

ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis: FROM TRAVELING EXPEDITIONS, TO MUSEUMS AND  
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OF MISREPRESENTATION

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FROM TRAVELING EXPEDITIONS, TO MUSEUMS AND TO FILM: NATIVE  
AMERICANS AND THE IMPACT OF MISREPRESENTATION

by

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On October 12, 1492 Christopher Columbus was lost at sea and discovered the New World and its people. He called us "Indians." We are called "Indians" even though our ancestors are not from India. We prefer Native Americans, since we are indigenous to North America. The term "Indian" only lumps us into one group. For example, thanks to the term "Indian," museums and films have lumped Navajos from New Mexico and Mohawks from New York into the "Indian" category. This makes it seem to appear as if not only are we from the same racial group, but the same cultural group as well. Why is it that we do not lump Hungarian people to people from the British Isles and call them all Caucasians? We automatically assume that they are different. Ironically, the distance from the Navajo reservation to the Mohawk communities is greater than the distance from Hungary to Britain (Crosby 1). The moment of discovery left us no choice for we were given our roles in museums and in films (Ellis 5).

Since the beginning of movie production thousands of films have been made about Native Americans. In the early films the representations were misleading, only presenting us as primitives unable to function in Euro-American society. These films often generalized us and ignored the fact that more than five hundred tribes exist in North

America; instead we were lumped into one group, which led to the birth of the Hollywood Indian. The Hollywood Indian is male, dressed in feathers and leathers, riding a horse. He is barbaric and likes to terrorize white folks, especially their women. He can also be more romantic; instead of being barbaric, he is in tune with nature and smokes a peace pipe. He is a noble savage who accepts defeat and befriends colonizers, and sometimes rides with the U.S. Cavalry as an interpreter. He is in conflict with renegade Native Americans who refuse to accept defeat, known as the savages. The savages never win and are killed. At the end the Cavalry is victorious and rides into the sunset with their noble savage. Some other images show Native American revolutionaries, trying to return to the ancestral ways that were destroyed many years ago. He is lost, trying to rediscover himself.

Hollywood films' noble and savage Indians all exist in America's past; they are not pictured beyond the early 1900s. In contemporary films, such as *Dances With Wolves* (dir. Kevin Costner, 1990), *Geronimo: An American Legend* (dir. Walter Hill, 1993) and *The Searchers* (dir. John Ford, 1956), we remain in this same time period. Our contemporary lives are not recognized in mainstream film. This is dangerous since the majority of Americans get their

information about us from the Kevin Costners and John Fords of Hollywood. These films convey misleading information, and so it is safe to say that in Hollywood we will always be waiting for proper recognition. Attaining proper recognition is a working process that will not occur overnight, just as Hollywood Indians did not form overnight. It was a working process that stretched from traveling expeditions, to museum exhibits and finally to film.

The earliest images of Native Americans were during the colonization of North America: 1492 to the early 1900s. As people, we were encoded and decoded by explorers and anthropologists. In the nineteenth century anthropologists became concerned that we were vanishing. During this period Native Americans faced new diseases, battles with colonizers and the US government and many Native American people died and in some cases entire tribes were wiped out. These high death tolls caused a rise in collecting artifacts and human remains, which were analyzed (Bieder 28). These artifacts were displayed at traveling exhibitions and later in natural history museums. After the collections were coded and decoded, assigned a space and time, museums created Native American exhibits using anthropological field notes (Bieder 19-20). On the other

hand, traveling expeditions created more "in your face" exhibits. They were more humiliating, for in most cases living Native Americans were the artifacts. In the 1876 World's Fair's Chicago Exposition (Maurer 21) artifacts--which included exotic animals--Native Americans were forced to "play Indian" for visitors. A group of fifty-seven Inuit natives were brought to the exposition and were forced to wear their "traditional Arctic clothing," in the sweltering Chicago heat to perform "traditional things" for visitors. They "threw harpoons, shot arrows and pulled tourists by dogsled" (Fitzhugh 213). Frustrated, diseased and weak from hunger they demanded to be returned home; they were dropped off in Newfoundland, eight hundred miles away from home. One Inuit man replied: "We are glad to be at liberty once more, and not to be continually looked at as if we were animals. We shall never go again" (Fitzhugh 213). Ironically, the purposes of traveling exhibitions were to increase the knowledge of men, by entertainment (Maurer 21). However, it only contributed to misconceptions about Native Americans, which is that we can only exist in a primitive state; and that cannot adjust to other discourse communities and so we perform uncommon acts, like pulling white tourists on dog sleds and wearing furry Arctic clothing during Chicago's summer season.

