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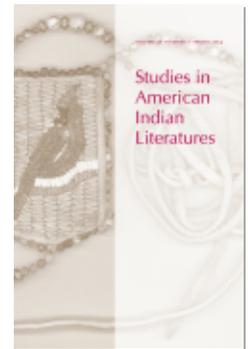
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Remembering Polingaysi: A Queer Recovery of *No Turning Back*  
as a Decolonial Text

Alicia Cox

Studies in American Indian Literatures, Volume 26, Number 1, Spring 2014,  
pp. 54-80 (Article)

Published by University of Nebraska Press



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# Remembering Polingaysi

A Queer Recovery of *No Turning Back* as a Decolonial Text

ALICIA COX

Riverside. Land of oranges. Land of perfume. Time of torture. After more than half a century, Polingaysi still could not recall that interval without a surge of emotion, remembering the white nights filled with the cloying scent of the orange and lemon groves, remembering the stifled sobbing of the lonely child she had been.

But there was another, happier, memory of that time. Each day the schoolchildren sang. Song was Polingaysi's salvation.

Polingaysi Qoyawayma, *No Turning Back*, 59–60

## THE EROTICS OF REMEMBERING

In *X-Marks: Native Signatures of Assent*, Scott Richard Lyons claims that “[n]o aspect of Native history has been more maligned in contemporary discourse than the boarding-school experience, or, as the historian David Wallace Adams names it, ‘education for extinction’” (Lyons 22).<sup>1</sup> The “typical narrative of victimization” tells how Indian children were displaced from their homes to genocidal institutions that sought to eliminate their Indigenous identities by assimilating them into the dominant Euro-American culture (22). This narrative rhetorically opposes (settler) colonization and (Indigenous) resistance, perpetuating a binary that denigrates Indians who lived in nontraditional ways as inauthentic at best, or as successfully assimilated and no longer truly Indian at worst. In this article I offer a “more complex treatment” of boarding school histories by exploring the ways Polingaysi's as-told-to autobiography, *No Turning Back: A Hopi Indian Woman's Struggle to Live in Two Worlds* (1964), complicates and challenges Indian victimization rhetoric (Lyons 23).<sup>2</sup> *No Turning Back* characterizes Polingaysi (born c. 1892, died

1990) as a “self-willed” woman who consistently pursued her personal desires rather than conforming to the gendered social norms of Hopi or US cultures, the two worlds indicated in the text’s subtitle.<sup>3</sup> Remembering Polingaysi as an agent of her own destiny, I focus on the gendered significance of her choice to attend Sherman Institute, a federal Indian boarding school in Riverside, California, and I recollect her life story’s narration of her Hopi decolonization praxis, which I call *gender indiscipline*.

I open this article with an overview of the disciplinary and theoretical issues that *No Turning Back* raises. This introduction describes my analytic methods and explains why we may usefully consider *No Turning Back* as a queer Indigenous and decolonial text. Subsequent sections of the article provide close readings of Polingaysi’s gender indiscipline in specific parts of the book, which bring the decolonial orientation of the story to the surface.

In general the term *decolonization* denotes the undoing of colonialism. Although federal legislation affirming Indian nations’ sovereignty, or right to self-determination and autonomous rule, has theoretically decolonized Indian governments, American Indian communities continue to be surrounded by a settler colonial population and imperialist sociopolitical structure.<sup>4</sup> Decolonization involves ongoing processes of removing or transforming the pernicious cultural effects of colonization—for example, the myth of the assimilated Indian. Authoritative histories have long denied a secure space for Indian people caught in the drama of federal assimilation projects. The phrase “between two worlds,” prominent in both subtitles of *No Turning Back*, conventionally circulates within Indian boarding school discourses as a trope that signifies a cultural chasm, a no-woman’s-land that ostensibly separates Indigenous from Euro-American communities. Caught in this void, or so the story goes, assimilated Indians experience a sense of subjective fragmentation or a feeling of unbelonging in either world.<sup>5</sup> Some Native American scholars dislike this trope because it homogenizes settler colonial and Indigenous peoples and condemns Natives who live in the space of the in-between as inauthentic and therefore powerless to claim or represent either culture. The decolonial significance of *No Turning Back* lies, in part, in Polingaysi’s representation of herself as a bridge between Hopi and white worlds. Polingaysi’s liminal identity recuperates the in-between as a productive space from which she engenders

new relations and modes of belonging in the face of cultural and geographical alienation.

*No Turning Back* is written in the third-person narrative voice, which may induce some readers to consider Polingaysi's amanuensis, Vada F. Carlson, as an omniscient white narrator. However, significant aspects of Polingaysi's story would be elided if we were to attribute sole authorial agency to either Polingaysi (as the story's "teller") or Carlson (as the story's "writer"). Since *No Turning Back* was produced through Polingaysi's collaboration and relationship with Carlson, throughout this article I treat the text itself—the medium of the book—as the story's narrator.<sup>6</sup> My reading practice attends to instances of what Michelle Raheja describes as "autobiographical disruption," the "intentional rhetorical silences" that "operate in Indian personal narratives" so that Indian authors can "strategically . . . 'stay Red' even while engaging with the white-controlled literary and publishing practices of their day," including especially the practice of collaborative authorship with non-Indigenous amanuenses (Raheja 88).<sup>7</sup>

Autobiographical disruption in *No Turning Back* often takes the form of Polingaysi's recollections of sensory experiences, such as those that appear in the above epigraph to redirect readers' attention away from her subjection to torture and toward her methods of surviving her experiences at Sherman Institute, one of which was singing. *No Turning Back* narrates that a Sherman teacher cajoled Polingaysi into taking the lead part in a school musical production. After her performance Polingaysi found that "[s]he began to receive pleasure from giving pleasure. Compliments encouraged her and aroused in her a desire to excel" (61). By touching her audience through the sense of sound, singing provided "a way [for Polingaysi] to express her pent-up yearnings, her uncertainties, and her loneliness and to rise above them" by creating a community based on the exchange of aural and emotional pleasure (61). Polingaysi's singing, as I show, can be read as part of the erotic—a source of sovereign power that tied her to her remote relatives on the Hopi reservation, for whom singing was a common practice.

