NOTES

Abbreviations
BIA Bureau of Indian Affairs
CA Canton Asylum for Insane Indians
CCF Central Classified Files
CPL Canton Public Library, Canton, SD
KA Keshena Agency
NARA-CP National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD
NARA-D National Archives and Records Administration, Denver
NARA-DC National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.
NARA-FW National Archives and Records Administration, Fort Worth
NARA-KC National Archives and Records Administration, Kansas City, MO
PA Potawatomi Agency
RCUA Records of the Consolidated Ute Agency
RG Record Group
SA Sisseton Agency
SDSA South Dakota State Archives

Introduction
2. The name of the Office of Indian Affairs changed in 1947 to the Bureau of Indian Affairs. This book will primarily refer to the bureau by its current name. For histories of the BIA, see Kvasnicka and Viola, Commissioners of Indian Affairs; and Philp, John Collier’s Crusade for Indian Reform.
10. These themes align with what Vine Deloria Jr. (Standing Rock Sioux Tribe) describes as a “bunch”—topics that “are not neat, clean, and clear areas of concern. Rather they are intangible and emotional aspects of American Indian concerns that are not often
reduced to a structural framework with a larger area of policy considerations.” Deloria, “Introduction,” American Indian Policy in the Twentieth Century, 7.

11. “RBC Taylor Emerging Writer Award Leanne Simpson.”


15. See, for example, “Christopher Estate Sold to United States for Indian Asylum”; and “Prosperity at Canton,” 1.


18. As some historians have argued, European colonization and domination in North America contributed directly to the decimation of Native populations. According to one estimate, fewer than 237,200 American Indians were living in the United States by 1900. Thornton, American Indian Holocaust and Survival, 42–43, 64. See also Berger, Long and Terrible Shadow, 28–29, chap. 3 passim. Estimates of Indigenous populations pre- and post-1492 remain highly contentious. See, for example, Denevan, Native Population of the Americas in 1492; and Thornton, “Population History of Native North Americans,” 9–50. Federal attacks on Indigenous nations’ medical-spiritual autonomy (another site of sovereignty battles) have ranged from disparagement and dismissal to outright legal bans on Indigenous practices. See Goodkind et al., “We’re Still in a Struggle,” 1033. See also D. Lewis, Neither Wolf nor Dog.

19. For more on sovereignty, see Kauanui, “Precarious Positions,” 1–27; A. Cobb, “Understanding Tribal Sovereignty,” 118 and passim; Barker, Sovereignty Matters; Womack, Justice, and Teuton, Reasoning Together; V. Deloria and Lytle, Nations Within; Mallon, Decolonizing Native Histories; Biolsi, “Imagined Geographies”; Kirwan, “Mind the Gap,” 42–57; and Churchill, Struggle for the Land. For details why settler colonialism is a useful framework to historians, see Hoxie, “Retrieving the Red Continent,” 1153–67. For more on


24. Critical disability studies scholar Chris Chapman identifies similar rhetorical patterns and contexts of settler colonialism and ableism in the long reach of Canada’s Indian residential schools in “Colonialism, Disability, and Possible Lives.”

25. It appears that many materials already were lost not only through poor record keeping but also through the general devaluing of the people who were incarcerated at Canton (and of their families). For more on dynamics of power and archives, see Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*; and Fuentes, *Dispossessed Lives*.

26. I am grateful to Lisa Kahaleole Hall, Eli Clare, Pemina Yellow Bird, Faith O’Neil, Napos, Lavanah Judah, Katherine Ott, Bobby Buchanan, Jessica Cowing, Adria Imada, Caroline Liefers, Sarah Whitt, Corbett O’Toole, and Regina Kunzel for extended conversations about the ethical aspects of this kind of research. See also Reaume, “Posthumous Exploitation?”; Burch and Richards, “Methodology”; Nielsen and Burch, “Disability History”; Roman et al., “No Time for Nostalgia!,” 17–63; and Fuentes, *Dispossessed Lives*.


30. Elizabeth Fe Alexis to Commissioner, May 22, 1922, Box 16, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.

31. Like many disability studies scholars, I use the term “bodymind” to resist simple binaries (i.e., “body vs. mind”) and to underscore the interdependence of physical and mental processes. For more on the concept of bodymind, see Kafer, Feminist, Queer, Crip; Price, Mad at School; Clare, Brilliant Imperfection; Schalk, Bodyminds Reimagined; and Imada, “A Decolonial Disability Studies?” For more on mad studies and mad activism, see the website Mad in America.


35. Yellow Bird, “Wild Indians,” accessed December 17, 2014; Yellow Bird interview, November 12, 2019; Waldram, Revenge of the Windigo; Senier, “Rehabilitation Reservations”; Weaver, “Perspectives on Wellness,” 5–17; Whitt, “False Promises”; Gough,
“Colonization and Madness.” I also thank Pemina Yellow Bird, Menominee elder Napos (David Turney Sr.), and Rosebud Sioux Tribe archaeologist Ben Rhodd for insights on Indigenous medicines compared to Western psychiatric concepts.


37. Cowing, “Obesity and (Un)fit Homes”; Cowing, “Settler States of Ability.” For more on disability justice and critiques of settler ableism, see Sins Invalid, Skin, Tooth, and Bone; Mingus, Leaving Evidence (blog); Clare, Brilliant Imperfection; and T. Lewis, “Ableism 2020.”

38. As with other systems of power, ableism emerges and manifests differently across time and places. Scholars and activists also offer expansive definitions and critiques of ableism. See Lieffers, “Imperial Ableism”; T. Lewis, “Ableism 2020”; Michalko and Titchkovsky, Rethinking Normalcy, 84, 251–52; Rohrer, “Ableism”; Kafer, Feminist, Queer, Crip; Campbell, Contours of Ableism; Dolmage, Academic Ableism; Scuro, Addressing Ableism; Nario-Redmond, Ableism; Taylor, Beasts of Burden; Schweik, “Disability and the Normal Body”; and Hunt-Kennedy, Between Fitness and Death. Environmental historian Traci Voyles’s concept of “wastelanding”—“a racial and spatial signifier that renders an environment and the bodies that inhabit it pollutable”—also intersects with settler ableism. Voyles, Wastelanding, 9.

39. This is also true of “sanism,” commonly defined as systemic discrimination and oppression toward people who are—or are perceived to be—mad, mentally ill, or insane. For more on sanism, see B. Lewis, “Mad Fight”; Wolframe, “Madwoman in the Academy”; and LeFrançois, Beresford, and Russo, “Destination Mad Studies.”

40. See, for example, Smithers, “Pursuits of the Civilized Man,” 245–72; Whitt, “False Promises”; TallBear, “Dossier: Theorizing Queer Inhumanisms,” 230–35; Trafzer and Weiner, Medicine Ways. For late-nineteenth-century and twentieth-century examples of settler colonialism and ableism, as well as Native resistance, see C. King, “The Good, the Bad, and the Mad,” 38; Schweik, “Disability and the Normal Body”; and Porter, “Progressivism and Native American Self-Expression.” Linda Tuhiwai Smith details both the crucial role of counterstories and the influence of settler colonialism on historical practices in Decolonizing Methodologies. For more on ableism and foundational ideas in North American history, including competence, normalcy, deviance, and citizenship, see Kafer, Feminist, Queer, Crip; Clare, Exile and Pride; Michalko and Titchkovsky, Rethinking Normalcy; Erevelles, “(Im)Material Citizens”; Nielsen, Disability History of the United States; and Rembis, Defining Deviance.


