these new attributes or offered transference of their powers to consumers.

Prior to the Civil War, medicine shows touting “Indian healing” curatives had already been popularly traveling throughout the United States, setting the stage for spirituality associated with Native Americans (Green 1988:40). Spiritualist healing venues sprang up across the Southwest and California, and with the late 19th century emergence of the Arts and Crafts movement, the region blossomed as an artists’ haven and tourist destination (Jenkins 2004:71).

This new interest in native religions was the beginning of what many authors have referred to as “Native American Spirituality” which, as noted in the previous chapter, is closely tied to the New Age movement and neopaganism (Jenkins 2004). According to Jenkins (2004:76), famed southwest artist and author Mary Austin was likely the first to record spiritual experiences
derived from Native American practices. Austin suggested that due to her knowledge of William James and the teachings of a Piaute medicine man, she experienced a wholeness unlike anything spiritually offered by western religions (Jenkins 2004:76). The Arts and Crafts movement, which highlighted a revisionist trend away from the modern mass-made products of the industrial revolution to a deeper preference for craftsmanship, quickly stereotyped Native Americans not only as superior spiritually, but also as the ideal crafter (Jenkins 2004:72).

Throughout the 19th century, there were also popular traveling “wild west” shows, which promoted spectacled escapism through elaborately staged images of the mythic frontier, from Indian-cowboy battle reenactments to Indian “encampments.” Showmen such as George Catlin and Buffalo Bill depended upon promoting a mythology that linked the Vanishing Indian construct with a vanishing American natural landscape. Indeed, as Reddin described, in 1895, the publicist for Buffalo Bill’s Wild West Show described the conquest of the frontier as America’s “great epic” and called Bill’s show “America’s national entertainment” (1999:xiii).

While Catlin and his traveling shows were immensely popular, they did not compare to the extravagance of Buffalo Bill’s Wild West Shows. Wild West shows were much bigger business during Bill’s time, but an international consuming audience had been prepared through Catlin. While Catlin employed a small troupe of costumed actors (both Indian and non-Indian) with props, Bill’s shows were far grander—offering souvenirs, food concessions, and games, in addition to large-scale battles and encampment performances (Reddin 1999:65). Of course, like Catlin, Bill also employed Native Americans. He saw his employment of Indians as a means to help them improve themselves (Moses 1996:8).

As Native Americans were being sanctioned off to reservations, placed under continued American military control, and made the subject of debates over assimilation, Americans were
visiting archeological sites, museums, and attending Indian rituals in mass—all in attempts to catch a glimpse of what were popularly called the “Vanishing Americans” (Champagne and Pare 1995:97). By 1890, the same year as the Wounded Knee Massacre, white tourists were a common site on reservations, especially in the Southwest (Jenkins 2004:67). Americans were able to travel to the consumable myth, which had before only been brought to them through literature and traveling healing and Wild West shows.

As nostalgic symbols associated with American glory and firmly embedded in popular culture, the figures on the edge of the frontier, the Indian and the frontiersmen or scout, were the idealized national hero. However, this idealization was not uniquely American and was fermenting in Europe as well. It was given considerable institutionalized power through an important revitalization movement at the beginning of the 20th century: scouting. The scouting movements and associated fraternalism of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, converted the major attributes of the Noble Indian—craftsman, naturalist, warrior, spiritualist—into a powerful consumable ethnogenic form.

With the rise of Germany, the United States, and Japan, Britain’s international colonial power was under considerable threat. As urbanization, population decline, and poverty were growing, Britain at home was facing a popular fear about its national identity (MacDonald 1993). At focus in this identity crisis was the “boy problem.” Within this national crisis emerged Baden-Powell, a hero in the South African War, who created the Boy Scouts as a way to save British boys from the demasculating habits of urban domestic life and produce the next generation of imperial soldiers (MacDonald 1993).

The hero for the Boy Scouts was the frontier scout who was in constant battle with “primitive” races who were considered the most dangerous of adversaries and closest to nature
(MacDonald 1993:5). The story of Pocahontas and John Smith was important in Baden-Powell’s scouting manuals, and John Smith was a figure held up by Baden-Powell as the ultimate patriotic imperialist (MacDonald 1993:169). It was not long before the successful Boy Scouts of Britain was exported to the United States.

Prior to Baden-Powell’s creation, Ernest Thompson Seton, a Scottish national living in the United States, had created the Woodcraft Indians. The Woodcraft Indians was a scouting program that modeled itself on the Indian heroes of Cooper’s novels, rather than the frontiersmen (MacDonald 1993:139-140). In 1901, Seton began publishing a regular column in *Ladies Home Journal*, in which he proposed and promoted his ideas for a youth organization addressing the moral issues caused by urbanization. An incident at his 120 acre Wyndygoul estate in Connecticut gave Seton his first chance to experiment with his proposals.

Seton’s estate had been vandalized by a group of young boys, and instead of contacting authorities, Seton invited the boys to the estate for camping. Seton created a pan-Indian “Indian village” with plains style teepees, Algonquin birch bark canoes, Arapaho style beds, Navajo blankets, and a large council ring surrounding a fire pit where the boys met to commune with the Great Spirit and learn Indian ways (Anderson 1986:138). The experiment was a success, and the estate grounds quickly became the summer time home to numerous children in Seton’s youth movement, the Woodcraft League.

“Seton Indians” groups sprung up all over the nation and Seton rushed to organize the massive movement. He wrote handbooks and guides on proper Woodcraft organization and training. He also published fictional stories and books, such as *Two Little Savages* (1911b), which provided examples of the proper Woodcrafter. His goals for the movement were to instill
in future generations a great sense of “manhood” and their proper relationships to nature (Anderson 1986:144).

The essential elements of the Woodcraft Way were: promotion of interest in outdoor life and woodcraft, preservation of wildlife and fellowship among it, giving young people proper recreation, and character building (Morris 1970:187). His primary goal was to discover, preserve, and develop Indian culture, in order to diffuse it throughout western civilization (Morris 1970:187).

What set Seton apart from similar efforts by his contemporaries—who idolized the scout or frontiersman—was his idealization of the Indian (Anderson 1986:64; Morris 1970:189). In one of his many Woodcraft Indian Manuals, Seton explained the justification for this idealization:

The Ideal Indian stands for the highest type of primitive life. He was a master of woodcraft, and unsordid, clean, manly, heroic, self-controlled, reverent, truthful, and picturesque always. America owes much to the Redman. When the struggle for freedom came on, it was between men of the same blood and bone, equal in brains and in strength. The British had the better equipment perhaps. The great advantage of the American was that he was a trained scout, and this training which gave him the victory he got from the Redman. But the Redman can do a greater service now and in the future. He can teach us the ways of outdoor life, the nobility of courage, the joy of beauty, the blessedness of enough, the glory of service, the power of kindness, the super-excellence of peace of mind and the scorn of death. For these were the things that the Redman stood for; these were the sum of his faith. [Seton 1917:8]

Seton’s favorite lecture, titled “The Message of the Redman,” was a critique of white society (Anderson 1986:231). In Gospel of the Redman (1963), Seton sums up his arguments that the Indian way of life is superior to western civilization, and openly professed his desire to be the vehicle for sharing that way of life, for which the Woodcraft Indians was a primary means.

Baden-Powell’s version of scouting—which many claim was primarily an appropriation of Seton’s earlier Woodcraft League (Morris 1970)—proved to be far more popular than Seton’s and other competitor groups. This led Seton and others to join with Baden-Powell to produce the
Boy Scouts of America. Seton—named “Chief Scout”—maintained powerful influence in the organization’s earliest years and was able to steer the Boy Scouts to model after the Indian as American hero. However, as conflict over which frontier hero was the most appropriate to encourage young American boys to emulate—frontiersmen, scout, or Indian—and personal clashes emerged between Seton and other scouting leadership, a turn was made against using Indians as the ultimate icon. Seton eventually broke with the Boy Scouts and denounced the institution’s continued emphasis on militaristic imperialism (Morris 1970).

After devoting years of his efforts to the Boy Scouts and realizing the extreme gulfs between his philosophies and those of the other founders, Seton refocused on Woodcraft. He reorganized his Woodcraft League, making it more institutional. Seton also turned back to writing. Seton wrote, as a sequel to Two Little Savages (1911b), Rolf in the Woods (1911a)—a story overtly against war, and describing the ideal Woodcrafter modeled after the “real Indian with his message for good and for evil” (Seton 1911a:1).

Seton also decided on a change of venue for the Woodcraft headquarters. He and his wife divorced, and Seton moved Woodcraft to New Mexico with his long time assistant and companion, Julia Moss Buttree, who also published Indian craft and hobby books (Anderson 1986:223). In New Mexico Seton created the College of Indian Wisdom, teaching Indian ways through field excursions, skills training, and rituals (Anderson 1986:220). In the Southwest, Seton also worked toward lobbying for Indian rights and causes (Anderson 1986:228).

Seton’s influence on American scouting did not die with his split from Boy Scouts. Seton’s Woodcraft system was appropriated by numerous other youth and adult movements, such as the Camp Fire Girl Program (which eventually integrated with the Boy Scouts to become Girl Scouts of America), the Order of Woodcraft Chivalry, Kibbo Kift Kindred, YMCA Indian Guides, and

Even with Seton’s departure, the idealization and incorporation of Indians remained in Boy Scouts. However, the strange paradox at focus in this dissertation also remained. In *On My Honor* (2001)—an ethnographic account of a 1990’s California based Boy Scout troop—author Jay Mechling was particularly critical of the existence of this paradox in his own scouting experience in 1950’s South Florida:

> I am sorry to say that our use of Indian lore somehow mixed a genuine respect for the Native American with a verbal disrespect for real Indians; we worked hard at recreating the costumes and dances of the Great Plains tribes, while ignoring the Seminole people who lived not far from our camp. [Mechling 2001:xxiv]

**Fraternal Pan-Indianism**

At the same time Boy Scouts and Woodcraft were rising in American popularity, fraternalist revitalization movements within Indian populations, particularly among highly educated Indians in urban places, were also emerging. The Society for American Indians (SAI) was the first such formal organization and was founded in 1911 to help unify the Indian “race” and bring it into “civilization” (Hertzberg 1971)

The SAI, Boy Scouts, and Woodcraft were all formed at the height of the “melting pot” paradigm’s popularity—a paradigm that dominated ideological debates about American identity and progress. As Hanson defined it:

> The “melting pot” philosophy sought to break down cultural and social diversity and develop “patriotic citizens,” hard-working Americans who would value austerity, individualism, and self-sufficiency, and who would share in the largess of “American Progress.” [Hanson 1997:196]

Of course, Native Americans were included in this paradigm. Through assimilation, Indianness would contribute to the ultimate American ideal. Just as Boy Scouts and Woodcraft were melting
pot institutions through which American boys would be imbued with Indianness, pan-Indian fraternal organizations like the SAI were institutions through which the Indian “race” would rise, evolutionarily, into civilization and be a vital part of American society.

However, only some aspects of Indianness were permitted to enter American society. The stereotypes that were integral in the construction of the Noble Savage-Indian were the ideal ingredients added to the melting pot. The stereotypes assigned to Indians still on reservations and participating in tribalism were associated with the ignoble savage construct. Pan-Indian fraternal organizations sought to emphasize the noble traits and eliminate the competing ignoble savage construct through assimilation and the dissolution of reservations (Hanson 1997).

One especially important fraternal pan-Indian organization whose publications clearly expressed this competition between noble and ignoble constructs was the Teepee Order of America (TOA). The TOA was formed in 1915 and founded by prominent Native Americans attached to SAI (Hertzberg 1971:213). When the SAI dissolved, the TOA grew to become the most active pan-Indian fraternal organization of its time—incorporating previous SAI members and appropriating the SAI founding history (Hertzberg 1971:220).

The Teepee Order of America utilized many of Seton’s Woodcraft ideas and modeled themselves after the Improved Order of the Red Men, with whom they maintained a great deal of cross-membership (Hertzberg 1971:218). The TOA published material that was often anti-immigrant, anti-black, and described Indians as ultimate American patriots (Hertzberg 1971:225). The organization’s publications described Indians as a noble but vanishing race important to the future of American society (Hertzberg 1971).

This trope—noble but vanishing—helps to illuminate the deep paradoxes that exist in the nationalization of the Indian-Noble Savage construct in American ethnogenic mythology. For
instance, in a contribution entitled “The North American Indian” in the 1920 summer issue of the “American Indian Teepee”—an “official magazine” for the TOA—the unnamed author described a noble and stereotypical depiction of “Indian” culture, morality, and temperaments. Interestingly, after describing such nobleness, the author then quickly transitioned into an argument that civilization had ruined the Indian morally and physically (American Indian Teepee 1920:12). The paradoxical transition was explained in the next paragraph when the author stated:

The noble precepts of the Improved Order of the Red men are founded on the manners, customs and traditions of the aborigines of the American continent as existed prior to the advent of the white man and should not be confused with the type we may occasionally meet in our travels today. [American Indian Teepee 1920:12]

This is a paradoxical statement, given that the TOA claimed to be “wholly” of the “Red Race” with Caucasians only as “associate” members. Essentially the author was placing the IORM (and by association the TOA) in the role of tradition keeper, both excluding contemporary Indians from nobleness and the power to authentically keep and communicate those noble traditions. Throughout the TOA issue, author after author argued that native knowledge was necessary to save the white man, that Red Men were closer to God and to nature, and that for the white race to be saved it must turn to knowledge of Indians. The Indians, on the other hand, were destined to vanish and had already been ruined, both physically and morally, by civilization.

The TOA grew considerably in the early 1920’s, with new councils emerging throughout the mid-west and Eastern United States, but also in larger cities in the West (Hertzberg 1971:226). There was a great deal of fissioning among the TOA. Individual organizations varied in structure and ritual focus, but generally local groups maintained a commitment to education and the promotion of American Indian Day (Hertzberg 1971:226-227). Even after the TOA officially dissolved in the late 1920’s—following the decision to prohibit non-Indians from holding national offices—upstarts and fissioned groups kept growing and maintained an active
focus on dances, powwowing, fraternalism, socializing, research, and education. According to Hertzberg (1971:235), the memberships in these organizations tended to be composed of lower middle class, uneducated people with little or no connection to tribes or reservations, and were generally prejudiced against by the Indian elite and Christian defense groups.

Many individual Native Americans played important roles in the proliferation and construction of the vanishing Indian myth and the paradoxical competition between ignoble and noble constructs. Through their leadership in pan-Indian fraternalism and popular status in American society, many individual Native Americans legitimated both ignoble and noble constructions, by spreading and strengthening romantic stereotypes and paradoxically, justifying identity appropriation by dominant society through institutions like Boy Scouts.

Arthur Parker—born on the Cattaraugus Indian Reservation of the Seneca to a white mother and mixed blood father—was once such Native American with considerable influence in American society. Not only did Parker play important roles in the Pan-Indian fraternal organizations of the early 20th century, but he also maintained advisory roles to numerous American presidents on Indian issues. Arthur was the nephew of the famous, and also politically influential, Ely Parker.

Ely and the Parker family were important informants and friends of Lewis Henry Morgan, a founder of professional American anthropology in the late 19th century. Early in his career, Morgan, failing as a lawyer, joined the secret society “The Gordian Knot.” Through his relationship with Ely, Morgan influenced the fraternity to transition to an “Indian group,” even changing the name to the “Grand Order of the Iroquois” (GOI) (Trautman 1987). The GOI had numerous chapters, organized the collection of ethnographic and historical documentation about
Indians, held meetings in full regalia at Masonic lodges, and had an elaborate initiation ceremony called “InIndianization” (Porter 2001:33-34).

Parker was an adherent to the “melting pot” concept, popular in the early decades of the 20th century, and he believed that, as a mixed-blood progressive Indian, he was on the forefront of the evolution of the “American” race (Porter 2001:28). However, after considerable conflict with the SAI leadership in 1922, Parker came to believe that Indians were too diverse to be shepherded by elite mixed-blood Indians. He gave up the melting pot idea and favored a eugenicist approach to race relations and intermixing (Porter 2001:136-137).

Parker was also highly involved in the Masons, even achieving the highest rank, the 33rd Degree (Porter 2001:143). Parker wrote in numerous Masonry publications, arguing that Indians were inherent Freemasons because they possessed an ancient proto-Masonic understanding, a universal freemasonry (Porter 2001:153). Parker (1919:9) argued that there is an inductive Masonry, an inherent morality in men who can become Masons. Parker believed that this inherency was present in Indians, and could be found in their secret societies.

In his arguments that Indians, or higher groups of Indians, had an inherent freemasonry, Parker isolated five major traits or beliefs. Parker argued that Indians believed in one Supreme Being—The Great Spirit, Maker, or Creator—and one afterlife which was affected by the conduct of one’s life on earth (1919). Indians also shared a strong sense of morality:

The practice of virtue was demanded of every red man. He must be just in his dealings of his fellows, truthful, charitable, considerate. He must be stoical, slow to anger and slow to admit of personal discomfort. He must at all times recognize his dependence on the Maker… [Parker 1919:11]

Parker also argued that Indians maintained a strong sense of fraternity or brotherhood. This fraternalistic brotherhood was expressed panentheistically:

If there is one belief above another which affects the conduct of the Indian it is his belief in a universal kinship of all created things. Man was not only the brother of
man because a supreme Father created both, but every animal, plant and rock, as well as every force of nature was believed to sustain a certain relation to man. [Parker 1919:12]

According to Parker (1919), this spiritual brotherhood was the cornerstone of the social organization, ritual, and laws of Native American societies. Indians never killed an animal wantonly and always gave thanks to the Creator. He further argued that, this sense of brotherhood “made hospitality the universal rule among Indians” (Parker 1919:13).

Parker’s freemasonry (and Louis Henry Morgan’s research) has had a continued impact on Masonic literature. For instance, in a 2006 regional newsletter, a historian for the Grand Lodge of the State of New York called upon Parker’s and Morgan’s work in an article linking the Iroquois to the U.S. constitution and freemasonry (Peter 2006:10-11).

Charles Eastman, a Santee-Sioux, was another prolific popular author and leader in early 20th century pan-Indiansim. He helped head both the Teepee Order of America and Society for American Indians. Like Parker, Eastman adhered to social evolutionary theories and conflated Indianness with ultra-Americanness. Eastman also had significant ties to Boy Scouts and Seton.

Claiming that the Indian’s, as a “vanishing race,” greatest worth is spiritual and philosophical, Eastman said that “the” Native American:

Will live, not only in the splendor of his past, the poetry of his legends and his art, not only in the interfusion of his blood with yours, and his faithful adherence to the new ideals of American citizenship, but in the living thought of the nation. [Eastman 2007:64]

Eastman argued that through scouting, this Indianness could not only be salvaged but also be transmitted to Americans. Eastman argued that Native Americans are the very essence of democracy, patriotism, and justice, and called on American parents to enter their children in Boy Scouts and Camp Fire Girls where they might learn about the “original American” (2007:55-64).
Eastman even produced a scouting guide—*Indian Scout Talks: A Guide for Boy Scouts and Campfire Girls* (1974)—in which he passed on the “Indian method” for a menagerie of activities such as physical training, woodcraft, hunting, cooking, survival skills, trailblazing, and even naming, ceremonies, and wigwam etiquette. As the basis for this scouting guide, Eastman stated that “we will follow the Indian method, for the American Indian is the only man I know who accepts natural things as lessons in themselves, direct from the Great Giver of life” (1974:2).

As in many of Eastman’s publications, throughout the guide, Eastman (1974) depicted Indians’ superior physicality, morality, and spirituality as having been derived from nature, which he contrasted with civilization and modern Christianity. The final sentence of Eastman’s guide urged readers to “have more of this spirit of the American Indian, the Boy Scout’s prototype, to leaven the brilliant selfishness of our modern civilization” (1974:190).

Like their non-Indian counterparts, public figures like Eastman and Parker gave considerable legitimacy to revitalization movements that justified the appropriation of Indian identity by dominant society, particularly those organized through fraternalism at the turn of the century. These revitalization movements institutionalized and made consumable the stereotyped Indianness as an antithesis of civilization and Christianity—superior spiritually, physically, and morally. As Philip Deloria (1998:126) pointed out, the use of this antimodern primitivism to justify Indianness as ultra-Americanness, while perhaps altering dominant stereotypes, was a catch-22 that actually reinforced already existing prejudices.

The further romanticized stereotype would be reproduced over and over in various pan-Indian revitalization and political movements throughout the 20th century. Early pan-Indian fraternal organizations were attempting to create a national Indian identity that was ethnically the same as those of dominant culture. In contrast, organizations that played important roles in pan-
Indian movements in the latter half of the 20th century—such as American Indian Movement and National Indian Youth Council—emphasized a distinct ethnic Indian identity, separate from non-Indians (Harmon 1997:202).

As was described in the previous chapter, this shift occurring in the latter half of the 20th century coincided with the dissolution of the relationship between Indian hobbyists and Indians in powwowing. It also co-occurred with the move by many tribes and Indian organizations to expose New Age and neopagan entrepreneurs as exploiters of Indian religions and traditions. As will be described in the following chapter, these shifts are tied to economic and political empowerment for some Indian populations and groups. This empowerment created competition and tightening of the boundaries of Indian ethnic identity.

**What is Being Appropriated**

Indian hobbyism and wannabeism is often dismissed as a form of appropriation and cultural genocide. Indeed, as I argue in this dissertation, participants in the regional movement do threaten the agency of some Native Americans by claiming to have more Indianness and authenticity than those who are legally tied to the nation state as Native Americans and by perpetuating definitions of stereotyped Indianness that subvert the power of legal definitions. Although participants in the regional community cannot access Indian-specific funds provided by the nation-state’s legal institutions, they can compete with Native Americans within the public arena for capital tied to Indianness.

Like Eastman, Parker, and Seton, members of the regional community have turned to the public for legitimacy of their claimed Indianness—regardless of the form of ancestry that they might claim. Within the public arena, Indianness is stereotyped and attached to popular beliefs about Indians and American history. As I will describe in later chapters, regional participants do not appropriate specific tribally tied identities but make claims to the stereotype—Indian as
patriotic Noble Savage. This stereotype is deemed to be the authentic, and harnesses the most capital, thus anyone competing for capital tied to Indianness in the public arena must also claim this stereotype in order to be successful. Indianness in this arena is not relative to one’s legal status or relationship to the nation-state.

Interestingly, looking at the regional community in a historical and geographic context allows for a convoluted view of participants’ claimed identities. Is the appropriation of stereotyped Indian identity the ultimate “American” act? If the history of the idea of the Indian as Noble Savage is Western in originality and a product of many different figures and institutions (even including Native Americans) on a global scale, can it even be called appropriation? As this history has shown, this construction is a global, hybrid project.

As Jan Nederveen Pieterse pointed out in *Globalization and Culture* (2004), there are three dominating ways of seeing cultural difference: differentiation, convergence, and hybridity. I would argue that the conflation of Noble Savage with Indians is a product of historical differentiation and convergence views of culture, but that the conflation of the Noble Indian with Americana is powerful because it necessitates a hybrid product. As this chapter has shown, the appropriation of Indian identity has been used by various institutions throughout American history to legitimate a “new” American ethnic identity. However, this new identity is built on tying “Old World” to the “New World” and making America indigenous. The indigenization of America requires hybridity in some form. From the Red Men’s quest to indigenize American history, to Teddy Roosevelt’s Lamarckianism, to the popularity of the Boy Scouts—each of these new identities have made a nationalist American identity hybrid.

As Nederveen Pieterse (2004) pointed out, hybridity threatens essentialist views of culture. In order to produce a “new” identity that contradicts dominant systems, hybridity is one powerful
means. As I will describe in the following chapters, participants in the regional polybian movement are often self-acknowledged hybrids, idealizing their hybrid state as the “best of both worlds,” more ideal than being fully of either Indian or White identities.

I believe that the polybian Indian movement is a nativist revitalization phenomena, one that is attempting, at the ground level, to move “up-time” as Benedict Anderson stated (2006). This movement threatens the essentialist identities that the state has imposed upon Native Americans, by competing for Indianness capital within the public arena. However, what is interestingly ironic is that while regional participants may be as “American as mom’s Apple Pie” they are attempting to indigenize by appropriating a construct of being Indian that is actually the Noble Savage construct that is actually a product of imperialist dynamics.

Further complicating the picture are individuals and groups recognized as Indians who have used these noble savage construct for Indian revitalization, as well as a means to distinction from dominant society. Even Disney’s Pocahontas has been the subject of such reappropriation. Russell Means, an actor with a role in the film and activist in the American Indian Movement, depicted Disney’s Pocahontas as a film that told “the truth” about Native Americans for the “first time” (Taylor 2010:135). This appropriation and re-appropriation of dynamically constructed stereotypes is a messy business and confuses multiple spheres of identity.

So the question can be asked, and as the Disney song “Colors of the Wind” might be suggesting, is imperialism no longer imperialism if the native perspective is appropriated? But perhaps, a more important question to ask is: what is it that is actually being appropriated by contemporary people who are labeled wannabes and hobbyists and how does that relate to power?
CHAPTER 5
FROM COMMODITIZATION TO CLASS CREATION

As the previous two chapters have shown, (1) there is great diversity in the types of individuals who claim some form of Indianness or interests in Indianness, but who are often associated with illegitimate interests in Indian identity, and (2) there is a long history of American ethnogenic myth-making that not only parallels consumer demand for products imbued with the nostalgic symbol of Indianness, but also conflates a stereotyped Indianness with a stereotyped Americanness. This history was punctuated by the efforts of specific groups of people who tied their identities to Indianness, to control the profits of labor associated with the commodification of Indianness. A legal class system emerged that was legitimated through popular American mythology—particularly by elements of that mythology that fused Indianness with Americanness. Understanding the development of this class system is important to understand the emergence of the Southeastern Polybian Indian Movement and the strategies (and parallel ideologies) that this movement’s participants use in order to subvert the class system.

Institutionalizing Indian Identity

On the issue of identity, I draw greatly from the work of British anthropologist Richard Jenkins. Identity is a process of being or becoming, rather than a thing, and has to be made to matter, thus it cannot be separated from interests (Jenkins 2008b:5-12). Further, all identities are constructed in terms of similarity and difference from a dialectical process of internal and external identification (Jenkins 2008b:41).

Collective internal definition is group identification, while collective external definition is categorization (Jenkins 2008b:109). Identity is never disinterested; identification and categorization have consequences. As Jenkins has said, “it is the capacity to generate these
consequences and make them stick which matters” and institutions are important contexts through which identity becomes consequential (2008b:43).

There have been numerous definitions of Indian identity over the hundreds of years of interaction between people associated (internally or externally) with indigenousness and people not associated with indigenousness in North America. As described in the previous chapters, it is commonplace in American history and mythmaking for individuals and institutions in the dominant population to self-identify as Indian or self-associate with Indianness but without requiring such self-proclaimed Indianness to be recognized by individuals or institutions associated with the subaltern Indian population (e.g. the Red Men).

Such identity claims or self-associations have typically gone without significant negative consequence. However, during the late 20th century emerged significant shifts in power for some institutions in the subaltern Indian population. With those shifts in power, the consequences of Indian identification and categorization also changed. As Joan Nagel has argued, these shifts—particularly as catalyzed by the Red Power Movement—and subsequent institutionalization of cultural renewal, redefined the meaning and value of “Indian” self-identification, making Indian identity “one of the most attractive ethnic options in America today” (1997:247).

Beginning in the 1970’s, the United States government—with influence by native interest groups and institutions—outlined and instituted definitions of tribal and individual Indian identity that created serious consequences for those who claimed Indian identity—whether collectively or individually—but who were excluded from these new legal definitions. These new definitions followed a long historical process of dynamic construction of Indian identity. Not until 1934, with the Indian Reorganization Act, was there much coherency within the U.S. government as to what defined an Indian or Indian tribe. Definitions varied from branch to
branch, just as they did in popular culture. As William Quinn Jr. (1990a) has documented, it took a long time for cognitive and legal definitions to align in the United States.

Looking at legislative policies and court decisions since the Indian New Deal, Lawrence Baca (1988) constructed a “working definition” of Indian identity in the seminal Handbook of North American Indians. Baca defined an Indian as:

a person, some of whose ancestors lived in America before the arrival of Whites, who is generally considered to be an Indian by the community in which he lives or from which he comes, and who holds himself to be an Indian. [Baca 1988:230]

Of course, this was not a legal definition at the time Baca wrote it, but was only a generalization. Such a definition points to two important elements in the construction of Indianness: (1) the construction of Indianness in relation to ancestral origin and (2) the reciprocal interaction between identification and categorization. This definition relies on relational recognition. It incorporates both identification and categorization.

As Baca (1988) pointed out, the question “who is an Indian” has been heavily dependent on the specific purpose for which such a question has been asked. Indian identity is situational and arbitrary, but bound by complicated multidimensional scales of social interaction and perception, much of which is far beyond the influence of individuals who might or might not self-identify as Indian. Throughout the 20th century, in order to access resources and political power, groups self-identifying as indigenous have adapted their identities to match powerful categorizations in the fields in which they are interested. Two major pieces of federal legislation—the 1978 Indian Recognition Act and the 1990 Indian Arts and Craft Act—have been particularly important in giving broader power to certain in-group identities in specific fields of competition.

The 1978 implementation of the Federal Acknowledgement Process, or the Indian Recognition Act (hereafter referred to as the Recognition Act), was only one element in a
plethora of legal enactments and court decisions beginning in the 1960’s that reflected major shifts in national treatment of minority groups. During the 1960’s, there was a simultaneous increase of federal expenditure for Indians and a growth of publically salient pan-Indian (often urban) organizations demanding control over programs that impacted Indian people. These shifts in federal policy—a change in course from historic termination and assimilation policies—gave more power of self-determination and sovereignty rights to tribes and helped to underwrite the activist efforts of many urban pan-Indian organizations. Laws and court decisions gave tribes more power over resources and services on reservations, as well as power to determine tribal membership, even if membership definitions conflicted with U.S. constitutional civil rights (Kelly 1988:79).

Especially important to note here, is the emphasis on “tribe” as a collective unit. Tribe has multiple meanings and definitions, but in a legal context “tribe” is a political category and the fundamental element upon which United States “Indian law” operates (Sheffield 1997:56). With new resources available for Indian populations, by the 1970’s there was considerable growth in the number of Indian groups seeking clarification of their status with the Department of the Interior. Many such groups had their tribal status and trust relationships terminated by congress in previous decades, and were seeking reinstatement.