As anthropological research progressed, the visual representations of Native Americans swayed away from traveling expositions into museums. Although the museums were a little friendlier, they kept us in the primitive world. In 1955, the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History opened its "American Indian" exhibit to the public and for forty-eight years the exhibit was not modified. Only small modifications were made, such as lighting and moving exhibit display cases around. The exhibit consisted of artifacts that the Smithsonian collected in the 1800s. In the museum's *1955 Annual Report* it praised the "American Indian" exhibit as being "an attractive way that the visitors may learn easily and quickly how these primitive peoples actually lived," (1955 Annual Report). A year later the museum introduced more wax miniatures of Native American bodies to the exhibit. These manikins were modeled to portray "the manner of living Indian tribes that formerly occupied the forested eastern third of the United States; the nomadic hunting tribes of the Great Plains; the salmon fishing and totempole-building Indians of the Northwest Pacific coast; and the Arctic Eskimo of Greenland and Alaska," (1956 Annual Report 36). The exhibit was seen as clever, however it only focused on past

representations of Native American people; there were no contemporary representations.

Instead, we became trapped in time, displayed as inhabitants of North America's past. For the Smithsonian, Native American history began in 1492 and ended in the later 1890s. After the 1890s, we all of a sudden vanished. Disturbingly, in most contemporary museums this representation still exists. For example, in the NMNH the "American Indian" exhibit has not changed. It still has William Henry Holmes 1901 life-sized manikins of Native Americans, accompanied with environmental backgrounds. Holmes' goal was to design "a picture of reality," by "accurately mode[ling]" Native American bodies and depicting scenes of "what these people used to do" (Fitzhugh 212). Holmes' said that exhibit cases "should be set as though the pages of history were turned back to the time when the people lived untrammelled by a higher civilization and foreshadowed by higher peculiarities of the time and place they formerly occupied" (Yochelson 59). He preferred using plastic sculpture since it represented "more perfect racial types...as long as they were modeled scientifically, under curatorial direction, using drawings and field photographs" (Fitzhugh 211).

Holmes' work led to the exhibit entitled *The Happy Eskimos*. The exhibit was considered being so "life-like" that children "steered clear of" the display (Fitzhugh 210). *The Happy Eskimos* exhibit still remains the main attraction in the "American Indian" exhibit and the title has been changed to "Polar Eskimo." It reads:

The whole family enjoys a good laugh at the youth who called out the dog team to haul the undersized seal which he harpooned through a hole in the ice. Seal and walrus are the staple foods of these northernmost Eskimos. They also hunt sea and land birds, polar bear, caribou, foxes, hares and, musk oxen. And from carcasses of whales, which are washed ashore they obtain flesh and blubber (Floor Exhibit Script).

Disturbingly, it mainly mentions the name change from the Euro-American term "Eskimo" to Inuit and it reads:

This exhibit, created in the 1950s refers to all Arctic people as 'Eskimos,' a name given to them by outsiders. Canadian Arctic peoples prefer to be known by their own name: 'Inuit.' Furthermore, each indigenous group has a specific cultural names, as seen

on the map. When we renovate the exhibit, outdated references will be corrected (2002-2003 Floor Exhibit Script).

This explanation is weak, for it does not mention that Inuit people are alive and that the display is not a contemporary, everyday scene in Northern Inuit lives, but a historical reinterpretation of Inuit ancestors. It should mention that Alaskan Native communities have adjusted to contemporary society and maintain their traditional practices. *The Polar Eskimo* display is similar to the other displays. Most of the displays present the terms "used to," or the words "lived" and "were." Some scripts even provide dates, such as "1890," to address Native Americans and their tribal artifacts. This recycled and overused presentation of Native Americans denies them a contemporary place in history, and "dishistorizes" them (King 31-32). Sadly all visitors, Native American and non-Native American are denied useful information, instead they are provided with generic and generalized information about "Indians":

Sioux warrior, The Dakotas: Painted symbols, quilled panels, 'big beads'; and horsehair pendants decorate this war shirt. Panels of 'big beads', hair pendants and painted stripes

ornament the leggings. Soft-soled moccasins are both beaded and quilled. Period before 1850. The plains Indians wore their finest garments on ceremonial occasions. Their everyday clothing was not decorated (2002-2002 American Indian Floor Exhibit).