*No Turning Back* narrates Polingaysi's erotic memories and silences other significant aspects of her life story. The text provides a sensuous description of how the night air in Riverside smells, for example, but does not tell us the precise reason why Polingaysi wanted to leave home and go to Sherman Institute. Rather than simple curiosity or a

desire for new experiences, marriage avoidance was a more probable motive. Hopi girls were expected to stay close to their homes and mothers, and Polingaysi's act of running away to attend Sherman was one of a series of gender role transgressions. From early childhood, Polingaysi's desires conflicted with the cultural norms of her Hopi community. Because Polingaysi loathed the domestic lifestyle of the "true Hopi maiden," *No Turning Back* tells us, more "tradition-bound" Hopis gossiped that she "doesn't want to be a Hopi; she wants to be a white man" (52, 145–46). The implication of this critique that Polingaysi "wants to be a white *man*" demonstrates the importance of gender to both colonial and decolonial discourses. I focus on Polingaysi's gender expression in order to challenge characterizations of her as an assimilationist who desired to abandon Hopi culture and adopt a white lifestyle. Polingaysi struggled to live as a bridge, located between and serving both Hopi and white worlds, not because she despised Hopi traditionalism per se nor because she considered US culture a preferable alternative; rather, she desired to find or create a space where she could live free from the gendered imperatives to marry and reproduce that confronted her in both cultural realms.

A queer Indigenous analytic lens is crucial for understanding *No Turning Back's* decolonial orientation. Queer Indigenous studies methodologies help us to focus on the ways that Indigenous peoples survive colonial assimilation projects that are particularly sexist and homophobic, not only racist and imperialist. Polingaysi's practice of gender indiscipline, as rendered in *No Turning Back*, enacted a decolonized Native identity, which I term *sovereign selfhood*. My theory of sovereign selfhood challenges the binary opposition of tribalism (characterized by homogeneity, communalistic values, and dependence on kinship relations) and individualism (characterized by heterogeneity, individualistic values, and independence or self-reliance). *Sovereign selfhood* names Polingaysi's sense of individuality and difference while simultaneously acknowledging her relationality and responsibility to her sovereign Hopi tribe.

In his groundbreaking work, *When Did Indians Become Straight? Kinship, the History of Sexuality, and Native Sovereignty*, Mark Rifkin claims that US projects designed to "civilize" American Indians and to "reorganize [N]ative social life" "can be understood as an effort to make them 'straight'" (6, 8). The "language of 'individualism'" that is so

central to Indian “education discourse,” Rifkin explains, contrasts “an atomized notion of selfhood with traditional communal conceptions of identity among [N]ative peoples” (149). Rifkin adds that a “larger heteronormative matrix . . . is the horizon for” colonial processes of naturalizing individualism “through the representation of monogamous marriage and the single-family dwelling as the self-evident basis for true intimacy and human reproduction” (150). I concur with Rifkin’s assessment of the inextricable connection between imperial efforts to detribalize Indians and to discipline them according to Eurocentric standards of sexual normalcy. But we must be careful not to conflate (supposedly Euro-American) individualism with heterosexuality or to position these characteristics as the binary opposites of (supposedly Indigenous) collectivism and queerness. To do so risks erasing the experiences of Native people like Polingaysi, a Hopi individual who struggled against what may be understood as a Hopi version of heteronormativity. Although Hopi home and family life were matrilineal and extended rather than patriarchal and nuclear, tradition nevertheless required Hopis to engage in monogamous and sexually reproductive marriage. *No Turning Back* offers a more complex view of Native selfhood by accounting for the ways Polingaysi’s desires differed from those of her Hopi peers prior to her subjection to the individualizing or straightening influences of the Indian boarding school.

One reason why Polingaysi assented to narrate her life story was to combat assaults on the authenticity of her Hopi identity. I want to explore the usefulness of her story for today’s queer-identified Indians who struggle with queerphobia, to use Daniel Heath Justice’s term, and also for Native- and non-Native-identified people who want to understand the gendered aspects of US imperialism. Viewed through queer Indigenous lenses of analysis, *No Turning Back* reveals that Polingaysi’s practice of gender indiscipline preceded—and, indeed, instigated—her attendance of boarding school and also aided her ability to thrive in the space she cultivated between Hopi and white worlds. By offering a more complicated understanding of Native selfhood in the context of US imperialism, I hope to demonstrate how the nontraditional identities or practices of some Native individuals may have decolonial implications that benefit said individuals’ tribal communities. Since the self exists only in relation to other selves in a web of relations, self-interest is not

necessarily opposed to communal welfare. By acting on her personal desire, Polingaysi served not only her self but also her Hopi people.

Polingaysi's avoidance of marriage and willing attendance of Indian boarding school do not indicate her successful assimilation to dominant US culture but rather her anomalous mode of being Hopi. *No Turning Back* portrays Polingaysi as different from her fellow Hopis and as remarkable for her ability to transcend the boundary between Hopi and white worlds—a geographical and ideological division that arose from US settler colonialism. Polingaysi's practice of sovereign selfhood, as presented in *No Turning Back*, resonates with traditional Indigenous approaches to the anomalous in nature. Justice locates a potential precedent for affirming queer Native people “*as Native people*” in Indigenous Mississippian peoples' traditional reverence for anomaly as a necessary and integral feature of Native social life.<sup>8</sup> Justice takes the term *anomaly* from anthropologist Charles Hudson, who defines anomalies as “those beings *and states of being* which fall into ‘two or more of their categories,’ and which are ‘singled out for special symbolic values’” (Justice 219). Examples of anomalies include “conventional creatures whose habitats, appearance, or behavior marked them as deviating from categorical clarity,” such as bats (four-legged fliers) and bears (four-legged creatures who can walk upright like humans); creatures who possessed an “ability to move between worlds,” such as “the kingfisher as a diving bird” and “the turtle as both an aquatic and terrestrial four-footed animal”; and creatures who possessed “special abilities or strength” (219–20).

Justice explains that “an anomalous reading looks to the constitutive significance of queerness,” which he defines as “the world-crossing powers of the anomalous being” (227). He employs the term *queer* for its “mercurial and transgressive resonance” and its inclusion of “gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, pansexuals, transgendered [sic] people, and straight folk with nonconformist sexual and gender behaviors and identities” (233). I concur with Justice's “insistence that a place of legitimized queerness *matters* to Native cultures, and . . . to both tribal politics of sovereignty and a sovereignty of aesthetic (and erotic) expression” (208), and I suggest that *No Turning Back* represents the bridge, the third space of the in-between, as such a place for Polingaysi, whose Hopi traditions were seemingly intolerant of her anomalous gender expression. We can read Polingaysi as queer, at the very least, in her avoidance of marriage and motherhood, lifestyles to which Hopi women were expected

to conform. But her practice of gender indiscipline exceeds her refusal to marry and have children; it reveals that she neither immersed herself in Hopi traditions nor assimilated to Euro-American standards of gender normativity. Rather, she performed a politics of disidentification by bridging Hopi and white worlds and cultivating a third space in-between, a space of sovereign selfhood.<sup>9</sup>