43. LeFrançois, Menzies, and Reaume, Mad Matters; Cahn, “Border Disorders”; Clare, Brilliant Imperfection; Kilty and Dej, Containing Madness; Burch and Joyner, Unspeakable; Rembis, Defining Deviance; Menzies and Palsys, “Turbulent Spirits,” 149–75; Samuels, Fantasies of Identification. See also Metzl, Protest Psychosis; B. Lewis, “Mad Fight”; and Lunbeck, Psychiatric Persuasion.

44. For a thoughtful reflection on this point, see Goodkind et al., “We’re Still in a Struggle,” 1022. See also Tuck, “Suspending Damage.”

46. Historian Mark Levene has called these forms of slow and sometimes subtler forms of violence “creeping genocide.” Levene, “Chittagong Hill Tracts,” 339–69. See also Levene, Genocide in the Age of the Nation State.

47. H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, September 29, 1926, Box 17, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.

48. In her study of activism, Indigenous ancestors, and haunting settler colonial spaces, historian Victoria Freeman has explained ancestors’ living presence this way: “The relationship between ancestors and descendants could best be described as based on reciprocity, one of the most fundamental Indigenous values, and one that promotes strength and continuance.” Freeman, “Indigenous Haunting in Settler Colonial Spaces,” in Boyd and Thrush, Phantom Past, Indigenous Presence, 232.

49. Barker, Native Acts, 224–28; Jacobs, Generation Removed, xxxiii; Lesser, “Caddoan Kinship Systems,” 260–71; Pickering, Lakota Culture, World Economy, 6; Kimmerer, Braiding Sweetgrass, 21, 37; Galloway, “‘The Chief Who Is Your Father,’” 254–78; Mintz and Kellogg, Domestic Revolutions; Child, Boarding School Seasons; Hyde, Empires, Nations, and Families; Justice, Our Fire Survives the Storm; Child, Holding Our World Together. Beth Piatote (Nez Perce) further notes: “During assimilation period the Indian family home relations served as the locus of settler-national efforts to diminish or eliminate the tribal-national polity. Policies such as child removal, compulsory boarding school, marriage regulation, and land allotment shattered Indian families and homeland alike.” Piatote, Domestic Subjects, 173.

50. Other examples include a daughter and mother from the Western Navajo Agency in Tuba City, Arizona; spouses from Crow Creek Sioux Reservation, South Dakota; siblings from the Chippewa Laona Agency in Wisconsin; Cherokee siblings from Union Agency, Muskogee, Oklahoma; and three generations of a Menominee family from Keshena, Wisconsin. For more on the ways that “family” as a heteropatriarchal concept has served settler colonialism both ideologically and materially, see Morgensen, Spaces between Us; L. Hall, “Strategies of Erasure,” 273–78; and A. Smith, “Queer Studies and Native Studies.” See also social theorist Patricia Hill Collins, “It’s All in the Family,” 62–82.

51. Charles Werner to Commissioner, November 11, 1910, RCUA, 44011, NARA-D. A more detailed explanation of this family’s experience appears in chapter 2.


53. Record of Marriage for Jesse Faribault and Mary Marlow, October 27, 1919, Registered No. 480, Sisseton, Roberts County, South Dakota Division of Census and Vital Records, Pierre; Marriage Index, 1905–14, and Marriage Certificates, 1905–49, South Dakota Department of Health, Pierre. In the early 1920s, Mary Marlow Faribault tended the home shared with Solomon, Annie, and Howard—Jesse and Elizabeth’s children. I thank Joe Rabon for sharing George Leo Marlow’s family history.
54. For example, Davis interviews, June 8–10, 2014; handmade map, ca. 2010–14, personal collection of Kay Davis; Gregory interviews, May 9, 2012, February 23, 2015, July 3, 2017, December 28, 2018, July 19, 2019; Gregory family photographs, personal collection of Anne Gregory; J. Jensen interviews, April 22, 23, 2017; October 3–5, 2019; bandolier, ca. 1890s, by O-Zoush-Quah; family quilt, Ancestry Project, ca. 1900–2019, personal collection of Jack Jensen; Faribault family scrapbook, 1960s–2019, personal collection of Faith O’Neil; Marlow family photographs, 1890s–1940s, personal collection of Joe Rabon; Mitchell interview, April 8, 2014; and Garcia telephone interviews, June 30, August 22, November 20, 2015, January 21, July 6, November 1, 2016, September 11, 2019, January 3, 28, 2020. For more on Native cultural innovations as a living tradition, see, for example, Ortiz, “Towards a National Indian Literature”; Wilson, Remember This!; Teuton, Red Land, Red Power, 24–25 and passim.

55. For more on the powerful role of place in Native American history and culture, see Johnson, “American Indians, Manifest Destiny, and Indian Activism”; Carlson, The Power of Place, the Problem of Time; Tuck and McKenzie, Place in Research; Lerma, “Indigeneity and Homeland”; C. Allen, Blood Narrative; and Lyons, X-Marks. See also Kaufman, Place, Race, and Story.

56. K. Tsianina Lomawaima describes these kinds of insights and historical sources as “the gifts.” Lomawaima, “To Remain an Indian,” 12. Historian Ava Chamberlain describes some of this methodology as an “indirect approach” that “shifts from an overemphasis on individuals to people inhabiting authentic relationships within families.” Chamberlain, Notorious Elizabeth Tuttle, 2–3. See also Stevenson, Life Beside Itself; Boyd and Thrush, Phantom Past, Indigenous Presence, 230; Carlson, The Power of Place, the Problem of Time, 112; and Burghardt, Broken.


58. See, for example, Vizenor, Manifest Manners; Vizenor, “Aesthetics of Survivance: Literary Theory and Practice,” in Survivance.

59. Vizenor, Manifest Manners, vii.


61. Definitions of “kin” include, “the group of persons who are related,” and, “one’s kindred, kinsfolk, or relatives, collectively.” OED Online, Oxford University Press, s.v. “kin,” accessed September 2014, www.oed.com (subscription required). For demographic histories, see Thornton, Studying Native America; and Jacobs, Generation Removed.

63. For more on Diné Nation history, see Iverson, *Diné*.
66. For more on Indigenous children and adoption, see Jacobs, *Generation Removed*; and Briggs, *Somebody’s Children*.
67. This process coincided with interventions by the U.S. government in the lives of other and overlapping groups, such as children and orphans, individuals accused of crimes, disabled persons, and poor people, through what geographer Jake Kosek calls “intimate entanglements”—seemingly disparate places, people, and issues that broad historical forces closely knit together. Kosek, *Understories*.
75. For example, James Herman, “Statement on Treatment of Patients at Canton Insane Asylum,” received June 17, 1915, Box 5, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC, 3; Susan Wishecoby to H. R. Hummer, June 14, 1925, Box 17, ibid.; letter, Peter Thomson Good Boy, trans. John Brown, February 19, 1917, Box 9, CA: Individual Patient Files, 1914–16, Decimal 414-580, Program Mission Correspondence, 1914–34, RG75, NARA-KC. I thank Mary G. Vickmark for her assistance in researching her relative Susan Wishecoby.