This is not surprising since mainstream American society has always chosen to present Native Americans in a primitive state, especially "Indian" theme films (Iverson 15 and Penney 59). Just as the museum, Hollywood film stays away from topics that deal with genocide, Native American boarding schools and contemporary Native Americans. This is threatening since Americans learn about Native Americans in museums and film.

The earliest film images of Native Americans came from Thomas Edison. Edison's *The Sioux Ghost Dance* (dir. Thomas Edison, 1894), *Eagle Dance* (dir. Thomas Edison, 1898) and *Indian Day School* (dir. Thomas Edison, 1898) invoked human interest and contributed to the generalization of Native American people and once again we were lumped into one tribe (Bataille 122-129). Native American roles in these films portrayed us as *other*. The films showed us going to schools and performing tribal dances for white folks. This imagery compares to the NMNH's *Polar Eskimo* display.

"Indian" films are an easy way to "express sympathy," by freeing "the audience from any direct sense of responsibility because it shows that the destruction of Indian culture is the sad, but natural result of social evolution to white culture," (Hilger 21). In this sense for the NMNH's *Northern Polar Eskimo* display covers up the disgusting reality of genocide and government faults, and replaces it with a false romantic image. Thus, there is no guilt felt by the visitors. In silent films good whites defeated the evil savages and so it was justified to portray the savage, which became fixed in Hollywood westerns. Here "again the audience could feel good about the destruction of the Native American because this image portrayed us as melodramatic villains: Vicious, evil enemies who were justly and necessarily conquered (Hilger 253).

Native American theme films from the 1930s to the 1940s differed from the silent films for they presented Native American and non-Native American relationships, in hopes to understand us. Our image went from the savage to the conquered savage and one thing remained, we still had no power. In these films white protagonists saved entire towns from "Indian" attacks, such as in *Battling with Buffalo Bill* (dir. Ray Taylor, 1931). In other films, like

*End of the Trail* (dir. Tim McCoy, 1932), the white protagonist saves us because we cannot save ourselves. At this time sound became important; for instead of a film being accompanied by live score, films now included sounds: talking characters and music. This helped people identify "Indian" films, usually with "Indian" drumbeats and war cries. It further contributed in shaping people's attitudes about Native Americans. On the other hand, "Indian" theme films from 1960 to 1970 pushed for a realistic image of Native Americans; filmmakers were more sensitive. This sensitivity did not have Native American input and were produced and written by Hollywood people. These include films as *A Man called Horse* (dir. Elliot Silverstein, 1970) and *Little Big Man* (dir. Arthur Penn, 1970). These films only stereotyped Native Americans again, especially women. In *A Man Called Horse*, after her husband dies an older Native American woman loses her mind and wanders aimlessly. She is reduced to a hysterical person who cannot function without her husband; she is useless without him. She commits suicide and her death is condoned (Jaimes 40-45). Native Americans were allowed to be actors and actresses in these films. They were dressed and played "Indian" for the camera, for Hollywood knew how to make Native Americans appear more "Indian." Native American actor Sonny Skyhawk

describes his experience during these productions. "When I first got into film the real Indians were extra, while any leading Indian role went to white actors. They at one time had an instant Indian Kit! It was a tub that consisted of some kind of food color or dye so that they would actually dip people in this tub and up would come an Indian. Of course they would dry them off, put on their make-up, mostly war paint—then put on a feather bonnet, moccasins and a lion cloth and bang—an instant Indian. The whole process took about fifteen minutes" (Huntinghorse 12).

In the 1980s to the early 1990s, non-Native Americans played lead Native American roles because they knew how to play "Indian" better than Native Americans themselves. An example includes Michael Mann's *Last of the Mohicans*, 1992. Just as natural history museums, the Native American does not exist in contemporary times, and so there are no films in Hollywood about our roles in education, politics and technology. People do not learn about Mohawk natives from New York who built most of the New York City's great structures, from the former World Trade Center to the George Washington Bridge (Iverson 6). Or Sax and Fox native Jim Thorpe, an Olympic pentathlon and decathlon champion and Pro-Football Hall of Famer (Iverson 21). Will Euro-America hear about Wilma Mankiller, former principal

chief of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma? (Iverson 206) These Native American lives are absent and replaced with the Hollywood Indian, which disembodies our presence by denying that we exist today (Nason 37). This is not to say that preserving or presenting the past is not essential to Native Americans, but failing to mention contemporary accomplishments leaves the impression that we do not contribute to contemporary society and instead, are only interested in preserving the past and belonging to the past.