In response, the 1978 Recognition Act created a process of formal acknowledgment of tribal status by the United States government for groups of people who claimed to be Indians but did not have existing tribal recognition. With the late 20th century shifts in policy toward Native Americans, gaining tribal recognition meant access to numerous forms of federal assistance, services, and programs, as well as achievement of a “government-to-government” relationship with the United States.
However, achieving the mandatory criteria for federally recognized tribal status is a burdensome task. As a 2004 senate report summarized, criteria for acknowledgement must essentially:

- demonstrate that the members of a tribe are related genealogically to one another and that they, as a tribe, have existed as a distinct community and that the tribe has maintained political influence or authority over its members from historical times until the present. [Committee on Indian Affairs 2004:6]

This kind of documentation takes a great deal of time, financial resources, and expert consultation to collect and authenticate. The Office of Federal Acknowledgement (OFA) is understaffed and underfunded, and, as acknowledged in a 2008 Senate hearing pointed out, there is a conflict of interest in the BIA both overseeing allocation of limited funds to federally acknowledged tribes and being responsible for recognition of petitioning groups (Committee on Indian Affairs 2008:59).

As of 2008, the OFA had received 332 petitions or letters of intent to petition for recognition, only 82 of which have had complete documentation for review (2008). Of the 82 reviewable cases, 47 decisions have been made by OFA, resulting in only 16 successfully recognized tribes (Office of Federal Acknowledgment 2008a). Nineteen additional cases have been resolved by legislation or other means. Some petitioning groups have had unresolved active cases for decades.

Clearly the process biases toward exclusion. Nonetheless, with a high potential pay-off, many groups still seek recognition. However, with such heavy burdens of time, economic resources, and forms of proof needed to petition, much less to do so successfully, many groups who claim Indian identity have attempted to subvert the acknowledgement process. One subversive means is to seek federal recognition through the legislative or judicial branches, bypassing the executive branch.
One of the most controversial examples of a group successfully subverting the process is the Mashantucket Pequot tribe of Connecticut. The Pequot, a historical New England tribe, had only one person living on the reservation by the 1970’s. In 1975, relatives of that individual began organizing to gain federal recognition (Benedict 2001). Participants gained legal counsel, converted their non-Indian ethnic identities to Native American and Pequot, and moved onto the reservation (Benedict 2001). The Pequot were quickly thrust into the national spotlight when President Reagan weighed in on their legal battles to increase land holdings and gain federal recognition. Winning recognition through legislative acts and court decisions, the Pequot founded the Foxwoods Casino and eventually became one of the wealthiest populations per capita in the world. Many scholars and public figures have been particularly critical of the Pequot’s federal status, not only because of the process by which they achieved it, but also because the Pequot likely could not meet the mandatory criteria set forth by the OFA (Benedict 2001).

Another important means of subverting the federal recognition process is by gaining state-based recognition. Some states, all of which are in the East, recognize tribes independently from federal recognition. Especially controversial are those states that—through lenient legislative maneuvering, where recognition can be as easy as gaining sponsorship by one representative—recognize groups who do not first have federal recognition (Sheffield 1997:77).

Many federal tribes and public figures have protested state recognition. One of the most salient protests came from Wilma Mankiller, a former principle chief of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma. In 1992, Mankiller wrote to numerous state governors warning them of the growing number of groups claiming Cherokee identity and seeking federal or state recognition. Mankiller
urged the governors to make federal recognition a prerequisite for state recognition (Sheffield 1997:76).

Interestingly, Standing Bear, of the Deer Clan in Georgia, referenced Mankiller’s letter as a turning point for his organization. Many Deer Clan members felt betrayed by Mankiller’s position and became disillusioned (Standing Bear 1994:317-318). The group’s spiritual leader described Mankiller as having sold-out and likened her to a Serbian warlord committing genocide (Standing Bear 1994:318). The leader further argued that “these people,” of whom Mankiller was representative, are only driven by money and have failed to follow the vision of their ancestors (Standing Bear 1994:318). As I will describe later, this is also a common argument among groups that I worked with in Central Florida. An argument that Mankiller is committing genocide, suggests that the Deer Clan (or at least its spiritual leader) see themselves as part of an ethnic population, perhaps distinct from types of Indians that Mankiller represents. To attack motivations for seeking Indian identity—to attribute economic motivations—subverts dominant definitions of Indian identity and questions the authenticity of those categorized by such definitions.

The Deer Clan is associated with a larger organization called the Southeastern Creek Confederacy (SECC) that petitioned for but failed to achieve federal recognition. George Roth, in Indians of the Southeastern United States in the late 20th Century (1992), pointed to the SECC as an example of the phenomena of non-tribal groups organizing in the Southeast and recruiting from lower to middle class economic and rural populations, but claiming Indian tribal identity. Although the SECC did not achieve federal status, or state-recognition, other groups that Roth (1992) associated with this Southeastern phenomenon, the MaChis Creeks of Alabama and the
Lower Muskogee Creek Nation have achieved state-recognition. State recognition, as Roth described it, is:

a step beyond the state forming a commission or having a specific state official to deal with Indian needs. However, it generally constitutes little more than the state taking official notice of the existence of the tribe as a tribe, usually together with defining access to state programs for Indians. State recognition is of greatest significance to the tribes that are not federally recognized because although much less significant, it provides a degree of ratification or distinct status. [Roth 1992:191]

As recommended in 1988 by the Florida Governor’s Council on Indian Affairs (Sheffield 1997:63), there are currently no Indian groups, other than those with federal recognition, that have been recognized as tribes by the state of Florida. That is not the case for Florida’s neighbors, however. Alabama and Georgia both have state recognized tribes who are not federally recognized, and some of these groups play an important role in the Florida powwowing network. “Legal” recognition, whether state or federal, is an important element in empowering specific definitions in the issue of authenticity, and is especially important in relation to the 1990 Indian Arts and Craft Act (hereafter referred to as the IACA).

**Indian Arts and Craft Act**

The IACA is a unique piece of legislation in the whole of “Indian law.” As Gail Sheffield (1997:134) has argued, the IACA is an especially egregious example of legislation that fails to distinguish between political and cultural spheres and confuses both with the racial sphere. Sheffield (1997:134) argued that this failure is a major contributor to Indian versus non-Indian conflict. However, another unique, and especially important element of this legislation, is that it was primarily advanced by specific Native American interest groups and, as Sheffield (1997) pointed out, created a property right on Indian identity.
The act defines an “Indian-made” product as

any craft or art made either by (1) a member of a federally or state-recognized Indian tribe or (2) a nontribal member artisan certified by an Indian tribe as such, or (3) a legally established Indian arts and crafts organization composed of members of Indian tribes. [Henson, et al. 2008:303]

The Department of Interior agency responsible for implementing IACA, the Indian Arts and Crafts Board, defined an Indian producer, “as a member of any federally or State recognized Indian Tribe, or an individual certified as an Indian artisan by an Indian Tribe” (Indian Arts and Crafts Board 2008). Of course, this ties the ultimate value of the product to the producer’s identity, rather than to skill or product quality—it is “Indian-made.”

The 1990 IACA was created to solve the problem of imitation and imported Indian-style products cutting into the profits of Native Americans. With the rise in status of Native Americans in American popular culture, following the Red Power Movement and popular films that romanticized Indians, the market for Indian-style arts and crafts had grown to a $400-800 million dollar industry by the 1980’s (Hapiuk 2001, Sheffield 1997). A congressionally mandated study by the U.S. Department of Commerce in 1985, found that as much as 20% of this market was represented by imitation and foreign-made products with drastically cheaper prices (Hapiuk 2001:1017). Unmarked imports were especially affecting the Southwest Indian jewelry market, particularly cutting into sales by the Zuni, Navajo, and Hopi tribes who dominated the market (Sheffield 1997:21).

In 1988, Bill Nighthorse Campbell, a representative from Colorado and the only Native American in congress at the time, and Bill Richardson, a representative from New Mexico, sponsored an amendment to the Omnibus Trade Act that would require permanent country of origin marks on Native American style jewelry (Sheffield 1997:23). This was clearly not enough
to stem the flow of foreign Indian themed goods, and two years later Campbell and Jon Kyl, a representative from Arizona with a large Navajo constituency, introduced the IACA.

As Sheffield (1997) has documented, the final version of the bill was heavily weighted to represent the interests of tribes and market participants from the Southwest. Indeed, Campbell was a Southwest Indian-style jeweler himself, whose son went on to take over the family business after Campbell became a congressman (Hapiuk 2001:1073). Particularly important in the construction of the bill was the power it gave to tribes—both state and federally recognized. The first version empowered only federal tribes, but a later amendment increased the power of state tribes as well.

The 1990 IACA amended the Indian Arts and Craft Act passed in 1935, giving it real criminal power through greatly increased fines and jail time. As part of the “Indian New Deal,” the 1935 Craft Act created the Indian Arts and Crafts Board, which was given the mandate to develop and expand the market for Indian arts and crafts. In addition to creating economic opportunities for Indians, the 1935 Craft Act was an attempt to salvage Indian culture. A committee established to study this market, argued that government intervention was needed because Indians were no longer producing crafts to be consumed and used by Indians, but were producing crafts for cash trade which was leading to a loss in traditional culture (Hapiuk 2001:1050).

As Hapiuk (2001) and Sheffield (1997) have both pointed out, the 1990 IACA was also pitched to interest groups and congress as a way to save traditional Indian culture. Much of the argument for passage of the bill was founded in romanticism—that government intervention in the market was needed to save a valuable part of American culture (Hapiuk 2001:1021).
The IACA was also advertised as a consumer protection, truth-in-advertising form of legislation and closely paralleled trademark infringement laws. The legislation, however, focused most on preservation of authentic Indianness. Hapiuk argued that, on the issue of consumer protection, the IACA is primarily concerned:

that consumers believe that they are getting the “real goods.” Thus, the legislated path to consumer protection is directly linked to the cultural survival of Indians: to insure that only authentic goods reach consumers, a pure source must be maintained. In this sense, the cultural survival of Indians is in the best interest of the American consumer. [Hapiuk 2001:1028]

With this overlapping of protection for both the consumer and Indian culture, this legislation gave to tribes the ability to regulate “authentic” individual Indian identity. As Sheffield (1997) carefully documented at hearings for IACA, support for the bill linked protection of Indian arts and crafts with protection of authentic Indian identity. Only an Indian can produce an “Indian” product, and an Indian is only someone who is officially recognized by a tribal entity that is itself first recognized by a federal or state government. Even the certification of un-enrolled Indian artists empowered tribal authority.

The penalties for IACA were intended to be comparable to intellectual property laws, which, whether intended or not, created a new category of intellectual property—Indian identity—and gave tribes further power to control this identity (Sheffield 1997:137). The IACA essentially created two classes of people, at least in the market for things Indian: tribally recognized (certified or enrolled) individuals and unrecognized individuals—the power of the symbolic capital of authenticity being legally and exclusively the right of the higher class.

As both Sheffield (1997) and Hapiuk (2001) pointed out, such class creation actually threatens tribal sovereignty by confusing political, cultural, and racial categories. Although typically based on genealogy and often on blood quantum, as political entities rather than racial
groups, tribes can determine their own membership. Could the federal government’s intrusion, through the IACA, create classes based on race or ethnic origin?

Sheffield stated that:

The treatment of federal Indian law as being nondiscriminatory because it is based on the status of Indian sovereignty rather than on race or national origin presumably does not, or should not, create a blanket exclusion for any law that somehow involves Indians. Thus, presumably, the Indian Arts and Crafts Act can be scrutinized by the federal courts to see if it creates a classification based on race or ethnic origin, and, if so, if it meets the constitutional test of being necessary to compelling state interest… The obvious question is whether forbidding the use of self-identification as Indian to those persons who are of Indian ancestry creates a racial classification and, if so, whether there is a compelling state interest in making such a classification. [Sheffield 1997:132]

Sheffield (1997:132) also pointed out that the IACA further risks creating a race or ethnicity based class by giving state-recognized tribes equal footing with federal tribes. State-only recognized tribes do not have a political government-to-government relationship with the United States and are often recognized by a state government based on claims to Indian decent. As Sheffield argued, “recognition by a state could be construed as creating political entities out of racial groups” (1997:133).

I agree with Sheffield and Hapiuk, the IACA confuses political, cultural, and racial categories, and puts at risk the sovereignty of federally recognized tribes. This confusion of categories, which makes tribal sovereignty vulnerable, is being used, intentionally or not, by members of the regional Indian Polybian Movement to subvert the authority of tribes by subverting dominant definitions of Indian identity. Further, I believe that the classifications created by the IACA are contributing to the development of ethnogenesis in the regional movement.

The commercial powwow is an especially important element in this ethnogenesis. The commercial powwow is a marketplace for things Indian, thus bringing together people of varying
self-identifications and categorizations—both legal and not—but a shared interest in accessing capitals associated with *Indianness*, whether as consumers, producers, or merchants. The powwow, as a place that is both an *Indian* market and a market for *things* Indian, allows merchants and producers to subvert the power of the “Indian-made” label. Before I further develop my argument, however, I must first lay the groundwork theoretically.

**Creating a New Category**

In addition to Richard Jenkins, Michael Kearney, and Eric Wolf, basic to the lens of my argument, are the works of Pierre Bourdieu. Influenced by Marx, Weber, and Durkheim, Bourdieu constructed theories, in which he attempted to wed idealism and materialism to explain:

> how stratified social systems of hierarchy and domination persist and reproduce intergenerationally without powerful resistance and without the conscious recognition of its members. [Swartz 1997:6]

For Bourdieu, all practice or action is influenced by self-interest, whether conscious or not, to increase power within a social order (Wilk and Cliggett 2007:184-186).

Bourdieu put forth numerous concepts and ideas in his evolving theory of practice, however, only some of those concepts are directly employed in this dissertation. The most influential of these concepts are *symbolic capital*, *social capital*, and *fields*.

For Bourdieu, there are many forms of capital, beyond just the material, economic form. He primarily focused on four different types—economic, cultural, social, and symbolic—which are interchangeable. While economic capital is at the root of the other forms of capital, it is symbolic capital that gives legitimization to all the other forms, in effect imbuing power by disguising interests (Bourdieu 1990). Such legitimization creates “misrecognition” of the arbitrary nature of interests (Swartz 1997:89).
Struggle for these forms of capital occurs within a *field*. There are different types of strategies employed by actors within these fields—conservation, succession, and subversion. Conservation and succession are typically pursued by those seeking to maintain or gain access to dominant positions, while subversion is used by those who expect to gain little from the dominant position (Swartz 1997:125).

Eric Wolf drew on Bourdieu’s concept of field as well. For Wolf (1999:274), it is precisely within these fields—as people engage one another—that culture is made or unmade. In these relational engagements, power is exercised and old ideas are drawn upon or new ideas are constructed to legitimate or underwrite structural power.

The IACA and other civil rights laws (e.g. AIRFA and NAGPRA) are examples of how strategies of conservation and succession are enabling tribes to maintain and control the capitals exchangeable for Indianness. On the other hand, as this dissertation will describe, members of Florida’s (and perhaps the broader Southeast) regional Indian community are utilizing strategies of subversion. Polybian Indian individuals and organizations composed primarily of polybians (such as the Deer Clan) cannot anticipate achieving recognition of their self-proclaimed Indianness and other interests tied to Indian identity through dominant institutions.

With the concept of field, we move into Kearney. In trying to understand the changing perceptions about the peasant as *type*, utilizing an articulationist perspective Kearney (1996) drew on Bourdieu to argue that identities within fields are internally differentiated. External types are largely given by the nation-state and are within firm boundaries. Often making a living in informal economies, internally differentiated persons are “transforming” and maintain somewhat fluid identities, which are suspect and illegitimate (Kearney 1996:141). These internally differentiated persons, who Kearney often termed “polybians,” subvert the hard
categories maintained by the nation-state, situating themselves externally, in an ambiguous place that threatens those categories (1996:143).

For Bourdieu and Kearney both, value or capital is imbued with power through social relationships that make up the network, or field of struggle. Drawing on Bourdieu, but also heavily influenced by Wolf, Kearney argued that value is embedded in identities, due to their situation in a social order. These identities “are constituted not only by the press of relations of production but also by the consumption of signs imbued with various forms of value” (Kearney 1996:12).

To this point, Kearney (1996:165) described the contradictions of traditional folk-art tourism as a modernizing scheme. Using Oaxaca as an example, Kearney (1996) pointed out that such enclaves are often populated by “peasantlike polybians” enmeshed in informal economies and depend, not only on commodifying the “traditional,” but also on distinguishing the tourist from the touristed. The producer must appear as “local” and traditional other. The producer, as well as the product, must be exoticized, embueing the value in the producer or creator, not the material. The contradiction to the modernizing scheme is that the exoticization actually further contains the subaltern population (Kearney 1996:167).

As Hapiuk (2001) pointed out, the twin goals of the IACA—consumer protection and cultural salvage—creates a need to preserve a pure source of Indian identity. The traditions of arts and crafts in different tribes are not being preserved, but have adapted to consumer demands, which are built on romanticism and nostalgia. As Hapiuk stated, “it is difficult not to conclude that at least some of the burgeoning market for Indian arts and crafts represents an ahistorical fetishizing and mythologizing of what consumers imagine to be ‘Indian’” (2001:1054). Hapiuk
(2001) likened this to the more postmodernist concept of “simulacra,” which he attributed to Jameson. However, I view this as more akin to Bourdieu’s concept of “misrecognition.”

The preservation is done in the name of protecting tribal sovereignty, which, in formal hearings on the IACA, interest groups claimed was intimately linked to protecting Indian identity (Sheffield 1997). Tribes, and the tribally affiliated, are conserving the power gained through formal, institutionalized recognition. However, regulating authentic identity is dangerous. In regulation of the market by IACA, what is being protected is not traditional culture but the power to control the profits of social labor. This is dependent on the structural power of the Indian versus non-Indian dualism—keeping Indianness exotic.

To bring up the question of authenticity—to ask “who is a real Indian”—imbues power to a particular in-group by disguising interests. The IACA was intended to stem the flow of cheaply produced foreign Indian-style goods cutting into the profits of people identified as Indians. However, intended or not, the bill actually empowered a specific category of people and the institutions that empower those categories and police their borders, giving that group exclusive, legal right to take the profits of social labor in the production of things Indian.

One does not have to look far to find an example of how this misrecognition works to enhance profits for a specific interest group. As Hapiuk (2001) pointed out, Bill Nighthorse Campbell’s son went on to take over his father’s business. Campbell has been criticized for a particular knife the business sells. The knife is produced in China—taking advantage of cheap production costs—and is advertised with pictures of Campbell in a full war-bonnet. Campbell’s son claimed the product to be legally “Indian-made” because the pieces were designed by Campbell (Hapiuk 2001:1073). As Hapiuk (2001:1073) noted, it is unclear what courts would conclude.
In further examples, the first civil cases under the IACA were not brought against imitators or importers—the focus of the bill—but were brought against JCPenny and Walmart (merchants) for hundreds of millions of dollars in claims (Hapiuk 2001:1014). As Hapiuk pointed out, nothing in the IACA requires tribes to show that they have suffered harm or even be involved in craft production in order to bring a suit (2001:1042). In addition, consumers do not have actual legal recourse under the IACA. Only Indians, tribes, and arts and crafts organizations (which are composed of tribal members) can bring lawsuits under IACA (Hapiuk 2001:1025).

When the IACA was signed into law it had a quick and broad impact. Many prominent galleries and museums had to shut down in order to avoid being a test case for the IACA in the courts. Even the Museum of the Five Civilized Tribes in Muscogee, OK had to close with fears that too many of their artists did not have CDIB cards and were not enrolled in a tribe (Hapiuk 2001:1034). Although many artists might have been Indians as defined by Baca (1988), a tribe did not politically recognize their identity claims. Indeed, with the implementation of the IACA, many artists have called for a boycott of anything foreign-made rather than a redefinition of Indian identity and submission to tribes as authority over authenticity of personal identity (Hapiuk 2001:1034). Many artists likened the bill to Nazism or McCarthyism (Hapiuk 2001:1036).

A 1996 amendment further added “Native American,” along with “Indian,” to the restricted labels, but did allow “Indian-style” and “Native American-style” to be attached to products not created by legally recognized Indian people (Hapiuk 2001:1037). Nonetheless, it did not solve the problem of what being “Indian-made” means. Still, on the other hand, many Indians felt like the IACA did not move far enough to protect Indian tribal identity (Sheffield
For instance, IACA only protects material products, not performances claimed to be Indian.
Class Versus Ethnicity

As Jenkins has argued about unintended consequences of policy:

the attempt to target resources and intervention at a section of the population which is perceived to have particularly urgent or specialized ‘needs’ may serve either to call into existence a new social category or strengthen an existing categorization. [Jenkins 2008a:71]

The IACA, whether intended or not, has strengthened an existing category of people—tribally recognized (certified or enrolled)—by giving them powerful access to profits of social labor in the production of things Indian. As the previous chapters have described, there are numerous individuals and groups who claim Indian identity or some form of Indianness, but who do not have tribal recognition, many of whom have no social recognition of their self-proclaimed Indianness. The IACA alienated a highly diverse population from profits they might have interests in seeking, even alienating them from the profits of their own individual labor if they do not have tribal recognition. By confusing the political, cultural, and racial spheres, the IACA has potentially created an ethnic or racially based dichotomous class system in the market for things Indian.

Looking again at the above quote by Jenkins (2008a), I believe that an important question should also be asked: is the creation of a non-Indian category new? Of course not. The binary Indian versus non-Indian classification is not only at the root of Indian law, but also has roots in evolution of a distinct American identity in which consuming things Indian has been an important part of the development of an American mythology and ethnogenesis. As Sheffield and Hapiuk described, arguments for the IACA often called on this mythology by tying Indian cultural preservation to American preservation.

This is not different from Wolf’s case studies. As with the Kwaikitl, Aztec, and Nazi Regime, in efforts to take control or retain control of social labor, elites in Indian society have
linked their identities—their position of structural power—to a broader cosmological order that legitimates the consumption of things Indian as *American*. As Wolf put it in regards to his case studies:

Power was thus made to depend not merely on “production” (the active interchange of humans with nature) and on “society” (the normatively governed interaction among humans) but also on relationships with imaginary elements and beings projected beyond tangible experience into metaphysical worlds. [Wolf 1999:281]

The IACA not only reinforced this dichotomous social structure—Indian versus non-Indian—but also placed powerful boundaries around specific constructed definitions of these categories. As the previous chapter showed, American mythology legitimates “Indian blood” as authentic—this blood authenticates individuals, tribes, and American society as a whole. With a long history of American ethnogenic mythmaking that both incorporated Indians into national identity and increased the value of the market for *things* Indian—if following Wolf’s argument in *Envisioning Power* (1999)—it should not be surprising that as the value of things Indian increased and the market expanded under a global capitalist mode of production, there would be an eventual “property right” created for Indian identity.

Of course, the question with a less clear outcome would be who gets ownership of such property—who gets to exclude who from the profits of social labor in the production of *things* Indian? As opposed to previous legislation on the regulation of arts and crafts, highly organized self-identified Indian groups have been a major driving force behind the creation of 1990 IACA. Those interest groups utilized the romanticized, nostalgic definitions of Indianness that had been constructed through American ethnogenic mythmaking but had been refashioned by actors in the Red Power Movement to encourage tribalism and cultural revitalization (Hanson 1997). Power for those groups to control interests associated with Indian identity were greatly enhanced by the IACA.
In the field of competition over things Indian, the tribe, as a political institution, was given the most power, and definitions of Indianness were more tightly bound to concepts of kinship and race (blood and ancestry). As the previous chapters have shown, the imposed non-Indian category covers an especially diverse population with widely varying types of claims to Indianness—claims which range from direct ancestry, to claims of reincarnation, and to adherence to specific lifestyles. Even in social phenomena such as hobbyism, many people have an interest in attaching Indianness to their personal identities, although they may not self-identify as Indian ethnically.

Of course, to have an interest in Indian identity does not mean that one is interested in profiting economically or socially from such identity. However, if only some individuals or groups who are in this lower category have interests in the market for things Indian, what could be the unintended consequences of the IACA? With such a diverse population in the delegitimized category, could this dichotomous classification lead to a new social category, in addition to strengthening existing ones? If Indian law is built on a dichotomous category—non-Indian versus Indian—then creating a new, third category could be a viable means of subverting such a dichotomy, particularly for those who cannot expect to breach the boundaries of legal Indian identity.

To illustrate that group identification can be generated by prior categorization, Richard Jenkins has regularly drawn upon Marx’s distinction between a class for itself and a class of itself (2008a:56, 2008b:110, 1994:201).

Marx argued that the working class is constituted in itself by virtue of the similar situation of workers, their common alienation from the means of production within capitalism. By virtue of their shared situation, workers have similar interests (i.e. things that are in their interest). Marx argued that these interests cannot be realised until workers unite into a class for itself and realise for themselves what their interests are. This, for Marx, signifies the emergence of the working class as a
collective historical agent. The process of group identification encourages and is encouraged by class struggle. [Jenkins 2008b:110]

Individuals that are regularly associated with inauthentic Indianness (e.g. Indian-style artists who are unenrolled but of Indian ancestry, hobbyists, and “plastic shamans”) are a group in itself, because they share a similar situation with similar interests—a desire to access Indianness in whatever form its associated capital (symbolic, social, cultural, or economic) might exchange for. The categories that they have been assigned to on the hierarchy of Indian identity attest to their interested state. In other words, they would not be labeled wannabes if they were not at least perceived to be interested in Indian identity.

As the following chapters will describe, although at the bottom of this hierarchy, non-Indians who have interests in Indianness are organizing into a group for itself in Central Florida and, perhaps, the broader American Southeast—emerging as a nativist revitalization movement which has been variously labeled the Southeast Syndrome (Quinn 1990b) and Native American Culture Organizations (Standing Bear 1994). Central Florida, and perhaps the broader American Southeast, is a field where highly complex debates about authentic Indian identity can be acted out. However, what makes Central Florida and the broader Southeast different from other regions of the United States, is the lack of organized, highly salient groups of people whose claims to Indian identity have powerful, legal legitimation. Those who dominate the regional network of events and organizations associated with Indianness lack powerful legitimation and, as Standing Bear (1994) referenced about the Deer Clan, these polybian groups’ claims to Indianness are threatened by those who have legal legitimation.

Although the IACA’s definitions of Indian identity are only enforceable in the market for things Indian, the institutionalization of such definitions reflects competition that has been ongoing for some time. Standing Bear (1994) dated the emergence of Native American Culture
Organizations in the Southeast to just a few decades prior to his publication. This places the rise of the Southeastern Polybian Indian Movement within the same period as the national shift in status of Indian identity—the 1960’s and 1970’s—and subsequent competition over identity boundaries within communities and populations who linked their identities to Indianness. As Deloria (1998) described, the shift in status of Indian identity coincided with the breakdown of mutualism between Indians and hobbyists who were then excluded from urban and reservation powwows. As Powers (1988) described, by the 1980’s hobbyist organizations were reorienting toward educating the public about Indians.

**Subverting Power Through a Market for Things Indian in the Southeast**

To support his perspective about the process of group identification, Jenkins (2008b) turned to anthropological theories developed by Barth. According to Jenkins, one of Barth’s key arguments about identity was that it is not enough:

> to send a message about identity: that message must be accepted by significant others before an identity can be said to be ‘taken on’. As a consequence, identifications are to be found and negotiated at their boundaries, in the encounter between internal and external. [Jenkins 2008b:44]

Jenkins argued that group identities are constructed across boundaries, but that boundaries are permeable, “and identity is constructed in transactions at and across the boundary” (2008b:44).

Powwows are an important symbol for Indian identity and community, which makes it a key site for negotiation and competition over boundaries of Indian identity. Being a site of negotiation, powwows—particularly commercial powwows—are important fields for the struggle between different classes of Indians. I believe that this struggle is encouraging group identification for those who have interests in Indianness but who have been excluded from categories that permit access to capitals associated with legal definitions of Indian identity.
The commercial powwow, as a marketplace for things Indian, is a powerful means of creating groups boundaries around Indianness and, thus can be a key site to subvert dominant definitions of Indian identity. However, there is risk in becoming dependent on powwows as a means to access Indianness. As the following chapters will describe, I believe that the groups and individuals in the regional Indian community have become dependent on powwows to access the capital of Indian identity, and such dependence actually threatens the powwow as a social instrument for community. Dependence on powwowing—both economically and symbolically—is affecting how groups in Central Florida, and perhaps other areas of the American Southeast, organize. I believe competition in this market is a key reason for the common existence of paradoxical ideologies within the regional movement, but is particularly important in affecting the emergence of group identification for members of the lower class of Indian identity.

As marketplaces for things Indian, commercial powwows are especially important venues for leveling the power of Indian class identification—subverting dominant structural power—by appealing to the consuming public for legitimacy. For the non-native public, that which makes a powwow “Indian” is not innate to the powwow, but instead, is the social relations perceived to be present within and behind its production. It is Indians—the spectacle—who are the embodiments of assumed innate value. Since the public assumes Indians are present at a powwow, the symbolic capital vested in Indian identity can be imbued to products (crafts, arts, hosts, even the event itself), regardless of the legal legitimacy or claims of a producer’s Indian identity. In short, for the public, such legal legitimacy is irrelevant. In order to exchange capitals with the public, anyone can embody the value of Indianness, as long as the public perceives them as such. Thus, the powwow as place—perceived as a place produced by Indians and a place
where Indians are assumed to be present—can imbue such identity to those objects and people in its presence who also assume symbols popularly ascribed to Indians.

At powwows commodities produced and consumed must only appear to be Indian, thematically rather than in originality. The symbolic capital of Indianness can be added to products to make them Indian, and thus more valuable. These symbols though, would have less value themselves, if not associated with Indianness. The way to give them such symbolic capital is to place them in a setting that is perceived as Indian by consumers. Symbols as mundane as feathers, beads, or even sticks are imbued with Indianness, due to their presence at a powwow. For instance, an unsharpened wooden pencil anyone can buy at a supermarket or office supply store for a few pennies (especially in bulk), might sell for a dollar after a vendor ties a feather to it. In any other setting such a price would likely be absurd.

At many powwows in Florida, vendors sold “Indian Grab Bags” which included cheap trinkets that could likely not compete for children’s interests outside of a powwow. In the grab bag pictured in figure 5-1 at the end of this chapter, were a pen, toy car, plastic lizard, and plastic arrowhead necklace. The arrowhead was the only symbol associated with Indianness. At one event early in my fieldwork, for a few dollars I bought a square leather pouch being sold as an “Indian cell-phone or cigarette carrier.” Leather was the symbol associated with Indianness.

Food is another mundane commodity easily imbued with Indianness at powwows. Burgers, hot dogs, and chili take on added value when served with buffalo meat rather than pork or beef. Buffalo is the differentiating symbol associated with Indianness.