76. See, for example, Goffman, “Characteristics of Total Institutions”; and Goffman, Asylums.

77. See, for example, Reaume, “Mad People’s History,” 170–82; Rembis, Defining Deviance; Braslow, Mental Ills and Bodily Cures; McCandless, Moonlight, Magnolias, and Madness; Lunbeck, Psychiatric Persuasion; Grob, The Mad among Us; Deutsch, Mentally Ill in America; Jimenez, Changing Faces of Madness; Lasch, World of Nations, 7–12; Stiker, History of Disability; and Burch and Joyner, Unspeakable.

78. See, for example, Parsons, From Asylum to Prison; Jacobs, Generation Removed; Grob, “Public Policy and Mental Illnesses,” 425–56; Stern, Eugenic Nation; and Michael Rembis, “The New Asylums: Madness and Mass Incarceration in the Neoliberal Era,” in Ben-Moshe, Chapman, and Carey, Disability Incarcerated, 139–59.


82. Lomawaima, “To Remain an Indian,” 15.


84. O’Brien, Firsting and Lasting; Kelman, Misplaced Massacre; Lomawaima, “To Remain an Indian.”

Chapter 1

1. The author thanks Kay Davis for extended conversations about the map. After she walked on in December 2017, her family shared the photos of Kay and the map and granted permission for them to be included in this book.


8. White strands from other Great Sioux Nation reservation lands overlap this threaded trajectory, fanning out across the Great Plains and the map’s borders.

9. I thank Tamara St. John, Dianne Desrosiers, and the Sisseton Tribal Historic Preservation Office for their assistance with research on Alexis, Faribault, and Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate history.

10. Related government documents suggest she was born there as early as 1857. U.S. Census rolls place Mary Alexis in Minnesota prior to 1862. See, for example, Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900, RG 29, NARA-DC, Lawrence (town), Roberts (county), South Dakota, Roll 1554, p. 1B, Enumeration District 0284, microfilm #T623, 1854 rolls; Mary Alexis, SA, 1922, Indian Census Rolls, RG 75, NARA-DC, M595, Roll 511, line 5, microfilm; Mary Alexis, SA, 1899, ibid., Roll 508, p. 1, line 14; Mary Alexis, SA, 1913, ibid., Roll 509, line 5. Manzakoyakesuim had a son, Henry, born in 1886, but he did not survive. Alexis family, SA, 1888, ibid., Roll 507, lines 1–4. The family was in Spirit Lake (also known as Devils Lake), Dakota Territory, in 1889. Zihkanakoyake and Manzakoyakesuim, Devils Lake Agency, 1889, Indian Census Rolls, RG 75, NARA-DC, M595, Roll 94, p. 39, microfilm. For more on histories of the Great Sioux Nation, see Ostler, Plains Sioux and U.S. Colonialism; Utley, Last Days of the Sioux Nation; and Nurge, Modern Sioux.

11. The couple had parted ways. Zihkanakoyake remained at Spirit Lake. Manzakoyakesuim moved to and remained at the Sisseton Reservation.

12. Devens, “‘If We Get the Girls, We Get the Race,’” 160. Oneroad and Skinner also affirm that the Dakota language was the primary means of communication on the reservation in the nineteenth century. See Oneroad and Skinner, Being Dakota, 11.

13. See Devens, “‘If We Get the Girls, We Get the Race,’” 165; Hansen, Encounter on the Great Plains; Hyman, Dakota Women’s Work; Young Bear and Theisz, Standing in the Light; Rhodd conversations, August 17, 2017, November 9, 2019. One enrollment list from 1900 suggests that seventeen-year-old Elizabeth had married a Sioux man from Manitoba, Edward Walkingcloud, and that the couple was living with her siblings and mother. Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900, RG 29, NARA-DC, Lawrence (town),
Descendants of the people referred to in U.S. documents as Mary Alexis and Elizabeth Faribault know few details about the women’s immediate kin before the mid-1800s, and the fragmentary sources they possess primarily reflect white settlers’ interpretations rather than Dakota people’s.


17. Devens, “‘If We Get the Girls, We Get the Race,’” 160.

18. This was common across the Sisseton Reservation. In 1911, for example, virtually all of the churches on the reservation were ministered by Native clergymen who conducted services almost exclusively in the Dakota language. Meyer, *History of the Santee Sioux*, 322; Sneve, *That They May Have Life*, 31–32.

19. Solomon (b. 1901 or 1902), Stephen (b. 1903), Annie (b. 1904), Howard (b. 1909), and Gilbert (b. 1911). The name of one of the infants who died remains unknown. SA, 1912, Indian Census Rolls, RG 75, NARA-DC, M595, Roll 509, lines 1–6, microfilm; SA, 1911, ibid., line 7; SA, 1910, ibid., line 20; SA, 1913, ibid., lines 16–21. It is unclear how or when the couple lost their son Gilbert, but he likely had died by 1914.


21. For example, the federal government established the Courts of Indian Offenses in 1883, which especially targeted traditional ceremonies. The 1885 Major Crimes Act granted federal courts jurisdiction “over Indians who commit any of the listed offenses,” which profoundly undermined Native self-governance. The Major Crimes Act—18 U.S.C. § 1153.

22. This form of government had been in place since the 1880s, and had longer roots in Dakotah traditions.

23. Across his career as an agent for the BIA, Mossman consistently sought to curtail Indigenous practices. See for example Gooding, “‘We Come to You as the Dead,’” 1–14; Troutman, “The ‘Dance Evil,’” In *Indian Blues*, 58, 66, 71; D. R. Miller, “Mossman Administration,” 233–49.
24. United States Congress, Senate Committee on Indian Affairs: Claims of Sisseton and Wahpeton and Sioux Indians, “Hearing before the Committee on Indian Affairs, United States Senate, Sixty-third Congress, Second session on S. 113.”


26. Comaroff and Comaroff, The Dialectics of Modernity on a South African Frontier, 332; Arnold, Imperial Medicine and Indigenous Societies; Inglis, “Disease and the ‘Other,’” 385–406; Roman et al., “No Time for Nostalgia!,” 17–63; Hunt-Kennedy, Between Fitness and Death; Waldram, Revenge of the Windigo. Maureen Trudelle Schwartz, a scholar of Indigenous people and biomedicine, has added that, “As a result, contemporary medical pluralism everywhere involves hierarchical relations among medical subsystems . . . the aim was for allopathic medicine and Christianity to dominate and replace the indigenous systems.” Schwartz, “I Choose Life,” 28.


30. Elizabeth Alexis to Commissioner, May 22, 1922, Box 16, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.

31. See, for example, Burch and Joyner, Unspeakable; Ben-Moshe, Chapman, and Carey, Disability Incarcerated; Braslow, Mental Ills and Bodily Cures; Rossiter and Clarkson, “Opening Ontario’s ‘Saddest Chapter,’” 1–30; Szasz, Insanity, 250–51, 315–17; Grob, Mental Illness and American Society.

32. For example, H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, March 20, 1917, Folder 121232-1916, Box 296, SA, 722.1, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC; E. B. Merritt to John S. Noble, December 11, 1916, ibid.; E. B. Merritt to Alec Murray, December 27, 1918, ibid.; H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, November 18, 1918, ibid.; H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, July 8, 1918, Folder 121232-1916, ibid.; H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, January 22, 1927, Box 17, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.