An early review of *No Turning Back*, published in 1965 by anthropologist Leo W. Simmons, claims that Polingaysi was so “atypical” of Hopi women that her story is of little value to anyone seeking knowledge about authentic Hopi culture (1567). Simmons’s devaluation of Polingaysi’s story neglects the fact that the margin constitutes the center rather than being outside of or insignificant to it. A queer Indigenous reading reveals how Polingaysi’s gender indiscipline was precisely what suited her to serve her Hopi community by, in the words of the book’s longer subtitle, “*Bridg[ing] the Gap between the World of Her People and the World of the White Man*” (iii). Polingaysi created a space for herself where none previously existed, but her innovation need not be seen as selfish or non-traditional. Justice understands Native “tradition” as valuing

adaptation, not stasis or assimilation; inclusivity of the strengths of our differences, not rejectionist claims to false purity; a generous engagement of expansive kinship values, rather than a simple-minded adoption of the miserly ‘family values’ of division; and unflinching honesty in its attention to both historical and contemporary tribal realities, not a naïve adherence to ahistorical visions of some pure, unchanging, uncomplicated past or present that neither did nor does exist. (214)

Polingaysi engendered a space for herself to be Hopi *despite* her non-conformist expressions of gender. Although she was anomalous among her peers, she was fully Hopi and a significant member of her tribal community. To recognize her as such is part of a decolonial project of acknowledging tribal histories that legitimate and nurture social spaces for queer Natives.

In the following sections, I employ close reading to explore Polingaysi’s methods of gender indiscipline. First, in “Stowing Away,” I read her escapes from her mother’s home to attend colonial schools as attempts to evade Hopi gender role expectations, which indicate her subject position as an anomalous Hopi girl. Next, in “Surviving Torture,” I pro-

vide literary and historical contextualization for Polingaysi's strategies of surviving the torture she endured at Sherman Institute. My analysis of archival sources housed at the Sherman Indian Museum, such as the school newspaper, *The Sherman Bulletin*, illuminates the ways Polingaysi subverted the school's disciplinary demands of what Katrina A. Paxton calls "gender assimilation." Polingaysi continued to embody a bridge between Hopi and colonial communities throughout her life. My concluding section, "You of Coyote Clan," illustrates how Polingaysi's practice of gender indiscipline served her in her later occupations as a college student, Indian teacher, and mediator of non-Hopi presence on the reservation. By narrating Polingaysi's enactment of sovereign selfhood through her decolonial praxis of gender indiscipline, I hope to demonstrate how *No Turning Back* functions as a testament to her Hopi integrity and decolonial legacy.

STOWING AWAY: EVASION AS A  
QUEER SURVIVAL STRATEGY

Federal officials working to recruit Hopi students to H. R. Voth's Menonite day school disrupted Hopi childrearing practices, which included observation of elders at work, hands-on instruction, and participation. The issue of schooling fomented factions among the Hopi people. While some Hopi parents sent their children to the day school willingly, school authorities enlisted black soldiers and armed Navajo policemen (traditional Hopi enemies) as truancy officers to forcibly take children from the homes of resistant parents. *No Turning Back* portrays Polingaysi's mother, Sevenka, as resistant; Sevenka laments: "The *Bahana* [white man] does not care how we feel toward our children. They think they know everything and we know nothing . . . It is not the Hopi way of caring for children, this tearing them from their homes and their mothers" (18). In order to learn the responsibilities and roles of Hopi girls within the matriarchal social structure, Sevenka required Polingaysi to remain close to home, hiding beneath sheep pelts or in underground kivas when necessary to evade truancy officers.

*No Turning Back* indicates that Polingaysi always harbored an aversion to the domestic labor for which Hopi girls were responsible and in which they took pride in performing. For example, Polingaysi "had never . . . been willing to consider" learning the art of weaving "reed

and yucca plaques,” which “Hopi girls from time immemorial had learned . . . as a matter of course” (51). Although her sister “Anna had been an apt and willing student,” “Polingaysi had been too restless, too filled with projects of another nature to learn such sedentary work” (51). The text neglects to name this otherness, which Sevenka disdains: “‘Always you must be doing something different,’ her mother sighed” (52). Polingaysi’s preference for “projects of another nature” marks a specifically gendered “differen[ce]” that was out of place in traditional Hopi society.

Polingaysi did not share her mother’s value of clinging to tradition in the face of colonial incursion. *No Turning Back* portrays Polingaysi as having desired to attend school. By narrating Polingaysi’s departure from home as a choice, the text casts her not as a victim of colonial authority but rather as an agent of her own destiny. After her sister was captured and taken to the day school by truancy officers, Polingaysi became lonely for her friends and curious about their activities. Polingaysi was weary of hiding, and she experienced nostalgia for her “old self,” a self that “had been as free and unhampered as the wandering wind” (22). She descended the mesa trail—without parental permission or colonial force—and entered the school: “No one had forced her to do this thing. She had come down the trail of *her own free will*. . . she went into that schoolhouse . . . because *she desired to do so*” (24, my emphasis). When Polingaysi returned home and confessed to her mother where she had been, Sevenka chastised her for acting on her personal desire: “‘You self-willed, naughty girl! You have taken a step . . . away from your Hopi people. You have brought grief to us . . . You have brought this thing upon yourself, and there is no turning back’” (26). Sevenka’s admonition implies that by going to the Mennonite day school, Polingaysi had committed herself to assimilating with colonial culture, and that there could be “no turning back” to true or authentic Hopi ways.

Polingaysi’s transgression was, in particular, a gendered one, and she continued to attend the day school, spending more time in Voth’s church and less time in her mother’s house. Some years later, in 1906, when Polingaysi was about fourteen years of age, she learned that a wagon was bringing a group of Hopis to an Indian boarding school in Riverside, California. Since Polingaysi’s parents would not permit her to join them, as historian Margaret D. Jacobs writes, she ran away from home and “stowed herself away in” the wagon “bound for Sherman Institute”

(48). Inverting her mother's prior command that she hide to evade truancy officers, Polingaysi premeditated her departure to Sherman Institute and carried out her plan by hiding: "Before daylight she crept out, snatched up her bundle, and fled . . . crouched beneath the wagon seat, hoping no one would discover her" (53).

*No Turning Back* clearly narrates Polingaysi's departure as an escape; what the narrative obscures in rhetorical silence, or "autobiographical disruption," to use Raheja's phrase, is the precise reason why Polingaysi ran away from home. Jacobs surmises that once she was discovered hiding in the wagon, Polingaysi "refused to get out" because she "looked forward to educational opportunities beyond the New Oraibi day school" (48). However, I find the potential for "educational opportunities" a dubious explanation for Polingaysi's flight. As K. Tsianina Lomawaima notes, federal boarding schools actually "limited educational opportunity" for Indian boys and girls by primarily training—and exploiting—them to perform manual labor and domestic service work, respectively (99). David Wallace Adams's account construes Polingaysi's departure as an act of simple disobedience; he characterizes Polingaysi as a "stubborn Hopi girl" "who had already defied her parents by attending the day school" and "was determined to do so again" (Adams, "Beyond" 37). Adams claims that the "fact" that Polingaysi "eagerly wanted to go off to boarding school . . . explain[s] her overall favorable attitude toward the whole experience" (38). His summary neglects Polingaysi's description of her experience at Sherman Institute as a "[t]ime of torture." So why was Polingaysi so eager to leave Hopiland, and how were her hopes disappointed when she arrived at Sherman Institute?