As with the Indianized pencil, the grab bag, meat, and pouch were only made Indian by employing a symbol associated with Indianness—in other words, adding a theme. However, it is likely that outside of a powwow, these items would be worth less, regardless of theme. Their
Indian theme might not be powerful enough to exchange for as much profit if separated from the powwow as a place. At powwows, these commodities are imbued with symbolic capital that, in turn, brings their dealers economic capital. Both the Indian theme and setting disguise the profits, and subvert the need to claim authentic Indian-made identity.

As already described, that which makes a powwow Indian is not innate to the powwow, but instead, is the social relations assumed to be present. The source of economic capital—the non-native public—assumes that Indians are present at a powwow. Indians are the embodiment of assumed innate value. However, what makes them innately valuable, what legitimates them, is controlled by the public, as social value. Therefore anyone can embody the value of Indianness as long as the public perceives them as such. In order to be Indian within the general public, where symbolic capital can be transformed into economic capital, a person must enter the field where Indianness is struggled for. A person must engage the public in order to become Indian. The commercial powwow is such a field.

For those who wish to access relatively unregulated capitals associated with Indian identity, and especially for those who lack legal legitimacy, a public, commercial powwow is an important means to endowing themselves with Indianness. Indian themed events, such as powwows, provide spectacle, which attracts the public, because of the social relations assumed to be present—people who are assumed to be socially identified as “Indian.” Dependent on the public’s assumptions for the valuation of their Indianness, these public events also provide self-labeled Indian groups or individuals opportunities to access symbolic capital of Indian identity, to influence the public’s definition of Indianness, and then to imbue that capital to themed products which can be sold to the general public.
Unlike other regions of the United States, the American Southeast has been particularly devoid of salient organized tribal populations and few pan-Indian organizations emerged during the Red Power Movement in Southeastern cities (Roth 1992). The few groups in the Southeast that claimed unique tribal identities were often what Anthony Parades referred to as “refugee-traditional culture” or “folk culture” groups (1995:344). Refugee traditional Indian groups, such as the Seminole and North Carolina Cherokee, remained in out of the way places to avoid removal and dislocation during the Civil War. Being isolated, these groups retained or developed unique traditional culture and identity. Folk culture groups, such as the Tunica-Biloxi and Lumbee, culturally assimilated into the local non-native populations but retained a sense of unique group identity.

With shifts in status of Indian identity during the 1970’s, many of these Southeastern groups began organizing and seeking federal or state based recognition. Without a unique traditional culture separate from the dominant population, many folk-culture groups adopted cultural activities, rituals, and symbols associated with reservation Plains Indian cultures—the more common stereotypes associated with Indians in American popular culture and with pan-Indianism. Both folk and refugee type groups have increasingly adopted pan-Indianism (Paredes 1995:345). At the heart of this pan-Indian cultural adoption are powwows.

Just as in New England (McMullen 2004), in the Southeast the powwow has been an important instrument used by groups to distinguish themselves as Indian from the dominant population. Powwows and powwow-like Indian festivals have proliferated across the American Southeast. As Paredes (1995) pointed out, however, these powwows do more than just give identity distinction to their producers. Powwows are also important sources of revenue. Groups are adapting to the economics of powwow production (Paredes 1995:351).
As I have already stated and will reiterate throughout this dissertation, I believe that the lack of access to legitimating institutions, but also the lack of pressure by organized groups who do have access to legitimating institutions, has “leveled” the field of competition over capitals tied to Indianness in the American Southeast. Without as much regulation imposed by institutions with legal power to exclude, anyone with interests in Indians and Indian identity can organize to not only seek out the capital invested in such identity, but can also construct in-group definitions of Indianness according to their own interests. Central Florida (and perhaps other regions of the Southeast) is just such a place—a field where a wide variety of individuals who have interests in Indians and Indianness, but lack access to dominant forms of legitimization, can interact, organize, compete, and creatively define Indian identity according to their own highly varied interests. In this field, the power of the higher class of Indian identity is leveled.

In the following chapters, drawing primarily on my own fieldwork, I will describe how a categorized non-Indian class is becoming a class for itself, and how the commercial powwow (as an event) and the American Southeast are particularly important sites for the process of group identification. In the realization of class identity groups are drawing on historically constructed ethnogenic mythologies that tie Americanness to Indianness. Reliance on the powwow and historical myths subvert the dominant definitions of Indian identity, particularly damaging institutions that police and reinforce those definitions through the IACA and Recognition Act.
Figure 5-1: Indian Grab Bag, Indian pencil, and Indian cigarette or cell phone carrier
Figure 5-2: “Indian” style food at Florida powwow
CHAPTER 6
REGIONAL NETWORK OF INDIAN ORGANIZING AND RECRUITING

With my original intention to study “wannabes” and “hobbyists,” and being yet unaware of the Southeast Syndrome literature, I initiated my fieldwork by attending public events at which people sold native themed products and dressed in native themed clothing, costume, or regalia. I found these events through public advertisements. Some events and events’ participants did self-ascribe to hobbyist labels, however, most did not. Further, none were labeled “wannabe” by event hosts, although, walking among the vendors and participants I occasionally heard such accusations.

Based on scholarly descriptions of hobbyism and wannabeism and on my own previous experience, I expected to find individuals with tenuous claims to Indian ancestry to be outsiders or marginally involved at these events. I was surprised to find that often the most salient participants and event host organizations appeared to be composed greatly of people who had no institutionally legitimated claims to Indian identity and many did not claim an ethnic Indian identity at all.

As my fieldwork progressed, I used these early events, which were mostly powwows, to network into other events and the organizations that hosted, collectively participated in, and organized such events in peninsular, primarily Central Florida. By “Central” Florida, I am primarily referring to events and organizations that occurred south of Interstate-10 and north of Lake Okeechobee. I found that participants in these events and organizations often described themselves as constituting a unique type of Indian group, what many termed “intertribal” or “multicultural” community. Although participants described this community as being wholly Indian, and certainly not limited to just Florida or Central Florida, they distinguished it from
other Indian communities because it included so many people who did not claim an ethnic Indian identity and many of those who did claim such an identity did not immediately inherit it.

Many participants that I encountered in the field were Indian reclaimers (Fitzgerald 2007) and identified as “part-Indian” or “mixed blood.” Further, the idea that a person could be a reincarnated Indian appeared to be acceptable to many participants. Many participants did not claim to be ethnically Indian at all—often self-describing as “Indian at heart.” Interestingly, I repeatedly encountered a taboo against asking anyone if he or she was an Indian.

Participants regularly depicted themselves as inclusive of multiple ethnic identities and religious practices. Many also identified the regional intertribal community as tied to an extensive, loosely networked, national collective of people with similar religious and nationalist interests. Some even designated themselves, their activities, and the regional community to be part of a movement. However, participants contrasted their own movement or community from tribes and other types of Pan-Indianism by emphasizing inclusion of non-Indian people, particularly the inclusion of people who were phenotypically stereotyped as “white.” Rather than a shared ethnic or racial identity as Indians, participants, instead, attributed their self-identification as Native Americans or possessors of Indianness, to a shared interest in being Indian or shared adherence to a lifeway—often termed the Indian-Way or Old-Ways—and to their formal participation in organized secondary networks and activities that they associated with Indian community.

Of course, the concept of community is difficult to pin down. As Weibel-Orlando stated, “community can reside in the mind, reflect a sentiment, and be the product of symbolic as well as pragmatic social interactions unrestricted by considerations of shared space” (1999:2). During my fieldwork, there appeared to be no broadly agreed upon concept for inclusion in the regional
Indian or intertribal community, or agreement on where the lines were drawn geographically. Powwow participation was a consistently important element of *ingroupness*, but which specific events and which participants were included or excluded varied.

Although many participants in this network perceived there to be a regional Indian community or movement, I perceived the regional community to be more like a loosely connected network of organizations (both formal and informal) and various types of events that connected individuals with shared interests in Indians or an Indian lifeway. I even occasionally found that members of organizations were unaware of other organizations in the same general geographic area that shared similar interests and goals. Further, many organizations that were aware of one another often appeared to compete against one another. In addition, there were numerous accusations of wannabeism that went between organizations, sometimes even between organizations that had recently fissioned from one another.

Of unrelated households residing throughout Florida and Southern Georgia, participants in this regional network, which I will henceforth interchangeably refer to as the regional intertribal or Indian community, appeared to see little of each other outside of the loose network of interconnected institutions—events and organizations. Indian associated events and organizations served as nodes, at which interested individuals could openly congregate—engaging the boundaries of Indian identity by deconstructing, reconstructing, and sharing their identities and beliefs about *being* Indian, as well as displaying and articulating their distinctions from the public. These events and organizations constituted the field of social interaction that participants perceived to be a community.

Regardless of how loosely structured this community appeared to be, participants often described themselves as insiders to such events and activities, and identified such participation as
part of their Indianness—*who they are and what they do*—regardless of whether or not they self-identified as Indian or identified the events which they participated in as exclusively Indian. Further, these events and organizations provided a means of communitas, as well as growth through recruitment and proselytizing of the Indian-Way.

Using my own fieldwork, the following chapters will focus on ethnographically describing this network. This chapter will focus on the dominant institutions that give it structure—events and organizations. These institutions were the primary means by which participants negotiated in-group boundaries and distinguished themselves from the public. It is through engagement with the public that participants negotiated and defined their insiderness, recruited new members, and accessed economic capital. Although focusing primarily on powwowing, in this chapter I will also describe other important types of events and organizations, such as historical reenactment and primitivism. These types of events gave participants other means of organizing and publicly negotiating their Indianness in Central Florida.

In order to understand how community boundaries are constructed it is necessary to understand the complexity of participants’ meaning of Indianness and Indian identity. This revitalization movement appears to be meant, not for Native Americans, but for the general *American* population. Chapter 7 will examine conflicts over Indian identity that emerged in the community, where so few have legitimated recognition of their claims to Indianness. Understanding these conflicts helps to illuminate the meaning of the Indian-Way and the broader movement. In addition to public events like powwows, participants in this movement, particularly NA-ICOs engage in educational programs to teach about Indians to the public. Through these educational programs, as well as recruitment, participants were engaging in revitalization.
Institutions: Organizations and Events

In Florida, there are many organizations and events in which individuals who are interested in Indian identity or Indian cultural heritage can participate. Of course, a catalog of such institutions does not explain or encompass the Indian community. However, understanding the size of such a network is important.

Using participant observation, informant interviews and networking, advertisements, regional and national event calendars, and public records, I was able to participate in events or make contacts with group members associated with at least 20 separate formal organizations based in Florida that associated their collectiveness with Indian cultural heritage, religious practices, or ethnic identity. None of these groups were state or federally recognized tribes, nor were they groups advertising themselves as affiliated with any state or federally recognized tribes.

A handful of these organizations were primarily formed around a specific performance activity, such as a drum-group or “Indian-style” dance troupe. Only one group’s members depicted their collective as a tribe, a label that some participants within the broader community contested. I only encountered one organization that used “hobbyist,” in its official title, although, like “tribe,” such a label was also controversial among regional powwow participants.

Although unable to make confirmation through personal contact or observation, I either heard of through informants or found through publications—such as event flyers, newsletters, and websites—an additional 24 organizations in Florida associating themselves with Indian identity or cultural heritage. Many of these groups were affiliated with larger umbrella organizations. Additionally, according to participants, there were a few “Aztec” groups—usually formed as dance troupes—traveling the powwow networks in Florida. I attended numerous
events with Aztec dance performances, however, I only encountered one formally organized troupe.

In Florida, between September of 2005 and May 2006, there were at least 42 events or planned events whose hosts advertised their event as representative of or linked to Native American culture or identity. Most events were associated with powwowing but a few had greater focus on the sale of specific crafts or performances (e.g. Native American flute festival and competition). During the same time period, there were at least 13 historical reenactment events at which a person portraying an Indian persona could participate. There were only 2 formal primitivist events that I was aware of.

I learned of these events through informants, published or informally distributed calendars, websites, advertisements, and personal attendance. In total, I was aware of 57 events in Florida that were specifically organized around activities advertised as being representative of Native American culture, identity, or history.

Of these total 57 events, only four were economically or socially associated with the Seminole and Miccosukee—the only two federally recognized tribes in Florida, and were the furthest southern events I was aware of during fieldwork. Many participants distinguished the South Florida Indian population from the rest of Florida’s Indian community. I met few Central Florida participants who referenced attending these tribally associated events and I rarely saw such events advertised at Central Florida powwows. There were many, usually vendors and entertainers, who further distinguished the Central Florida Indian population from the Florida panhandle. Powwow focused groups and events on the panhandle were often socially associated with Indian groups in Georgia and Alabama, some that had official state-based recognition.
Participants’ perception that Florida’s Indian population can be broken into three regional communities—Central, Panhandle, and South—is supported through a geographic and temporal comparison of the public powwows and Indian themed festivals. As stated, I was aware of at least 42 powwows or Indian themed festivals in Florida that occurred between August 2005 and July 2006. Figure 6-1 charts these events on a map. Of course, the reader should be reminded that my methods for collecting this list were biased by the network upon which I conducted participant observation, which was focused in Central Florida geographically.

On the map, figure 6-1 at the end of this chapter, events are color coded per month. Events that co-occurred with at least one other event in the state of Florida on the same weekend are marked with an “x.” When comparing the dates of events across the state, 27 of the 42 (64.3%) events were on the same weekend as another event in the state.

When controlling for the coinciding dates of events between regions, there was a reduction in within-region overlap. In other words, if there were two or more powwows occurring on the same weekend in Florida, they were likely to be in separate regions. Further, without specific events being emically associated with any given region, I chose to separate the panhandle and the peninsula based on relativity to the city of Gainesville. For the purpose of these calculations only, an event that occurred north of Gainesville and west of Lake City was considered part of the panhandle of Florida. There were two events in the northwest corner of the state that I was not comfortable placing in either the panhandle or the central region, thus both events are included in the calculations for each region. Many participants primarily based in the central region attended events in Northwest Florida, however, few regularly spoke of attending events in the western Panhandle. However, at one Northwest Florida powwow the majority of flyers distributed were for upcoming events on the western Panhandle and in Alabama and Georgia.
When not controlling for within-region overlap, 7 of 14 (50.0%) events in the panhandle, 19 of 27 (70.4%) events in Peninsular Florida that were not tribally affiliated, and 2 of 3 (66.6%) tribally affiliated events had conflicting weekends. If comparing only within region, however, the number of events on conflicting weekends dropped to 2 of 14 (14.3%) in the panhandle, 14 of 27 (51.9%) in the Peninsula, and no conflicts (0%) among tribally affiliated events.

The above data cannot accurately test participants’ emic assumptions about regional divisions. However, I believe that future research utilizing Social Network analysis methods to compare flyer distribution between events, card.sorts for participants’ perceived categories, and vendors’ seasonal routes could be quite useful. It should also be noted that some events in Alabama and Georgia, particularly near the border with Florida, are also important in the regional network. If this map included events in Alabama and Georgia, conflicting dates between events would increase.

Although powwows were the dominant event type through which people associating themselves with Indianness and the regional Indian community organized, as noted, historical reenactment and primitivist events were also important venues. However, participants in these events and in powwowing did not generally describe reenactment and primitivist events to be part of the Indian community. Nonetheless, many community insiders did regularly participate in these types of events and performed their Indianness through them. Further, some organizations held major meetings and recruited new members at reenactments and primitivist events.

At reenactment events, I did come across many flyers for powwows, although I rarely saw reenactment or primitivist event flyers distributed at powwows. A few reenactment events did host powwows, but primarily for registered participants only. The powwows hosted at reenactments were only one part of the larger event itself. The larger event was dedicated to
reenactment, not powwowing. It was an event produced for the interaction of reenactors, not for people tying themselves to Indianness.

As noted, there were at least 13 historical reenactments themed around time-periods or historical events that could include reenactors of Native American personas. There were at least 2 events primarily oriented around primitivism. Although some of these reenactment and primitivist events were co-hosted by groups associating their identities with Indianness, most were produced by historical societies, individual professionals, or reenactment groups that did not associate their collectiveness with Indian identity. However, it should be noted that one reenactment was hosted by a tourism business closely tied to a federally recognized tribe in Florida.

**Primitivism**

In comparison to historical reenactment—the recreation of lifestyles and products associated with a particular time in human history—primitivism was focused on means of wilderness survival and replication of the material culture and practices associated with native peoples prior to interaction with Europeans. Types of events focusing on primitivism ranged from primitive arts and crafts festivals, to multi-day gatherings (public or private) for competition in a specific craft type such as knapping (often termed “knap-ins”) or atlatl throwing, to large encampment events where people formally gathered to socialize and attend seminars. Similar to historical reenactment, there are primitivist events where participants attempt to recreate and temporarily live a lifestyle that they attribute to pre-contact indigenous peoples.

While often romanticizing Native Americans as ideal survivalist examples, primitivist events and groups tended to actually center on what many referred to as “abo,” or “anything aboriginal”—survival strategies, life-ways, and material culture that participants associated with
any Paleolithic peoples. With such a broad category, interests varied widely. For example, at a primitivist encampment—called a “meet”—that I attended in Maryland there were workshops offered in everything from African drumming to medicine wheel philosophy, “skills of the scout,” tracking, Lakota Singing, scrimshaw, feltmaking, storytelling, atlatl making, beading, moccasin construction, brain tanning, shamanism, and numerous seminars in wilderness survival. The evenings’ gatherings around a large fire included dancing to a cacophony of drums, rattles, tambourines, flutes, and drums associated with musical traditions from numerous groups on the globe.

Even with such geographic eclecticism, however, Native Americans were associated with the greatest authenticity of wilderness knowledge. To attribute one’s source of knowledge to Native Americans, even indirectly, gave legitimacy to participants’ teachings or practices. For instance, participants at the Maryland meet regularly referenced Tom Bown Jr. and his wilderness survival schools as primary sources for learning about primitivism. Participants would reference Tom Brown’s name in basic conversation or seminars to authenticate their information. Stories about Tom Brown, who did not attend the meet, were told around the evening campfires. Tom Brown has written many books about wilderness survival, including *The Way of the Scout: A Native American Path to Finding Spiritual Meaning in the Physical World* (1995). In this book, and many others, Brown (1995) described where and how he achieved his superior survival skills, which he described as having been taught to him as a boy by an Apache elder whom he referred to as Grandfather.

Florida, especially Central Florida, has few formal primitivist organizations and events. Most primitivist activities are informal gatherings of friends and acquaintances who share interests in practicing specific crafts or skills. However, both powwowing and historical
reenactment provided outlets for individuals more focused on primitivism to demonstrate and practice their crafts. At most powwows I attended, there were designated reenactment areas for participants to set up primitive camp sites and demonstrate or give seminars in skills such as knapping and fire-starting. Reenactments and powwows also often held competitions in primitive skills. With so few organized primitivist groups and events, the rest of this section will focus on describing powwows and reenactment events.

**Powwows and Indian Festivals**

As Parades (1995) described, there has been a recent proliferations of powwows and Indian festivals in the American Southeast. As groups claiming Indian identity emerged and promoted their distinctiveness from the general population, the production of powwows has become an important measure of public relations “know-how” (Paredes 1995:351).

Publically accessible Indian themed events in Central, Peninsular Florida are primarily commercial enterprises and are predominantly organized and produced by voluntary groups that claim Indian or Pan-Indian identities, or possession of Indianness. Most of these events are officially labeled powwows although many participants prefer to formally label their powwow structured events as Native American or Indian “festivals,” “dances,” “cultural experiences,” or “celebrations.” However, no matter the name given, most of these events were primarily organized around similar structures of activities associated with Pan-Indian “powwowing,” with a designated “circle” or arena for dancing, a drum, dancers in powwow style regalia, grand-entry, and head-staff.

The use of “powwow” to label these events was controversial in the community. Many participants expressed beliefs that in order to call a public event a “powwow” the event should have some federally or state recognized Indians present. Some participants believed that an event that does not have such legally recognized individuals present should be called a “festival” or
“gathering.” However, as one participant stated, if a group sets up a public circle, whether powwow or festival, they should follow the “intertribal protocol” which requires specific ceremonial structure and religious sacraments (interview with author, June 03, 2006). From this point on, I will refer to Indian festivals and powwows jointly, as powwows.

Participants, especially those who have been powwowing in Florida for many years, expressed frustration that the community and educational aspects of powwowing have been waning over the previous decade. Many described three traditional purposes to the powwow: to teach the general public about Indians, to have fellowship together (“community”), and to sell. These three purposes were perceived to have been traditionally more balanced, however, many felt that the purposes of education and fellowship have been pushed aside by a new, stronger emphasis on “selling.” This chapter will primarily focus on describing the “community” aspect of these events, while chapter 7 will address the “educational” aspects in detail, and chapter 8 will focus on the “selling” emphasis.

According to some participants, a shift toward consumerism has led to a unique regional type of powwow, dependent on the promotion of spectacle, rather than education, community and fellowship. The consumer has become the primary target, rather than insider community members. This new, now dominant, event type was seen by many vendors and critical insiders as something different from commercial powwows hosted by tribes, Pan-Indian groups, or hobbyists outside of Florida—particularly outside of Central Florida. Many also argued that the traits of these new Central Florida powwows have begun influencing powwows in other areas of the American Southeast. Indeed, out of state vendors often noted that there were strong efforts to keep Florida based vendors out of their own home regional networks.
Most powwows typically lasted multiple days, Friday afternoon through Sunday afternoon. Friday daytime activities were usually dedicated to educational programs and were often termed “Kid’s Days” or “Educational Days” by hosts. Kid’s Days included programs specifically geared for young families and large groups of children on fieldtrips from schools, scouting programs, or churches. Many hosts also offered programs specifically for local scout groups to earn badges. It was typically not until Friday evening, with the first “grand-entry,” that powwows began focusing more on insiders—community, fellowship, and celebration of Indian identity.

Usually a date for a powwow was chosen based on its sequence in a specific month and its geographic relativity to other events during the year. For instance, a group might regularly host a powwow on the third weekend of October every year, while another regularly chose the fourth weekend of October at a site only a few hours’ drive away, in order to attract a different segment of the public. This allowed vendors and participants to plan their annual routes at least one year in advance.

Powwows were typically advertised through flyers that were distributed by hosts at other events and displayed by vendors. Many groups also maintained websites where they advertised their event. Some hosts took out advertisements in local newspapers. One group even advertised on permanent billboards along major highways near its powwow grounds. On the weekend of a powwow, most hosts set up temporary signs along nearby highways directing drivers to the powwow.

There were a number of informal calendars of events developed and distributed by participants every year, as well as a few websites managed by local organizations that listed powwows on a state or multi-state level. Easily found on the web are websites dedicated to
keeping national, searchable databases of powwows. Some of these national databases included Florida based events. I utilized these databases to initiate my fieldwork.

Being multiple day events, many powwows allowed camping on the grounds for any participants. A few powwows only permitted vendors, host group members, or other professionals to camp on the grounds. Many event hosts provided at least one daily meal to people who formally worked at the powwow, such as vendors, organizers, head-staff, and entertainers.

**Powwow Structure**

As noted, regional powwows were organized around similar structures of activities associated with Pan-Indian “powwowing,” with a drum, dancers in powwow-style regalia, grand-entry, and head-staff. The powwow was focused on activities that occurred within a designated space, typically called “the circle,” in which people danced clockwise to a powwow drum. The circle had an opening or “gate,” usually at the eastern side of the circle, through which dancers entered and exited.

The drum consisted of men sitting around a large drum, beating and singing. Sometimes drums included women who stood behind or around the drum and sang. There were “host” drums and “guest” drums. Host drums were the primary drum group for the event, and were typically hired and paid. Guest drums were not typically paid and performed when the host drum was taking a break or during other less important elements of the powwow.

There were a few female drums in Central Florida, but they were rarely permitted to be host drum, if allowed to drum at all. There was a powwow in the spring of 2006 that had a host drum with a female lead-singer and the rest of the drummers were male. That same powwow also had two guest drums: an all male drum and an all female drum. The mixed-gender host drum was so controversial that I repeatedly heard discussion and debate about it at events on
multiple following weekends. I did not attend that particular powwow, but according to many participants who did attend, most dancers would only dance when the guest drums were singing.

Vendors were also an important part of regional powwow structure. Vendors usually specialized in selling a specific set of products, such as animal parts and furs, arts and crafts, videos and books, herbs and medicines, flutes and other musical instruments, weapons, powwow regalia, or historical costuming. Vendors set up in booths around the circle, forming an outer wall with space for pedestrians to walk between the circle and the booths. Vendor’s cargo trailers or campsites were often set up behind the booths. If camping was available for people who were not participating as professionals or organizing personnel, then those individuals camped in adjacent fields or other designated sites nearby.

Along with the vendors, there were also many booths set up around the circle that were primarily for information, educational demonstrations, or other cost-free activities such as face painting. Many host organizations set up booths providing information about how to become a member or attend a meeting. At these booths, participants could also donate money or buy event t-shirts. Many information booths also offered some general educational information about Native Americans—typically focusing on pre-reservation historical information.

Other organizations or individuals also set up demonstration booths, such as wildlife wranglers and primitive arts specialists, and incorporated educational activities about Native Americans into their demonstrations. Many events offered designated children’s areas where a host organization might give special historical demonstrations or provided crafts or games for children. Some powwows also had designated areas where their members would give seminars, usually on a craft and at no cost to the public.
As already mentioned, a “grand-entry” was the formal ritual opening to a powwow. It was typically the most elaborate organized activity and, thus, a major focus of contestation between participants. Regional powwows usually included one grand-entry on Friday and Saturday evenings, starting around seven o’clock. Most also included a mid-day grand-entry on Saturday and Sunday, starting around noon.

Prior to a grand-entry, often while the drum began warming up, a call would be made by an event’s organizing staff for dancers to come to the east gate in preparation for the start of the powwow. Only dancers in “regalia” were permitted to dance in the grand-entry, unless in the “color-guard” or specifically called upon to dance by host organizers.

What constituted permissible regalia varied considerably between hosts and organizers. While many hosts required grand entry dancers’ regalia to fit into specific powwow-dance styles, such as grass-dance, northern traditional, and fancy-dance, typically hosts permitted anyone wearing clothing associated with Indianness to dance in grand entry. This often created highly eclectic grand-entry dance processions, with people wearing everything from regalia for specific powwow dance-styles, historical costumes, and simple fringed dresses. Generally, women and girls were prohibited from showing their bare shoulders and legs while in the circle. It was also controversial for participants to dance in the circle without wearing moccasins or shoes decorated to appear like moccasins.

Some dance-styles were also controversial, if performed in the circle. For instance, dance-styles were gender specific. One controversy I regularly witnessed was over a girl grass-dancer. Grass-dance is a male dance and most powwow hosts prohibited her from dancing the grass-dance while in grand entry. Some hosts prohibited her from dancing all together. Another
common controversy was whether hosts permitted the performance of the Eagle-dance in the
circle or when tourists were present.

As marketplaces for things India, powwows were an ideal place to shop for regalia
accessories, even full outfits. Many vendors took orders for regalia and sold cloth and
accessories. For my first set of dance regalia, I was directed by participants to buy a costume
pattern that can be found at most major fabric stores and department stores—particularly during
the Halloween holiday season. Vendors often carried regalia patterns in their booths as well.

I should also note that many participants used the label “regalia” to refer to the clothes they
wore to attend the powwow, which for some participants, was a separate type of regalia from
their dance regalia. Regalia—both attendance and dance—was typically quite individualistic and
incorporated symbols associated with personal identity. For instance, draping an animal fur
associated with an Indian name or personal totem across one’s shoulders, or using the Southern
“rebel” flag as a loincloth. Many participants also incorporated their organization’s symbols and
colors into their regalia.

There were many popular accessories associated with powwow dress. Sheathed knives and
hatchets, shouldered bows, and beaded breast-plates were popular among men. These accessories
were often worn whether in regalia or not. Both men and women often wore chokers and feathers
in their hair. Many vendors sold hairpieces with feathers dyed the colors of professional and
collegiate sports teams, which were popular accessories for women. Similar theming was applied
to dream-catchers, earrings, and other small handy-crafts. Also highly popular, were t-shirts with
images of animals—particularly wolves, buffalo, and eagles, often alongside an Indian maiden or
warrior. The Mountain was an especially popular brand for these kinds of t-shirts.
The importance of moccasins in powwow attendance regalia cannot be understated. I was told that moccasins were the first piece of regalia I should buy. Many participants expressed beliefs that moccasins or faux-moccasins must be worn whenever in the circle and during rituals. Moccasin wearing was often a source of conflict with participants who were not from Florida. Some Florida participants traveled as tourists to reservations during the summer months and voiced frustration over seeing a lack in moccasin wearing at powwows or rituals on reservations. Similar frustrations were often expressed about out-of-state Indian dance troupes that performed at local powwows.

Even though, when I first began my fieldwork, I had been quickly told that moccasins were the most important part of regalia, I did not recognize just how important until attending one powwow during particularly wet and cold weather. The temperatures reached freezing levels during the night and stayed cold during the day. It rained the majority of the time, leaving the grounds so muddy and saturated that the hosts placed a trail of wooden planks between vendors’ booths. Although I did not typically wear moccasins at powwows, I did have to wear them to participate in reenactment events so I knew just how little protection the average moccasin sold by local vendors provided from the rain and cold. For this reason, I was amazed at the number of participants wearing moccasins in such weather. Huddled around the campfire at night warming their feet, many complained that the weather was too horrible to pull out their best pairs of moccasins.

One night I was present for a particularly illuminating discussion where a woman expressed frustration because her feet were unbearably cold and wet, but she did not want to take off her moccasins while on the powwow grounds. Another woman responded that she wears boots over her moccasins in such circumstances—a solution the first woman agreed to try. This
is especially illuminating. Moccasins were perceived to be such an important element of powwow participation, at least by these two women, that they were willing to wear them even if not visible to anyone else and providing no practical benefit.

Turning back to description of the powwow event itself—prior to grand entry, a host organization’s spiritual leader would bless the arena through a smudging ceremony. The leader also smudged the individual dancers before they entered the arena, either while they were in line at the east gate waiting for the procession to begin, or as each individual entered the circle. The grand-entry usually began with some words of introduction from an emcee, who might or might not have first been introduced by a member of the host organization. Often the emcee’s introduction included some humor and acknowledged the host organization, “head-staff,” drum(s), and, perhaps, sponsors.