34. P. Allen, Off the Reservation, 42. See also P. Allen, Grandmothers of the Light; Lovern and Locust, Native American Communities on Health and Disability, 51; Locust, American Indian Beliefs Concerning Health and Unwellness; Trafzer, Fighting Invisible Enemies; Crawford O’Brien, Coming Full Circle; Walker, DeMallie, and Jahner, Lakota Belief and Ritual; Manitowabi and Maar, “Coping with Colonization,” 145, 154–155; Angel, Preserving the Sacred; P. Allen, Sacred Hoop; Pengra and Godfrey, “Different Boundaries, Different
Barriers,” 36–53; Kills Small, “Lakota.” I also thank Menominee elder Napos for many conversations about Menominee medicine and commonalities with other Native medicine, understandings of well-being and its relationship to Native self-determination. Longtime archaeologist for Rosebud Sioux Tribe Ben Rhodd also provided extensive explanations of Lakota language, culture, and history.

35. Jesse Faribault to Commissioner, August 9, 1918, Folder 12132-1916, Box 296, SA, 722.1, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.

36. Mary Alexis to Commissioner Charles Burke, September 13, 1921, Folder 12132-1916, Box 296, SA, 722.1, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.

37. Elizabeth Alexis to Commissioner, May 22, 1922, Box 16, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.

38. See, for example, Mrs. Ed I. Whiting Sr. to BIA (petitioning for the discharge of her brother, referred to as James Herman), July 24, 1914, Box 14, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC; BIA Commissioner to Mrs. Ed I. Whiting Sr., August 25, 1914, ibid.; Charles Fisher to BIA (petitioning for the discharge of his wife), December 16, 1918, ibid.; and Mary L. Davis to BIA (petitioning for the discharge of her mother), June 4, 1917, ibid.

39. Letter, Jesse Faribault, June 12, 1918, Folder 121232-1916, Box 296, SA, 722.1, CCF 1907–1939, RG 75, NARA-DC.

40. Mary Alexis to Royal Johnson, January 10, 1927, Box 17, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.


42. W. C. Barton to Commissioner, April 22, 1922, Box 641, Kiowa Agency, 722.1, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.

43. W. C. Barton to Commissioner, April 22, 1922.

44. J. A. Buntin to Commissioner, April 24, 1922, Box 641, Kiowa Agency, 722.1, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC; H. R. Hummer to J. A. Buntin, May 8, 1922, ibid.

45. H. R. Hummer to J. A. Buntin, May 8, 1922.

46. “Amelia Moss” 39213, Saint Elizabeths Hospital form, January 15, 1934, Box 4, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC; J. A. Buntin to H. R. Hummer, May 22, 1922, Box 15, ibid.; H. R. Hummer to J. A. Buntin, May 8, 1922. Perspectives on a range of perceived mental disabilities presented a murky picture, both then and now. Hummer may have been suggesting that he and other medical professionals regularly applied this definition. Yet while leading American eugenicists in the 1920s commonly grouped people deemed “imbecile” and “insane” under broader categories of “defective,” most drew distinctions between what they considered to be cognitive impairments versus psychiatric disorders. The proliferation of colonies for the feebleminded separate from psychiatric facilities, for instance, both encouraged and responded to medically imposed and policed boundaries. Conflating imbecility with insanity, however, was an effective means of convincing people like Superintendent Buntin to incarcerate the young girl at Canton.

47. For example, Buntin, in a 1929 response to a survey about Kiowa Agency members held at Canton Asylum, told the BIA that only Amelia Moss, “who is really a child with very little mental capacity” was there. J. A. Buntin to Commissioner, October 14, 1929.
Box 641, Kiowa Agency, 722.1, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC. By this time, the superintendent was in communication with the Oklahoma Institute for the Feeble Minded. The institution had been opened since 1910 and admitted young boys and girls, but perhaps Buntin had not known about the state school. It is equally possible that Moss’s Indigeneity and citizenship status disqualified her from admittance to the Oklahoma institution. With the passage of the 1924 Indian Citizenship Act, individuals like Moss were legally considered citizens of the United States. It is probable that her family and others who may have known the girl advocated for her return to the community, or at least to a place closer to them. Relatives regularly petitioned the BIA with such requests. Longhat interviews, May 3, August 1, 2014; Jerz interviews, January 27, April 1, 2017, January 9, 2020.

48. Financial factors may have played a role in Moss’s retention at Canton. The Indian Asylum was a federal institution with federal funding. State institutions regularly resisted admitting Native people, arguing that the U.S. government was responsible for this population. Even though the Oklahoma institution was expanding rapidly in the late 1920s, they may not have had a vacancy available to a person institutionalized at Canton. Another scenario may have played out. In similar instances, Hummer often interceded, asserting his professional expertise and claiming that an individual was best served at his South Dakota asylum. He usually prevailed.

49. “Amelia Moss” 39213, Saint Elizabeths Hospital form, January 15, 1934, Box 4, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.


52. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, Asylum for Insane Indians, 55th Cong., 2nd sess., February 11, 1898, S. Rpt. 567, 2, https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.$b635600&view=2up&seq=736. For more on Pettigrew and South Dakota politics in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, see Risjord, Dakota.


Country”; “Only Asylum for Insane Indians in U.S.,” 18; “News and Gossip from Washington Departments,” 4; Willis, Dean, and Larsen, “First Mental Hospital for American Indians”; History of Lincoln County, South Dakota, 36–38.


58. The author thanks Smithsonian National Museum of American History intern Mariana Bellante for sharing her research work on Lincoln County history.

59. Olson, Norwegian, Swedish, and Danish Immigrants, 16.

60. Lovoll, Norwegians on the Prairie, 4 (summarizing Ingrid Semmingsen). See also Hansen, Encounter on the Great Plains, 60–73; G. Olson, “Yankee and European Settlement”; Blegen, Norwegian Migration to America, 499–501.

61. Iconically—if hyperbolically—depicted in Norwegian American author and Canton resident Ole Edvart Rølvaag’s Giants of the Earth (1924), Norwegian pioneers in the Dakotas lived the “Manifest Destiny” dream. Rugged determination and vast fertile land, in this storytelling, enabled protagonist Pers Hansa and his family to tame the West. As in the novel, many Norwegians traveled in kin groups to places like Lincoln County, playing central roles in establishing towns like Canton.

62. See “Birds-eye View of Canton,“ 2; Peterson telephone interviews, July 29, 2017, August 3, 2019; Canton, SD, photographs, personal collection of Omar F. Peterson, Canton, South Dakota; and Canton, SD, photographs, personal collection of Manfred Hill.

63. Lovoll, Norwegians on the Prairie, 6. See also Risjord, Dakota, 137–38; Hansen, Encounter on the Great Plains, 60–61 and chap. 2 passim; and Blegen, Norwegian Migration to America.

64. Barkanp, Immigrants in American History, 541.


66. See Holt, Indian Orphanages, 198; Trachtenberg, Shades of Hiawatha; Feagin, White Racial Frame; P. Deloria, Playing Indian; Lipsitz, Possessive Investment in Whiteness; and Painter, History of White People. See also Mihesuah, American Indians, 77–79.


68. It was and is an unexceptional story. Across the United States in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, many towns, libraries, church missions, and golf courses have invoked Hiawatha in their names. For more on the broader process of settler colonialism that this reflects, see O’Brien, Firsting and Lasting.
69. “Gain in Indian Insanity,” 44. See also “No Indian Lunatics,” 19; “Insane Asylum for Indians,” 5; Hummer, “Insanity among the Indians.”

70. “Gain in Indian Insanity,” 44. The quote is from the article, not directly from Oscar Gifford.

71. “Gain in Indian Insanity,” 44.


73. “Gain in Indian Insanity,” 44.