An audience is sensitive to film imagery and a film is produced so it will not be rejected by an audience; there is a relationship between an audience and a filmmaker. Therefore, a filmmaker is careful not to offend his audience so he or she creates films that go with the grain and so the Native American stays on his horse (Ellis 78). Films do not just entertain an audience, films convey social messages. As in the traveling expositions and museum exhibitions, it can be said that cultural, political and economical influence shapes how we are presented (Butler 2491-2492). The museum manikins and Hollywood Indians are bodies that are defined and constructed through social influence. Curators and filmmakers convey our cultural lifestyles. The information is then presented or

projected to visitors or audience members. The images determine what sort of body is ultimately perceived (Crawford 220).

Throughout the nineteenth century studying Native American bodies was of interest to ethnologists and anthropologists, who attempted as Columbus, to "discover" whom we "were" (Hinsley 183 and Bieder 20). They examined their subjects (us) and recorded information about race, gender, natural environments, ethnic backgrounds and physical features (Pels and Salemink 3). First used in Europe, this recording method was influenced by political and social forces. For example, to conduct this research the Smithsonian Institution relied on soldiers, explorers, and missionaries. They observed Native Americans and reported back the information (Hinsley 183). Individuals as these re-imagined Native American people (Bieder 25). Thus, when an image was formed their religious and political ideas helped shape our bodies. After the data was gathered, they presented us in primitive form and part of America's past (Hinsley 183).

Smithsonian's head curator John Ewers used the same research method when he designed his "Indian" exhibits. He liked primitive Native American images and was confused as to why contemporary Native Americans were frustrated with

his work; they did not like being presented as primitives. In 1975, the Smithsonian interviewed Ewers about his museum work. He said that he was disappointed about his trip to the Assiniboin community in 1953. He went there to look for new exhibit ideas and instead of primitive "Indians," Ewers saw contemporary Assiniboin people wearing contemporary clothing and living in contemporary homes. The Assiniboin were of a new generation, witnesses to mistreatment of their elders. They were reluctant to share tribal information with him. Ewers said all the men he talked to "had never been to war or hunted a buffalo" (Ewers 99). He said he missed the "Bow and Arrow Indians" and was not interested in the new generation. Ironically, he assumed that they were not sharing information because they forgot their own traditions. He did not even consider that the Assiniboin were tired of being subjects for "American Indian" specialists. They were tired of being studied, analyzed and compared to the white, dominant society (Braun 106). In the interview he said:

The Indians used to have a term for it themselves...they called these old fellows who had taken part in the culture of buffalo days—the Bow and Arrow Indians. And I can recall writing in my field notebook about the time I was working n

the Assiniboin Reservation, that when these old Bow and Arrow Indians disappeared, we really lost something and we did. They were fascinating old people. Now [these] days, you know, there's a great deal of talk on the part of certain Indian that they shouldn't tell anything to anthropologists...that they should keep it all to themselves. There was no feeling of that kind in those days; in fact, the older people that I'd talked to seemed to feel that it was wonderful that here was an opportunity for us to tell out stories and to see it preserved. The idea that Indians shouldn't talk to anthropologists is something that's developed in recent years; and I hate to say it, but I think in a way, it represents that fact that a good many people who are living now don't know too much about their culture and maybe they don't want to reveal how little they know (Ewers 100).

Ewers' ideas are disturbing, but important because individuals with the same misconceptions exist in American society and are in "superior" roles. There are a few respectful and educated individuals in the museum field, such as former Secretary of the Smithsonian Dillion Ripley.

Ripley said the museum's representations of Native Americans and other minority groups were problematic. He said they failed to present these people as a "vital part" of American history and not as part of the museum's "preservation trap." He said that "technological achievement" is only associated with Euro-America and make people of color appear unimportant and not contributors to contemporary society. "We have failed to give a true historical picture to describe the whole panorama of our cultures. Young people representing Native Americans are not given the evidence that they are part of the stream of history of the United States with a noble past, a vital present and an unlimited future. We should be prepared to correct what is in effect a series of oversights in history the history of our country and of the multiplicity of our peoples" (Ripley 3-4). Ripley said history was a social science that interpreted and represented people, places and ideas and so museums needed to present people in a respectful manner, if not the museum would continue to fail (1).

Fortunately, in the museum field these changes are occurring at the local level, but mostly in tribally operated museums. Nationally, more time and energy needs to be dedicated in helping us get recognition. The first

major step has been taken by the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian. This museum, which is to be scheduled to open in 2004, will provide its visitors with information from Native American contributions in society to a Native American film festival (Birdrattler).