Head-staff were designated participants who had salient roles in the production of the powwow. The head-staff usually consisted of “head-dancers” who led dancing, an emcee who narrated the event, an arena director who helped organize dancers and direct entertainers, and a head veteran. Different events had other head-staff positions, such as a “whip-man” who at times would serve in a head-dancer role and at other times be responsible for encouraging audience participation. Some events included a “keeper of the circle” and at events where hosts built a small fire in the center of the circle there was also a “fire-keeper” role.

Before the grand entry was to begin, the emcee would typically ask the audience to stand and remove head coverings and perhaps request that no photographs or film be taken during the grand-entry, unless given special permission by event staff. Then, after receiving notice from the arena director that everyone was ready at the gate, the emcee would instruct the drum to start. The emcee would then narrate the procession of dancers entering the arena.
The first to enter the arena were members of the “color-guard” or “honor-guard.” The color guard was composed of military veterans and active duty soldiers, many of whom carried flags. Women were permitted to be part of the color-guard. The emcee introduced each member of the color-guard and his or her branch and rank.

The first three “flags” carried into the arena were typically the United States flag, the POW/MIA flag, and the “eagle staff.” The eagle staff, what some called the “Native American flag,” was usually in front of the procession and carried by the head-veteran. The placement of the eagle staff was often controversial, however, and some powwow-staff required that it be carried parallel to the US flag. The eagle staff was sometimes replaced with a live bald-eagle being carried by a local handler. Often carried behind these three flags were flags of the different military branches, different tribal flags, organization’s flags, or decorative, patriotic flags with images of Native Americans and wild animals.

Following the color guard were the head dancers and “royalty.” The head-dancers typically consisted of one male and one female head dancer, and sometimes one male and female “junior” head dancer. The royalty were princesses and junior-princesses chosen from local organizations to represent the group at regional powwows. Some organizations in Central Florida also had a male counterpart to the princess position, entitled “warrior” and “junior-warrior.”

The royalty were followed by the rest of the dancers who entered the circle in order of dance-style and regalia type. Typically, all the male styles entered first. Within each regalia type, dancers were sequentially ordered by age, the eldest entering first. Age was often a means of ordering other activities, such as meal lines and rituals.

After all dancers entered the east gate, the emcee signaled the drum to stop and dancers moved to the edge of the circle while the color guard moved to the center (as pictured in figure
facing the drum and emcee arbor. At this point, a prayer would be said and a “flag song” and “memorial song” were played. Then the emcee encouraged military veterans from the audience to come to the east gate so that they could be honored for their service. As individuals from the crowd entered the arena the drum began a “veterans song” and the color guard began a final dance around the circle and exited at the east gate. The rest of the dancers slowly followed, dancing their way around and out. One host organization required that dancers exit the circle dancing backwards and many participants followed or adopted this same practice at other powwows.

At the east gate, the arena-director typically greeted the exiting dancers with a handshake or hugs and thanked the veterans for their service. Other participants also congregated at the exit hugging one another. Many called this practice “huggin-out.” After the grand-entry was concluded, the emcee told the audience they could sit down and return their hats to their heads. At this point, the host drum would often get a short break.

The first dance of the night, following the grand entry, was often a “friendship dance” or “round dance” in which the audience was particularly encouraged to participate. Numerous types of dances were conducted throughout the evening or afternoon, but were primarily “intertribal” dances in which anyone could dance whatever style they preferred and without regalia. There were also “exhibition dances” where dancers of a particular dance-style would perform.

There were also numerous “blanket” and “honor” dances performed during powwows. Blanket dances were usually organized by the royalty and involved general intertribal dancing while members of the audience brought donation money out into the circle to toss on a blanket. The money was donated to the drum, host organization, or a participant with special financial needs. An honor dance was usually conducted upon request by a participant and involved
dancers offering prayers, while dancing, for a person who recently died, was in a critical situation, or who was celebrating a life event such as marriage, high school graduation, or the birth of a child.

Dances were usually interspersed with entertainment. Such entertainment was usually in the form of storytelling and vocal or flute musical performances, but some events included fiddle playing, hand-drum performances, bag-pipe performances, even ventriloquism. These performing individuals or groups were typically hired—but sometimes were volunteers—and were advertised as “celebrities.” Many also had other professional roles at powwows—such as vending or emceeing. As will be described in later chapters, there were many individuals and small groups who traveled regional powwow networks providing a variety of salient roles to powwow production, often playing both entertainment and head staff roles. Many of these performers also had a vending booth set up to sell their crafts or recordings.

As noted, powwows were multiday events and there were numerous activities outside of the circle. The day officially began with a flag raising ceremony conducted by veterans. Many events also had a “camp wake-up call,” usually a calm musical performance. However, well before the wake-up call, the grounds were busy with people visiting each other, seeking out breakfast or coffee, and offering morning prayers. Vendors took this time to air-out their booths and prepare for tourists.

Some powwows also included a “church service” on Sunday mornings. The only such service I attended at a powwow included a short, charismatic sermon before the floor was opened to the audience for prayer requests or personal stories of spiritual guidance. Many in the small audience spoke of how powwowing helped them find healing or escape past addictions. Sunday religious services were common at historical reenactments.
Usually by midmorning tourists and other day-attendants began trickling in. By this time, scheduled educational demonstrations and entertainment were fully underway. Throughout the day, there were opportunities for intertribal dancing in the circle and formal and informal groups often gave dance demonstrations or performances.

There were also raffles, auctions, and lotteries. Often royalty or other designated individuals were responsible for going around to event participants offering raffle or lottery tickets for sale or showing an item that was to be raffled or bid for in an auction. Often items for raffle or auction were donated to the host organization by vendors. “50/50’s” lotteries were especially common. In 50-50’s whomever had a ticket-number drawn would win fifty-percent of the money paid to buy the tickets. The other fifty-percent went to the hosts.

Insider participants prized the “after-hours” periods when the public had typically gone home. Most after-hours activities were informal and focused on socializing. One of the most popular after-hours activities was the “trade blanket.” Participants congregated at a central place on the grounds where they “traded” crafts and other items on a large blanket. While participants claimed that the trade blanket was a historic tradition from “olden-days,” they often acknowledged that they did not know exactly when or how it emerged.

Although many people participated in trade blankets, some people were stereotyped for their consistent and enthusiastic participation in trade blankets. Often these individuals stood out from other participants by the numerous boxes or bags full of items they brought to trade. Most participants only brought a few items to trade and many people came just to watch and socialize.

Before trading began on a trade blanket, at least one person was appointed the leader for the activity. At most blanket trades that I attended there was at least one person wearing a baseball cap with the words “Official Blanket Trader” embroidered on the front. This individual
was often chosen as the leader. If more than one person was wearing one of these caps, the leadership went to whoever was wearing the oldest cap.

The Official Blanket Trader caps were first introduced by Wanda (pseudonym), a woman who was an “advocate” for blanket trades at one of the oldest powwows in Central Florida. Wanda would make a new cap for every powwow season and trade it on the trade blanket at her organization’s powwow. To successfully trade for one of these infamous hats was an important achievement for regular trade blanket participants.

Usually a trade blanket began with a person placing an iron skillet on the blanket. The person who traded for the iron skillet was expected to return to the same powwow in the following season to start the trade blanket with the same skillet. An iron skillet was not always available, so a blanket trade often started with something else. I know of at least one Florida powwow host that had traditionally started its trade blanket with a large clock rather than a skillet.

Individual trade blanket skillets were often accompanied with considerable individual sentiment—sometimes even painted with elaborate scenes or decorated with beads and feathers. For instance, at the final powwow of one season, before vendors headed north for other powwow networks, a special trade blanket was held. The organizer of the trade blanket (who I will call Elaine, a pseudonym) explained that she was moving away from Florida and wanted to hold this special trade blanket in order to pass on her skillet. After Wanda died, her favorite skillet was passed on to Elaine, who continued to use that skillet and “advocate” for trade blankets in the regional powwow network. At this special trade blanket, the last powwow of the season, Elaine, used Wanda’s skillet to start the trading. Unable to part with the Wanda’s skillet, Elaine gave a new, special skillet to another participant who was to continue her trade blanket advocacy. That
particular trade blanket was attended by a much larger crowd than I had normally seen at other powwows.

After the opening skillet trade was complete, usually moving clockwise, the next participant put an item in the center of the blanket to trade—being careful not to put two feet on the blanket. After an item was placed on the blanket for trade, other participants around the blanket would place items on the blanket in front of them that they wished to exchange for the trader’s item. The trader could say, “sweeten the pot” to encourage another trader, or all the traders, to barter—increasing the value of the exchange by adding another item. If the original trader accepted another trader’s offer, they were required to shake hands and say “good trade.” After the trade, the rest of the participants at the blanket and in the audience chimed in with “good trade.” If not seeing something worth trading for or other participants did not sweeten the pot enough, the original trader could withdraw his or her trade items by saying “no trade.” After an exchange was completed or the trader withdrew, participants would say “trader up” and the next person at the blanket, clockwise, would place his or her items on the blanket and the pattern would continue.

Trade blankets were usually the last activity at a powwow, after most tourists had gone home and vendors had time to close shop. Trade blankets could last many hours, as long as people were willing to continue trading. Being so late at night, children were not usually present for trade blankets but were only allowed to trade if they had something valuable. During the day, in children’s programs, some host organizations organized trade blankets where they traded candy and learned the basics of the trade blanket.

In Central Florida, most powwow grounds were expected to have “quite hours” from 11:00 pm until sunrise. Quite hours were enforced by a “security team,” whose members patrolled the
grounds and kept watch at night. Members of these security teams are typically men and often quite salient, frequently carrying weapons, such as large knives, and wearing shirts or sashes stating their unique role at a powwow. Security teams were also responsible for enforcing the powwow rules, such as the prohibition of drugs, alcohol, and firearms. At some events, security teams are also responsible for guarding the host organization’s leadership.

**Historical Reenactment**

Jay Anderson, both a reenactor and scholar, described reenactment as a “particular way in which people have chosen to slip away from the modern world”—what he termed “time traveling” (1984:10). In reenactment, participants simulate some aspect of life at a different time than the present. This activity can range from re-creating life—both fantastic and real—in Renaissance arts fairs, Civil War battle reenactments, replication of a 17th century New England village, Medieval martial arts demonstrations, and even futurist gatherings where people portray life as they believe it will be, or should be.

Anderson (1984:12-13) divided reenactment into three major types that differ from one another based on participants’ motives for reenactment. First are those interested in “time traveling” as a form of educating others about the past (Anderson 1984). These individuals perceive themselves to be master teachers, often participating in “living history” exhibits or presentations at museums and historical sites. Members of the second type are interested in using simulation as a serious research tool, to test hypotheses and better understand material culture of past societies (Anderson 1984). Many of these individuals are scholars, particularly archeologists and social scientists. The third group, who Anderson (1984) termed “history buffs,” time travel for personal reasons, often for leisure and social activity.

If adopting Anderson’s categories, my reenactment fieldwork was primarily conducted among history buffs who participated in the reenactment of time periods, events, and activities in
which people could portray Indian personas. I did make efforts to interview individuals who might fit into the living history and scholarly types. I also participated in at least one event for each of the other categories. Many of the especially salient individuals that portrayed Indian identities in both living history and history buff type events were also quite salient within the regional powwowing networks.

Although I witnessed considerable variety in claimed motivations for reenactment, participants did often distinguish between reenactors and event types in ways that reflect or support Anderson’s categories. Interestingly, living history oriented participants often expressed prejudice against the history buff type. For living history practitioners who portrayed Native American personas, many were especially prejudiced toward those “buffs” who primarily participated in rendezvous themed “Fur Trade era,” “Black Powder,” “Muzzleloader,” “Mountain Man,” or “Bucksinner.”

Rendezvous were encampments where people gathered primarily for social reasons and portrayed personas and lifestyles associated with specific time-periods. According to Anderson (1984), this type of reenactment can be traced back to the late 19th century medieval period tournament reenactments. However, beginning in the 1930’s, the reenactment of black-powder or muzzle loading motifs became central to the history buff movement (Anderson 1984:136).

The National Muzzle Loading Rifle Association (NMLRA), founded in 1931, has been the key organizing institution for such buff reenactment—hosting encampments and publishing magazines of interest to history buffs (Anderson 1984). Three types of interest groups emerged through the NMLRA: enthusiasts of black-powder weapons and shooting, Civil War history buffs, and buffs “fascinated by the ‘primitive’ culture of early long hunters, coureurs de bois, voyageurs, frontier settlers, mountain men, and Indians” (Anderson 1984:137).
At early NMLRA annual meetings, some participants instituted a “primitive” encampment, started forming offshoot organizations, and called themselves “buckskinner” (Anderson 1984:137). Early members of the buckskinning movement were both history buffs and wilderness survival experts, reflected by their rendezvous that were often in isolated wilderness and required “packing” in on foot or by mule and even trapping or hunting for food.

As Anderson (1984) noted, by the time of his publication there was a newly emerging branch of the bucksinners’ movement that included a focus on interpretation. With their own unique type of rendezvous, these events had roots in the Wild West shows of the late 19th and early 20th centuries in which people interpreted some event, specific activity, or scene for public demonstration (Anderson 1984). Interpretation was just one element of this new type of multifunctional rendezvous. There were also numerous other activities such as parades, costume contests, dances, concerts, shooting contests, religious services, and other social activities (Anderson 1984).

It was primarily at these multifunctional rendezvous events that I conducted fieldwork. Participants regularly told me that the isolated wilderness type of rendezvous that Anderson primarily described was no longer a dominant type—that the multifunctional type now dominated. In my own research, participants regularly attributed the growing inclusion of women and children in rendezvousing over the past few decades, to be the primary reason for a shift away from rendezvousing in wilderness isolation.

Rather than just a demographic shift, I suspect that an economic element has also been an important catalyst for the shift away from wilderness rendezvousing. As Anderson noted, the new, emerging multifunctional type of rendezvous was a means of making profit for event producers and salient participants (1984:165). Russell Belk and Janeen Costa, who conducted
their fieldwork during the early 1990’s, described rendezvousing as a “fantastic consumption enclave” (1998). They ascribed several key elements to a rendezvous:

participants use of objects and actions to generate feelings of community involving a semi mythical past, a concern for “authenticity” in recreating that past, and construction of a liminoid time and place in which a carnivalesque adult play and rites of intensification and transformation can freely take place. [Belk and Costa 1998:219]

Especially important to the consumption experience of rendezvousing is a fascination with things Indian (Belk and Costa 1998:219). Not only were things Indian important to consumption, but events included “Indian” ceremonies and rituals that the entire encampment participated in (Belk and Costa 1998). In my own research, people who portrayed Indian personas were often the most salient in camp rituals, such as opening and closing ceremonies. Teepees were the dominant shelter type, and deemed most authentic, whether portraying an Indian or not. There were often sweat lodges, powwows, and naming ceremonies held at rendezvous. Many participants claimed some Indian ancestry, whether portraying an Indian or not.

As Belk and Costa (1998) also noted about participants in their study, many conflated the old mountain-man mythic hero with Indian identity. However, as Belk and Costa (1998) also pointed out, the re-creation of Indian identity at these events was especially loose in relation to temporal “authenticity.” In my own work, although supposedly set on the early 19th century American High Plains, many participants who portrayed native personas were dressed in powwow regalia, women were often permitted to wear ribbon dresses, and many portrayed Southwestern themed Indian identities. Reenactor’s interpretation of native personas and lifeways was creative and included a great deal of “presentism,” dependent on romanticized, nostalgic stereotypes of Native Americans, not necessarily accurate historical portrayal.

In my field experience, to be part of an Indian encampment only required a display of some stereotyped Indianness, regardless of the time in history the character was attributed to. I
witnessed an especially egregious example at a small town fair in Central Florida where the event coordinators had organized a “timeline” reenactment. Timelines are reenactments where scenes or encampments from different time-periods are constructed in sequential order. The timeline for this particular event depicted the history of the small town.

At the beginning of this timeline was an Indian themed encampment. A hurricane had recently destroyed the permanent “Indian Village” so the event organizers cleared the underbrush in a large nearby wooded area that they temporarily designated the “Indian Village.” The other timeline scenes or “camps” were set up in an adjacent field.

Inside the timeline’s Indian village were a few people dressed in Indian themed clothing. One man was dressed in a ribbon shirt and jeans, provided flute performances and sold CDs. Another performer was a woman selling herbal remedies and advertising a local school for “healing arts and ancient traditions” that focused on knowledge linked to both Native American and African heritage. Within the village, only one person appeared to be conducting historical interpretation. She was dressed in a faux-leather fringe dress and was tending a fire.

Later that day, one of the most popular local powwow drums appeared at the village entrance and gave powwowing demonstrations in full dance regalia. Perhaps ironic, although pan-Indian powwowing is a more contemporary cultural phenomenon, the demonstration was physically located in the timeline’s Indian camp, which itself was placed temporally prior to the other camps. Participants at other reenactments have told me that timelines are important venues for people who portray Native Americans and that many such timelines host or demonstrate pan-Indian powwowing in the more primitive, native encampment.

Such presentism is not unique in history buff oriented events. Laura Peers (1999) conducted ethnographic work at historical living history sites and found that the inclusion of
―native interpretation‖ was often controversial, typically due to the presentism and historical leniency permitted by site administrators. People who portrayed native personas in living history were often given considerable leniency in their portrayal of Indians, weaving their own perceptions about history into the interpretive presentation (Peers 1999). Peers (1999:54) noted that site administrators often felt political pressure to permit such leniency, preferring not to invoke criticism from native peoples. Further, the inclusion of native interpretation often provided more funding opportunities for sites (Peers 1999:54).

It should be made clear that I did not portray an Indian identity in participant observation at any type of reenactment event. Instead, I intentionally portrayed a temporally ambiguous non-Indian pilgrim or pioneer and did not create a storyline for my persona. I did this so that I could “fit” into many different types of events on a low budget. It also allowed me to avoid the controversy of portraying an Indian identity without claiming such ancestry. As Belk and Costa noted, just as in hobbyist powwowing, historical reenactment of native personas, particularly by non-native people, has been often viewed as “cultural genocide” (1998:235).

My choice to portray a “white pilgrim/pioneer” often prohibited me from setting up in events with less lenient rules for Indian themed encampment. Even when I was permitted, I had to choose to do so strategically because setting up as an “out-of-place” character could make building rapport difficult. For example, at a battle reenactment, after explaining my research to the event organizer, I was directed to set up in the Indian camp. The host’s decision frustrated a few participants. However, my tenuous situation was resolved when a group of men portraying native personas ambushed me at my tent site and incorporated me into the reenactment scene by “kidnapping” me, keeping me at their camp to cook over the fire, and telling tourists that I was to be married off to one of the “braves.” There were other women portraying Caucasian personas in
the same encampment but they solved their out-of-place situation by portraying a missionary or educator.

Like powwowing, historical reenactment—particularly interpretation—is a powerful means of constructing and displaying an Indian identity by distinguishing oneself from the non-native public. As Peers (1999:47-48) noted, native interpreters often saw themselves as ambassadors who “play themselves” and used living history as a means to thwart racism, which puts a whole new meaning on performance of living history—meaning not shared by non-native interpreters.

Unlike non-native reenactors, when engaging the public, native interpreters gave authority to their stories and information by saying “we” and “my people” (Peers 1999:51). I repeatedly witnessed this strategy used by participants in both powwowing and reenactment. However, not all individuals using such a strategy claimed an Indian identity, and like in powwowing, many participants interpreting native personas who did self-identify as Indian were reclaimers—converts to such an identity later in life and who lacked formal legitimization. Much like in powwowing, the reenactment community and interpretive performances to the public were major sources for legitimization of a performer’s self-proclaimed Indianness.

There are numerous reenactment events in Florida, such as Seminole War battle reenactments or “timelines,” at which people can portray Indian personas. However, rendezvousing—particularly the multifunctional type of rendezvousing that includes interpretation—provided an especially important means for both individual and group identity construction. Rendezvousing allowed participants to perform an Indian identity for numerous days, if not weeks at a time in a dynamic social interaction with other people performing other identities.
Especially through years of such interaction in rendezvousing, people can construct and form close social networks built around a shared, although perhaps just temporary, Indian identity. As one interviewee described, having to live primitively for long stretches of time requires depending on one another so that you become a “family” and then want to then bring in your own family into it (interview with author, February 20, 2006). Participants regularly complained about having trouble bringing loved ones into reenactment and occasionally I even heard stories of marriages dissolving because one partner was so committed to reenacting. Over and over, I heard participants complain of a time-traveling “jet-lag” that occurs when moving from a rendezvous back into regular society. Participants regularly attributed rendezvousing to be when they felt the most accepted for who they feel or believe they actually are, when they could express themselves fully. I believe this is important in the construction of identity, and makes events like the rendezvous worth more scholarly attention.

Rendezvous Event Structure

In Florida many rendezvous have a broad time frame. Simply termed “pre-1840,” almost any persona, lifestyle, and material culture assumed to have been present between 1640 and 1840 was typically acceptable for interpretation. This broad time frame allowed for a variety of personas to be adopted and portrayed at any single event, from Celtic highlanders, Indians, Mountain men, and New England pilgrims. At some events, there were even pirates and Civil War soldiers. Many participants, both critical insiders and outsider reenactors, criticized Florida rendezvousing for the especially loose adherence to historical authenticity. I often heard generalized complaints that reenactors were leaving Fur Trade Era rendezvousing for other themes—particularly Old West and Pirate themes—in order to be more authentic. This was not just a complaint I heard in Florida, however. At the rendezvous I attended in Ohio, the opening
ceremonies devolved into debates about money, internal politics, and getting back to older traditions of rendezvousing.

Many participants in Florida reenacted in more than one time-period, although at separate events, which was reflected in their sometimes eclectic costuming or encampment. Medieval period reenactment has become especially popular over the previous few decades and many rendezvous participants took part in medieval reenactments as well. Many wore the same boots, hairstyles, and even constructed the same shelter at separately themed events. There were also a number of vendors who set up at events with different temporal themes, but who barely changed their merchandise. For instance, at a Central Florida medieval festival, there was one vendor exclusively dealing in Fur Trade Era costuming. I noticed that another vendor had Fur Trade Era costuming packed in boxes underneath the medieval themed products. At the same event, there were a few participants dressed in historical Indian costumes or powwow regalia.

The reenactments and rendezvous that I attended were typically held on public lands, such as a state or county park. The encampment was often in a large cleared space, such as a pasture, where participants camped in primitive shelters. In somewhat orderly sets of rows adapted to the terrain. Participants—often numbering in the hundreds and thousands—were dispersed throughout the grounds in individual campsites.

Extended families and friends organized their campsites into clusters of shelters called “camps” where they often shared meals and space. At some events, there were designated areas for different types of camps. For instance, like the one pictured in figure 6-3, there was usually a designated encampment for people portraying Indian personas—the “Indian Village” or “teepee town.”
Participants used distinguishing symbols, such as flags or unique painted shelters, to individualize campsites or group camps. One particularly popular means of individualizing camps were leather or canvas shields displayed at the entrance of campsites. These shields were highly personalized, often decorated with feathers, furs, bones, or historical trinkets.

These shields were also important displays of how serious a “vouser” was. At most rendezvous, every registered participant was given a medallion to wear (usually as a necklace) throughout the event. The medallion was similar to a nametag and helped organizers and gatekeepers keep track of participants. Medallions were uniquely designed for each rendezvous and imprinted with the event name, date, and usually an individual identification number. After events, participants added these medallions to their camp shields. Of course, the more medallions a person displayed the more serious a “vouser” (short for rendezvouser) he or she was perceived to be.

At many rendezvous, there were also “modern camps.” Modern camps were completely separate from the main encampment—perhaps even situated in the parking lot. Modern camps were designated for people who slept in modern shelters such as tents or recreational vehicles, sometimes humorously called “tin teepees.” Participants set up in modern camp either for comfort or because they could not yet afford primitive shelters. Modern camps were also spaces for scouting groups to set up campsites and attend the rendezvous on “public days” when unregistered guests and tourists were permitted.

I camped in a modern camp during my first rendezvous, because I did not have a “period” shelter. Many of the people with whom I camped in modern-camp called the primitive camp “vous-town” or “vous-ville.” When I used this term among people who were set up in the primitive camp, they were unaware of the term’s meaning. When I explained that I was camping
in “modern,” or had camped in modern before, primitive participants expressed considerable prejudice toward modern camping. Some even stated that modern camp was not “real rendezvousing.”

Modern camps were a good way for newcomers to test reenacting, before making a full financial commitment. To participate in “real rendezvousing” is expensive. Belk and Costa’s (1998) description of rendezvousing as a consumption enclave is accurate. Participants could spend thousands of dollars at just one event—consuming their identity by buying new costumes, crafts, weapons, or accessories for camp life—on “traders row.” Trader’s row was the designated area for vendors to set up their booths and tent sites. Not only could participants buy from vendors at events, but there were numerous companies throughout the United States who sold reenactment accessories online or through catalogs and had representatives at major rendezvous. I have also seen some of these larger companies’ representatives at powwows. One of the most popular companies, Crazy Crow, offered both powwow and rendezvous catalogs, as well as an online national calendar for both types of events.

Individual camps also set up “trade blankets” upon which they placed their homemade crafts or used items for sale or trade. Host organizations often set a limit on the monetary value of products on a trade blanket and restricted what kind of items could be displayed. Rendezvous trade blankets, as pictured in Figure 6-5, were not the same as powwow trade blankets. Activities similar to powwow trade blankets were called “round robins” at rendezvous. Some powwow participants called them round robins as well. At the Maryland primitivist event there was also a round robin type “trade blanket.”

Tents were one of the most expensive items needed to participate in “real rendezvousing.” Most cost hundreds, even thousands of dollars. Tents were so costly to buy and maintain,
especially in the humid Central Florida climate, that at some rendezvous, participants made money by renting out old tents. Having the option to rent a fully equipped campsite, was especially practical for people having to fly into Florida in order to participate. Some larger rendezvous could attract participants throughout the United States, even Europe.

Costumes and camping accessories were also expensive investments, particularly if camping for many days. Interestingly, in my own efforts to construct a persona for rendezvousing, I came across numerous websites that encouraged newcomers—particularly those who were not sure they wanted to commit for financial reasons—to initially portray a Native American persona. Native personas were assumed to be the cheapest to portray, requiring relatively simple costuming and fewer accessories.

Most participants—whether portraying Indians or not—built up their collection of costumes, shelter, and accessories over numerous years. Many participants joked about how, over time, they have had to upgrade the size of their primitive shelters, storage space at home, even the towing capacity of their vehicles, just to accommodate all of the things they accrued for reenacting. Indeed, this was evident in a quick survey I conducted of the types of vehicles in the parking lot of a rendezvous that I attended in Ohio. Most vehicles in the parking lot were trucks, SUVs, or large cargo and passenger vans. Of the 51 vehicles I counted in the parking lot during one afternoon, there were only three smaller vehicles, a mini-van and two sedans, one of which was mine.

Although participants regularly prejudiced against modern camping as inauthentic and not “real rendezvousing,” many primitive campsites were far more comfortable than modern camping. Many participants had lavish campsites, with large tents and accessories that included full mattresses and bed frames, vanities, wardrobes, even bathtubs. Most camps had canopied
kitchens and living areas. At the event in Ohio, I was often teased for the relative poverty of my campsite, pictured in figure 6-4 at the end of this chapter. While other participants took hours, sometimes even days, to set up their campsites, I was able to set up within thirty minutes. My shelter, a small seven foot by seven foot, one-pole style “hunter’s pyramid,” was occasionally mistaken for nearby camps’ storage tent.

Further, “modern” accessories were not completely absent from primitive camps, but were only hidden from view. Many participants kept propane heaters inside their tents and had solar heated showers covered by canvas walls. Blankets often covered modern style boxes and coolers. Many vendors sold canvas covers uniquely designed to hide coolers and other modern accessories. At night, it was normal to hear cell phones ring and the whir of battery-powered fans. At the Ohio rendezvous, event staff often traveled around the encampment on motorized vehicles delivering ice, water, and firewood. At a smaller Florida event, the temperature was so hot that many attendants dressed in only half of their costumes. For instance, one reenactor wore contemporary shorts and sandals with a coonskin hat and 19th century shirt. In the evenings, many participants drove to nearby towns (in full costume) to eat dinner at a restaurant or replenish supplies at grocery stores. In the early mornings, with wet dew on the grown, many participants put on modern style tennis-shoes rather than moccasins or boots.

Rendezvous organizers typically permitted “early set-up” so that participants could register and set up camp at least one day prior to the official start time for the rendezvous. During early set-up, participants were able to dress in modern style clothing, use modern tools to set up camp, and drive their vehicles into camp to unload. However, once official start time began, participants were expected to keep anything modern out of sight.
Rendezvous officially started and closed with a ceremony. At Florida’s largest rendezvous, which regularly included thousands of campers, opening ceremonies were presided over by a regional Indian-persona celebrity in both powwowing and reenactment throughout Florida. This celebrity also had ties to important figures in the Maryland primitivist meet that I attended, and worked professionally as a primitivist demonstrator. The closing ceremonies were held in the “Indian Village” and presided over by a different reenactor, the founder of a Florida based NA-ICO. The closing ceremonies included ritualized acknowledgment of the seven directions and a naming ceremony.

Although Indian-characters played significant ceremonial roles, organizing staff at rendezvous that I attended did not typically portray Indian personas. Highest ranked at a rendezvous was the “booshway” or “bushway,” followed by the second in command, the “segundo.” The bushway and segundo were the primary organizers of a rendezvous and had the greatest authority in camp decisions. “Dog Soldiers” provided general enforcement of rendezvous rules. There were numerous other important, sometimes official roles at a rendezvous, including people who worked in the first-aid tent, “fire chiefs” who made sure there was easy access to water incase a campfire got out of control, stable-men who watched the horses, and “ice chiefs” who delivered ice to campsites.

In comparison to other forms of reenactment, history-buff oriented rendezvousing socializing was an important element of the event. Indeed, one of the first accessories participants urged me to buy at my first rendezvous was a “possibles bag.” Whatever else I wanted to carry in my bag, it was important that I always included a fork, knife, and plate or bowl, and especially a cup. When invited to visit someone else’s campsite it was expected that
participants have these essential items in case they were offered food and drink. Sharing meals were important social aspects of rendezvousing.

In addition to informal socializing, rendezvous included a wide variety of formally organized activities. Seminars in primitive skills and competitions in tomahawk or knife throwing, archery, and riflery were most common. Larger events often included parades, nightly and daily concerts, socials, dances, and even costume runway competitions held in common areas. Florida’s largest rendezvous also includes “Highland Games.” There were many self-proclaimed Gaelic or Celtic “clans” who camped together every year.