74. See, for example, Asylum for Insane Indians, Annual Report, 1920, SDSA, 2; Asylum for Insane Indians, Annual Report, 1922, SDSA, 2; Superintendent, Kiowa Agency, to H. R. Hummer, July 1, 1921, Box 15, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC; Superintendent, Fort Yuma Indian School, to H. R. Hummer, June 30, 1921, ibid.; Superintendent, Coshute Indian School, to H. R. Hummer, June 29, 1921, ibid.; H. R. Hummer to Commissioner (list of applications for admissions), June 2, 1921, ibid.; Asylum for Insane Indians, Annual Report, 1925, SDSA, 2. “The management of this institution, believing the same is not fulfilling its entire function, because it is not caring for all of the insane Indians in the United States, has prepared a tentative program of expansion.” H. R. Hummer, circular, June 21, 1921, Box 15, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC. See also “Asylum Needs Larger Quarters,” 17.

75. See, for example, “Home for Insane Red Men,” Portsmouth (NH) Herald. This 1906 article emphasizes the campus’s many trees and pastoral scenes in its description of the “home for the unfortunate.”

76. The building was 184 feet long and 114 feet wide at the center. Arms, “Asylum for Insane Indians.” An architectural drawing of Canton Asylum’s floorplan can be found in Middleton, “Supplanting the Medicine Man,” 141.

77. “New Hospital Building at Indian Insane Asylum,” 1. See also Laudenschlager, “Infamous Institution.”

78. “New Hospital Building at Indian Insane Asylum,” 1. See also Herbert T. Hoover, “Canton Asylum” (Vermillion, SD, 1984), Canton Insane Asylum File, CPL. The Hospital Building was located east of the Main Building. Sioux Valley (SD) News, July 23, 1915, ibid., 4.

79. Examples include Leahy, They Called It Madness; Joinson, Vanished in Hiawatha; Dilenschneider, “Invitation to Restorative Justice,” 105–28; and Benson, “Keepers of the Canton Indian Asylum Share History.” See also the romance novel based on Canton Asylum history, Eagle, Sunrise Song; and “Hiawatha Asylum’s Dark Past Featured in Romantic Novel,” 5.

80. PA, Indian Census Rolls, 1908, RG 75, NARA-DC, M595, Roll 393; PA, Indian Census Rolls, 1920, RG 75, NARA-DC, M595, Roll 210, p. 19.

81. According to one story, a vision of a menacing county sheriff rising up through the floor of the home, threatening to severely beat him, compelled Seh-Tuk to hide in the fields during the day. Admission note, “Willie (John S.) Mitchell, #39252,” January 4, 1934, Box 4, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC; Mitchell interview, April 8, 2014; Mitchell email correspondence, December 18, 2013, April 14, 2014. I thank Prairie Band Potawatomi Tribal Historian Gary Mitchell for his guidance and support in writing his family’s story.
82. Henry Roe Cloud to H. C. Woolley, February 15, 1934, Folder M, Box 221, Correspondence Relating to Individuals, 1895–1936, M-N, Series 8, PA (Mayetta, KS), RG 75, NARA-KC.


84. Occupational list, 1934, Indian Insane Int. Dept., Records Relating to the Department of the Interior 1902–43, Box 1, Entry 13, RG 418, NARA-DC. A cover letter accompanying the list, dated January 9, 1934, was sent from William G. Cushman, medical officer, to Dr. H. C. Woolley, on St. Elizabeths Hospital letterhead. Thanks to Carla Joinson and Maureen Jais-Mick for confirming the citation.

85. Jasper Cross to H. R. Hummer, March 18, 1930, Folder M, Box 22, Correspondence Relating to Individuals, 1895–1936, Series 8, PA (Mayetta, KS), RG 75, NARA-KC.

86. Jasper Cross to C. M. Blair, May 26, 1933, Folder M, Box 22, Correspondence Relating to Individuals, 1895–1936, Series 8, PA (Mayetta, KS), RG 75, NARA-KC.

87. Riley Guthrie to John S. Mitchell, April 2, 1942, Box 4, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC; Prandoni email correspondence, February 8, 2017. I especially thank Dr. Jogues Prandoni for his assistance with research questions related to Seh-Tuk and others transferred from Canton to St. Elizabeths and elsewhere.

88. Seh-Tuk apparently was readmitted to St. Elizabeths on January 4, 1950; his new medical file was numbered 63909. Hospital records show that he was discharged on September 13, 1961. Prandoni email correspondence, February 8, 2017.

89. Many scholars define specific periods as “the era[s] of removal.” See Merrell, *Indians’ New World*; Tiro, *People of the Standing Stone*; and Gray, “Limits and Possibilities.” The Alabama Department of Archives and History has a website devoted to the “Indian Removal Era.”

90. See, for example, Blackhawk, *Violence over the Land*; Dunbar-Ortiz, *Indigenous Peoples’ History of the United States*; Jacobs, *White Mothers to a Dark Race*; and Hixson, *American Settler Colonialism*.


92. Gary Mitchell wrote extensively about Potawatomi history and culture. See, for example, Mitchell, “Boarding Schools and the Potawatomi”; and Mitchell, *Stories of the Potawatomi People*. He also posted regularly to his column on *The Native Blog* and made the short video “Prairie Band Potawatomi: Preserving Language & Culture.” Mitchell passed away in 2015. I thank his wife, Voncile Mitchell, for supporting this project.


96. See O’Brien, *Firsting and Lasting*.

Chapter 2


2. W. R. Bebout to Commissioner, October 13, 1917, Box 162, KA, 722.1, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.


4. W. R. Bebout to Commissioner, October 13, 1917. Historian Ronald Takaki has argued that “the crucial term is reformatory. The ‘discovery of the asylum’ in white society had its counterpart in the invention of the reservation for Indian society. Based on the ‘principle of separation and seclusion,’ the reservation would do more than merely maintain Indians: it would train and reform them.” Takaki, *Iron Cages*, 186 (emphasis in original). For more on the violent application and enforcement of colonial gender systems on Indigenous people, see Lugones, “Heterosexualism and the Colonial/Modern Gender System,” 186–209. For other examples of settler medicine, pathology, and Indigenous communities, see W. Anderson, *Colonial Pathologies*.


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8. Historian Margaret Jacobs adds, “Prior methods of child rearing were under attack and in fact officials often justified the removal of Indian children to boarding schools based on supposedly deficient Indian child-rearing and aberrant family models.” Jacobs, “Diverted Mothering,” 180. Brenda Child (Red Lake Ojibwe) and other historians additionally have noted ways that traditional Indigenous kinship, gender roles, and domestic life differed significantly from settler colonial customs and have long been a central target of imperialist campaigns. See, for example, Mintz and Kellogg, *Domestic Revolutions*; Child, *Boarding School Seasons*; Hyde, *Empires, Nations, and Families*; Cahill, *Federal Fathers and Mothers*; Unger, *Destruction of American Indian Families*; and Emmerich, “‘Save the Babies!’” For more on the overlaps of gender, Indigeneity, and institutionalization, see Rimke, “Sickening Institutions,” 15–39.