Marriage evasion seems like the most probable motive for Polingaysi's escape attempt. In 1906 Polingaysi was about fourteen years old—around the age at which Hopi girls traditionally prepare to become women: by definition, wives and mothers. According to anthropologist Byron Harvey III's observation, the Hopi language employs a single term for both "woman" and "wife" (212). Anthropologist Diane M. Notarianni also claims that it is not until a Hopi maiden "becom[es] a mother" that "she is socially recognized as a wuhti, or woman" (598). *No Turning Back* repeatedly states Polingaysi's desire to avoid marriage and motherhood. The potential for new experiences beyond the mesas may have been a secondary motive, but Polingaysi ran away primarily to shirk Hopi women's roles as wives and mothers.

Polingaysi's refusal to learn traditional Hopi industry and her self-willed attendance of the Mennonite day school in New Oraibi marked her as anomalous, or "different," from her Hopi peers (52). Alarmed and aggravated by her deviance, her parents and other members of the Hopi community commanded her to conform to the standards of "the true Hopi maiden," which included preparation for marriage and motherhood (52). Such expectations incited Polingaysi to leave Oraibi and pursue her own desires. Unfortunately, if marriage evasion or a desire for greater fluidity of gender expression inspired Polingaysi's decision to run away from home, she must have been sorely disappointed upon arriving at Sherman Institute. Although Hopi and Euro-American cultures differ in their respective matriarchal and patriarchal structures, a heteronormative imperative apparently existed in each. As I show in the next section, the school's Indian education policy of gender assimilation may have constituted much of the torture Polingaysi endured in Riverside. However, *No Turning Back* silences the exact source of her torture and highlights her survival strategies. By claiming personal responsibility for her situation at Sherman Institute, Polingaysi foregrounds her initial desire for displacement.

#### GENDER INDISCIPLINE AS DECOLONIAL PRAXIS

Recent scholarship in the field of queer Indigenous studies attends to the effects of settler colonialism and legacies of US imperialism on the erotic lives of Native peoples. In a landmark essay, "Stolen from Our Bodies: First Nations Two-Spirits/Queers and the Journey to a Sovereign Erotic," Qwo-Li Driskill theorizes a sovereign erotic as "an erotic wholeness healed and/or healing from the historical trauma that First Nations people continue to survive" (51). Driskill does "not see the erotic as a realm of personal consequence only" but rather acknowledges how our "relationships with the erotic impact our larger communities" and vice versa.<sup>10</sup> In *The Erotics of Sovereignty: Queer Native Writing in the Era of Self-Determination*, Mark Rifkin explores the ways self-identified queer Native authors draw on their most seemingly personal experiences, such as memories, as platforms from which to actualize political power and assert sovereign agency. Rifkin defines the erotic as a structure of feeling that encompasses yet is irreducible to the sexual; examples of the erotic include melancholy, shared history, connections to place, and other

embodied indicators of an individual's communal belonging. Remembering Polingaysi, in both senses of recalling and reassembling her life story, requires us to acknowledge her practice of gender indiscipline as an effect of her erotic power.

As a student at Sherman Institute, Polingaysi discovered that the world of the white man also expected women to perform domestic labor, marry, and bear children. By excelling as a scholar, who eventually became a renowned teacher of Indian pupils, Polingaysi disidentified with gender normativity in both Hopi and white worlds. Acting from a third space of transformative resistance—a sovereign selfhood—Polingaysi survived assimilation.

Adams characterizes Indian boarding schools as “assimilationist hot-houses” where Indian students were taught to dress, think, speak, and behave like would-be US citizens (“Beyond” 36). Authority figures at Sherman Institute enforced Euro-American norms of gender expression and conduct; for example, girls were required to wear restrictive Victorian dresses, were physically restricted to the school campus, and were expected not only to marry and bear children but also to subordinate themselves to the dominion of men and Euro-Americans in a patriarchal and racist society. Paxton offers the term *gender assimilation* to articulate how school officials at Sherman Institute

established a gendered campus and curriculum . . . separated boys and girls, while female and male teachers encouraged Native American girls to accept the place of women within the dominant society. They did not want Indian girls to develop into professional women . . . The school curriculum provided opportunities for girls to become dressmakers, cooks, and servants. (174)

Although Paxton claims that the “belief that a woman’s place [is] in the home” is generally a “non-Native belief,” it likely resonated for Polingaysi as a white version of her mother’s expectations that she get married and become a mother in her own right (174).

Lomawaima explains how federal boarding schools’ demand for gender assimilation, which “pressed Indian students into a strictly homogeneous mold of uniform dress and appearance,” upheld the US government’s “quest to individualize the tribal consciousness” (99). “The seeming contradiction” between homogenizing and individualizing Indian students, Lomawaima continues, “is no real paradox” because the “federal practice

of organizing the obedient individual” through strictly enforced codes of bodily comportment and conduct coincided with federal “policy aimed to disorganize the sovereign tribe” (99). Emphasizing the straightening effect of such individualizing policies, Rifkin claims that Indian boarding schools operated according to a “romance plot” that “impose[d] a detribalizing teleology” by encouraging Indian students to pursue companionate marriage characterized by an “isolating passion between individuals” who would leave their tribal communities and assimilate with dominant American culture by living as a nuclear family in a privatized home (“Romancing” 29). To understand Polingaysi’s story, it is important to acknowledge a shared imperative for women to marry, bear children, and lead domestic lifestyles within both US and Hopi ideologies. Meeting the same dreaded expectations in both cultural contexts, Polingaysi eked out a space for herself between these two arenas.

I wondered if the archives at Sherman Indian Museum might shed light on the torture Polingaysi suffered in Riverside and help illuminate her methods of survival. Matthew Sakiestewa Gilbert, author of *Education beyond the Mesas: Hopi Students at Sherman Institute, 1902–1929*, explains that he “looked in the *Sherman Bulletin*. . . various letterpress books and other school records, but . . . never came across [Polingaysi’s] name” (“Search”). So when I began my archival research for this project, I had low expectations of finding much information about Polingaysi’s time at the school. Museum archivist Lorene Sisquoc suggested that I speak with Hattie Lomayesva (Hopi), a retired teacher who currently volunteers at the museum. When I introduced myself to Hattie, I held out my copy of *No Turning Back*, the cover of which depicts Polingaysi as an adult surrounded by several of her young Hopi students. I asked Hattie, “Do you know about this author?” Hattie reached out her hand, touched the image of a child in the foreground, and declared, “That’s me! I remember when that picture was taken. I sure loved that sailor dress.” Hattie confided that Polingaysi had been the teacher of her class for beginners at the Hopi day school in New Oraibi. “I was surprised to have an Indian teacher. I thought only white people could be teachers,” Hattie recalled. Like Polingaysi, Hattie attended college and pursued a career in teaching. Hattie’s memories of Polingaysi’s influential teaching encouraged my search.