**Native American Indianist Culture Organizations (NAICOs)**

Although powwows and rendezvous played an important role in providing similarly interested individuals opportunities to congregate, as already mentioned, during fieldwork I also found many organized, formal groups that publically self-associated with collective Indian identity. These NA-ICOs provided organized means by which people interested in portraying and acquiring Indian identity could receive a form of institutionally empowered social recognition. NA-ICOs also existed as gatekeepers for the exchange of economic capitals tied to Indian identity through the production of powwows and controlled a great deal of communication of the meaning of Indianness to the public through educational programs. NA-ICOs—not tribes, not organizations affiliated with tribes, not Pan-Indian organizations primarily composed of members linked to reservations and tribes, and not groups organized around common kinship networks—were the primary institutions through which individuals negotiated their distinction from the general public and made claims of insiderness to the broader Indian community.

Not only did many NA-ICOs host or co-host the commercial, often heavily publicized powwows, but local newspapers and magazines often published NA-ICOs’ contact information

159
as resources for Native Americans and Native American issues. Further, newspapers and magazines occasionally carried stories about conflict between groups or between groups and local civic officials. Sometimes in these stories, groups were described as “tribes.” I will not reference such publications in this dissertation, because to do so would reveal the identities of organizations that I studied and potentially reveal the identities of informants.

NA-ICOs are organizations similar to the Deer Clan, as described by Standing Bear (1994), in that their members associated their collectiveness with Indian cultural identity and were primarily organized around an interest in learning about Indian cultural heritage and lifeways that they associated with Indianness—often called “The Way,” “Red Road,” “Red Path,” or, more commonly, “Indian-Ways” or “Old-Ways.”

Participants were not organized around a shared kin-based network, racial identity, or sense of similar geographic origins, but were organized around a shared idealization of Indians and interest in perpetuating a culture, practice, cosmology, or way of life that they associated with Indians. While many members claimed Indian ancestry, membership was not limited to any specific tribal background, percentage of “Indian-blood,” or claims to tribal membership. Further, while some organizations might have required that an individual or family claim Indian ancestry to be full-members, more often membership was open to anyone willing to follow the Indian-Ways, regardless of ancestry. Organization members and other self-proclaimed affiliated participants often identified these organizations as “intertribal” or “multicultural.” This label was used to mean that the group did not exclusively focus on the traditions of any particular tribe, and membership was open to people who were Indian, part-Indian, or non-Indian.

Organization flyers, membership applications, and advertisements typically stressed inclusivity, “family,” and community, often without any reference to Indian heritage. Quinn
(1990b) described the groups he encountered as requiring some form of Indian ancestry. It appeared that most groups I encountered did not require Indian ancestry to be a member, although I did come across a few groups that maintained tiered membership statuses based on personal claims of percentage of Indian ancestry.

Most of the organizations whose members I had contact with appeared, if just by self-description, to function somewhat similarly to small church congregations. Members often identified themselves as being like a family and engaged with one another on a regular basis, through formal group meetings (usually held once or twice per month) and at powwows throughout the year. Many groups gave themselves names that suggested kin-based connectedness—such as family, clan, lodge, or tribe—but appeared to be primarily composed of unrelated individuals and small families who were unrelated to one another as groups.

NA-ICOs offered organized social support to members, such as providing home cooked meals after the loss of a loved one, raising money for medical care, making hospital visits, and even helping to rebuild each others’ homes in the wake of disaster. In addition, leaders of many of these organizations officiated weddings, naming-ceremonies, birth celebrations, and memorial services for members and affiliated participants. Groups claimed some shared social or religious goal and provided a regular setting to commune, find support, celebrate life-events, as well as learn about Indians.

These organizations offered considerable social capital to their members. Many critical insiders described those who participate in the regional community’s events and organizations as being socially and economically marginalized from dominant society. In interviews and even public statements, participants often pointed to participation in the Indian community, powwowing, or reenactment as having changed their lives. They attributed their participation to
not only giving them personal meaning, but also giving them a support network to overcome social deviancy, chemical addictions, or even a sense of social isolation after incarceration or traumatizing war experience. Especially in the powwowing communities, homelessness and personal stories of past homelessness were common, and many regular participants often traveled from powwow to powwow with nowhere else to consider home. Concerns about friends and family who had been or were incarcerated, or were struggling with drug or alcohol dependency were also common discussion topics and prayer requests.

When I first initiated my fieldwork, participants were regularly expressing anxiety that the rise in fuel and food costs had been severely threatening Florida’s powwows for a few years. Indeed, as my fieldwork progressed, many regular powwow participants were forced to discontinue their attendance at events and meetings due to travel costs. In one of the NA-ICOs with which I spent a great deal of participant observation time, over the course of my fieldwork period, the communal meals held at monthly meetings noticeably dwindled in size and quality. Members described having a more difficult time affording fresh produce for the recipes they wished to contribute to group meals.

Groups appeared to vary in size, often between 10 and 50 members. Some groups claimed to have members throughout the United States. A number of groups claimed to be branches of umbrella organizations based in or originating in other regions of the United States. I only knew of one umbrella organization officially based in Florida.

On flyers, in event programs, and in leaderships’ public statements or interviews, organizations’ publically stated goals typically revolved around coming together in “appreciation,” “honor,” or “admiration” of native cultures, with a primary interest in “learning,” “preserving,” “sharing,” “educating,” “teaching,” or “building awareness” about Native
Americans to the general public. Some groups described organizing or participating in charity projects for Native Americans. Most NA-ICOs, at least those that I was aware of, either had, or were seeking not-for-profit, 501c3 tax designations as church, educational, or charity organizations.

I often encountered considerable confusion expressed among participants about the meaning of the 501c3 designation. For example, in one group’s business meeting I witnessed an internal debate about whether the 501c3 label was a specific tax designation only for Indians. I have also met people from a number of different organizations who have suggested that such a tax designation is similar to “federal recognition,” although inferior in legitimacy. As Paredes (1995) noted, officially incorporating is an important strategy for Southeastern Indian groups to gain access to tax rebates and grants. Many federally recognized tribes have non-profit organizations as well. However, the 501c3 label is not unique to Indians or related federal recognition.

While official legal titles for tax purposes may have varied, organizations were typically structured by ranks of “chiefs,” “councils,” and “spiritual leaders.” As the primary contact for interested members of the public, organization leadership appeared to maintain considerable control over group representation and interaction with the local non-Indian population.

Many organizations were quite hierarchical, often headed by individuals, a married couple, or a small core of kin-related individuals, who served as both the political and spiritual authority. In some organizations, leaders were elected or claimed to have been appointed (often by an outside figure) as “chief for life.” Leaders that I met often claimed more knowledge about being Indian than other group members, and even than other leaders in the larger community.
In one example of an especially hierarchical organization—which hosted bi-annual public powwows and whose members claimed to have applied for federal status but were subsequently rejected—formal members lived on the chief’s property, which members called a “reservation.” Although later removed, for at least the first year that I attended this organization’s powwows, there was a formal county sign on a busy highway that directed the public to the nearby “Indian Reservation.” Penny Jessel (1992) also referenced such a sign when she was conducting fieldwork, however, I do not know if it was the same sign. The chief for this organization not only controlled who could and could not live on the “reservation” but also who was permitted to visit. At this organization’s powwow, as well as a few others in the region, I had to receive special permission from bodyguards before speaking with the chiefs.

Many participants did acknowledge wanting more legitimacy for themselves as a group and as individuals. There appeared to be considerable confusion among the general public and regular insiders about legal definitions of Indian groups. This confusion has created opportunities for some individuals to gain saliency within the regional community. For example, at the powwow of a recently organized group, its leader publically announced that they received a flag that was flown on its behalf at the U.S. capital. The leader claimed that this act was proof of their progress in gaining recognition. However, what many of the group’s members seemed to be unaware of or did not mention, was that there is a federal program—The United States Capital Flag Program—which allows citizens to request and purchase a flag flown over the Capitol for a special occasion, interest, or group. Requests are made to representatives or senators and can even be made online. This flag program has nothing to do with tribal recognition. At this organizations’ event I had to receive permission from bodyguards before introducing myself to the chief.
Key indicators of how power over identity was distributed in NA-ICOs were organizations’ naming processes. Taking an Indian-name was an important rite of passage for new initiates and distinguished them from the general non-Indian population. Some participants likened the importance of the naming ceremony to a Christian baptism. As the narrator of one naming ceremony described, an Indian name is what a person uses to engage the Creator, and although a person can receive numerous Indian names during a lifetime, a name cannot be removed. Once having received a name it was commonly expected that a person use that name while attending rituals and participating in the community.

Indian names were intended to reflect something personal, such as an individual’s totem animal, a favorite past time, or special personal attribute. For instance, one informant took a name that referred to a unique animal that she encountered during a spiritual experience. She believed that the animal was sent to her by the Creator to express approval of her interpretative work on pre-historic Indians in Florida (interview with author, February 20, 2006). In another example from a naming ceremony I attended, a man was named “Loving Bear.” Although a pseudonym, I believe “Loving Bear” reflects the intent of the actual name given in the ceremony, a name intended to reflect his affinity for the earth and a particular animal species. Names also may reflect a familial relationship. At another naming ceremony that I attended, a son was named “Little Hawk” after his father who was named “Hawk” (both pseudonyms).

Being such an important element of becoming Indian, the process of receiving an Indian name is controversial in the community. Occasionally I witnessed arguments over whether anyone other than the recipient of a name had the right to choose a name. In organizations that were particularly hierarchical, not only did the chief or spiritual elder preside over naming ceremonies, but leadership also had the sole power to determine a person’s Indian name. For
example, in one organization, only the chief—who claimed both political and spiritual authority—could officially bestow an Indian name. A group member had to approach the chief asking for a name. If the chief felt that the individual was ready for such a transition, he would pray to the Creator and meditate on a name or appoint someone else to conduct the meditation. After meditating and receiving a name or receiving permission from the Creator to bestow the name which a recipient might have requested—a process which could take months—the chief would then notify the recipient that a name was ready. After undergoing a cleansing process by fasting, a recipient would be bestowed an Indian name in a naming ceremony held at an organization meeting.

This hierarchical naming process contrasted sharply with another organization whose members I interacted with, but was much smaller organization primarily involved in reenactment and primitivism. In the smaller organization, names were chosen by the individual members or emerged dynamically like a nickname. If an individual desired to take that nickname as an Indian name, he or she could do so through ritual.

The importance of one’s Indian name appeared to be valued equally between groups. At powwows, I occasionally heard complaints made about different organizations’ naming methods, as many participants disagreed on the proper authority and ritual process. As my fieldwork progressed, I began to perceive similar patterns in the names of individuals from the same organizations. For this reason, I was wary of taking an Indian name, even when offered. I was concerned that with so much infighting between organizations, that taking a name tied to a specific organization would limit my ability to associate with other organizations.

There was a great deal of fissioning among organizations, often as a result of conflict between an instituted group leader and an upstart who claimed greater authenticity and
knowledge of how to be a real Indian. Typically, even organizations that had survived for at least a few decades also had a number of breakaway groups. Among previously fissioned groups and their various allied organizations, accusations of “wannabe” were often leveled against one another. Many competing histories about the origins of individual groups circulated event networks. In chapter 8, I will address the competition between organizations in greater detail.

Figure 6-6 depicts the founding dates in intervals for the 44 organizations—only 20 of which I made personal contact or observed—that I was aware of during fieldwork. The dates represent the official 501c3 charter or the date members stated that they began organizing. If members of a 501c3 organization claimed an earlier formation date than their tax-exempt charter, I chose to use the earliest date. I could not find founding dates for eleven of the forty-four organizations.

This data is simply of a snap-shot in time and the social networks and methodology I used considerably skew the data on the map. At this point in the study, accurate dates for these organizations are difficult to pin down. Informants were often vague and, for many organizations, few current members represented founders. Further, many organizations have changed their names multiple times over the course of many years, making them difficult to trace in public records.

Regardless of the clear bias and faults in the data provided in figure 6-6, the data does point toward interesting patterns, potentially worth future research. It is important to note that the number of organizations claiming founding dates since 1990 is twice the size of those with founding dates in the 1970’s and 1980’s combined. Further, the number of organizations claiming founding dates within the first seven years of the 21st century is nearly twice that of the previous decade. This considerable increase does support participants’ beliefs that the regional
Indian community has grown, and that, perhaps as some believe, constitutes a movement. This increase is also interesting when considering that, after 1994, the OFA experienced a noticeable rise in the number of groups submitting letters of intent to petition for federal recognition (Office of Federal Acknowledgment 2008b). As of 2008, ten Florida based Indian groups are on the list of petitioners for federal acknowledgement and have submitted letters of intent to the OFA—one has been declined acknowledgment, two have withdrawn, and one has been referred for determination (Office of Federal Acknowledgment 2008c). Five of the ten Florida based groups sent letters of intent after 1994 (Office of Federal Acknowledgment 2008c).

**Expanding the Network: Non-Indian Group Participation**

Especially in rural areas, many NA-ICOs often served the local non-Indian communities in highly public capacities—sponsoring scout groups, participating in donation drives, and sitting on area boards. Some groups also represented a town or county’s *earliest* inhabitants in civic celebrations, either as demonstrators or as representatives from the local Indian population. Many groups have also spearheaded civic efforts to create Indian monuments, or the construction of a permanent “Indian Village”—primarily for educational purposes—in public parks.

For a member of the general public, finding a NA-ICO and becoming a member was quite easy. As described, groups often maintained salient profiles in the local non-Indian community. Additionally, with the exception of the more hierarchical groups, organizations’ members whom I encountered were typically quite welcoming and actively recruited at public events and educational demonstrations. At the end of presentations and during events, many groups shared their contact information to inquiring public participants. Often powwow programs and information flyers included membership applications and notification of “interest meetings.” Many organizations also maintained websites that had contact and membership information, some even with downloadable applications.
There were other types of formal organizations that many insiders in the local Indian community also regularly participated in, but were groups not associated with an Indian identity—culturally, religiously, or politically—nor appeared to be perceived as insider groups to the regional Indian community. For instance, organized groups of motorcycle riders were common public attendees at powwows and many insiders in the community were avid motorcyclists. Some participants expressed a strong affinity between Indianness and motorcycle riding, and occasionally some NA-ICOs worked with motorcycle clubs in non-Indian events. However, I did not hear anyone describe motorcycle riding as part of being Indian nor have I heard of any groups of motorcycle riders considered a group of Indians or part of the Indian community. Organized groups of riders participated as consumers, as members of the public.

Non-Indian groups were also not typically involved in the organized production of Indian themed events, although they might have been sponsors or collectively involved in the event as community outsiders. For example, a Celtic heritage society set up an educational and recruitment booth at the same Central Florida powwow for numerous years. Its participants demonstrated cultural similarities between ancient Celts and American Indians, as well as provided histories about Indian chiefs in the Southeast who might have had Irish or Scottish ancestry. While many of their members were also involved in NA-ICOs or were regular powwow participants, like motorcycle groups, the Celtic group was not perceived as Indian.

Youth scouting organizations—especially Boy Scout and Explorer troops—were also important and regular non-Indian participants in powwows. Troops often attended powwows on fieldtrips and many performed official tasks, such as keeping the grounds free of litter or directing traffic in parking lots. It was common to see Boy Scout troops and their leaders roving the powwow grounds as consumers and some events offered discounted entrance prices to scouts.
in uniform. Some organizations and many participants did acknowledge scouting as having played an important role in their history or involvement in powwowing. It is also interesting to note that during interviews, the founders of two separate and unconnected Indian-style dance-troupes in Central Florida both mentioned having attended Koshare dance performances (interview with author, March 4, 2006; interview with author, March 26, 2006). The Koshare are an Indian-style dance troupe based in Colorado that formed out of a Boy Scout, Order of the Arrow troupe. One interviewee—a vendor involved in reenactment, powwowing, and primitivism—said that most everyone he knows in rendezvousing and powwowing initially got involved through Boy Scouts. He also noted that Celtism, specifically Highland Games, is also popular activities in Boy Scouts (interview with author, May 5, 2007).

In addition to scouting, there were many other overlapping networks. Examples of other types of groups with common overlapping participation in local Indian community events were: organizations and businesses catering to New Age or Neo-pagan interests, archeology clubs, veterans organizations, businesses that deal in Indian themed goods (e.g. “Indian Trading Posts” and Western-style gift shops), craft guilds, and non-“pre-1840” themed reenactment groups (e.g. medieval, American Civil War, fantasy, etc).

All of these institutions—NA-ICOs, non-Indian associated groups, powwows, primitivist events, and reenactment—were nodes in a large network of people who shared some interests in Indians or interests in consuming products associated with Indians. These nodes further served as key sources for cross-communication and incorporation with non-Indians and Indians, as well as creating a pool of potential new consumers and converts.

Providing a clear example of how such overlapping occurred, a highly salient figure in the regional community—a powwow vendor and organizer, as well as chief of a popular NA-ICO—
annually published a powwow calendar that also included scheduled moon circle ceremonies held at a Unitarian-Universalist church. This vendor/chief recruited powwow acquaintances to attend the moon circles. It is interesting to note that since the 1980’s Unitarian-Universalism has been shifting toward an emphasis of spirituality, with highly visible incorporation of New Age, neopaganism, and Native American Spirituality practices and ideas (Lee 1995).

Schools, churches, scout troops, and children’s camps were especially important sources of networking, because NA-ICOs often focused their proselytizing or outreach efforts on children, who are seen to be the future’s leaders and more receptive to the Old-Ways. NA-ICOs and more prominent figures in the local Indian community were often invited by these institutions to give lectures and demonstrations, either at public or private venues. NA-ICOs were also invited to teach about or represent Native Americans during events intended for the celebration of some theme or holiday, such as Earth Day, Thanksgiving, “Multi-Cultural Awareness,” or Native American Heritage Month.

Finally, one other type of institution should also be mentioned as being an important node in this large network—the United States military. Informal social networks linked by military experience regularly appeared between participants. Many participants described their military background as being important to their eventual participation in powwows. One interviewee stated that most powwow vendors are veterans, who have a unique bond because of military experience, which he analogized to shared experience of being Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts (interview with author, March 4, 2006).

The military also provided important networks for educational programs and recruitment. Some organizations described or advertised themselves as having conducted educational programs on military bases and aircraft carriers. One NA-ICO’s leader said that his organization
had been invited to give demonstrations about Native American culture to officers at a nearby air force base, as part of a “diversification instruction” program (interview with author, April 22, 2006).

The network of activities and events at which NA-ICOs can participate and openly self-identify as Indian or possessors of Indianness is quite large and infiltrates the general public on multiple levels. Between public events, proselytizing outlets, and personal social networks, NA-ICOs and their concepts of Indianness have a wide reach. Further, these events and outreach programs provide individuals and groups opportunities to perform their *insiderness*—to become Indian by distinguishing themselves from the non-native, tourist outsiders. Outsiders’ acknowledgement of a group’s Indianness is a form of legitimization, even for individual members.
Figure 6-1: Map of Florida Powwows and Indian Festivals representing one-year long “season” August 2005 to July 2006. (Note: Some participants divided one year of Florida powwowing into two seasons, the Fall and the Spring.)
Figure 6-2: Grand entry ceremonies at Central Florida powwow.
Figure 6-3: Indian associated encampment area at a Central Florida rendezvous

Figure 6-4: Picture of author’s “camp.” (Note: the one-pole-style pyramid/hunter’s tent was much smaller, relative to surrounding tents. The tent was often mistaken for nearby camps’ storage tents.)
Figure 6-5: Rendezvous “trade blanket.”
Figure 6-6: Map of organizing dates for groups that I was aware of during fieldwork.
CHAPTER 7
IDENTITY AND THE INDIAN WAY

According to one critical insider to the regional polybian Indian community—a local self-proclaimed “Wannabe Indian” who has read Philip Deloria’s Playing Indian (1998) and at one time maintained an active interest in founding “the Wannabe Tribe,” modeled after the Order of the Red Men—Indian wannabes are:

people who know or think they know that Indians are noble people and worth emulating. Their goal is similar to most Americans who are trying to understand the beginning of our country, and beyond, and further back. [interview with author, August 26, 2006]

Based on my ethnographic experience, as I will describe in further detail in this chapter, this quote appears to accurately sum much of the thematic expression of individuals in the networks and groups among which I have conducted fieldwork.

However, unlike this quoted individual, as I have already mentioned in previous chapters, most participants I worked with did not label themselves wannabes or even hobbyists. Nonetheless, few participants inherited an Indian identity and many outsiders described the regional community as wannabes. Participants did not appear to see themselves or their actions as “playing Indians,” but instead as being authentically Native American. For many participants, being Native American was considered a lifeway—a lived set of beliefs and mores. It was something that a person cannot “wannabe,” but is practiced, regardless of phenotype, ethnic heritage, or cultural affinity. This is more like lived religion (Hall 1997) rather than a performative hobby or idolatrous impersonation.

Often at the base of participants’ justifications for the identities and activities they associated with being Indian were expressions of a deep patriotic spirituality. Being Indian was often thematically linked to a nostalgic and noble American past—often articulated as acting out
“old-ways” which were tied to being *truly* American. It appeared that being Indian, for many participants, was also about being ultra-American.

Frustrated with what they felt to be a deteriorating American society, many organizations and individuals employed creative strategies to proselytize their beliefs about *being* Indian to the general public—particularly through educational outreach programs to children. Participants often described their outreach, organizations, and identities as being part of a normative social goal—to return American society to the “old-ways.” However, this revitalization was not intended for other Indians. Revitalization was intended for the broader American society.

As I have mentioned in previous chapters, I believe that the regional Indian community is part of a revitalization movement that is nativistic and includes elements of ethnogenesis. This chapter will explain my position by examining the constructions of Indian identity that dominate the regional movement, how participants view themselves collectively, and how organizations recruit new members. Analyzing the conflict of identity that existed in this community helps to illuminate the meaning of Indianness that participants perceived to constitute their Indian *groupness*, regardless of shared or unshared claims to Indian ancestry.

I believe that this regional movement is much more similar to early 20th century revitalization movements, as exemplified by SAI and Boy Scouts. In these fraternal pan-Indianism linked institutions, constructed ideal traits of Indianness and the Noble Savage myth were revived or perpetuated for the benefit of *American* culture. In contrast, later pan-Indian revitalization movements, such as the Red Power Movement, were attempts to revive ideal traits for the empowerment of Indians and revitalization of Indians—constructing these traits as markers of ethnic Indianness, distinct from Americanness.
As I have repeatedly pointed out, Central Florida, and perhaps the broader American Southeast, is a field where highly complex debates about authentic Indian identity can be acted out, primarily among a highly diverse population with highly varied interests in Indian identity. This field is without a salient voice from organized people who claim Indian identity but who also have more powerful forms of recognition. Those who dominate this regional network lack powerful legitimization and, as Standing Bear (1994) referenced about the Deer Clan, polybian groups’ claims to Indianness are threatened by those who have such legitimization.

As this chapter will describe, within the local community, boundaries of Indian identity were especially complex and not widely agreed upon, yet consistently the power of legality—more specifically the lack of legitimization and the threats posed by those with legitimization—played heavily on the dynamic construction of personal and group identities. Based on interviews and participant observation, I will attempt to give a sense of just how complex and diverse identities were in this community.

The conflicts over identity that I witnessed during fieldwork not only point to the diversity of the population, but also give insight to the meaning of the Indian-Way and Indianness. Just as Indian identity has little cognitive agreement in the community, the Indian Way was also a concept with broad and often ambiguous boundaries. Through analysis of organizations’ recruitment and proselytizing efforts, the boundaries of both the Indian-Way and Indian Identity become clearest.

**Indian Identity**

As previously stated, many participants in the regional network of events and organizations associated with Indian identity, were aware that as members of the regional network they shared a similar ascribed status—that outsiders and some critical insiders commonly assigned wannabe labels to regional organizations and events, even to a perceived regional Indian community as a
whole. However, rather than engage the issue of ethnic or racial Indian authenticity, insider participants often emphasized ethnic or racial hybridity (whether as individuals or as groups) and adherence to a certain value system or lifeway deemed authentic. As already noted, participants commonly referred to their regional community, events, and organizations as “intertribal” or “multicultural.” Although depicted as wholly Indian, the label of “intertribal,” often referred to a lack in exclusion of non-Indian people, as well as the mixing of cultural or religious practices ascribed to various indigenous groups.

Indian identity was highly controversial within the local community. I regularly encountered a strong taboo that one never asks someone whether he or she is an Indian. Warnings against such identity questions were often published in local powwow pamphlets and announced by event emcees. Nonetheless, there was considerable gossip within the community about who was and was not an Indian, and, ironically, accusations of “wannabe” were common. Further, while participants repeatedly argued that being an Indian had little, if nothing, to do with direct or biological heritage, being able to claim some amount of Indian ancestry was an important form of authentication or legitimization.

Many participants described stories of “coming home.” Coming home was the liminal experience of transition from non-Indian to Indian. This experience usually was somewhat epiphanal and arbitrary, when a person found out that he or she had Indian ancestry or a past life as an Indian, and had converted to the Indian-Way. Discovery of this identity could come in the form of a dream, or even through mundane genealogical research on the internet. However, regardless of the source of knowledge, the discovery experience was spiritual, similar to conversion.
Some participants described the coming home experience as reassurance that their life-long empathy or interest in Indians was due to a “real” connection. Some participants openly claimed that something “deep down inside” always told them that they were an Indian or had some connection to Indians that they could not articulate or prove. Participants also consistently referenced their coming home experience with a time of personal struggle, a struggle that was alleviated through their newfound identity and sense of connection. Most that I worked with did not discover their native ancestry until later in life, but many considered their children identifiable as Indians.

Many participants described having a sense of marginalization in their inherited religions or among dominant society. One interviewee, “Ben” (pseudonym), exemplified these themes in his coming home experience (interview with author, April 22, 2006). Ben did not discover his Indian heritage until he was 63 years old. He had spent a lifetime in churches, often with leadership positions and moving between Methodist, Baptist, and evangelical denominations. Never feeling “fulfilled,” he eventually left “the church.” One day his wife came in and said, “We’re going to a powwow this weekend.” Ben described walking over the hill from the parking lot and hearing the powwow drum. He said that when he first heard the drum it “hit him down so deep in that place that we are all touched but can’t explain” (interview with author, April 22, 2006). He immediately knew what he had been missing in church. He related his new found Indian life-way to nature spirituality. He argued that he could go into the woods and commune with the same god as everyone else and was frustrated that people do not understand that everyone is worshiping the same god, but with different names.

Like Ben, many participants described finding the Indian-Way as an alternative to their inherited religions, particularly Christianity, and that nature and powwowing provided a place for
them to commune with a supreme being. Many participants regularly used the label “church” to describe powwows and the environment, and equated these sites with other types of religious organizing and worship.

Within the community, there were many competing definitions of what defined an Indian. More commonly participants argued that just one drop of Indian blood meant that a person was a “real Indian.” This argument was used not only to justify personal reclamation, but was also used to encourage members of the public to seek out potential Indian identity. For instance, at one NA-ICO’s monthly meeting, held at a public park in a national forest, a small crowd from the public had gathered to watch the group’s drum practice. The group offered a seat at the drum to a young boy from the audience. The wife of one of the group’s more salient leaders—the spiritual leader—asked the boy if he was “native.” The boy responded that he had some Cherokee on one side but he was not an Indian. The spiritual leader quickly told the boy that any Indian blood means that a person is an Indian. During fieldwork, informants regularly encouraged me to do genealogical research in order to discover my Indian ancestry. As one interviewee put it: some people, “maybe even yourself,” do not even know that they are Indians (interview with author, May 5, 2007).

This “one drop” rule is highly commodified in regional powwows. Many events offer genealogy seminars and many vendors sell books, videos, even self-published worksheets that help consumers find Indian heritage and navigate tribal rolls. At a powwow in Kentucky, one vendor sold mail-in DNA-swab tests for Indian ancestry. Another vendor, who was actually based in Florida, sold lists of phenotypes suggestive of Indian ancestry—such as diabetes, a Mongolian bruise, even alcoholism—and placed a large poster of these traits in front of her booth as an advertisement. There were also vendors who consulted as genealogists to help
individuals who were looking for Indian ancestry. One such vendor set up a large database for individuals who were researching their native ancestry to register and network with one another.

I believe it is important to note that, like Ben, many participants in the regional community first participated in powwows before discovering Indian ancestry or claiming an Indian identity. Rendezvous and other reenactment events also had vendors who provided aid in genealogical research or offered genealogy seminars—although not advertised as specifically focused on finding Indian ancestry. An emphasis on universal genealogical relatedness was also important in ideological expressions at events. For instance, before his performance at a Central Florida powwow, an entertainer spoke to the audience about how it has been proven by four strands of DNA, that everyone is related, no matter what tribe or race.

In addition to the commodification of the one-drop rule, a symbolic emphasis on mixed-ancestry could be found in consumer goods at events, particularly powwows. At many powwows, participants wore and vendors sold shirts and bumper stickers with variations of the popular motif “I’m Part White but I Can’t Prove it.” Usually on a black background, the phrase surrounded a red and white outline of an Indian face. Many participants also owned wolf-dog hybrids, which were common sights at powwows. These “wolves,” as participants referred to them, were dogs with some wolf-ancestry. There were a few breeders who brought litters of “wolves” for sale at powwows. I also encountered many people who conducted outreach to the public about wolves. They linked educational outreach on wolves to educational outreach on Indians.

Some groups or individuals were more specific about their hybrid identity. Rather than emphasizing their Indian ancestry only, many creatively self-ascribed to a dual identity. For example, I met many participants at both powwows and reenactments who self-identified as
“Celtic-Indians.” Such individuals often expressed this hybrid identity by incorporating kilts and tartans into their powwow regalia. Although I met many Celtic-Indians at powwows in Florida, in my experience, this identity appeared more commonly in reenactment networks.

In the United States, as in Europe, there have been many movements of people who reclaimed or converted their identities to “Celtic” ones. Similar to stereotypes about Indians, Celtic identity was constructed as a Noble Savage opposite to dominant civilization but closely tied to nationalist frontier myths, an oppressed population, warrior oriented, and closely tied to nature (McCarthy and Hague 2004). Interestingly, like Indians, Celts have been representative of the Noble Savage construct and the subject of a great deal of popular culture and commercialism (Dietler 1994). Also, like Indians, New Age and neopaganism enclaves often idealize celticism and take celtic identities (Bowman 1995).

There were also many participants who claimed a Métis identity. However, Métis, in this sense, was not a reference to the specific ethnic group found in the Great Lakes and Northern Plains. Participants used the label Métis more as a reference for someone with any Indian ancestry, a “mixed-blood.”