11. The parents’ documented names vary. The 1900 and 1914 Indian census rolls, for example, list “Robert Burch” also as “Acaneca (Steve)” and “A-Ca-Nee-A,” and list “Ruth Bent Burch” as “Mary,” “Peachigavits,” and “Sec-Pe-On.” Daughter Wepiwicenaget (Jane) also was referred to as “Wopiwicunaget.” Susan appears in some Indian rolls as “Sawwapeget.” Southern Ute Agency, 1900, Indian Census Rolls, RG 75, NARA-DC, M595, Roll 545, nos. 1–13; Southern Ute Agency, 1914, ibid.

12. The 1900 U.S. census notes that neither elder daughters nor their parents wrote or spoke English. The younger siblings, who also were listed as attending school, were described as understanding English. Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900, RG 29, NARA-DC, Southern Ute Reservation, La Plata, Colorado, p. 6, Enumeration District 0155, lines 21–29, microfilm #T623. Osburn, *Southern Ute Women*; Osburn, “‘To Build Up the Morals of the Tribe,’” 10–27. Osburn and other scholars have emphasized the high value placed on pregnant mothers and children in Southern Ute communities and the comparative sexual autonomy women enjoyed at the turn of the twentieth century. See, for example, Young, *Ute Indians of Colorado in the Twentieth Century*, 92. The author thanks Eddie Box Jr., Traditional Leader of the Southern Ute Indian Tribe, for permitting me to include his family’s story in this book.

13. Charles Werner to Commissioner, November 11, 1910, RCUA, 44011, NARA-D.
15. Charles Werner to Commissioner, November 11, 1910. According to historian Katherine Osburn, Werner regularly punished Ute people, particularly women, who defied his expectations of appropriate gender behavior. For example, he denied some infants from being enrolled in the tribe if he did not recognize the parents as legally married. Osburn, *Southern Ute Women*, 93–94. As historian Elizabeth Lunbeck and many others have argued, young women whose gender and sexual behavior did not conform to white settler norms commonly were targeted for institutionalization during the early twentieth century. See, for example, Lunbeck, *Psychiatric Persuasion*; and Rembis, *Defining Deviance*.


18. H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, March 10, 1913, Box 13, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC; H. R. Hummer to Superintendent, Southern Ute Indian School, March 10, 1913, File 006-Burch, Box 4, Decimal File, Series 723, RCUA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-D.

19. “Report Regarding Susan Burch,” April 1, 1913, Box 154, Decimal File, Series 723, RCUA, RG 75, NARA-D.

20. Stephen Abbott to Commissioner, May 9, 1913, File 006-Burch, Box 4, 44015, Decimal File, 1879–1952, RCUA, RG 75, NARA-D.

21. According to BIA correspondence the child was placed in her grandparent’s home and raised primarily by them. Superintendent, Southern Ute Agency, to Commissioner, October 31, 1913, File 006-Burch, Box 4, Decimal File, 1879–1952, RCUA, RG 75, NARA-D; Superintendent Abbott to Commissioner, June 19, 1913, ibid. Census rolls identify the little girl with her father. See, for example, Southern Ute Agency, 1914, Indian Census Rolls, RG 75, NARA-DC, M595, Roll 545, lines 1–2, microfilm.

22. Cora Burch Allen was the among the only children born at Canton who survived into adulthood. In 1932, she married a man referred to as John Williams. Two years later, the couple had a daughter, Emily. Sawwapeget’s elderly parents, Cora Allen Burch’s grandparents, lived nearby. Southern Ute Agency, 1916, Indian Census Rolls, RG 75, NARA-DC, M595, Roll 77, lines 1–5 and 9–13, microfilm; Consolidated Ute Agency, 1935, ibid., Roll 78, p. 33, line 3; Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920, RG 29, NARA-DC, Ignacio, La Plata, Colorado, Roll 165, p. 1A, Enumeration District 169, microfilm #T624; Sixteenth Census of the United States, 1940, RG 29, NARA-DC, Bayfield, La Plata, Colorado, Roll T627-466, p. 5B, Enumeration District 34–20. See also Stephen Abbott to Commissioner, June 19, 1913.

24. According to the superintendent of Southern Ute Agency, the removal of Susan and Jane devastated Steven Burch. Explaining that he already had “lost two girls in S. Dakota,” Burch petitioned the BIA in 1917 to release his son from boarding school so he could return to the family. Letter to Frederick Snyder (superintendent, Santa Fe School), June 15, 1917, File 006-Burch, Box 4, Decimal File, 1879–1952, RCUA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-D.


27. For more on eugenics and the targeting of families, see Larson, *Sex, Race, and Science*; Stern, *Eugenic Nation*; Lombardo, *Three Generations, No Imbeciles*; Leonard, *Illicit Reformers*; and Lovett, *Conceiving the Future*. For more on medicine and imperialism, see Inglis, “Disease and the ‘Other’.”

28. According to sociologist Lutz Kaelber, South Dakota passed its sterilization law in 1917, but the first recorded sterilizations began near the end of the 1920s. Between that time and the 1960s, 789 South Dakotans were sterilized. Most—nearly two-thirds—were women labeled as having mental disabilities. Of all states with sterilization laws, South Dakota performed the fifteenth-largest number of surgical sterilizations. Canton Asylum, like St. Elizabeths Hospital, was a federal institution, so surgical sterilizations were not recorded at either facility. The head of St. Elizabeths, William Alanson White (who had supervised Dr. Hummer during the future Canton superintendent’s residency at St. Elizabeths), was staunchly opposed to eugenic sterilization. These factors likely contributed to the absence of such procedures at Canton Asylum at a time when state facilities increasingly deployed them. Kaelber, “Eugenics.” For more on sterilizations of Indigenous women, see Kluchin, *Fit to Be Tied*; and Voyles, *Wastelanding*, 140–44. U.S. and regional sterilization histories include Kevles, *In the Name of Eugenics*, 47–48, 93–94, 107–11; Hansen and King, *Sterilized by the State*, 254; Stern, *Eugenic Nation*, 1–10, 99–114; Larson, *Sex, Race, and Science*, 33–39; Bruinius, *Better for All the World*; Whitaker, *Mad in America*, 56–60; and Dowbiggin, *Keeping America Sane*.

29. Burch, digital database. Hummer advocated for Agnes Caldwell to remain institutionalized in order to restrict her from mothering more children: “I recommend that she be kept under proper surveillance for her own good and as well as posterity.” H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, November 8, 1920, Box 14, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.

30. As historian James Moran explains, “The strict separation of patients at the asylum by sex was . . . the socio-spatial division completely unfamiliar to those cared for


32. Expectations about labor productivity and adherence to capitalism also pervade the story. According to the superintendent, the person referred to as “Susan” and her immediate family did not seem to do what the BIA wanted them to do with their allotted land. The administrator pathologized their nonconformity, claiming that the sisters “exhibit insanity to some extent.” Charles Werner to Commissioner, November 11, 1910, RCUA, 44011, NARA-D.

33. Osburn, *Southern Ute Women*, 94; Osburn, “‘And as the Squaws Are a Secondary Consideration,’” 328.

34. Letter, W. C. Barton, April 22, 1922, Box 641, Kiowa Agency, 722.1, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.

35. J. A. Buntin to H. R. Hummer, May 22, 1922, Box 15, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC; “Amelia Moss,” Saint Elizabeths Hospital patient 39213, January 15, 1934, Box 4, ibid. Matron Lucie Jobin, Canton Asylum’s only Native staff member at the time, went to retrieve the child. The author thanks Kathryn Leslie for sharing background history on her ancestor Lucie Jobin.