In film production the task is even more challenging, first for Hollywood's influence has spread like smallpox throughout the world and secondly, finding funding is difficult. The way to tackle this Hollywood Indian image is for Native Americans to go behind the camera as producers, directors and writers. We need to make our own film representations about our lives and tribes. This is not to say that the representation problem will be automatically fixed, but instead of non-Native American representations, we will have Native American representations. We need to move towards an independent media and reestablish ourselves by filming our own stories. They cannot rely on others to confront these images, for it our responsibility to make the first move (Skyhawk). The confrontation is difficult, for the cowboy and Indian imagery is very popular to American audiences. These images have succeeded in Americanizing us by keeping us in the past. These images are so popular that it may be defined as accurate (King 18). For example, instead of learning about female chiefs

and warriors, people are only presented with male chiefs and warriors that fight with cowboys and Cavalry soldiers. Great women, such as Yellowhead Woman (Cheyenne), The Other Magpie (Crow) and Running Eagle (Blackfeet) are nowhere to be found and are replaced with stoic "Indian" men (Oshana 126). The role of a chief has been re-presented by Hollywood. A chief is shown as a savage leader and a chief is not. A chief is a leader, not completely dominant, for a chief requires community input. He or she knows their tribal history and stories. A chief tries to avoid war and conflict, for it is not the interest of a Native American community.

However, when it comes to mainstream media misrepresentation is expected. The Hollywood Indian image is disturbing, but what is more disturbing is the depiction of Native American women. We are background figures and do not contribute to the story; instead we perform alternative tasks, such as child rearing, cleaning hides, grinding corn or being a sex object for white men. Hollywood will not show a better depiction of Native American women, for it is too risky, for it goes against the Hollywood Indian formula. We are not given power and serve as a spectacle for male audiences. Through this image, spectators do not

learn about female roles in our predominantly matriarchal tribes.

The depiction of Native Americans in Hollywood films encouraged anthropologist Gregory Bateson to start examining feature films, in search for cultural attitudes towards Native Americans. He explored film themes and how it characterized Native American culture, (Oshana 127). His study showed that Hollywood American westerns contributed in creating popular images of us, which reinforced an Euro-American view about how we looked during colonization. Ethnographically these images are still used to depict us, in order to entertain spectators, feed them misrepresentations to the point where even Native American children began to root for the US Cavalry; films do this to make money (127). The Hollywood Indian is an Euro-American figure that the film industry has not allowed us to forget (Jojola 12). For example, the fixed representation of Geronimo remains the same today.

In the film *Geronimo: An American Legend*, the filmmaker attempts to present a more kinder and peaceful Geronimo, but Geronimo has been so typecast as a savage that his attempt did not work; Geronimo stayed Geronimo. He is not given a respectful or serious portrayal, which is common in Hollywood films. The individuality of Native

American people does not exist because the role of Native American characters will always be typecast. We are not allowed to portray our own cultures and our own tribal histories, for these are replaced with Hollywood interpretations and so there are no Native Americans on the silver screen (Nolley 77). In "Indian" theme films, the audience usually identifies with the white protagonist, who leads Native Americans or saves a town from Native Americans. The characters are used to please American audiences and so "we may respond to the Hollywood formula and feel a tender sympathy for these honorable Native Americans and whites as they face a sad and threatening future at the ends of the films" (Hilger 253).

Hollywood cinema, also known as "entertainment cinema," is usually "vague" because of the demands that it has to meet. For example, entertainment cinema is based on money, and to get fifteen million people to the movies, Hollywood presents savage Indian images to its audience. The image will "therefore confine itself to known and safe ideological trends in society" (Ellis 78-79). An audience is not made to add to the film, instead the audience is present so he or she see and hear. The audience is only to understand the events that unfold before their eyes and cannot change them. They are fascinated with Hollywood's

noble and savage Indian. At this point an audience is not distant, but part of the film (Ellis 81). They become part of the film as viewers and watch images that were chosen for them and because of this they are not distant, they are involve with the pcitures.

These films relieve "the conscience of the American public" by presenting Native Americans in an "unfavorable light" (i.e. as savages, obstacles to progress, and most importantly as cultural inferiors). Hollywood westerns are influential in creating the Native American. It is so much that most people do not recognize Native Americans, unless they fall into the Hollywood Indian formula. The image is glorified, presenting men as warriors, while women are not given any high status and are only cast as "buck skin princesses" or degrading "squaws" (Oshana 131). This is no surprise, since film images generally depict ideal traditional "structural divisions of power" in American society, which are based on sex, race and gender. Also, these depictions are consistent with the "conservative interests of the owners of the media outlets that produce and distribute popular films in the United States and the world" (Eschholz 326).