Together, Hattie and I perused the student registration ledgers from

1905 to 1907, as *No Turning Back* claims that Polingaysi was born around 1892 and enrolled at Sherman at age fourteen. We discovered, as had Sakiestewa Gilbert before us, the absence of any entrance for “Polingaysi Qoyawayma.” We looked for “Bessie Qoyawayma” because *No Turning Back* mentions that school authorities at the Oraibi day school had renamed Polingaysi as Bessie. Finding nothing, Hattie suggested that I search for “Bessie Polingaysi” because Hopi people do not traditionally use surnames; Qoyawayma was the name of Polingaysi’s father. Still, we met silence. Finally, with Lorene’s insight that administrators were often careless with spelling, we found Polingaysi in the B section of the ledger, misspelled as “Boliangaisy, Bessie,” a “full” blood “Moqui [Hopi]” female from Oraibi, Arizona, who was enrolled at Sherman on November 29, 1906, at the supposed age of thirteen (her precise birth date is unknown) (Registration Ledger).

I share this anecdote because the absence of evidence of Polingaysi’s time at Sherman, which we originally confronted in the archive, in the end did not equate positive evidence of Polingaysi’s absence from the archive. Rather, it indicated that we researchers did not yet know what we were looking for. We found it only through the process of searching together. This, I think, is how queer Natives may find the legitimate social spaces we seek.

Finding is a form of remembering. Hattie’s, Lorene’s, and my collective discovery, our recovery, enabled me to find Polingaysi’s presence in the school’s student-printed newspaper, the *Sherman Bulletin: Devoted to the Interests of Sherman Institute*. Relevant *Bulletin* articles contextualize Polingaysi’s life story and lend insight into the significance of her rhetorical silences. For example, *Bulletin* articles regarding the school’s outing program clarify Sherman’s enforcement of gender assimilation through a sexual division of labor. During summer vacations, school authorities encouraged male and female students to secure employment in agricultural and domestic labor positions, respectively.<sup>11</sup> The *Sherman Bulletin* reveals that local residents relished Sherman students as cheap laborers, and the school encouraged Indian girls to accept positions as low-wage domestic workers serving white citizens: “Many of our patrons are making application . . . for the same girl they had last year. This shows that the girls did their work well and is quite gratifying to Sherman.”<sup>12</sup> Another *Bulletin* stated, “Since the available supply

of Sherman girls [has] been exhausted, application[s] for their services in homes have been filed daily.”<sup>13</sup> The commodification of female students as an “available supply” to fulfill consumer demands for domestic servicers represents Sherman’s primary investment in Indian children’s capacity as laborers, not intellectuals. If Polingaysi’s flight from home had been motivated by a desire to evade domestic labor and restrictive gender roles, obviously she would have been sorely disappointed and perhaps disillusioned to discover Sherman’s plans for her.

While the outing program trained Sherman students to accept inferior economic positions due to their Indian race, the sexual division of labor at the school disciplined female students according to the expectation that they would become wives. Indian boarding schools like Sherman often enforced a sexual double standard that fomented a sense of gender division between boy and girl students. As Lomawaima explains, school authorities allowed boys to roam campus while confining girls indoors; scrutinized girls’ bodies, hairstyles, dress, and behavior more closely than boys’; and trained boys in agricultural and vocational trades while teaching girls that “you’re a woman, you’re going to be a wife” (85). This structure institutionalized the subordination of girls to boys in order to prepare students for marriage in a heteropatriarchal system. A *Sherman Bulletin* article titled “Training for Sherman Boys and Girls at the Ranch” describes the model homestead located several miles from the school’s campus and explains that “[t]he boys are required to perform manual labor” while “the household duties, or *ranch wife’s duties*,” are “performed by the girls . . . just what the Indian boys and girls need.”<sup>14</sup> The *Bulletin* also regularly printed praise for students and alumni who united in marriage—too many, in fact, to bother citing. Such accolades would not have been available to Polingaysi, who, as *No Turning Back* plainly reports, “had never been seriously attracted to any young man” (70). The colonial romance plot scripted marriage as the happy ending for educated Indian students, effectively queering Polingaysi, who had no desire to wed.

The school newspaper also publicized students’ performances of gender assimilation by printing the results of the boys’ and girls’ industrial examinations. In January 1908 Polingaysi (misspelled as “Bessie Bolingasie”) scored 61 percent in “Primary Sewing.”<sup>15</sup> In March of that same year, she (misspelled as “Bessie Boliangaisy”) scored 91 percent in “Dining Room Work”; she was one of six A students in this class of twenty-

four girls.<sup>16</sup> Rather than indicating her successful gender assimilation, the 30 percent improvement in Polingaysi's exam scores from January to March was most likely due to the difference in subject matter. Among the Hopi, sewing is traditionally men's work, so her low score on the sewing exam perhaps illustrates the fact that she had little to no previous training in the skill. In his ethnological report H. R. Voth writes, "Dresses . . . are worn by all Hopi maidens and women. The material is prepared and the dress is made by the men . . . wool . . . is carded, spun and dyed . . . and woven and worked up by the men" (24, 33). Historian Cathy Ann Trotta also writes in her unpublished dissertation on the Voths' Mennonite mission that Martha Moser Voth's sewing circle for Hopi women "crossed gender lines, since . . . sewing was traditionally a male activity at Hopi" (144-45). Sherman's Euro-American domestic science curriculum effectually queered Polingaysi (and Hopi culture in general) by marking her as inept at the civilized girl's task of sewing.

Despite her early lack of skill, Polingaysi improved to become an adept seamstress, and her new attachment to sewing queered her to her Hopi community, where weaving and textile production are traditionally men's work. When Polingaysi prepared for her homecoming, she packed clothes that "were neat and new, products of her skill in sewing. A sewing machine would be one of her first purchases, she promised herself. She would make good clothes for her mother and the younger children" (67). *No Turning Back* implies that Sevenka disapproved of Polingaysi's textile productivity because she considered it to be part of the "white man's way of living," a lifestyle that did not coincide with traditional Hopi gender roles (67). By offering to produce clothing for her mother and siblings, Polingaysi attempted to assume a Hopi man's role.