36. For more on asylum architecture and management, see Miron, *Prisons, Asylums, and the Public*.


38. In this way, Canton Asylum was unlike other institutions of assimilation, representing an overlapping but distinct form of erasure. Indefinite, often-permanent incarceration disrupted or severed the typical family lifespan and generation. For more on the Indian Service and “surrogate families,” see Cahill, “‘Seeking the Incalculable Benefit of a Faithful, Patient Man and Wife,’” 71–92. My work also draws on feminist disability scholar Alison Kafer’s insights about the ableist cultural drive to eliminate disabled people and disabled futures. See Kafer, *Feminist Queer, Crip*.

40. H. R. Hummer to Commissioner Merritt, November 18, 1918, Box 296, SA, 722.1, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC. For more on trachoma and the Office of Indian Affairs, see Benson, “Blinded with Science,” 52–75.

41. H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, June 22, 1922, Box 16, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC; H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, September 29, 1921, Folder 121232-1916, Box 296, SA, 722.1, ibid.

42. For example, Commissioner to H. R. Hummer, October 11, 1921, Folder 121232-1916, Box 296, SA, 722.1, RG 75, NARA-DC; E. B. Merritt to Mr. Ed. S. Johnson, April 1, 1921, ibid.; E. B. Merritt to H. R. Hummer, December 12, 1918, ibid.; and E. B. Merritt to Jesse Faribault, August 30, 1918, ibid.

43. H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, July 8, 1918, Box 296, SA, 722.1, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.

44. H. R. Hummer to BIA, October 21, 1919, Box 14, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC. See also H. R. Hummer to BIA, November 8, 1920, ibid.

45. H. R. Hummer to BIA, December 30, 1918, Box 14, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.

46. There is no record of any officials claiming that Native men needed to be institutionalized because they might reproduce. This particular form of medicalized intervention focused on women.

47. In one interview, Superintendent Gifford, for example, asserted, “It is a peculiar fact that Indians desert unfortunates.” “Gain in Indian Insanity,” 44. For details on home care of people deemed insane in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, see McCandless, Moonlight, Magnolias, and Madness.

48. W. R. Bebout to Commissioner, October 13, 1917, Box 162, KA, 722.10, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC. Claiming concern for her family, H. R. Hummer recommended Caldwell’s continued detention. Many historians have detailed this settler logic. See, for example, Jacobs, Generation Removed; Barker, Native Acts, 224–28; Piatote, Domestic Subjects; Dunbar-Ortiz, Indigenous Peoples’ History of the United States; and Smithers, Science, Sexuality, and Race.

49. See, for example, W. R. Bebout to Commissioner, December 18, 1916, Box 162, KA, 722.10, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC; W. R. Bebout to Commissioner, October 13, 1917, ibid.; W. R. Bebout to H. R. Marble, May 7, 1917, ibid.; and Fernindand Shoemaker (physician expert) to Commissioner, December 10, 1913, ibid. Agents claimed, too, that the family caring for Peter Clafflin wanted him sent to Canton Asylum and that this dislocation would benefit the reservation generally. W. R. Bebout to H. R. Marble, May 3, 1917, ibid.

50. Many scholars have drawn attention to the ways the U.S. government and colonial settlers have especially targeted Indigenous kinship structures. See, for example, Jacobs, Generation Removed; Piatote, Domestic Subjects; and Dunbar-Ortiz, Indigenous Peoples’ History of the United States. Indigenous studies scholar Joanne Barker has argued, “The notion that indigenous peoples are weaker than, wards, dependent, and limited in power in relation to their colonial states has perpetuated dominant ideologies of race, culture, and identity.” Barker, Sovereignty Matters, 16.

51. As critical race theorist Patricia Hill Collins has explained: “Racial ideologies that portrayed racial/ethnic groups of intellectually underdeveloped, uncivilized children...
require parallel ideas that constrict whites as intellectually mature, civilized adults. When applied to race, family rhetoric that deemed adults more developed than children, and thus entitled to greater power, uses naturalized ideas about age and authority to legitimate racial hierarchy to distribute national rights, entitlements and responsibilities.”

Collins, “It’s All in the Family,” 19.

52. H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, July 8, 1918, Box 296, SA, 722.1, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC. Hummer also specifically charged that Elizabeth was better off at Canton than with her spouse, Jesse. H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, December 2, 1916, Folder 121232-1916, ibid.

53. H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, December 30, 1918, Box 14, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC; H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, November 6, 1920, ibid.

54. H. R. Hummer to J. A. Buntin, November 18, 1918 (re. M. Magpie), Box 94, Tongue River Agency, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC; H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, November 4, 1918, ibid.

55. Stephen Abbott to Commissioner, May 9, 1913, File 006-Burch, Decimal Files, Series 723, RCUA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-D.

56. Cahill, Federal Fathers and Mothers.

57. Agnes Caldwell was described as having done “general housework at Dr. Hummer’s home.” Occupational list, 1934, p. 3, Indian Insane Int. Dept., Records Relating to the Department of the Interior 1902–43, Box 1, Entry 13, RG 418, NARA-DC.

58. Elizabeth Alexis to Commissioner, May 22, 1922, Box 16, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.

59. See, for example, Agnes Caldwell to Commissioner, October 29, 1920, Box 14, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC; Agnes Caldwell to Commissioner Cato Sells, August 17, 1919, ibid.; Agnes Caldwell to H. R. Hummer, December 11, 1919, ibid.; Agnes Caldwell to Commissioner, November 10, 1920, ibid.


61. Elizabeth Alexis to Commissioner, May 22, 1922.

62. Agnes Caldwell to BIA, February 24, 1920, Box 15, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC; Agnes Caldwell to BIA, November 10, 1919, Box 14, ibid.

63. Agnes Caldwell to Commissioner, March 10, 1920, Box, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.

64. Agnes Caldwell to Cato Sells, October 3, 1920, Box 15, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.


66. For more on ways that the U.S. government idealized and institutionalized the nuclear-family structure, see Cahill, Federal Fathers and Mothers; Jacobs, Mothers to a Dark Race; and Piatote, “Indian/Agent Aporia,” 45–62, 359.

67. The matron’s duties involved daily inspections of the wards and oversight of laundry and meals. Norena Hummer’s disdain for the other employees rippled across the campus. Initially kept to mutterings and complaints behind closed doors, staff eventually came forward when Dr. L. M. Hardin, the only other doctor on the premises at the time, petitioned the BIA for her and her husband’s removal in 1909. Extensive evidence
of Norena Hummer's dereliction of duty were provided, including insufficient rations for staff and the Native people institutionalized at Canton, unsanitary living conditions in the wards, and hostility toward individuals under her supervision. Dr. Hummer and the BIA ultimately invoked family roles and expectations as a way to divert scandal and formal dismissal: noting that Norena Hummer was pregnant during the time of the allegations, she was allowed to resign. The move reaffirmed the status quo: she was expected to maintain the role of matron to her own family without competing obligations of institutional work, supporting her husband, who continued to oversee both his household and the Indian Asylum. Near the time they moved into the cottage, the couple lost another child, a baby daughter, in 1913. See affidavit, L. M. Hardin, November 19, 1909; and Joinson, Vanished in Hiawatha, 115.


69. “Local,” 5. Another article at the time claimed, “We learn there is being constructed at the Indian Asylum grounds an elegant and commodious residence building,” Sioux Valley (SD) News, August 20, 1915, Canton Insane Asylum File, CPL.