Based in Florida, one of the fastest growing NA-ICOs in the regional community primarily utilized a Métis, mixed-blood identifier and was officially organized as a church. The organization originally formed out of historical reenactment—primarily Fur Trade Era themed rendezvousing—but had been recently growing through heavy recruitment in powwow networks. The group had a genesis story stating that over time, “mixed-bloods” in the United States wanted to find an official place to practice their beliefs. The mixed bloods did not want “white-man’s ways,” but were rejected by American Indians. The mixed bloods came together to organize their own group as a starting point to bring all “the people” together to learn the Old Ways, and to be a
starting point for one world, one people, with one creator (interview with author, March 19, 2006). The group’s leadership taught that adherence to the Old-Ways is the only thing that separates people from one another (interview with author, March 19, 2006).

One leader in this organization told me that all “true Americans” are part Native American, they just do not know it yet, and that they will all eventually “come-home” (interview with author, March 18, 2006). According to this individual, America is a melting-pot and “anyone born in the U.S. is a Native American” (interview with author, March 18, 2006).

Symbolically expressing their origin story, this rather primitivist and nationalistic group designed and sold t-shirts showing a black and white picture of their still-living founders with a subscript of “Homeland Security Since 1493.” This t-shirt creatively reproduced a popular motif that juxtaposed images of Native Americans, often the Apache Geronimo, with the subscript “Homeland Security Since 1492.” Of course, by placing their origins in 1493, this particular NAICO not only claimed a unique place in American history, but also redefined both the boundaries of indigenous identity and the American nation-state’s indigenousness—reflecting an ideology more akin to Charles Eastman, the Teepee Order, and Red Men.

Interestingly, this organization urged its members (and recruits) to model their identities on Canadian definitions of “Métis.” Perhaps most dangerous to current essentialist definitions of native identity, this group was also recruiting through local powwows and historical reenactments to lobby the United States government for a legal recognized Métis identification. On application forms and websites, the group depicted itself as not being prejudicial like tribes, as trusting of applicants’ claims of Indian ancestry without the need for formal proof.

Just as Standing Bear (1994) described about the Deer Clan, many in the local Indian community have been rejected and felt threatened by more legitimated Indian populations,
particularly by federally recognized tribes. Perhaps reflecting the reactionary and defensive aspects of their self-identification, away from the public, within Central Florida’s intertribal community there were many who expressed prejudice against legally recognized Indians.

Many participants in the local community negatively contrasted their form of Indianness from those who have federal or even state based recognition. Often “reservation,” “card-carrying,” or “legal” Indians were depicted as an out-group, characterized as types of Indians referenced by “them” as opposed to “us.” Legally recognized tribes were often depicted as possessing less authentic Indianness, because they failed to follow the Old-Ways, were exclusionary, if not racist, and had “given in” or “sold-out” to dominant society. Some participants stereotyped “full-bloods” and tribes as being “all about the money.”

Although I do not know how wide spread, during participant observation and during interviews, I encountered Social Darwinist-like theories or interpretations of prophecies—such as the “Seventh Generation Prophecy”—used as explanations and justification for participants’ claims to Indianness. For example, a man who did not self-identify as Indian, but worked full time to educate the public about indigenous life-ways through primitivism and reenactment, argued that contemporary Native Americans did not speak up for their ancestors as they should. He explained that this was to be expected because all the bloodlines of those who were willing to stand-up died off, since they were the first on the battlefields against whites (interview with author, February 20, 2006).

This interviewee, and others present during the interview, justified his interpretive work and performance of Indian identity during interpretive demonstrations, by arguing that Indians were no longer teaching the ways of their ancestors. The group’s members openly acknowledged that their educational work was controversial but described their work as an American right to
free-speech. Interestingly, members of the organization depicted themselves as more akin to anthropologists than Indians.

Like the previously mentioned group, I encountered many individuals and groups who described a need to share Indian Ways with the public because Indians were not doing so. In another example, to an audience of hundreds, in a public powwow performance by an Indian-style youth dance troupe, the narrator described Native Americans as the minority group that likely contributed the most to the United States. He referenced Native Americans as “them” and “they”—as people who helped “us” adapt to the New World and who fought beside the United States in international wars. He argued that each of “us” has an obligation to help preserve Indian culture because it has been such an important part of the American way of life.

Following the performance, in an interview, the narrator stated that although his dancers did not claim to be Indian, he felt that someone has to share and preserve Indian culture, because too few Native Americans were doing so (interview with author, March 25, 2006). He stated that he knew this was a contentious issue, but that he had some Indian heritage so he could justify his leadership (interview with author, March 25, 2006). He emphatically made the point that his dancers were not “wannabes,” specifically because they did not practice anything religious regarding Native Americans.

As with the mixed-blood NA-ICO and above examples, participants often described a strong sense of American patriotism or nationalism that was linked to their Indianness or desires to share Indian-Ways. Another Indian-style dance troupe began many of its public performances with a short ritualistic flag ceremony. The flag bearer danced out into the front, waving an American flag and declared love for “Grandfather” and his nation, America. In one public presentation, the narrator and founder stated that the dance troupe represented American Indian
people, and that powwows and dance presentations were a growing part of American culture of which they proudly represented. At the end of this same public presentation, an audience member asked if the dancers were Indian, to which the troupe leader and founder, responded that many of their members were Indian and of numerous backgrounds, but they do not require Indian heritage for membership.

Such nationalism pervaded the regional rituals and performances. Patriotic songs were a primary theme for entertainers at powwows. Accessories for regalia and organization’s official colors were often themed with patriotic colors, symbols, and designs. In order to become princess, some organizations required applicants to know certain elements of American history. Vending booths at events were often dressed in patriotic theme and many crafts were decorated with national themes or utilized patterns and colors associated with different military branches and wars. One organization even started its monthly meetings by reciting the American Pledge of Allegiance to the United States Flag. A source of great conflict at powwows was whether to place the “Eagle Staff” (often called the “Native American Flag”) in front of the United States Flag during a grand entry procession. The Eagle Staff usually won in such disagreements or the two symbols were marched side by side.

American military veterans were typically given the greatest honor during activities and events. Veterans usually received discounted entrance to events and often maintained leadership positions within organizations. Many powwows set up replicas of various war memorials and often individuals (usually vendors) set up a table with black linens and dinnerware for the spirits of fallen soldiers. One vendor even traveled to regional powwows setting up a large rubbing of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Of thirty-six powwow flyers that I was able to collect from participants that advertised events held in Florida and neighboring states ranging from 2003 to
2009, eleven flyers stated who or what was being honored at the powwow. While honorees varied, the majority, six, specifically honored veterans or warriors. The other honorees were “Mother Earth,” “The Creator,” “All Our Relations,” “Youth and Elders,” and all Native people.

Veteran’s wartime sacrifices were often used as justification for prohibition of various behaviors at powwows. For instance, at one powwow, after complaints were made about people throwing cigarette-butts on the ground, the emcee announced that the sacrifices of veterans gave Americans the right to smoke so “we” should honor them by throwing the butts in the trash, not on the ground. At the same powwow, the emcee described the veteran’s honor dance as something that “no other culture on this continent does.” Participants often described this broad and active respect for veterans as a uniquely Native American cultural attribute.

Many participants often pointed to groups’ and events’ patriotism and nationalism as the primary variables that inspired them to become active participants in powwows. One popular and highly respected animal wrangler, who set up educational booths and demonstrations at powwows, said that he entered powwowing because of an admiration for the bald eagle and its simultaneous symbolic role in the U.S. military and as a spirit animal for Native Americans. Claiming to be a white man himself, he argued that Native Americans have taught him respect for heritage. The vendor—who described himself as a White man and having been adopted by the Maori people of New Zealand—further lamented that the “white man” and “white society” were no longer just “Americans,” but now required prefixes before their American identifier, such as “Irish-American.” He argued that Native Americans have not lost their identity like Americans, and through educational programs at powwows, he hoped to pass on respect for heritage (interview with author, March 4, 2006).
Revitalization and Indian Education

During fieldwork, numerous event and group participants warned me that during my lifetime I would likely be witness to a violent revolution. The mixed-blood NA-ICO, earlier referenced, even required members to practice wilderness survival strategies in preparation for a violent revolution in which the U.S. government would be overthrown by a foreign government (interview with author, March 19, 2006).

Participants often painted a grim picture of the near future, especially America’s near future. Many particularly expressed frustration with the U.S. government, often arguing that the Constitution was no longer being adhered to and that the government could not be trusted anymore. Many generally described cultural trends in current American society and environmental changes as apocalyptic signs. However, many also described hope in the future—that after the impending destruction there will be a better world.

At this time, I would not go so far as to describe the regional network of polybian Indian event participants and organizations as part of a broad apocalyptic or millenarian new religious or social movement—at least not as a whole, although, clearly I encountered many participants and groups who believed and taught such ideas. I would argue, instead, that these groups and individuals, as a regional whole, are part of a nativist revitalization movement—in which there are many, often competing ideas, ideologies, and identities, only some of which are apocalyptic or millenarian. Rather than a shared preparation for a New Age or revolution, participants’ expressed ideas, rituals, and public activities appeared to more commonly share a goal of renewal—however, not to renew Native society, but to renew American society by learning about and teaching about culture and history that they associated with Native Americans.

To distinguish the polybian Indian movement from other typologies, such as millenarianism or apocalypticism, I am working from a broad definition proposed by Ralph
Linton. Unfortunately, this is an old definition, however, I do believe it is particularly useful for the highly diverse population at focus in this dissertation. Linton defined a nativist movement as “any conscious, organized attempt on the part of a society’s members to revive or perpetuate selected aspects of its culture” (1943:230).

In order to renew American society, most of the organizations I worked with, made it a normative priority to share the Old-Ways with the public through educational outreach. Even the few groups whose members described themselves as actively preparing for a new millennium or apocalypse, also engaged in educational outreach. Many organizations clearly stated in their by-laws and organization goals that they existed to educate the public about Native Americans and to preserve native traditions. Often, it was through activities intended for such education and preservation that the Old-Way—what was being revived—was given more substantive boundaries. Of course, in these activities participants were engaging non-Indians, the public. Just like powwows and historical reenactment, through educational performance, participants constructed an in-group versus out-group structure that distinguished themselves as the insiders—the possessors of and authorities on Indianness.

As one interviewee, Jeff (pseudonym), described of his organization, educational outreach helps to make sure that the public knows that “we are still here,” that Indians are not extinct (interview with author, May 5, 2007). Jeff described his organization—with their goal to preserve the “ancestor’s” teachings and share them with all people, Indian or not—and others in the community as fulfillment of the “Seventh Generation Prophecy.” Like this interviewee, many participants in the regional community expressed belief in a prophesied Seventh Generation—a generation of primarily non-Indian people or people of diluted Indian blood who will bring back
the “truth” and make the future a better place. In the field, I have heard the source of this prophecy attributed to both Chief Joseph and Crazy Horse.

The Prophecy of the Seventh Generation was first published by the Kahnawake Survival School in Quebec in 1980 (Johnson 1996). The prophecy predicts that seven generations after Europeans first arrived in North America, there will be major ecological disasters that will make native peoples become aware of the damage they have done to the Earth (Johnson 1996:601-602). Their children (the seventh generation) will rise up and lead a renewal (Johnson 1996:601-602).

Of course, not all groups’ members or regional participants that I encountered described themselves as fulfilling prophecy; however, many articulated a need to pass on knowledge about Indians to the public. As already described, powwows had three major purposes, one of which was to “educate” and pass on traditional knowledge—the other two being selling and community. Even vendors often described having the opportunity to educate the public as an important part of their role at a powwow.

Included in many organization’s goals were also interests in stemming environmental degradation, which many linked to educational outreach. Many participants believed that sharing knowledge about Indian cultural heritage was a key solution to a looming environmental crisis. Some participants acknowledged that growing environmental awareness was a major reason they were invited to give educational demonstrations by outside groups. Indeed, many organizations described Earth Day as their busiest day for educational programs. Jeff specifically attributed growing public awareness of global warming, as a major reason why the local Indian community had gained public attention and experienced growth in recent years (interview with author, May 5, 2007).
For many participants, “to educate” was more than just a purpose given to their crafts, hobbies, or events, and often involved committed lifestyles important to their identities and the Indian-Way. Many participants argued that educational outreach was a religious directive from “the Creator,” and many described having deep spiritual and emotional experiences while giving demonstrations—leading some to tears during the retelling of such experiences.

Some participants even labeled their work “Indian Education” or “teaching Indian,” and self-identified as “Indian teachers,” much as one might identify as a math or history teacher. In attendance at one Florida powwow, I met some individuals who identified themselves as members of an “educational tribe” in Georgia. Many participants incorporated the craft through which they conducted outreach, such as woodcarving, knapping, fire-making, cooking, beading, music, or storytelling, into their personal identities and expression of their Indianness.

One educator—a woman who did not claim Indian identity but dyed her hair black and dressed in clothing that expressed Indianness—tried to explain to me the relationship between her educational efforts and religion. She argued that “Native American religion” was different from other religions because “you live it” (interview with author, February 20, 2006). During the interview, I told her about the concept of “lived religion” (Hall 1997) and asked whether she thought that could relate to her perspective about the links between religion and Native Americans. She responded: “well what you know, people are teaching in college what we’ve been talking about and doing all this time” (interview with author, February 20, 2006). She proceeded to say that it was too difficult for her to separate out the border between religion and life for Native Americans, which was why teaching about Native Americans was so difficult (interview with author, February 20, 2006).
Educational outreach was typically directed toward children. Children were often described by participants as being more open to learning about Indians and Indian-Ways, and not yet prejudiced toward Indians. Being focused on children, organizations and Indian teachers emphasized a “hands-on” approach to Indian education. For instance, many educational programs that I attended included letting children handle material objects (such as hatchets, flutes, furs, skulls, and rattles), learn a powwow dance or craft, such as knapping, beading, finger-weaving, wood or stone carving, or even fire-making. Like the one pictured in figure 7-1, many powwows set aside designated children’s areas for seminars and craft projects. One of the most creative hands-on activities I witnessed was called “Paint-the-Pony.” Paint-the-Pony, a popular attraction at a few powwows every year, involved children being taught “Native American Picture Writing” and then painting pictograph images on a live white horse.

Another major hands-on strategy for Indian education was to stage replica living-structures and scenes that members of the public could physically enter. Usually these shelters and scenes included one or two teepees and perhaps a palm-thatched lean-to. Often, if a group giving a demonstration did not have a life size shelter, they created scaled-down models of scenes for presentation. For many organizations, a key goal was to acquire enough property or access to public space in order to erect a permanent “Indian Village.” Having an Indian Village or standing teepee was both an attraction and educational tool and typically advertised on event flyers. There were a number of individuals who traveled the powwow network setting up elaborately staged living history structures and providing “tours” and demonstrations at regular intervals. Many powwows offered discounts to the organizers of such set-ups.

As part of their educational and preservation goals, many organizations required participants to learn a craft or skill that they would then teach to other members or during public
demonstrations. Dancing, reenacting—especially in regalia or costume—and the practice of a traditional craft was often articulated as “keeping alive” past ancestors. A ceremony during a powwow hosted at a large rendezvous in Florida illustrated this idea. After an honor song memorializing a recently passed reenactor who practiced flint-knapping, there was a small ceremony for the reenactor’s son, who was going to begin to learn the flint-knapping craft. During the ceremony, the emcee announced that one way to keep passed loved ones present is to learn and pass on their crafts and skills. He claimed that those loved ones never die if honored in such a way. At a memorial held at a battle reenactment, I also heard similar statements made about reenactment regalia or costumes. To put on a reenactment costume and to reenact, particularly using passed-down accessories, was to commune with one’s ancestors.

**Acquiring Knowledge**

Participants often justified their superiority over other organizations in the community through a claim of greater knowledge about Indians and the Old-Ways. Their authority was based on having “done the research.” Those pointed to as the “real deal” Indians were often perceived as also the most knowledgeable of Indianness. They were often described as people who “know their stuff” and were turned to during disputes about procedure.

Interestingly, I found that many of the salient, knowledgeable individuals that I was able to get close to (an admittedly few), actually claimed to have acquired their knowledge through distant Indian teachers who were either no longer living or did not live in the region. A few of these individuals did not even claim to have acquired their knowledge through Indians, but through institutions like Boy Scouts, or acknowledged that they did not actually have the knowledge other people thought they did.

Participants appeared to acquire information for their educational programs primarily from one-another and popular sources. As already described, many organizations expected members
to present research or craft demonstrations on a somewhat regular basis. Many gathered
information from movies, television, hobbyist magazines, historical fiction novels, craft catalogs,
and their own organizations’ past publications, such as newsletters. The few newsletters I was
able to acquire included general information about the organizations’ recent activities, but also
craft “how-to” sections, Indian lore, and even opinion pieces about identity, religion, and
tradition. A few participants in the regional community have self-published books, often sold at
powwows and rendezvous, which other participants utilized. Many also gathered information
from displays at public museums and memorials. The internet was an especially important
resource. For example, at one NA-ICO’s meeting, members brought printed pages from websites
to share with others and prepare for an upcoming educational program. Interestingly, I should
note that at one reenactment, participants described Germany and Japan as some of the best
places to get information about Indians. As I will note in the next chapter, many vendors and
craftsmen also described Germans and Japanese as important consumer groups.

During fieldwork, I did try to catalog specific books that different participants claimed
would be especially informative and that I regularly found for sale in vendors’ booths. In
reenactment, many participants turned to Smoke & Fire News (2007), a national living-history
and historical reenactment newspaper published monthly in Ohio. The newspaper included
recipes, pictures, editorials, cartoons, informative articles, and advertisements. The newspaper
also included updated national calendars for 14 separate reenactment types, in themes ranging
from “early American,” to “ancient/medieval/renaissance,” “Scottish,” “French and Indian,”
“Native American,” “‘Late 19th/20th Century,” “Old-West,” and even workshops and lectures.

Muzzleloader (2007) and The Backwoodsmen (2007) were other important periodicals that
many reenactors used. Both of these magazines offered editorials, advertisements, how-to’s,
informative articles, and short historical fiction. Participants also directed me to Muzzleloader magazine’s *The Book of Buckskinning* (Scurlock 1981)—a series of informative how-to books dedicated to historical reenactment of the Fur-Trade era. Finally, many Florida based reenactors also referenced using the *Florida Frontier Gazette* (2006), a magazine published by Historic Florida Militia, Inc.

Historical fiction was also a popular source of information for reenactment. One of the most popular fiction authors was Allan Eckert, who primarily published historical romance novels set during early American frontier history. Eckert, a Pulitzer Prize nominee and published author since the 1960’s, worked in the tradition of James Fennimore Cooper. In the “Author’s Note” to his *biography* of Tecumseh, *A Sorrow in Our Heart* (1992), Eckert explained:

> It is, therefore, my purpose in this book to meld in a continuous chronological flow the details of childhood and family life—the warmth and humor, the pleasures and games, the love and sadnesses of everyday living—with the pervasive aspects of tribal culture and the irresistible press of outside events. This is a biography, true, but it is more than merely that; it is what I choose to call *narrative biography*, in which the reader may, as with a good novel, feel himself drawn into the current events and be able to identify closely with the characters. It is designed to be a book that utilizes all the better elements of the novel form… yet at the same time remains reliable as an accurate depiction of the history it embraces. [Eckert 1992:xiii-xiv]

In the author’s note, Eckert explained that although the narrative biography would contain more dialogue than is typically associated with historical works, the dialogue was not invented but was “reconstituted” from the historical materials that he used (1992:xiv). The narrative biography, *A Sorrow in Our Heart* (1992), contains a highly detailed index and large bibliography—indeed, making it appear authoritative.

With the little bit of research I conducted among primitivist event participants, the *Wilderness Way* (2005) magazine appeared to be especially popular. As for historical fiction, Jean M. Auel’s 1980 fictive novel *The Clan of the Cave Bear* (1980) was popular. As I already
mentioned in a previous chapter, at least among the networks I worked with, Tom Brown, Jr’s works were especially influential.

Unlike reenactment and primitivism, there appeared to be less institutionalization of the knowledge powwow participants adhered to. The following books were referenced by various powwow participants during interviews or in statements I heard during participant observation, as important reading for someone wanting to know more about Indians: Jack Weatherford’s *Indian Givers* (1988) and *Native Roots* (1991), A.C. Ross’s *Mitakue Oyasin: We are all Related* (1989), Ted Andrews’ *Animal Speak* (1993), works by James Mooney, Peter Matthiessen’s *In the Spirit of Crazy Horse* (1983), and Dee Brown’s *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* (1970). Of course, *Black Elk Speaks* (Neihardt 2000) was consistently referenced as important reading material, particularly as a starting point for beginners to the Indian-Way. Many participants also acknowledged reading or knowing about works of Vine Deloria, Jr. The hobbyist magazine *Whispering Wind* (2007) was widely sold at events and I witnessed one NA-ICO’s leadership regularly direct members to the magazine for research.

Powwows also provided important venues for participants to acquire new research materials. Numerous vendors sold books, magazines, and pamphlets ranging from craft how-to books, new age or neopagan materials, used textbooks and encyclopedias, historical fiction, and romance novels. In addition to the books referenced in the previous paragraph, among vendors’ items I found a variety of works, from various editions of classics such as Seton’s *The Gospel of the Red Man* (1963) and Eastmans’ *The Soul of the Indian* (1980), as well as more contemporary works like Ed McGaa’s *Rainbow Tribe* (1992) and Vine Deloria Jr’s *God is Red* (1994).

Although many of these publications have been regularly associated with New Age and neopaganism, it should be noted that I rarely witnessed overt, self-acknowledged, public
expressions of New Age or neopaganism among the regional powwow networks. New Age or neopaganism was more prevalent in primitivism and reenactment. Within networks primarily organized through powwowing, participants often criticized New Age and neopaganism as wannabeism. I even heard rumors of some NA-ICOs prohibiting symbols that they associated with such wannabeism, such as sleeveless powwow regalia for women, nudity, or Starhawk’s book *The Spiral Dance* (1979).

Regardless of this prejudice and prohibition, however, books and activities regularly associated with New Age and neopagan traditions of Native American Spirituality were present in powwowing networks. Occasionally, I found tarot cards or astrological interpretation for sale by vendors. Many vendors offered crystals and herbal remedies for healing. In addition, some participants did adhere to a belief that a global catastrophe will occur in the year 2012, with the end of the Mayan calendar. However, I do not know if many participants were directly influenced by reading Jose Arguelles’ *The Mayan Factor* (1987). Arguelles’ works and ideas where important in the 1980’s Harmonic Convergence gatherings associated with New Age and neopaganism (Jenkins 2004:216; Pike 2004:35). I did not find *The Mayan Factor* (1987) or *The Spiral Dance* (1979) openly sold at events. However, Ross claimed that he presented the foundations for his book *Mitakuye Oyasin*, which blends Jungian psychology with Lakota cosmology, at a conference held during the Harmonic Convergence in 1987 (1989:i). As noted, *Mitakuye Oyasin*, was popularly sold at regional powwows and an important book used by some participants (1989). The phrase “mitakuye oyasin” was regularly used by powwow participants to mean “we are all related” or “all our relations,” but this phrase and concept is widely present in popular culture, beyond Ross’s book.
The Indian Way

So what is this lived moral state of being Indian—the Old-Way, Red Path, or Indian-Way—that participants in this regional network claimed to share or share a desire to learn more about? The Old-Way was rarely articulated with specific and dogmatic behavior requirements, but was instead, often defined through negation—by what was not the Old-Way. Participants consistently defined the Old-Way by contrasting it with modern and western dominant societal norms and religions. The Old-Way was not the “European Way,” “White Way,” or “Christian Way.” The Old-Way was often described as a state of the heart, of the being, and something that must be “lived”—a religious path that only “true Indians” follow, but a path not limited to Indians.

The path’s aspect of being lived was usually its ascribed distinction from other world religions, especially Christianity, which was often described as too exclusionary and doctrinally based. Standing Bear described religion as often the most controversial issue within the Deer Clan, particularly when revolving around disagreements over the compatibility between Christianity and “Native American Religion” (1994:312). Fitzgerald (2007) also described this kind of contrast among reclaimers.

Interestingly, however, although participants often distanced their beliefs from Christianity, members of many organizations were quick to point out that some of their members still went to Christian churches. The Old-Ways were often described as universal to all religions, including Christianity, and many participants expressed beliefs that the god that they worshiped—often called the Creator, Great Spirit, Grandfather, or Father—was the same as all other gods in all other religions. Amanda Porterfield made an important point that proponents and spokespersons of Native American Spirituality often appealed to Christian ideals as a means to discredit American culture and celebrate Indianness (1990:155).
As I noted earlier in this chapter, many participants described coming from Christian backgrounds prior to their conversion to the Indian-Ways. I believe that this background was reflected in many participants’ use of analogy in their explanations of rituals or religious symbols associated with Indians. For example, organizations typically included a communal meal at meetings. Prior to this meal there was a short ritual, the details of which varied by group, in which a small morsel from each dish was collected onto one plate and placed at a distance from the site. A prayer was made to four, five, or seven directions, and the food was left to “Mother Earth” or “The Creator.” In trying to explain this ritual to newcomers, I once heard it described as like the “Lord’s Supper.” In another example, many participants wear “medicine bags” around their necks, which I heard analogized with cross pendant necklaces or St. Christopher medals. Also, many participants made prayers to the Creator through a personal mediator animal—which they often call a “totem”—and other animals generally deemed more spiritual, such as eagles and wolves. I have heard participants associate this totem practice with making a prayer to a patron saint in Catholicism.

So still, what are the Old-Ways? When I asked this question, I usually received somewhat vague answers. For instance, a group’s spiritual leader said that generosity, kindness, respect, peace, and love were some of the “rules” to following the Red Road (interview with author, March 18, 2006). However, most consistently, the Old-Way was described as living in harmony, typically with one’s enemies and with nature. Many described the rule of “do unto others as you would have them do unto you” as the most important Indian ethic.

In educational demonstrations, Native Americans were presented as having maintained a perfect, or nearly perfect, harmonic balance with the environment. For example, at a large public powwow in Central Florida, during an introduction to the popularly sung “Colors of the Wind”
from Disney’s film Pocahontas, the singer stated that “our ancestors” were so balanced with nature that they were never wiped out by natural disasters like floods or hurricanes.

Part of this popularly attributed “harmony ethic” is the belief that Indians were highly respectful of nature and “never wasted.” In educational programs, demonstrators often highlighted the multiple uses a person could get out of a single natural object. In an interview with a woman who organized educational demonstrations with hybrid wolf-dogs at powwows, the interviewee described wolves as being just as in balance with nature as Native Americans. In one of her examples, she argued that just like wolves, Native American elderly leave to die in the wilderness, not burdening the population (interview with author, March 4, 2006).

Another interviewee, also an animal demonstrator, gave an example that while hunting deer, Native Americans prayed to their prey and thanked them for their sacrifice so that humans could eat (interview with author, March 4, 2006). The same interviewee also told me that a “true native person” picks up trash (interview with author, March 4, 2006). Interestingly, late one dark night at a large Central Florida powwow, I was recruited to help look for a lost silver earring, which the owner believed could be “anywhere” on the grounds. Searching, I picked up a small piece of paper reflecting the light of my flashlight. Upon realizing it was nothing more than paper, I tossed it in a nearby wastebasket. A leader of the host organization happened to be close by. When he saw me throw away the trash he exclaimed: “people just don’t treat Mother Earth like we Indians do.”

Of course, some participants recognized that there was some stereotyping involved in the harmony ethic—stereotyping which could lead to ecological mistakes. In order to illustrate this point, one NA-ICO’s spiritual leader regularly told a story about an Indian chief trying to forecast the weather. Interestingly, I saw this same story—“Indian Winter Forecast”—forwarded
on the Anthropology and the Environment mailing list (Kenneth Goodman, e-mail to EANTH mailing list, October 30, 2007).

In summary, the story follows. Late one fall, a newly elected Chief on a remote tribal reservation, was asked by his tribe members what to expect of the coming winter. Being in “modern” society and thus not having been taught the old secrets of weather forecasting, to be on the safe side the chief warned the members of a cold winter and told them to collect plenty of firewood. With the guilt of not being certain about the forecast weighing on his conscious, he called the National Weather Service who indeed told him that it looked as though it would be a very cold winter. So the chief went back to the tribe and suggested they collect even more firewood. A few weeks later, and still with weight of uncertainty, the chief called the National Weather Service again, this time being told that the winter looked like it would be even colder than was initially expected. The chief asked the meteorologist how he knew this. The meteorologist responded: “because the Indians are collecting firewood like crazy!”

Many participants did claim to try to live a life that was less harmful to the earth. One means by which participants attempted to be more in balance with nature, was to creatively utilize natural objects that otherwise would be wasted. For instance, I met many participants who picked up intact carcasses from the road to utilize for educational and ceremonial programs. Some of the most creative means of “reuse” were in the form of consumer objects sold at powwows. One popular vendor took unused remains thrown out by a local butcher to create tools, hairpieces, or toys. One of her more prized crafts were bowls made out of bull testicles. Another vendor proudly sold puppets made of dried raccoon penises and another man used a walking stick made of a dried horse’s penis.
The harmony ethic extended beyond interaction with nature, and was also part of participants’ views of how Indians engaged enemies. For instance, at a timeline reenactment, a demonstrator described to tourists how Indians never participated in war as the aggressor. She described Indians as never having had wars where people were killed but that warriors received honors by touching their opponents, or “taking coup.” Of course, this idea is not new in western descriptions of Native Americans. Charles Eastman (1974:46) described native warfare as sportsmanlike competition, more like college football.

In the regional community, participants did have a practice of “taking coup.” This was a non-violent means of publically retaliating against someone for a perceived mistreatment or bad deed. I only witnessed one coup during my fieldwork. A local, well-respected powwow vendor was “coupled” by another man who was accusing the vendor of being a thief. Early one morning at a powwow, the vendor was organizing his tent and visiting with a group of friends, when suddenly two men—who I had noticed milling about in a secretive fashion a few minutes before, but across the grounds—approached the vendor. The vendor greeted the two men cheerfully, then one of the men suddenly tapped the vendor on the shoulder with a “coup-stick.” The small group of friends who had been visiting the vendor immediately dispersed and the man who committed the coup quickly walked away. The second man stayed behind to explain to the vendor what he was being accused of. As it turned out, the vendor had not stolen anything, but had misunderstood a deadline for a commissioned craft. The two resolved their dispute under the oversight of the powwow’s oldest participant—a well respected and highly salient “grandfather” in the regional powwowing network who is believed to be an Indian from the Northwest Coast and who gives lectures about Indian culture to local organizations.
In addition to a harmony ethic, many participants circulated “Codes of Indian Ethics and Etiquette” and “The Indian 10 Commandments.” Although I did not hear participants describe them as specific to the Old-Way, these anonymously authored codes and commandments—reminiscent of Red Men, pan-Indian fraternal organizations, and scouting literature of the early Twentieth century—offered prescriptions for being Indian. Many powwow programs included copies of these codes, and I found codes visually reproduced on some vendors’ crafts. Some vendors sold such lists on simple computer printed pages. I once witnessed the codes read during an after-hours memorial service and stomp-dance at a battle reenactment.