While Polingaysi disidentified with the sexual division of labor at Sherman by embracing a traditionally male line of Hopi work, she also resisted the school's romance plot by constructing community beyond gendered borders through the practice of singing. In "Song, Poetry, and Language—Expression and Perception," Acoma Pueblo writer Simon J. Ortiz speaks of song as simultaneously receptive and performative. Ortiz argues that "[l]anguage as expression and perception" lies "at the core of what a song is" (108). He expresses doubt that "there is much of a division except arbitrary" between these two modes and explains that "[y]ou perceive by expressing yourself" (109, 117).<sup>17</sup> Ortiz writes that song is

an opening from inside yourself to outside and from outside yourself to inside but not in the sense that there are separate states [or fragments] of yourself. Instead, it is a joining and an opening together [as a bridge joins both sides of a chasm] . . . the song is part of the way you're supposed to recognize everything . . . the singing of it is a way of recognizing this all-inclusiveness . . . It is basically a way to understand and appreciate your relationship to all things. The song as language is a way of touching. (114)

By touching her audience through the language of song, Polingaysi understood and expressed her relationship to all things, creating a sense of communal belonging despite her anomalousness or gender queerness. Through the transformative practice of singing, Polingaysi created relationships based on communal pleasure rather than on heterosexual romance. Such sensual relations transcended the boundary between herself and others, deconstructing the binaries of Hopi/white and community/individual and fomenting a sense of belonging—to the students, to the school, and to the Hopis—founded on the shared experience of pleasure.

Polingaysi's vocal performances subverted the school's disciplining of students' gender assimilation. A December 1908 article of the *Sherman Bulletin* inscribes some of the compliments Polingaysi's singing inspired: the "program . . . was very entertaining . . . The student body sang in bright, buoyant spirit . . . One of the most pleasing features was the double number sung by Bessie Bolaingaisy, who shows much talent and promise in the quality and strength of her voice."<sup>18</sup> This public praise of Polingaysi's vocal "talent" and future "promise" remarks, significantly, on her voice's "quality" and "strength," contradicting the school's general advisement for girls to cultivate soft, ladylike voices. In a September 1909 *Bulletin* article titled "For the Girls" an omniscient narrator asks, "Girls, do you know that there is no adornment quite so becoming as a sweet voice?"<sup>19</sup> This article encourages girls to "cultivate a soft, low voice" because such is "the mark of a lady," and a "sweet voice for speaking is as much to be desired as a sweet voice for singing."<sup>20</sup> Claiming that vocal utterance marks the difference between "real ladies" and "common" women, the article asserts that those who "speak in loud, harsh, rasping voices" are "not *real* ladies."<sup>21</sup>

Polingaysi's memories of her vocal performances at school, recorded

in *No Turning Back*, recall her survival strategy of singing for and with others as a practice that created new communities in an alien context and simultaneously secured her connections with Hopi people and culture, albeit in her anomalous way. As Sakiestewa Gilbert explains, song was significant to Polingaysi because it connected her to her mother, Sevenka, who was a member of the Mazhrau, a Hopi women's religious singing and dancing society (106). However, Mazhrau society membership was contingent on one's social status as a woman/wife, so the opportunity for public self-expression through song would not have been available to Polingaysi. *No Turning Back* tells how Sevenka "composed songs regularly" for the Mazhrau society "and at one time composed a song which was used for years afterward by the [male] Niman Dancers . . . This was a stepping out of her woman's place to compete with men" (60). This detail evidences the potential for some fluidity of gender roles at Hopi. However, Sevenka's freedom to compete with men nonetheless resulted from her overall compliance with the parameters of women's gender norms of marriage and maternity and her resultant social status as a wife and mother. The *Sherman Bulletin* provides further indication that, in general, performance of traditional Hopi songs was restricted to boys. Polingaysi's Oraibi village chief, Tewaquaptewa, attended Sherman at the same time she did. The *Bulletin* records several instances of Tewaquaptewa leading his followers, who appear to have consisted solely of Hopi boys, in performances of Hopi song and dance for various audiences, including Sherman students, tourists, and Riverside citizens; a convention of Indian teachers in Los Angeles; visiting government officials; and even a music critic who wanted to hear Native songs.<sup>22</sup>

Polingaysi's vocal performances at Sherman signified more than mere musical talent. "Her singing," *No Turning Back* notes, "was a means of communication, beyond language, leaping all barriers," and especially the borders of normative gender (104). Through gender indiscipline, Polingaysi asserted her difference from typical Hopi girls yet related herself to them by going away to school and learning the skills necessary to later serve them as a cultural bridge who mediated relations among Hopi and non-Hopi people. Polingaysi's decolonial praxis enabled her to thrive at boarding school and paved the way for future coalitional politics.

YOU OF COYOTE CLAN: POLINGAYSI'S  
DECOLONIAL LEGACY

[Polingaysi's] former Sherman schoolmates had returned, married, and were living the traditional life. She was still reaching out for education. What for? they . . . asked . . . Sometimes she asked herself that very question: what for? Why, she thought, should she be so determined to learn, and learn, and learn?

Polingaysi Qoyawayma, *No Turning Back*, 116

As her years of schooling at Sherman drew to a close, Polingaysi contrasted herself with her Hopi classmates and acknowledged her anomalousness. "She almost envied the girls who looked forward to returning home and taking up the old ways" because she guessed that, unlike herself, "they would be content with home and children and routine duties" (66). From the first, Polingaysi eschewed marriage and motherhood, which she avoided by attending Sherman. The prospect of returning to Hopi presented her with the very challenges she had faced as an adolescent runaway.

On the day Polingaysi returned to Oraibi after spending three years at Sherman, Sevenka wasted no time broaching the subject of her daughter's marriageability. Presenting Polingaysi with "a stack of beautiful plaques," Sevenka declared, "These I have made for your wedding . . . You have reached that age. You must begin to think about taking a mate" (69). Polingaysi balked at this prospect: "Marriage! It had not entered Polingaysi's mind" (69). The narrative explains that Sevenka's command "was appalling to Polingaysi," who was not "willing to become a living seed pod for her Hopi people . . . she had never been seriously attracted to any young man . . . And for no man . . . would she grind corn on her knees" (70). Ignoring her stated lack of romantic desire for men, some critics interpret this passage as an indication that Polingaysi considered marriage to constitute a breach of her liberation from men—an autonomy granted by the benevolent colonial influence of white teachers and field matrons who devoted their efforts to "uplifting" benighted Indian drudges and instilling progressive feminist ideals.