Every medium, functions to an ideal audience and position. The audience unconsciously accepts the roles.

Film creates a reality for an audience, who sit and look for answers "to resolve an enigma who is concerned to gain the answer to particular questions the resolutions to specific problems" (Ellis 77). The projection of a film is a "public event" that offers its audience fictions. They are offered to the spectator through a mechanism a narrative image and statement. Cinematic narration looks for form and structure that is recycled (Ellis 89)

Until this image improves, further research will indicate how false images contribute to audience perceptions and how visual media continue to define roles and expectations "for less powerful groups in society" (Eschholz 326). Filmmaking must operate on the level of form as well as content, for although Native Americans can go behind the camera, it is essential to realize that these films cannot be separated from outside conditions. Studies indicate that such representations or "media messages" influence a individual's perceptions of reality. "This evidence suggests that media representations are incorporated into the knowledge base of audience members," (Eschholz 301). These images are set upon common "social gender or class stereotypes" that reinforce "common stereotypes about race, class and sex roles in our society" (Eschholz 301). These are further influenced by capitalism

and patriarchy and are "reproduced through characters both fictional and non-fictional" (Eschholz 301).

Presenting groups of people is not an easy task, but it does not mean that one cannot strive to be fair and respectful. Furthermore, representations are even more challenging since museum visitors already have established their own realities of certain groups of people. Even more problematic is a museum's goal to attract visitors, and so presenting an educational and informative exhibit about us may become a less priority. Instead, the museum is more interested in gaining more visitors (Nason 33). In dealing with misrepresentations of Native American people, there is no easy solution in fixing the problem (Nason 41). Although efforts are made to modify exhibits, the NMNH has been using early exhibit displays ("Polar Eskimo," "Kiowa Man," "Sioux Warrior," "Sioux Scalp Dance," et al.) and ideas, in which Native Americans are primitive and their history is vaguely presented. Funding is another issue that contributes as to why exhibits are not periodically updated. Most exhibitions are permanent and renovating the entire exhibit would be costly (Nason 4). For example, the new Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian takes funding away from the NMNH and so modifying an exhibit is problematic. There is a priority to raise

money--federal and private--for the new museum (Rodgers 2002). However, is changing a few words and phrases really costly, or just another excuse to avoid the entire subject of misrepresenting Native American people? Nevertheless, modifying exhibits should be a priority, since they are going to be used continuously. Change will confront the ideology that contemporary Native Americans are not real Indians (Nason 11, Crawford 222 and West 11). In the NMNH "American Indian" Hall 11 is being closed and later Hall 9 will be closed (Rodgers 2002). In this sense, it seems that NMNH's way to deal with the "Indian" problem is to completely get rid of the exhibit, an easy way out.

When Columbus landed he thought he was off the coast of Asia. He said that he liked our "horse hair" and "board foreheads" (Crosby 3). He brought us his beliefs and the destruction began. As news of the "Indians" spread to Europe people decided our future. For example, in 1537 the Pope said, "Indians should be treated as dumb brutes created for our service," and this became the popular attitude towards Native Americans. He continued that "the Indians are truly men, and that they are not only capable of understanding the Catholic faith but, according to our information, they desire exceedingly to receive it" (Crosby 11). "Thus it was decided by Rome that the aborigines of

America were worthy of conquest and too worthy to be treated as domesticated animals. Again and again during the centuries of European imperialism, the Christian view that all men are brothers was to lead to the persecution of non-Europeans--he who is my brother sins to the extent that he is unlike me--and to the tempering imperialism with the mercy--he who is my brother deserves brotherly love" (Crosby 12).

In cases of representations, visual imagery is greater than the written word; non-Native Americans learn and learned about us from visual images. Before the film camera artists painted and sketched Native Americans. In most cases, these images were given Caucasians features, in physical structure and in regalia. These images created fantasies for the "red man" for people who would never meet a Native American person (Ellis 33). The reality that museums and films have to realize is that when one chooses to present people that it is a sensitive issue. People want to see themselves in museum exhibits and films. In other words, they want to see their accomplishments and contributions (Rodgers 2002). We are not just bodies to study, examine and present; we are people, with a past and existing history. We are going to confront the treatment of our people, so far we have with repatriation, but it is

only a small solution to the larger issue in the treatment of Native American people (Rodgers 2002).

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