Although, among those versions I found in the field the codes varied from publication to publication, they maintained similar directives, typically commanding loyalty, self-sacrifice, mindfulness, generosity, and protection of children, elders, and the sick. Different versions of codes were often published in powwow programs or organization pamphlets. I have chosen not to cite specific examples because to do so would reveal the publication sources and potentially threaten the anonymity of informants’ identities. Some versions had a more environmentally aware tone, including requirements to care for Mother Earth and not take more than is needed. Other versions would encourage prayer to the Great Spirit or social tolerance for people who have lost their spiritual way. In addition to these codes, vendors and participants also utilized quotes or teachings that they attributed to famous historical figures such as Tecumseh and Chief Seattle.

Examples of lists of Indian codes and commandments can be widely found, especially on the internet. One interviewee described the work of Phil Lane as an important resource for people interested in Native Americans, particularly native spirituality (interview with author, June 3, 2006). Phil Lane contributed to *The Sacred Tree* (1984), which published a “code of


ethics” that the authors claimed were teachings “universal to all tribes” (Bopp, et al. 1984:74).
Although more detailed, many of the codes published in The Sacred Tree (1984) are quite similar to those I found produced by different groups in the regional network.

Popular stereotypes about Native Americans made at the turn of the century, and exemplified in the writings of Charles Eastman, Ernest Thompson Seton, and Arthur Parker, were reflected in the Indian codes and commandments. Interestingly, Hertzberg (1971:225) noted that as the Teepee Order moved away from associating itself with IORM and focused more on Indian Freemasonry, it also began regular publication of “Indian Ten Commandments” in its magazine. Many of these codes also reflect the “self-spirituality” attributed to the New Age (Heelas 1996).

Through Indian Education, Indian codes and commandments, organization recruitment, and descriptions of Indian identity and community, the meaning of Indianness gains some boundaries. However, these boundaries were not widely agreed upon. They were, most broadly, an idealization of Indians and lifeways attributed to Indians. However, what is clearest is that authenticity of Indianness rests on relative, perhaps arbitrary, interpretation of a lived morality, perceived as persecuted and distinct from contemporary dominant society’s institutions and identities. Perhaps ironic though, while these traits depict an Indianness, they are Western ideals and constructions, romanticized versions of humanity and of a Golden Age. Further, such an inclusive identity—based on lived morality—further marginalizes Native Americans who, unless they meet certain stereotypes, are depicted as the “Other” or even as part of the dominant societal population which is to be opposed.

Being a community composed of outsiders to legitimated Indian groups, participants in the Central Florida Indian community do not have much access to knowledge constructed in dense
networks of people or institutions in which knowledge is or has been transferred through modes of communication legitimated through reciprocal social acknowledgment of shared identity. As this chapter has described, in order to construct their own versions of Indianness, regional participants instead drew from sources in popular culture—sources that were not legitimated through institutions that gave Native Americans power, but, instead, were dependent on consumerism and popular interest in Indians. As chapter 4 described, there is a long American tradition of stereotyping Native Americans as ideal crafters, spiritualists, and peaceful-warriors who are in harmony with nature.

**Wannabes or Wannaknows**

It cannot be stressed enough that, at least for those individuals whom I worked with, participants genuinely believed that they were authentically Indians or non-Indians who possessed Indianness and were insiders to a broader Indian community. Although I met a small number of individuals who did appear to utilize conscious deception of their identity for self-interest, as compared to many charges in literature on the issue of wannabes and hobbyists, I believe that the majority of participants are not hucksters and charlatans. This community—a network of organizations and events at which people with similar interests congregate and organize—is conceived of as authentically Indian by its participants. However, participants’ concepts of Indianness and Indian identity are not always shared by outsiders, making them easy targets for accusations of charlatanism.

One informant, Jack (pseudonym), addressed these charges of charlatanism in an enlightening way. Jack claimed membership in a federally recognized tribe and after years working as an emcee at local powwows, he became frustrated and quit the network. Jack argued that with so many people seeking something to fill a spiritual and moral void in their lives, there was a growing market for information about Indians (interview with author, August 26, 2006).
He preferred to call seekers of this information “wanna-knows.” He argued that only after wanna-knows entered the market, where there was so much fraudulent information about Indians and people claiming to show the way to Indianness, did they then become “wannabes” (interview with author, August 26, 2006).

Based on field experience, I tend to agree with Jack’s distinctions between wanna-knows and wannabes. The regional community or network is structured around events and organizations that attract people seeking something related to Indians—whether that something is the personal acquisition of some form of Indianness or a the fulfillment of a simple curiosity for the exotic Other. However, perhaps, as Jack believed, these seekers do not want to be Indian until only after they have entered the market for Indianness and become exposed to the ethnogenic ideologies that proliferated among the marketplace’s associated groups and professionals.

Jack’s emphasis on the importance of seekers as wanna-knows points to a key element in the Colin Campbell’s (2002) concept the “cultic milieu”—a society’s deviant belief systems, practices, and institutions. Campbell (2002:23) pointed to an overlapping communication structure (i.e. magazines, advertisements, lectures) and a common ideology of seekership and seekership institutions in the cultic milieu. Campbell described three primary categories of “seekers” (2002). The first category is important to maintaining a cultic movement or organization through general loyalty in the quest for “the truth” and the second supports it through attendance at lectures, demonstrations, and answering advertisements (Campbell 2002:19). Participants in the third category support the movement by passive consumption of products tied to that culture, such as magazines or the services of professional practitioners (2002:19). Campbell argued that it is “this substantial commercial substructure which is one of the principle reasons why the cultic milieu continues to survive” (2002:19).
Certainly, as described in this and the previous chapter, there is a far-reaching and diverse network of people bound by a shared interests in Indians and Indianness. Such interested people primarily organize and interact through a substructure organized to attract consumers of Indianness. Participants produce educational programs that provide consumption of knowledge about Indians. NA-ICOs and their leaders offer knowledge on how to be or become Indian. Events offer the consumption of things or experiences deemed Indian. Events and organizations also offer means of achieving Indian identity, either by finding that one-drop of Indian blood or having that one-drop legitimated as authentically Indian.

If there were to be an existing category to which I would situate the Southeastern Indian Polybian movement, it would be in the cultic milieu, rather than the New Age or neopaganism, even hobbyism or native reclamation. Participants in the regional community come to it from diverse ideological and socio-economic backgrounds, as well as diverse types of communities where traits associated with Indianness are idealized. The commercial substructure provides a means of interaction between these diverse groups.

However, as compared to other niches in the cultic milieu’s commercial substructure, the market for things Indian is subject to regulation that empowers only a certain class of competitors in the market. As I will argue in the following chapter, although from diverse backgrounds, competition in this marketplace accentuates the divide between classes of Indians, and has enabled the emergence of class consciousness that is ethnogenic.
Figure 7-1: Children’s educational set-up at a powwow
CHAPTER 8
COMPETITION, PROFITS, AND DISENCHANTING THE POWWOW

As already described, self-labeled Indian groups and powwows have proliferated in Central Florida over the past few decades. With such growth, there has been intense competition between all levels of powwow production, between host organizations, between entertainers, and between vendors. In addition, global trade affecting profitability, federal regulations controlling the “Indian-Made” label, as well as increases in the number of both powwow hosts and consumers have all partly incited these changes.

Many participants, both non-Indian and Indian, were quick to point out that this growth and competition has led to the demise of the moral economy in Florida’s powwow network, and has exposed economic interests behind a traditionally perceived communal event—in effect, disenchanting the powwow. Participants, especially those who have been powwowing in Florida for many years, often described three traditional purposes to a powwow: to teach the general public about Indians, to have fellowship together (“community”), and to sell crafts. These three purposes were perceived to have been traditionally more balanced, however, during fieldwork I repeatedly encountered participants who expressed frustration that the within recent years, the purposes of education and fellowship had been pushed aside by a new, stronger, and unnecessary emphasis on “selling.” This change had led to greater promotion of spectacle in the powwow production, rather than community and fellowship. The public consumer was now the primary target, rather than the community insiders.

This change appeared to frustrate many participants and was a common topic of conversation at events. Not only did many interviewees, in open-ended interviews, move toward expression of this frustration, but also I often heard such frustrations expressed by general participants as I moved around vendors’ booths or watched entertainment. Even the simple act of
introducing my research and myself seemed to catalyze participants to point out that today’s powwows are “different,” particularly in Florida. Both insiders and outsiders to the Florida network often claimed that a “carny,” “dog-and-pony,” or “flea-market” powwow-type was now dominant in Central Florida, and was spreading throughout the American Southeast. As I will argue in this chapter, I believe that competition over the exchangeable value of the symbolic capital of Indian identity is at the heart of this change.

Public powwows are a particularly useful tool for groups who lack formal legitimization, to subvert dominant definitions of Indian identity. I believe that this is why the event has been proliferating, particularly in the Southeast. As Paredes (1995) noted, for groups that identify themselves as Indian in the Southeast but do not have institutional legitimacy, powwows are powerful because they ritually distinguish insiders from outsiders—Indians being insiders and outsiders being the general public—and provide an important revenue source to the insiders. However, as I will describe in this chapter, balancing these two interests—group distinction and economic profit—is difficult, particularly given global shifts in modes of production and changes in means of consumption.

**Competition and Powwow Production**

Without more institutionalized forms of legitimization, and facing regular threats to their Indianness, local self-proclaimed Indian or pan-Indian organizations are heavily dependent on commercial powwows. In addition to providing an opportunity to commune together and strengthen social bonds, powwows are powerful because organizations gain direct access to the public. Access to the public appeared to be the primary means of legitimization, economic income, and social reproduction through recruitment. This makes organizations not only highly dependent on the commercial powwow, but also on the public’s valuation of the symbolic capital of Indianness.
Powwows were the primary means of accessing capital because they attract the public, provide saliency, and reinforce group identity. Indeed, during participant observation, I often heard participants lament that many organizations dissolved if they were unable to produce a powwow or at least play important infrastructure roles for more than a few years. Instead, the lack of powwow production appeared to put pressure on organizations, which could lead to fissioning or membership loss. Even during the short window in which I conducted fieldwork, every year there were a few new upstart organizations, replacing those most recently dissolved, and creating new competition for older organizations.

Many powwow organizers and hosts openly acknowledged that without the public there could be no powwow, because the public would not come without “Indian” entertainment (drum, dancers, and “celebrities”)—the spectacle—and vendors would not come without the public—the source of economic capital. For host organizations, the exchange of capitals could not occur without vendors and the public. Host organizations gained money directly from the public by charging admittance fees, requesting donations, selling merchandized products, and offering raffles and auctions. Hosts also gained money by charging vendors “set-up” fees and requiring a donation from each vendor’s craft selection for the raffles and auctions. The cost of powwows appeared to be primarily in the hiring of entertainers, merchandising, and the production of the event itself.

Many Central Florida host organizations competed aggressively with one another for access to the public and vendors, which meant they had to accommodate the economic demands of entertainers, who were also highly commodified products themselves. Many organizations hired consultants who traveled the powwow network and had special legal or economic
connections or skills that facilitated the production of events. I knew of at least three regionally based participants that often provided their services as consultants.

According to participants, Florida’s powwow network was a wintering ground for vendors and entertainers (both non-Indian and Indian, self-proclaimed or “legal”) from other regions in the United States (especially the Northeast), Mexico, and Canada. Many vendors sold items in other networks of event-types, such as historical reenactments, neo-pagan or new age festivals, and motorcycle rallies. Florida’s climate provided comfortable weather for outdoor events, such as powwows, between October and April, however, high humidity and temperatures could cause May through September to be uncomfortable and even dangerous. This pattern was the opposite for other regions in the United States. While most vendors began trickling into Central Florida in October and leaving in late April, a recent growth in Central Florida powwowing allowed for a growth in vendors who could stay year round, eliminating the December “break,” when, just a few years ago, there were no powwows.

Vendors from out of state often described their winter participation in Florida as being necessary for economic survival until the next powwow season in their home regional network, which was usually in the warmer months of the summer. Many vendors appeared to attend powwows in Florida, not to participate in an instituted moral economy perhaps present in their home networks, but in a competitive capitalist economic niche-market, in which Indianness was the commodity. Heavily critical of Central Florida powwows, many were not shy in expressing prejudice against Florida powwows, even to potential customers—some even claiming no desire to be part of the powwow other than to sell their products. Under these circumstances, the powwow, as social ritual, was a means unto an end, rather than an end itself.
To produce a powwow costs a great deal of human and economic capital. Organizations could reduce costs if they had members who were also entertainers or had access to reduced prices of goods and labor that were important to the infrastructure of the powwow production. For instance, costs could be reduced if a member with special connections could get portable toilets at discounted rates or an offer by a local scouting troop to direct parking lot traffic for badges or service. Increasing overhead cost has led host organizations to expand the number of fees they charge for products or services at the powwow. One of the most controversial has been a rise in the number of powwows that charged a “camping fee,” or have raised the price of electricity to those camping in recreational vehicles.

While most Central Florida powwows are commercial, participants often dichotomized regional powwows into two incompatible types: “family” or “traditional” verses “show” or “entertainment.” Of course, family/traditional was associated with greater authenticity, while show/entertainment was associated with inauthenticity and profit motivation. This dichotomy does not correlate with the traditional verses competition differentiation used elsewhere to refer to powwows in the United States.

Although most of the events I attended were described as “family” or “traditional” by their hosts, advertisements, and more publicly visible participants, behind the scenes of many powwows that I attended, participants commonly complained that the hosts and salient participants were too interested in profits. For instance, one year a decades old NAI-CO installed a portable ATM at its isolated powwow grounds in Central Florida. The ATM flag was the highest-flying flag at the event, which infuriated many participants. During announcements, the emcee claimed that the powwow was a traditional family powwow, to which the audience replied with an audible grumble. Interestingly, some participants explained their participation
attendance at more controversially commercial powwows, like the one described above, as a means to acquire goods and crafts they could not find at other regional events.

Lacking “the spirit” was commonly ascribed to events perceived to be too profit oriented, these events had too much “politics.” Many pointed to the feeling of “the spirit,” felt in your gut, heart, or by chills, as a sign that a powwow was real and not just about money. Ironically, however, it was access to the public, consumers, which drove the structure of the Central Florida powwow network, not community. Dates and locations of events were chosen based on geographic and temporal variables related to the public’s powwow attendance. Based on statements made by many participants, it appeared that an ideal powwow date and location was one that had no other powwow co-occurring or recently occurring within reasonable driving distance, was not remote, and, most ideally, co-occurred with another public draw such as a flea-market or fair.

In fact, host organizations, through variables of geography and time, aggressively competed against one another for public consumers. There was a great deal of fissioning within Central Florida’s NA-ICOs, usually as a result of conflict between an instituted group leader and an upstart leader or recent convert who claimed greater authenticity and knowledge of how to be a real Indian. Often, fissioned groups would directly damage each other’s ability to grow their symbolic capital by undermining their competition’s authenticity of identity to the public, and by directly competing with them for access to the public through powwow production.

According to participants, powwow organizers often refused the admittance or advertisement of competitor organizations on the grounds if they were displaying their organization name, recruiting, or advertising events. I never witnessed such prohibition directly, although I did witness competitor groups recruiting or advertising through subversive means
nonetheless. For instance, far from the attention of security officials, a drum group that was prohibited from openly attending one powwow quietly passed out flyers promoting their own upcoming powwow. At another powwow, a vendor passed out flyers for a powwow whose advertisements were supposedly prohibited. All of this internal competition and power struggle was simply called “politics” by regular participants, and was often analogized to school-yard clique behavior. Politics was also associated with insincerity and lack of real community; too much politics occurred at powwows lacking the spirit. A few powwow flyers that I collected stated a prohibition of politics.

This competition went beyond prohibition of advertisements, particularly among host-vendor relationships. Hosts often provided lower registration costs or better booth locations to vendors who were also group members, could provide some other service, or who were associated with their allies and interests. Many organizations allied with certain clusters of vendors.

Some of the greatest host-vendor controversies were over changes in the booth location at events. Many vendors worked years to prove loyalty to host organizations. Through continued attendance, vendors could eventually acquire a prime booth location. However, when power changed hands in a host organization, so did the structure of the powwow. This also changed vendors’ relationships with hosts, sometimes resulting in different booth locations than were expected or that had been worked for through loyal participation.

Public holidays, especially those associated with extended weekends, were highly prized, as they could attract the most consumers. At the time of my fieldwork, there were only a few host organizations that maintained dominance over specific weekends and locations, and each of those were facing upstart competition threatening their control. Often it was competition over
highly prized weekends or locations that created the most controversy within the powwowing community.

In one example, after an organization fissioned into two separate groups following the death of its founder, the two new groups agreed to alternate hosting a powwow on the same grounds on the same holiday weekend every year. The grounds were in a highly accessible location near major highways and in a popular county park that hosted numerous festivals, including rendezvous and other Indian themed events, throughout the year. The park even had an adjacent reenactment village. The weekend was so institutionalized in the regional Indian community that participants typically called the powwow by the name of the holiday rather than the actual event label or host. The two separate hosts’ powwows were starkly different from one another. They were structured differently, had quite different forms of entertainment, and had different types of fees. In addition, different vendors attended depending on their loyalties to which group was hosting each year.

There is one especially infamous controversy that continued between three organizations, and which provides a particularly clear example of how competitive the regional network is. Prior to my fieldwork, all three groups had been part of one decades-old organization that appear to have evolved out of the organizers of a historical reenactment festival that itself evolved into a powwow. That powwow was quite important in the regional powwow network and dominated a popular holiday weekend.

I could not find someone to openly and officially interview in order to acquire a full and clear narrative, thus this example is based on conversations I was present for during participant observation, pieces told to me during official interviews, and organizations’ histories published online. It appeared that within the past decade the original founder and owner of the powwow
grounds died. The land was then sold to a man who intended to keep the powwow running, but to staff it with hired Indians from out of state. The organization quickly fissioned into three separate groups. One group maintained the original name and two new organizations emerged. The two new organizations also claimed rights to the original powwow grounds and holiday weekend. Without the ability to access the grounds, the two upstarts produced their own powwows on the same holiday weekend, at locations within easy driving distance of the original grounds and each other. Each group, and their allied organizations, accused each other of being “wannabes,” to devalue the others’ powwows’ authenticity. Paradoxically, I have witnessed the organization that retained the original namesake and grounds be accused by different participants in Central Florida’s powwowing community of being both a “bunch of wannabes” and at the same time having too many assumedly legally defined Indians involved in the powwow production.

Interestingly, as already described, such paradox—a simultaneous prejudice and idealization of Indians within one community—was common behind the scenes in the Central Florida powwowing community, perhaps exposing the reactionary and defensive aspects of participants’ subversive self-identification. I believe that these paradoxes were most evidently seen among issues of economic incentive or consumption. Participants in Central Florida powwowing commonly depicted being truly Indian as rejecting material value and money capital, being charitable, and egalitarian—Noble Savage ideals. For many participants, those who were least like true Indians were people who did not uphold these economic values. Legally defined American Indians are often at the top of this list.

For many participants, these prejudices were reinforced through the on-site conflict between regular participants and hired Indians at powwows. Of course, these hired Indians, who were the face of many regional powwows, usually appeared Indian, both in phenotypical
situations and legally. This often contrasted sharply with regular polybian insiders who invested in production of the event. Further, these hired Indians often traveled in kin-based groups, providing a diversity of entertainment services to powwows, but tended to be quite insular, rarely participating in “after-hours” social activities, and rarely dressing in clothes that many local insiders felt were required for proper and respectful powwow attendance (such as moccasins). Hired to play important directorial roles in powwows, these hired Indians also tended to follow much tighter adherence to event schedules than members of the local powwowing community, leaving little room for socialization and impromptu ritual. Often leaders of host organizations complained that they sometimes had a difficult time finding Indians to participate as entertainers or head-staff, because their fees were so costly.

**American-Made or Indian-Made**

The issue over value of authentic Indianness often led to considerable competition, not only between powwows, but even within powwows in the regional networks. Vendors often compromised other competitors’ products or profitability. An extreme example was sending young children, posed as shoppers, to spy on others’ prices and new products—an act I occasionally witnessed while strolling powwow grounds. More commonly, however, vendors undermined their competitors’ symbolic capital by openly complaining about the inauthenticity of other vendors’ products to consumers. I never witnessed such complaints directed at a specific vendor, but more generally toward “some Indians,” “some folks,” or “one of the vendors down that way” who sold similar items. The quality of craftsmanship was not the point of contestation; rather it was the identity of the producer or authenticity of the product that was threatened.

Many vendors complained that too many mass-produced, foreign made, Indian themed products, such as dream-catchers, beads, and flutes threatened the powwow vendors’ profits. For many critical of Florida powwows, “Kids’ tables,” and their proliferation throughout the regional
network, epitomized the problems caused by the influx of foreign-made, Indian themed goods. An example of a Kids table can be seen in figure 8-1. Kids Tables were often set out by vendors, in front of their booth as a way to offer cheaply priced toys and trinkets. Sometimes these items were associated with Indianness, such as plastic bow-and-arrow sets or tomahawks, and sometimes not, such as plastic balls, jewelry, and toy cars.

Often Kid’s tables were tolerated on Friday’s, which were considered “Kids’ Days” or “Education Days.” Although the general public was welcome, typically Kids’ Days offered incentivized admission prices and special activities for large groups of children, such as school, church, or scout groups. However, often if a vendor kept the kids’ table out or organized his or her shop so that a marked-down table was out front for the duration of the event, he or she risked being criticized by other vendors for selling inauthentic goods. Further, the presence of too many Kids’ Tables was often interpreted as a sign that an event, and thus its hosts, were too profit oriented. Interestingly, in my experience, in Central Florida it was more unusual to find vendors who do not have marked-down tables or who do not sell foreign made goods.

In addition to the influx of foreign goods, vendors often pointed to high transportation costs as the biggest threat to Florida’s powwow future. Many vendors complained that increasing fuel prices pressured them to sell ever-more-cheaply priced goods, just to cover transportation to events. Further, many participants believed that rising transportation costs (including insurance) was causing a decrease in the number of children showing up for Kid’s Days, leading some powwow hosts to eliminate the first day of the powwow all together.

As one vendor pointed out, he was ironically canablizing his own profits by selling cheaper, foreign-made goods in Florida. Selling such goods in his booth, while paying for gas and getting through the winter, was actually reducing the value of his crafts, his “real stuff”
(interview with author, April 22, 2006). He believed that cheaper goods and kids tables (as well as global warming) would eventually destroy the Florida powwow market. He described his home powwow network, in the Northeast, as being more sustainable because so many organizations have been strategically constructing strict contracts with vendors that prevent vendors from the South, especially from places like Florida and Cherokee, NC, from being able to easily set up (interview with author, April 22, 2006).

What this particularly illuminates is that it was likely not the inauthenticity of being “Indian-made” that typically threatened Central Florida vendors’ profits, but rather it was competition between participants and the cheaper labor and efficient production of similarly themed goods from overseas. To twist this image even further, I often witnessed non-Indian craftsmen and vendors joke about preferring to sell their products to foreigners—especially Germans and Japanese—because, according to participants, foreigners paid higher prices and did not care about origins, only theme. For many craftsmen and vendors, their sales were increasingly made on the internet, eliminating the need for the powwow all together.

Ironically, while non-Indian vendors’ Indian-themed craft production undermined the symbolic capital of “Indian-made” production, non-Indian vendors’ products themselves were threatened by yet another level of manipulation of the capital in Indian identity. Many crafters and vendors complained that legally-recognized Indians could buy foreign made product-kits, put the parts together, and label the product “Indian-made.” The profit was enhanced by adding symbolic capital to lower cost products. Many vendors who could not claim, and were unwilling to falsely claim that their products were “Indian-made,” would instead point to how their products were not “out of China.” Non-Indian vendors would criticize the “Indian-made” foreign products and emphasize the “American” identity of their own products. Indeed, toward the end
of my fieldwork period, a growing number of powwow hosts required vendors sell “American made” products only.

However, although American patriotism and nationalism were highly valued in Central Florida’s powwowing community, in such a competitive market, even emphasizing American symbolic identity did not completely overcome the economic incentives of selling foreign-made products. In order to capitalize on American symbolism, many vendors used creative semantic strategies to imbue the symbolic capital of “American-made” to the identity of their foreign made products. For instance, one interviewee admitted that when customers asked if his popular fringed leather jackets were “American,” one powwow vendor told them that he got the jackets “out of” an American state (interview with author, May 13, 2006). What he did not tell consumers was that while the wholesaler was based in the United States, the jackets were actually made in abroad. This interviewer claimed this was a common practice among vendors (interview with author, May 13, 2006). Just as the powwow was used as a place to perceptively imbue an Indian identity to products, vendors also semantically placed products’ origination in the United States to enhance their symbolic value.

As Hapiuk (2001) described, this same kind of manipulation of symbolic capital occurs for the claims of Indian-made also. In an extreme example provided by Hapiuk, an entrepreneur set up a jewelry manufacturing enterprise in a village in the Philippines and convinced the villagers to rename the village “Zuni.” This allowed the entrepreneur to legally claim that the Indian-style jewelry produced there was “made in Zuni”—suggesting origination in Zuni, New Mexico where a tribe by the same name is located (Hapiuk 2001:1044).

**Inversion of Authenticity**

I believe that changes in behavior and ritual between public-hours and after-hours activities at powwows are particularly illuminating of the power of identity in relation to consumption at
events. It is fascinating that after-hours at a powwow, participants appeared to considerably let down their guard about identity. Of course, this was also when most of the public had gone home, vendors had closed shop, and most hired Indians had departed to their own, separate camps. While most activities that occurred at powwows were during public hours—when consumption was highest—long-time insiders often prize the organized after-hours activities as most important to fulfilling their communal needs. However, many perceived these after-hours social activities as being more and more marginalized—especially as Florida powwows have evolved to focus more on consumers, on selling.

One of the most popular of these organized, after hours, activities was the Trade Blanket. The Trade Blanket—an opportunity to trade handicrafts, raw materials, and used goods—was viewed as distinct from and incompatible with the daytime’s profit oriented “selling” aspect of the powwow. Although highly structured, the Trade Blanket was especially social and light-hearted, full of pranks and “adult-themed” humor, and encouraged active participation from everyone present, including the audience.

As already described in chapter 6, there were many unique Trade Blanket traditions regularly upheld, such as using a cast-iron skillet as the first and opening trade, not putting two feet in the blanket at any given time, and asking the oldest person wearing one of the infamous and rare neon “Official Blanket Trader” hats to officiate. One of the most interesting Trade Blanket traditions, in relation to symbolic capital of Indian identity, was that a person, who puts an item on the blanket to trade, was expected to tell a story about that item’s origins. Stories were typically told for entertainment and were often outrageous.

Part of the art and entertainment of the trade blanket was the inversion of authentic identity. While many serious trades did occur on the trade blanket, many more trades were done
simply as jest and for fun. Origin stories inverted the threat of tenuous authenticity. For instance, many trade items’ origins, even animal pelts or intricate and time-consuming homemade crafts, were from “Walmartopia,” “Kmartopia,” and “Targetopia”—alluding to cathedrals of consumption that are popularly criticized in greater American society for selling cheaply produced, foreign-made goods. Sometimes trade items were intentional pranks, with an origin story that suggested “Indian-made” legitimacy yet, upon the trade was discovered to be completely inauthentic. For instance, trading for an “ancient pipe-carrier’s pipe” only to discover that the stem was made of plastic.

Pranks and outlandish origin stories directly undermined the seriousness with which people took their Indian identity and would be inappropriate during public hours. As already noted, one of the greatest cultural mistakes at a Central Florida powwow was to ask if a participant was an Indian. Strong warnings against this taboo were often publically announced by host organizations or emcees, and sometimes even published in event programs.

However, as this chapter has already pointed out, there appeared to be underlying economic interests influencing the structure of Central Florida’s powwow network and events. Such economic interests did not even escape the trade blanket, although to find such interests required deeper participation. While Trade Blanket traditions emphasized good humored socializing and community, and money was strictly prohibited in all Trade Blanket transactions, behind the scenes, economic value was once again reinstated. For instance, if a trade was a prank, the traded items’ values were expected to be “evened” after trading was through. More valuable items were bartered for after the trade blanket was complete or during what was called a “side-trade.” Often the trade blanket was used by vendors to display their newest crafts, yet they
took no trade offers. It was quite controversial for a vendor to sell whole crafts for which he or she traded on the blanket.

Many participants used the trade blanket as an opportunity to trade their own crafts for crafts that they did not have the skill to produce themselves, but could also not afford on the market. For instance, one informant was talented at creating dream-catchers, but could not produce a “peyote stitch” in beadwork projects, so he regularly produced extra dream-catchers to trade for the peyote stitch on trade blankets. He likened the trade blanket to passing on native traditions, particularly the traditions of never wasting and knowing the value of things without the need for money (interview with author, May 5, 2006). Similar arguments were made by participants about individual camp trade blankets at rendezvous.

As opposed to the powwow event itself, the economic interests behind the Trade Blanket did not disenchant the communal activity. Social identity was not required for valuation of the traded products and was controlled for through intentional inversion of the value of “authentic” origins.

Part of the power of identity is that it has no inherency or materiality, but is a construction dependent on a sliding scale of social agreement and action. The struggle for access to and control of symbols of association affects multiple levels of perception, human organization, and valuations of various forms of capital. Global trade dynamics, cheaper production costs, and national laws have all played an important role in influencing the relationship between economic and symbolic values of Indianness on local levels. Individuals and groups with interests in accessing these capitals must engage in a competition over the perception held by those holding the exchangeable capital. The value of Indian identity depends on the market and source of economic capital as to how the symbol will be valued in exchanges with other forms of capital.
While Indian Education is an important means of recruiting new members, gaining public saliency, and creating a social boundaries around Indianness, commercial powwows can create the same boundaries but can also level economic class boundaries of Indian identity. For those who compete for economic capitals tied to Indianness in Central Florida, their primary accessible marketplace for things Indian—the commercial powwow—is highly vulnerable to many pressures well beyond their direct influence. With the value of Indianness being influenced by public perception, these larger legal and economic pressures have influenced the regional powwow in such a way as to encourage spectacle. Unfortunately, for many long-time participants, as this chapter described, this rise in spectacle has disenchanted the powwow for them.