In a chapter titled "Uplifting Indian Women," Margaret D. Jacobs compares the autobiographies of Polingaysi Qoyawayma, Helen Sekaquaptewa, and Maria Martinez to advance her argument that white edu-

cators and field matrons imbued Pueblo women with a sense of the importance of becoming educated and financially independent. Jacobs proposes that Polingaysi “probably had not acquired her yen for independence and her aversion for domesticity among the Hopis in Oraibi. Rather her white women teachers, many of whom . . . shared . . . ambivalence about domesticity and who themselves never married, may have imbued her with a criticism of women’s domestic role within late-nineteenth-century Victorian marriages” (Jacobs 53). I wonder why Jacobs assumes that Polingaysi’s independence must have been “acquired,” contradicting her observation that “[b]efore ever attending American schools, Qoyawayma . . . already evinced a rebelliousness and independence” (52). By claiming that “encounters with white women had led [Polingaysi] to . . . shape a unique, multicultural view of womanhood,” Jacobs renders white women as Polingaysi’s emancipators from a stifling Hopi gender normativity and effaces *No Turning Back*’s narration of Polingaysi’s subjective agency (54). I privilege the narrative’s account of Polingaysi’s personal desire.

When Polingaysi rejected her mother’s proffered wedding implements, she credited her own aspirations as reasons for doing so. Sevenka tried to reason with her daughter: “You are a woman,’ her mother said, her voice uncertain. ‘You should have a man and babies. You should have a home of your own’” (70). The “uncertain[ty]” of Sevenka’s voice indicates her understanding that Polingaysi’s desires differed from those of typical Hopi women. In response, Polingaysi declared, “I intend to have a home of my own . . . I will build a home for myself some day” (71). This statement would alarm a traditional Hopi matriarch; as Albert Yava, a Tewa-Hopi, explains, “The man [husband] builds the house but the woman [wife] is the owner” (Trotta 105). “Sevenka looked steadily into the flushed and defiant face of her daughter, and her own face was sad. Whatever it was she saw there . . . made her turn away, weeping silently” (71).<sup>23</sup> This conversation between mother and daughter foregrounds Polingaysi’s rejection of Hopi gender roles, even as it silences the issue of her lack of romantic interest in men, which was likely a significant source of her aversion to marriage.<sup>24</sup>

I want to conclude by summarizing *No Turning Back*’s narration of Polingaysi’s life post–boarding school. The survival methods Polingaysi developed during her time at Sherman continued to serve her beyond her experiences at that institution. As a college student, Polin-

gaysi resisted the designs her white benefactors had for her to become a Christian missionary, and she used her schooling to pursue her own desires for musical training and financial independence. In her career as a teacher of Indian pupils, Polingaysi applied her extensive educational experiences to revolutionize federal Indian education policy by refusing to follow colonial authorities' rules of English-only instruction and pioneering ESL practices. Polingaysi incorporated Hopi pedagogy within—and often in replacement of—the Eurocentric curriculum in order to help her students learn Anglo-American language and culture *through* their Hopi knowledge. In her home and family life, Polingaysi established her subjectivity and belonging according to what Rifkin calls “the kinship plot,” an Indigenous counternarrative to the colonial romance plot (“Romancing” 44). The romance plot initiates “a process of breaking away from [one’s] family and tribe to create an independent household,” whereas the kinship plot “reaffirms [one’s tribal] identity . . . and underscores the fact that expansive notions of family suffuse . . . [tribal] relationships, providing a shared conceptual and political basis for individual and collective action” (44). Following “her desire to be different, to make a new place for herself in a world that sometimes seemed determined not to allow her a place in it,” Polingaysi located her self-designed home on the margins of New Oraibi, far from the center of village life (95). She fitted her large house with modern conveniences, such as electricity and indoor plumbing, and she operated her home as a sort of hotel or bed-and-breakfast that served her Hopi community by providing a buffer to mediate the influx of visiting tourists, archaeologists, scholars, and other outsiders brought in by the railroads and new government roads.

Polingaysi’s home/hotel nurtured “alternative figurations of home and family,” which Rifkin claims “contest the political economy of imperial domesticity” (*When* 148). Polingaysi became an adoptive parent who raised several of her nieces and nephews in her home. Additionally Polingaysi’s choice to open her home to strangers and her acquaintance with her visitors often led to lifelong kinship relationships and even political coalitions that benefited Hopi national interests. For example, she worked with philanthropists to endow a college scholarship fund for Hopi students—many of whom eventually served the Hopi nation as lawyers, tribal politicians, or federal employees. In a letter to one of her visitor friends, Polingaysi describes her home as the “meeting place

of the outside world” where “people of all walks of life” gathered (Linder 3). Although her visitors were outsiders at Hopi, their status as such did not disqualify them from being regarded as kin. For Polingaysi, kinship includes all relations, regardless of colonial markers of difference. Polingaysi writes, “I want all my friends . . . to know of my gratitude and love for them. The white ones, the red ones, the black ones, the yellow ones. We are all one family, all leaves of the same tree” (Linder 145).<sup>25</sup> Polingaysi’s tree metaphor for her interracial family of friends evinces the kinship plot that structured her interpersonal relations. Polingaysi’s dealings with non-Hopi people, in her career and in her home life, contributed to her creation of a space from which she asserted Hopi ideologies of interconnectedness and relationality—qualities of sovereign selfhood.

Although many of Polingaysi’s contemporaries misconstrued her as an assimilationist for her involvement with non-Hopi people and settler colonial culture, she took pride in fulfilling her tribal obligations as a member of the Coyote clan. Polingaysi’s foreword to *No Turning Back* explains: “My grandmother . . . used to say: ‘It is to members of Coyote Clan that *Bahana* [white man] will come, within your day, Polingaysi . . . and you of Coyote Clan will be a bond between the *Bahana* and the Hopi people” (vi). Polingaysi asserts, “I . . . believe that her prophecy has been fulfilled” (vi). In her capacities as a student, a teacher, and a hotel keeper, Polingaysi realized her role as a mediator between the “two worlds” set at odds due to US imperialism. Throughout her life Polingaysi mitigated the violence of colonial incursion and performed her sovereign responsibility to protect Hopi interests by bridging gaps between Hopi and non-Hopi people. Despite—and in some ways because of—her anomalous gender, Polingaysi cultivated a sovereign selfhood and survived the assimilation era as an unequivocally Hopi person. Her life story, *No Turning Back*, is a testament to her legacy of decolonial transformation.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to express my gratitude for the assistance of Hattie Lomayesva and Lorene Sisquoc, who played key roles in the development of my archival research at Sherman Indian Museum. In acknowledging their cooperation, I must also clarify that my reading of *No Turning Back* does not represent anyone’s opinions or perspective but my own. Rooted in

the historiography of Indian boarding school texts, this study does not aim to provide a true or corrective account of Polingaysi's autobiography but rather seeks to highlight textual silences and archival erasures and to raise questions about the possibilities that may arise for future readers by remembering anomalous figures like Polingaysi. Any mistakes are my own.