Figure 8-1: A vendor’s “kids table” at a North Carolina powwow.
CHAPTER 9
CONCLUSION

The United States federal government and a few state governments have given some power to some people to police boundaries of Native American identification. However, as the previous chapters described, continued controversy over Indian individual and group acknowledgment shows that in-group boundaries are multi-faceted and multi-layered. Competition to control those boundaries can easily extend beyond existing legal systems’ arenas.

As has been made clear in this dissertation, there are wide varieties of interests in achieving Indian identity as well as a wide variety of types of claims to Indianness. The most powerful means of achieving the most powerful form of Indian identity is through legally recognized tribal organization and membership. Over the previous decades, there have been more and more laws created to conserve the power of tribes and tribal membership. Some of these laws have helped to produce a two-tiered class system—people of legal Indian recognition and people without—in the market for things Indian.

In this chapter, I will summarize my major argument that competition between these classes has encouraged the construction of identities that subvert class boundaries and the construction of paradoxical ideologies that justify such subversive identities as being authentically Indian. My argument and fieldwork findings can be useful for further problematizing the issue of Indian identity and providing better understanding of how political and economic variables impact competition tied to Indian identity.

Although regulated nationally, the competition to control capitals associated with Indian identity influences regional cultural and organizational variability. Using a political-economic perspective, hypotheses can be proposed and tested to explain regional variation. Such
knowledge has important implications for Native American reclamation and acknowledgment policy.

Knowing whose capital is at stake, an important direction for future research should be in comparing different regional networks of markets for things Indian. How do these networks vary by region? How does such variation influence regional Indian communities and influence how people who claim Indianness but who lack legitimization organize and display their identities? Hapiuk (2001:1015) argued that a solution to threats imposed by “Indian-made” label toward individual identity, would be to replace the IACA with a regime in which the Indian Arts and Crafts Board would work in consort with tribes to develop “appellation-of-origin-like” certification marks for handicrafts. Especially as they expand through Asia and Europe, many powerful players in the market, such as the Zuni, are already creating such trademarks (Hapiuk 2001). By distinguishing tribes and reducing the concentrated control of the “Indian” label, Hapiuk’s proposal has many merits. However, a potential consequence could be that the most symbolically salient and already powerful tribes would have a considerable advantage over other tribes on the global stage. Leveling the control of the Indian-made label would also likely have ramifications in competition between tribes on a regional scale. How would this affect variation in ideologies about Indianness in different regions? I suspect that vendors play a major role in recruiting new participants and in organizing new groups. As heavily invested participants, are vendors, particularly those who lack legal legitimization, more likely to perpetuate ideologies that support the one-drop rule?

**Identity, Ideology, and Competition**

In *Envisioning Power* (1999), Wolf analyzed three case studies to make his argument that dominant modes of social labor set terms by which people are positioned in society and that structural power engenders ideas that qualified or disqualified people and groups in the structure
In Wolf’s first case study, he analyzed Kuakiutl society, which he argued was organized by a “kin-ordered” mode (as metaphor) (Wolf 1999). With the encroachment of Europeans and capitalism, members of lower strata in society were able to acquire wealth. Struggles for power between upstarts—who were breaching the kin-based boundaries of social order—and institutionalized leaders within Kuakiutl society led to ever more inflationary competition for privileges. Wolf (1999) described Aztec society as ordered by a tributary mode of mobilizing social labor, in which classes were divided and tribute was paid moving up the classes. A military order rose to power and refashioned Aztec cosmology to justify their power and a new social order. With the rise of Socialist Nazi Germany, a capitalist economic system was retained, but power was further monopolized and justified through a cosmology of Aryan biological and evolutionary supremacy (Wolf 1999).

In each of these cases, the “extreme ideology” that emerged to address crises had its roots in a distinctive cultural history (Wolf 1999:279). In each case, “ideology helped to orient society to act within the field of its operations, yet it did so in different ways and within different structural contexts” (Wolf 1999:280). As Wolf further argued:

> a concept of structural power leads to the issue of how the distinctions that segment a population are rendered manifest. The case study material suggests that these distinctions are defined and anchored in specific cosmologies that represent them as attributes of the order of things, in both the temporal and the logical sense. Aspects of cosmology are further extended and elaborated into ideologies that explain and justify the aspirations of particular claimants to power over society. [Wolf 1999:290]

The passage of IACA empowered tribes and the tribally recognized in the control of social labor in the production of things Indian. It did this by reinforcing the structural power of the Indian versus non-Indian dichotomy—a dualism that, itself, depended on a long cultural history that linked Indianness to ultimate Americanness. The idea that there are Indian and non-Indian
identities is a construction that orders access to certain forms of capital, and is legitimated in American ethnogenic mythology.

The IACA was not unique in its empowerment of tribes and the tribally recognized. It followed on the heels of many laws—especially concentrated in the 1960’s and 1970’s—that empowered tribes. In order to maintain or achieve tribal identity as perceived by the federal government, groups desiring recognition depended on being perceived as Indian by and distinguishing themselves from people who were categorized and self-identified as non-Indian.

The symbol that has become most powerfully associated with Indian in-groupness is Indian blood (Hamill 2003). Indian blood is a metaphor for Indian ancestry—the more relatives a person has who were categorized as Indian, presumably the more Indian blood a person has and therefore the more “Indian” he or she is presumed to be. However, not all people linked to a federally recognized tribe by “blood” are tribal members. Neither does having more Indian blood necessarily make one a tribal member. Throughout the 20th century, as tribes have gained more political power, in order to achieve more agency, tribes and the tribally affiliated, have often depended on a form of misrecognition over the symbolic capital of Indian blood to empower themselves in competition over capitals linked to Indian identity.

At the end of Envisioning Power, Wolf (1999:290) turned to Rappaport to address why people might be so receptive to power-laden ideas that can be contradictory, be so ready to live with such contradictions, and pay so little attention to internal cognitive coherence. Rappaport argued that foundational ideas—what he termed “ultimate sacred postulates” (USPs)—are cryptic, ambiguous, and senseless which makes them powerful because they define the nature of entities and beings in the world and set up rules for human behavior (Wolf 1999:284). USPs, which are unfalsifiable, produce paradox by turning the dubious and arbitrary into the correct
and necessary (Wolf 1999:285). However, as opposed to Rappaport—who saw USPs as contributing to homeostasis and adaptation—Wolf argued that:

> the structural power at work in human systems can embed itself in such ineffable and cryptic suppositions and draw on them to sanctify and defend its rule. Hence, it will also come to depend on them. [Wolf 1999:285]

An argument I am trying to make in this dissertation is that Indian identity, as well as non-Indian identity, is a constructed idea—as is the idea of Indian blood being an indication of Indian identity. Both are dubious and arbitrary, yet have become such an important part of American ideology that institutions have emerged to impose its structural power. Claimants to Indian identity who have sought power to control capitals tied to Indianness, have moved to concentrate in-group boundaries around the symbol of Indian blood. Those claimants have become dependent on such suppositions. The Indian versus non-Indian dualism, particularly as it is based on the symbolic power of Indian blood, is a foundational idea that has led to considerable dependence on the part of those trying to conserve and control power linked to Indianness.

As Sheffield (1997) and Hapiuk (2001) have pointed out, the IACA—in comparison to other laws passed to regulate access to capitals tied to Indian identity—is an egregious example of how dependence on this dualism and the boundary of Indian blood being authentically Indian, can actually threaten the agency of tribes. The IACA created a property right in the symbol of Indian identity and then, by defining who is Indian, concentrated to a smaller group of claimants—who were bounded by metaphors of blood—the legal power to profits of social labor in the production of things authentically Indian. Individuals who claim Indian identity and wish to capitalize on the power of their own ability to produce things Indian, but who are not recognized by a legally recognized tribe (state or federal), are legally prohibited from attaching the symbolic capital of “Indian-made” to their products—many being alienating from the means
to capitalize on their own labor. The IACA could be perceived as creating a class out of an ethnicity or racial group.

**Southeastern Polybian Indian Movement: An Ethnogenesis**

As Wolf described in *Europe and The People Without History*, as Europeans expanded across the globe, people of diverse backgrounds and origins were forced to construct new identities and cosmologies as they began interacting through “convergent activities” (1982:385). The market for things Indian is a convergent activity in which people of diverse backgrounds come together over interests in Indianness—whether as consumers, producers, or merchants. Although the reasons for individual participants’ interests in Indianness might vary considerably, all of these individuals share, to varying degrees, interests in the symbolic capital of Indian identity and converge in networks of exchange and production in relation to those interests.

If the IACA created a class relationship between two categories of people in this market, is there potential for a class-based movement to emerge within the alienated members of the lower class who maintain interests in Indianness and Indian identity? If so, how will such a group identify itself? I believe that, if such an emergence is possible, where else to look but among the social networks whose ties are dependent on the commercial aspects of things Indian. In these networks, competition between classes of Indians will be most evident. As Jenkins interpreted Marx:

Marx argued that the working class is constituted *in itself* by virtue of the similar situation of workers, their common alienation from the means of production within capitalism. By virtue of their shared situation, workers have similar interests (i.e. things that are in their interest). Marx argued that these interests cannot be realised until workers unite into a class *for itself* and realise for themselves what their interests are. This, for Marx, signifies the emergence of the working class as a collective historical agent. The process of group identification encourages and is encouraged by class struggle. [Jenkins 2008:110]
With the imposition of the IACA, the market for things Indian is a primary field in which struggles between classes of Indians would occur, thus there is potential that a class for itself could emerge within the population whose categorized identity legally alienates them from profiting on the symbol of Indian-made or makes profiting particularly difficult. As this dissertation has described, a broad and growing diversity of people have been or can be categorized with delegitimizing labels, the “wannabe tribe.” Class struggle in the market for things Indian could encourage participants of these varying backgrounds and claims to Indianness to recognize a common situation in the dichotomous Indian versus non-Indian structure. However, in order to become a class for itself, not only would individuals need to recognize common interests, but also would need to organize to realize such interests.

So what does all of this have to do with the Southeastern Polybian Indian Movement? Geographically, the American Southeast provides a unique field of competition between different types of people interested in Indianness. American expansion, racism, and federal relocation policies of the 19th century all played important roles in depleting historical indigenous populations in the Southeast. Under current federal acknowledgment requirements, such historical circumstances make legal recognition for groups in the Southeast particularly difficult. As a result, there are few legally recognized tribes in the American Southeast. Further, the national urban-based Red Power Movement of the 1960’s and 1970’s was less visible and less organized in the American Southeast.

Regardless of how few salient legitimized Indian groups might exist in the Southeast, consuming and appropriating Indianness is an integral part of national popular culture and mythmaking. Therefore, just as in other regions of United States, there is a market for things Indian in the Southeast. Further, just as in other regions of the United States, there are people
interested in possessing Indianness and Indian identity in the American Southeast, whether they can access legal legitimization or not. Commercial networks for the consumption of things Indian, particularly in the Southeast, is an ideal place for people who desire Indianness or Indian identity to interact. Engaging the public is particularly useful for groups or individuals who desire Indian identity but cannot achieve legal legitimization.

With few existing, organized groups who have legal legitimization and few salient groups who emerged during the Red Power Movement to control public communication of identity issues, the field of competition to influence public perception was somewhat leveled in the Southeast. This has provided room for groups that idealize and empathize with constructs associated with Indianness, but who do not necessarily associate collectively with Indian identity—such as scouting, New Age, and neopagan groups—as well as groups of people reclaiming an Indian identity, to organize and share ideas and ideologies popular within their own original networks. They can do this with less resistance or influence from legitimated Indian groups than such groups would experience in other regions or in urban areas of the United States.

In addition, the lack of legitimated organized groups of Indians has leveled competition between classes in the regional market for things Indian. If, like the cultic milieu, there is a commercial substructure that supports these groups and their practices, then a leveled competition on the marketplace should further enable groups that lack legitimacy the room to organize and communicate ideas that support their own claims to Indianness.

I believe that due to a more leveled field of competition, that polybian groups and individuals have come to dominate not only the organization of the Central Florida Indian community but also the communication of Indian issues knowledge to the public. I believe that the emergence of the Southeastern Polybian Indian Movement is a result of class conflict in
which a group in itself is becoming a group for itself. By recruiting people to an Indian lifeway and empowering definitions of Indian identity that authenticate people not legally legitimated as Indian, the movement enhances the interests of people who are not of the higher class of Indian identity.

However, if a common class situation binds participants in the regional community, why have elements of this movement appeared ethnogenic and religious? Further, if the most powerful category of Indian identity is tribal, legal, and full-blood, why, in the process of becoming a group for itself, have many participants and organizations constructed in-group boundaries around a religious identity and polybian-like identity, rather than a 100% Indian ethnic identity?

The market for things Indian—upon which this movement depends—is dependent itself not only on the Indian versus non-Indian dualism, but also on influencing the perception of consumers over the authenticity of Indianness. Groups that dominate the regional network of consumer based “Indian” themed events are polybian, thus, while they depend on the Indian versus non-Indian dualism for symbolic and economic capital, they must also subvert the power of dominant definitions of Indian identity that threaten the value of their self-proclaimed Indianness.

This dissertation has provided numerous examples of how participants have simultaneously reinforced the structural power of the Indian versus non-Indian dualism, yet subverted dominant definitions. Individuals often reconstructed these categories in such a way as to allow a polybian individual to justify a fully Indian identity. For instance, as Jessel (1992) described, a Florida based Indian associated group adhered to beliefs of “psyco-genetics,” where personalities of an individual’s ancestors are perpetuated through one’s DNA and that, as a
group, their members perpetuated the personalities of Indian ancestors and thus had *Indian* personalities.

While I did not encounter this specific ideology during fieldwork, I did encounter beliefs that a person’s behavior or lifestyle indicated that he or she likely had Indian ancestry. I met many individuals who believed that just “one-drop” of blood means that a person is an Indian. In recruitment, organizations often distinguished themselves from tribes by claiming that they trusted participants’ claims of Indian-ancestry no matter what type of proof they might utilize.

Paralleling such subversive ideologies was a commodification of Indian identity that provided individuals opportunities to achieve a “one-drop” rule. Not only could consumers learn about and adopt new definitions of Indian identity, but participants could also consume this identity. Many vendors sold genealogy guides for finding Indian ancestry and some even specialized as consultants in genealogical research looking for Indian ancestry. Although I only saw them sold at one powwow in Kentucky, many participants acknowledged utilizing, or knowing someone who utilized DN* A testing kits to find Indian ancestry.

As I have also described, many individuals bypassed the boundary of Indian-blood all together. Some individuals depended on claims of reincarnation to justify their Indianness. Many did adhere to a belief that Indian-blood was the only justifiable claim to “Indian” self-identification, yet many of those individuals still dressed in Indian-style clothing and self-identified as “Indian at heart.” They still transgressed the Indian versus non-Indian boundary by performing as an insider.

As I also described, I encountered some organizations whose members believed in nativist arguments for Indian identity. Some argued that people born in the United States are Indian or most people born in the United States have Indian ancestry and thus are Indian. Some even
believed that people of highly diluted Indian-blood or no blood at all would bring back the Indian Way.

In a great deal of the ideologies that participants used to justify their Indianness, there was a shared idea that Indian Way was the *authentic* Indianness, not blood, legal definition, or place-based community inclusion. Commodification and commercialization of Indian identity, adherence to and proselytizing of ideas and ideologies that justify the “one-drop-rule,” prejudice against “legal,” “reservation,” and “full-blood” Indians, and even cultural taboos against the question “are you an Indian?”—all reinforce and depend on the structural power of the Indian versus non-Indian dualism, but also subvert the boundaries of Indianness that are constructed around greater quantities of blood, reservation ties, and tribal membership.

Within the regional Polybian Indian movement are numerous means of expanding the number of people who self-identify as Indian. Not only is there a commercialization of discovering, reclaiming, and converting to Indian identity, but many organizations recruit people to convert their identities and proselytize meanings of Indian identity that subvert dominant definitions. One demonstration, powwow, or reenactment at a time, people not identifying as Indian are given the opportunity to internalize and adopt a new *Indian* identity. Most significant for those who compete for control of the meaning of Indian identity, such events also provide potential converts a new inclusive community which both claims to uphold Indian ideals and organizes to pass them on.

**Indian Versus Non-Indian**

Why should it matter that the Southeastern Polybian Indian Movement is the result of class conflict in which a group in itself—stereotyped wannabes and hobbyists—are becoming a group for itself? In his argument about wanna-knows, the interviewee Jack claimed that the market for Indian related knowledge and the regional growth in what he called “little tribes of wannabes”—
which he linked to the rise of state-recognized tribes—threatens the power of self-identification of people in federally recognized tribes and indigenous groups who seek recognition through such means. As a threat to tribal sovereignty, he argued that the rise of wannabes is the main reason why tribes have tightened control of resources and membership, as well as having evolved toward a corporate structure (interview with author, August 26, 2006).

Similarly to Jack, in his assessment of the “Southeast Syndrome,” Quinn (1990b) claimed that the organizing of Indian descendent recruitment organizations was harmless to the Federal Acknowledgement process until groups perceived themselves as tribes and claimed the right to determine Indian issues. Starna (1991), in a strong rebuke of Quinn, argued that such organizing did not threaten the federal acknowledgment process.

I agree with both of these conclusions. By perceiving themselves as “tribes,” NA-ICOs do not directly threaten Federal Acknowledgment. However, I also see a great deal of support for both Quinn’s and Jack’s arguments. The organizing of people from lower categories of Indian identity, threatens the structural power of the Indian versus non-Indian dualism upon which federal acknowledgment and benefits tied to such acknowledgement so greatly depend. As tribes and the tribally affiliated have become more dependent on this dualism—and bound the Indian category ever more closely to definitions of blood—in order to access and concentrate power, boundary constructions have excluded more and more interested individuals from the ability to access capitals tied to Indian identity. Regardless of this exclusion, however, the number of people self-identifying as Indian has risen considerably over previous decades.

Like the IACA, the growth of polybian Indians through organizing and recruitment weakens the power of Indian versus non-Indian identity boundaries by expanding the Indian category, particularly by legitimating the one-drop rule. One way of weakening the agency
invested in this dualism can be illustrated by a confusing episode that I was coincidentally present for at a monthly meeting of one of the state’s largest and least hierarchical NA-ICOs.

This organization, like many of the state’s larger and urban-based groups, included a number of members who claimed to have inherited an Indian identity or who claimed to have dependents legally recognized as Indian or tied to a reservation through marriage. At this meeting, a guest—a woman who claimed membership in a federally recognized tribe and had relocated to Florida—came to the organization’s meeting to encourage them to spread the word about an upcoming plan to develop an American Indian Community Center. A number of group members asked if there would be a requirement that they be card carriers or have a specific blood quantum to take advantage of the center. The guest hesitantly responded that the center would not discriminate, and would help anyone self-identifying as Indian, but that the center was focusing on social services for Indians who recently migrated to the city from reservations and needed help with things like language-skills, job searches, and computer skills.

This prompted the group’s leader to express excitement because she never knew what to do with Indians who called the organization asking where to get such aid, nor understood why her organization was being contacted for such help in the first place. She said that her solution was to direct callers to look in the classified ads of local newspapers. This acknowledgment frustrated many meeting attendants who claimed to be either Indian or to have dependents that were Indian. Some described their own frustrations, or the frustrations of their Indian friends, who, upon moving to the city, expected this highly salient Indian labeled organization to provide the services that the guest was only now addressing.

This scenario is an important example of how the power of communication and interests are dependent on social networks and perceived identity. It also suggests an underlying
materialist conflict. There is only so much capital available for projects like an Indian community center. A community center would not only provide agency to people who self-identify as Indian but would also provide a platform for people with such self-identification to organize and gain saliency in the area. By leveling access to any person who self-identifies as Indian, the limited capital available for such projects can be quickly used up and not reach the intended group.

Most participants I have worked with did not appear to believe that their inclusive public organizing, recruitment, and claims to Indian identity have the potential to threaten the agency of legally recognized Native Americans. Indeed many groups depicted themselves as helping Indians and some organizations participated in food drives or included in their budgets a donation to help poverty on reservations. Further, like in Standing Bear’s (1994) description of the Deer Clan, many regional participants argued that only members of federally recognized tribes and reservation communities deserved economic support in the form of federal aid or college scholarships, because those groups of Indians had experienced the most oppression.

Of course, the example from the NA-ICO meeting does not illustrate how Polybian organizing and recruiting can affect tribes’ power. The regional polybian Indian organizing has far greater potential to impact Indian issues if participants mobilize politically. As Marx argued, it is only when a class becomes a group for itself—when it recognizes its common interests and acts as a class—can it then be a historical agent, becoming politically effective (Jenkins 2008). I believe that the Southeastern Polybian Indian Movement has the potential to be politically effective, particularly by organizing as a new, hybrid ethnic group—part Indian and part non-Indian.
Tribes still depend on the nation-state’s enforcement of laws in order to benefit from the Indian versus non-Indian dualism. Although gaining some degree of self-determination, tribes’ power is still dependent on recognition of their Indianness by the federal government and thus the value of Indians’ Indianness is highly dependent on ties to the American nation-state. Further, within popular American mythmaking, Indianness legitimates Americanness, not vice-versa. A great deal of nativism underlies the market for things Indian.

Perhaps one of the strongest examples of subversive political organizing around a new ethnic identity can be found in a NA-ICO I already described. With many bands, but based in Florida, this particular NA-ICO formed out of historical reenactment, particularly rendezvousing. The group self-identified as a church with primarily “mixed-blood” membership, but the only requirement to be a member is to follow the Red Road. Members have a variety of ethnic self-identifications, ranging from non-Indian but followers of Indian Ways, to Indians, to part-Indians.

This group has a genesis story stating that after having been rejected by Indians, “mixed-bloods” in the United States organized as a starting point to bring all “the people” together to learn the Old Ways, and to be a starting point for one world, one people, with one creator (interview with author, March 19, 2006). A leader in this organization told me that all “true Americans” are part Native American, they just do not know it yet, and that they will all eventually “come-home” (interview with author, March 18, 2006). Although recently organized, the group creatively linked its founding to 1493. Not only did group members produce and wear shirts that made such a connection, but their leaders argued that, indeed, they had been protecting the United States since White people first met Indians.
This group was growing quickly among the commercial powwow and rendezvous networks while I was conducting fieldwork. They not only proselytized their definitions of Indian identity and recruited new members at such events, but they also worked to mobilize regional participants to claim a Métis or mixed-blood identity and lobby for legal recognition as an ethnic group from the United States.

The organizations members and advertisements depicted it as an alternative to legally recognized tribes. They did not believe in asking converts or new members for proof of Indian ancestry because mixed-blood people were historically prejudiced against, both by Indians and by dominant society (interview with author, March 18, 2006). The spiritual leader of the organization described their goal as trying to keep alive only the good aspects of Native Americans. He described historical Native Americans as only about ten-percent good. It was this ten-percent that his NA-ICO was building a culture and religion around—the Red Road. He argued that first nations and tribes have lost “the fire,” no longer practice their old respectful ways, and have let their reservations get run down (interview with author, March 18, 2006).

Of course, this is just one organization with just one strategy for subverting dominant definitions of Indian identity. However, it is emerging and mobilizing within a network of people who have real capital at stake, many of whose ways of life or local power are threatened by the enforcement of identity boundaries produced by the IACA. Further, already instituted organizations in the region perpetuate ideas that reinforce the perception of persecution of people by dominant society and by Indians. As people who share an interest in Indianness, but lack legitimization, ideas like the one above not only legitimate their claims to Indianness but also claim to explain conflict between classes of Indians. This conflict is unavoidable in the regional
community because it is built on a market of things Indian, where transgression of identity boundaries can be criminal, with significant repercussions.

The commodification of Indian identity in this network allows and encourages many people to find that “one-drop” of blood that popular ideologies (such as the one above) legitimate as authentic Indianness. This permits claimants from the lower class to transgress the Indian versus non-Indian dualism while still maintaining the foundational idea of “Indian blood” that tribes depend upon, but, paradoxically, simultaneously adhering to beliefs that contemporary Indians have lost authentic Indianness.

I would like to conclude with Wolf’s concluding words in Envisioning Power, which I believe best sums the power of this paradox.

The readiness of many people to live with contradictions, as well as the proclivity of most to pay little heed to internal cognitive coherence, suggests that the installation of a vision of cosmic order is more likely to be imperative for those trying to organize power than the reflection of a general striving for cognitive consistency. This becomes all the more likely when we recall Rappaport’s characterization of ultimate sacred propositions as ambiguous, mystifying, and cryptic and when we remember that what is at stake in the establishment of a cosmology is the propagation of “perlocutionary truths” that do not maximize the organization of minds so much as move them in a certain direction. [Wolf 1999:290].
LIST OF REFERENCES

Aldred, Lisa

American Indian Tepee

Anderson, Jay

Anderson, H. Allen

Anderson, Benedict

Andrews, Ted

Arguelles

Auel, Jean M.

Baca, Lawrence, R.

The Backwoodsmen

Barrett, Stanley R., Sean Stockholm, and Jeanette Burke

Belk, Russell and Janeen Arnold Costa
Benedict, Jeff
2001 Without Reservation: the making of the most powerful Indian tribe and Foxwoods. 
New York: Perennial.

Berkhofer, Robert F.

Bernard, H. Russell
2006 Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches. 
New York: Alta Mira Press.

Bopp, Judie, Michael Bopp, Lee Brown, and Phil Lane
1984 The Sacred Tree: Reflections on Native American Spirituality. Four Worlds 
Lethridge, Alberta: Development Press.

Bordewich, Fergus M.
1996 Killing the White Man’s Indian: Reinventing Native Americans at the 

Bourdieu, Pierre

Bowman, Marion
1995 Cardiac Celts: Images of the Celts in Paganism. In Paganism Today: Wiccans, Druids, 
the Goddess and Ancient Earth Traditions for the Twenty-First Century. Graham Harvey 

Briggs, Charles
1996 Politics of Discursive Authority in Research on the “Invention of Tradition.” 

Brown Tom Jr
1995 The Way of the Scout: A Native American Path to Finding Spiritual Meaning in a 

Brown, Dee

Bryman, Alan
2006 Global Implications of McDonaldization and Disneyization. In McDonaldization: the 

Calloway, Colin G., with Gerd Gemunden, and Susanne Zantop, eds
2002 Germans and Indians: Fantasies, Encounters, Projections. Lincoln: University of 
Nebraska Press.
Campbell, Colin

Carlson, Marta

Champagne, Duane and Michael A. Pare, eds.

Clifton, James A.

Colin, Susi

Committee on Indian Affairs

Committee on Indian Affairs

Confer, Vincent

Deloria, Vine Jr.

Deloria, Phillip
Dietler, Michael

Eastman, Charles A.

Eastman, Charles A.

Eastman, Charles A.

Eckert, Alan W.

Ellingson, Terry Jay

Feest, Christian F.

Fitzgerald, Kathleen J.

The Florida Frontier Gazette

Fulford, Tim

Garroutte, Eva Marie

Gilmore, Myron P.
Gossett, Thomas F.

Green, Rayna

Hahn, Robert A.; Benedict I. Truman; and Nancy D. Parker

Hall, David D.

Hamill, James F.

Hapiuk, William J.

Harley, J. B.

Healy, George R.

Heelas, Paul

Hertzberg, Hazel W.  

Improved Order of the Red Men  

Indian Arts and Crafts Board  

Jenkins, Phillip  

Jenkins, Richard  


Jessel, Penny  

Johnson, Willard  

Kallendorf, Hilaire  

Kearney, Michael  

Kelly, Lawrence C.  
Krech III, Shepard  

Kroeber, Alfred L.  

Krouse, Susan Applegate  

Lee, Richard Wayne  

Le Blanc, Steven A., and Katherine E. Register  

Lefler, Hugh T.  

Leitch, Stephanie  

Linton, Ralph and A. Irving Hallowell  

Lutz, Hartmut  

MacDonald, Robert H.  
1993     Sons of the Empire: The Frontier and the Boy Scout Movement, 1890-1918. Toronto: The University of Toronto Press.

MacGregor, Alan Leander  

Matthiessen, Peter  
McCarthy, James and Evan Hague

McGaa, Ed

McMullen, Ann

Mechling, Jay

Morris, Brian

Moses, L. G.

Muzzleloader

Nagel, Joane

Nagel, Joane

Nederveen Pieterse, Jan

Neihardt, John G.
Office of Federal Acknowledgment

Office of Federal Acknowledgment

Office of Federal Acknowledgment

Paredes, Anthony

Parker, Arthur C.

Peers, Laura

Peter, George

Pike, Sarah M.

Porter, Joy

Porterfield, Amanda
Powers, William K.

Quinn, William W. Jr.


Rappaport, Roy A.

Reddin, Paul

Rigney, Ann

Ritzer, George

Ross, Allen
1989 Mitakue Oyasin: We are all Related. Denver: Wiconi Waste.

Roth, George

Rowe, John Howland

Suam, Lewis O.

Schwartz, Stephen

Scurlock, William H., ed.
Seton, Ernest Thompson  
1911a Rolf in the Woods. Chicago: Gutenberg Project.

1911b Two Little Savages: Being the Adventures of Two Boys Who Lived as Indians and What They Learned. New York: Grossett & Dunlap.


Seton, Ernest Thompson and Julia M. Seton  

Sheffield, Gail K.  

Sieg, Katrin  

Slotkin, Richard  


Smith, Henry Nash  

Smoke and Fire News  

Standing Bear, Zug  

Starhawk  
Starna, William  

Sturtevant, William C., ed.  

Swartz, David  

Talliman, Valerie  

Taylor, Bron  

Taylor, Colin F.  

Trautman, Thomas R.  

Thornton, Russell  

U.S. Department of the Interior.  

Walsh, Martin W.  

Weatherford, Jack  
Weatherford, Jack

Weibel-Orlando, Joan

Wernitzning, Dagmar

Whispering Wind
2007   Whispering Wind. 36(5).

Wilderness Way
2005   Wilderness Way. 11(3).

Wilk, Richard R. and Lisa C. Cliggett

Wolf, Eric R.

Wolf, Eric R.

Wray, Matt and Annalee Newitz, ed.

York, Michael
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Reyda Leigh Taylor was born in Lilongwe, Malawi, to Jim and Karen Taylor. Moving to the United States early in her childhood, she grew up in Texas and Arkansas. In 2004, Reyda earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in psychology at Ouachita Baptist University. At OBU, she was able to conduct ethnographic research in the rural Ouachita Mountains in western Arkansas, an experience that set the stage for her pursuit of a Doctor of Philosophy in anthropology at the University of Florida.