#### NOTES

1. See Adams, *Education*.
2. As-told-to autobiography is a genre that is defined by a collaborative production process in which a so-called Indian informant orally narrates his or her life to a non-Indigenous amanuensis who transcribes, edits, and secures publishing for the story. Some critics argue that collaborative authorship compromises the representational authority that characterizes autobiography as a genre. For example, Gretchen M. Bataille and Kathleen Mullen Sands propose that the "best" way to engage as-told-to autobiography, due to its "problematical form," is to analyze the "process of its creation" rather than considering it "as an established genre" (3). In contrast, Stephanie Fitzgerald contends that this "scholarly emphasis on the process of creation" often has the effect of "obscur[ing] the Native voice, shifting the focus away from lived experience of the Native subject to that of the non-Native editor" (109). Fitzgerald encourages critics to "foreground Native agency in the process of collaboration" and to explore Indian women's use of "life-writing as a tool to interrogate and secure their legal and social identity as Indian women during an era of tremendous social change" (110).
3. Qoyawayma 26. I note subsequent citations of this text parenthetically.
4. I agree with Mark Rifkin's definition of *sovereignty*, which explains that "sovereignty is a translation," a term meant to articulate Native peoples' "existence as polities through a comparison to the logics and structures of the settler state . . . 'sovereignty' often is used to mark the rightful autonomy of [N]ative peoples—their existence as polities that precedes and exceeds the terms of settler-state jurisdiction" (Rifkin *When* 17).
5. See Bahr; Henze and Vanett; and Vučković.
6. In correspondence about the production process of *No Turning Back*, Carlson refers to the book as "our baby," indicating that she shared not only authorship but also kinship with Polingaysi (Linder 127). Furthermore, Polingaysi wrote the book's foreword in the first-person narrative voice; her opening statement suggests that she ultimately approved of Carlson's account of her narrative.
7. Michelle H. Raheja is not the only Native literary scholar who advocates a somewhat intuitive method for reading silences in as-told-to Indian autobiographies. Queer Indigenous scholar Craig Womack (Creek) offers "suspicioning" as a method for queer Native readers to reconcile their nonnormative subjectivities and desires for social legibility with their critical practices of interpreting queer signifi-

cances in Native American literatures. Womack's theory makes the crucial claim that silence surrounding queer Native identities and practices does not equate absence. See Womack.

8. Although Justice's theory of anomaly arises from a Southeastern Native-specific context, my reading of *No Turning Back* explores its potential transnational significance. As Justice explains, "until the Native folks familiar with queer tribal knowledge are less reluctant to talk about that information, we simply don't have a lot of community resources to draw on. The inevitable results of this lack of information are continuing silence—which clearly hasn't been a particularly productive strategy . . . or turning back to the extant ethnographic record and applying our own analytic lenses to them to the best of our ability, fully acknowledging the fact that any answers we come back with will always be partial and, to some degree, unsatisfying" (Justice 216).

9. Queer of color theorist José Esteban Muñoz theorizes disidentification as "a strategy that works on and against dominant ideology" to "transform" settler colonial "logic from within" (Muñoz 11). Disidentification is a third space of negotiating colonial situations that transcends the reductive paradigms of accommodation versus resistance, assimilation versus tradition, or identification (with colonial ideologies) versus counteridentification. Muñoz's theory of disidentification is useful for articulating the decolonial potential of Polingaysi's gender indiscipline. Native feminist and queer Indigenous theorist Andrea Smith notes that a "politics of disidentification can be helpful to the project of decolonization" because it "forces us to admit that we cannot organize from a space of political purity, that we have been inevitably marked by processes of colonization. When we no longer have to carry the burden of political and cultural purity, we can be more flexible and creative in . . . us[ing] the logics of settler colonialism against itself" (Smith 56).

10. Qwo-Li Driskill pays homage here to black feminist Audre Lorde; he claims, "I am in agreement with Audre Lorde when she writes, "Our erotic knowledge empowers us, becomes a lens through which we scrutinize all aspects of our existence, forcing us to evaluate those aspects honestly in terms of their relative meaning in our lives" (Driskill 51–52).

11. For more on the outing program, see Whalen.

12. "Local Items," *Sherman Bulletin* 1.12 (22 May 1907): 4.

13. "Local Items," *Sherman Bulletin* 1.15 (12 June 1907): 3.

14. "Training for Sherman Boys and Girls at the Ranch," *Sherman Bulletin* 1.17 (26 June 1907): 1; my emphasis.

15. "Industrial Examinations," *Sherman Bulletin* 2.1 (1 Jan. 1908): 3.

16. "Industrial Examinations," *Sherman Bulletin* 2.13 (25 Mar. 1908): 3.

17. Muñoz also speaks of the simultaneously receptive and performative aspects of singing as a metaphor for disidentification. He claims that the "utmost precision" that musicians employ in performance "is needed to rework that song, that story, that fiction, that mastering plot. It is needed to make a self . . . we hear and [at the same time] sing disidentification" (21).

18. "Thanksgiving Program," *Sherman Bulletin* 2.39 (2 Dec. 1908): 2–3.

19. "For the Girls," *Sherman Bulletin* 3.30 (29 Sept. 1909): 1.
20. "For the Girls"
21. "For the Girls"; my emphasis.
22. See "Hopi Song," *Sherman Bulletin* 1.1 (6 Mar. 1907): 1; *Sherman Bulletin* 1.11 (16 May 1907): 2; "General News," *Sherman Bulletin* 1.12 (22 May 1907): 3; and "General News," *Sherman Bulletin* 1.19 (11 Sept. 1907): 3.
23. The text I have excised here reads "—implacable opposition to all things Hopi, perhaps—" (71). I have omitted it because its presumption strikes me as Carlson's, not Polingaysi's. In this brief article I aim to highlight Polingaysi's voice and silence Carlson's interference.
24. The question remains: was Polingaysi attracted to, or romantically involved with, any woman? A study of Polingaysi's sexuality is beyond the scope of this paper, but I think it warrants future work, as many of the narrative's autobiographical disruptions obscure sexual issues. Such a project may prove productive for today's queer Indigenous scholars concerned with "Bringing 'Sexy Back' and Out of Native Studies' Closet" (Finley 31). Anthropological literature and historical archives indicate that alternative gender and sexual lifestyles may have been available for Hopi men, but the documentary record lacks any account of a counterpart role for Hopi women. Sabine Lang claims that "homosexual acts were commonplace, mainly among boys," but that "[f]emale homosexuality . . . was expressly denied among the . . . Hopi" (326, 328). Will Roscoe concurs: "Alternative roles for males (but apparently not females) existed among the . . . Hopi" (16).
25. I found these letters in an esoteric collection of independently printed and bound letters, anecdotes, drawings, photographs, and poems, titled *When I Met Polingaysi underneath the Cottonwood Tree* (1983), a source that has proven to be invaluable for my understanding of Polingaysi's coalitional strategies of mediating the presence of non-Hopi visitors to the reservation. The solicitor, collector, and editor of this laudatory, living eulogy was a female friend of Polingaysi's named Jo Linder, who contacted each person listed in Polingaysi's guestbook to solicit testimonials of her significance to them.

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