70. Other staff members directly benefited from close affiliation to the Hummer family and household. The Christopher sisters, Randy and Clara, for instance, regularly expressed personal loyalty to the superintendent. Early in Hummer’s tenure, Randy was elevated from a general laborer to matron. Clara, who joined the staff as a dining room girl, eventually enjoyed a status comparable to matron. Canton’s administrator regularly advocated for wage increases for Clara Christopher, and she—unlike her peers—was not required to seek permission to leave the premises. She also was relieved from certain cleaning duties in the 1920s. For more on Clara Christopher, see Christopher interview, April 10, 1979.


72. Landis was dismissed on January 22, 1915.


74. Economic factors, coupled with cultural expectations, fueled this outcome. The federal government did not want staff providing domestic labor for Superintendent Hummer. At the same time, the BIA wanted to reduce harassment—or at least complaints about it—but administrators chose not to fire the superintendent. Instead, they removed the white female staff from a location of ongoing threat: the Hummer bungalow. Following this logic, having Native women provide the domestic work resolved both problems: There was less financial and other resource drain, while harassment and potential complaints of harassment by Native women were not considered authentic problems. When Elizabeth Faribault complained about her treatment working for Hummer and his family, for example, the BIA and the superintendent did not interpret the letter as a complaint about workplace harassment or unfair conditions, instead viewing her expressions as symptoms of mental disability and dismissing them accordingly.

75. H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, January 14, 1920, Box 14, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC; H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, January 16, 1920, ibid.; E. B. Merritt to
H. R. Hummer, January 21, 1920, ibid. In a letter to Commissioner Merritt on March 20, 1917, Hummer claimed that Elizabeth was unchanged, “chronically insane with no chance for ultimate recovery and this is about as good a home as she could possibly find.” H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, March 20, 1917, Folder 121232-1916, Box 296, SA, 722.1, ibid.

76. E. B. Merritt to H. R. Hummer, January 21, 1920.

77. An earlier version of this information appears in Burch, “‘Dislocated Histories,'” 141–62.

78. H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, January 14, 1920; H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, September 29, 1921, Folder 121232-1916, Box 296, SA, RG 75, NARA-DC. Hummer specifically invoked Faribault’s second attempt in this letter as well as other perceived infractions during her detention.

79. Elizabeth Alexis to Commissioner, May 22, 1922, Box 16, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.

Chapter 3


2. This photograph belonged to Francis Jensen, O-Zoush-Quah’s grandson. Francis’s son, Dr. Jack Jensen, received the photograph from his father, and it now hangs in his home in Houston, Texas. The image was shared with permission from Francis and Jack Jensen. Missing from the portrait was O-Zoush-Quah’s other adult daughter, Shuck-To-Quah (Nettie), who likely was living with husband John Tork nearby on the Potawatomi Reservation. F. Jensen interviews, April 7, 8, 2014; F. Jensen telephone conversations, January 30, April 1, July 21, September 5, October 20, 2014; bandolier, ca. 1890s, by O-Zoush-Quah; J. Jensen interviews, April 22, 23, 2017; J. Jensen email correspondence, March 26, July 2, September 12, 2018, January 29, June 6, 2019; January 19, 2020.

3. Information on Anna and Nettie Hale comes from the Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900, RG 29, NARA-DC, Wakarusa, Douglas, Kansas, Roll 479, Enumeration District 0174, lines 3–4, microfilm #T623, 1854 rolls. For more on the Haskell Institute, see Milk, Haskell Institute. For a broad overview of Potawatomi history, see Mitchell, “Boarding Schools and the Potawatomi”; and Mitchell, Stories of the Potawatomi People. See also Clifton, Prairie People.

4. Nettie Tork to Oscar S. Gifford, March 12, 1909, Box 13, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.


7. For a general overview of beliefs about health, wellness, and American Indian identities, see Locust, American Indian Beliefs Concerning Health and Unwellness; and Weaver, “Perspectives on Wellness,” 5–17.

9. According to his grandchildren, Nash-Wa-Took played a central role in Mayetta’s annual fair and rodeo. Wearing the elaborate garments O-Zoush-Quah had made for him, the Hale family patriarch continued to foster close ties to Potawatomi ways, including annual festivals and rodeos. His daughters and son also attended these festivities, his grandchildren delighting in the gatherings. Jensen and Jensen, “Reclaimed Heritage,” 30–31; F. Jensen interviews, April 7, 8, 2014.

10. Family Bible, ca. 1880s–, personal collection of Jack Jensen; O-Zoush-Quah and Jensen family photographs, 1890s–2019, ibid.

11. In an annotated list of people detained at Canton around 1912, “Ozowshquay” was described as doing “a small amount of beadwork.” Annotated list, n.d., Box 2, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC. See also F. Jensen interviews, April 7, 8, 2014; J. Jensen interviews, April 22, 23, 2017; and J. Jensen, telephone conversation, March 9, 2018.

12. See, for example, Braman, Doing Time on the Outside; Comfort, Doing Time Together; Ben-Moshe, Chapman, and Carey, Disability Incarcerated; Hernández, City of Inmates; Burghardt, Broken; and D. K. Miller, “Spider’s Web.”

13. Disability studies scholar Alison Kafer’s theory of disability as political and relational offers an important way to understand what Faribault and her kin experienced. Kafer, Feminist, Queer, Crip.

14. For cogent explanations of kinship connections and obligations, cultural regeneration and recovery, and literary traditions, see Justice, Our Fire Survives the Storm.

15. The experiences of O-Zoush-Quah and her family, as with many others, aligns with Indigenous studies scholar Lisa Kahaleole Hall’s contention that relationships are contextual and contingent. I thank Lisa Kahaleole Hall for our many conversations about this insight. See also J. Miller, “Kinship, Family Kindreds, and Community,” 141; Gish Hill, Webs of Kinship; DeMallie, “Kinship,” 306–56; Justice, “Go Away, Water!,” 147–68; and Jacobs, Generation Removed. For insights into the inherent limits of kinship frameworks within a settler context, see Rifkin, When Did Indians Become Straight?

16. As historian Colette Hyman explains in her critique of settler colonialism across the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, “These events necessarily alter the work of Dakota women: bearing and caring for the next generation; feeding, clothing, and sheltering the older generations; and working not only for physical survival but for cultural and spiritual survival as well.” Hyman, Dakota Women’s Work, 12.

17. This was typical during Superintendent Gifford’s tenure as well as Superintendent Hummer’s.

18. H. R. Hummer, “Asylum for Insane Indians: Elizabeth Faribault,” October 1, 1926, Folder 2331, Box 17, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC. The next report, from November 1, 1926, follows the regular format and information that preceded Cora Winona’s birth.

19. H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, September 29, 1926, File 45757, Box 17, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.

20. Sarah Deer details how sexual assaults and sexual violence is a fundamental component of settler colonialism that particularly targets Indigenous women. Deer, Beginning and End of Rape.

21. For more on Sisseton-Wahpeton history, see Oneroad and Skinner, Being Dakota; and Brown, “Biographic Sketch of Chief Gabriel Renville.”
22. Rose Renville to Royal C. Johnson, January 10, 1927, Box 17, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC; H. R. Hummer to Mrs. S. H. Renville, December 3, 1926, ibid.

23. Royal C. Johnson to Charles H. Burke, January 14, 1927, Box 17, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.


25. As cited in Rose Renville to Royal C. Johnson, January 10, 1927.


27. At the time of Cora Winona’s birth, Elizabeth Faribault and Willie Dayea apparently disputed the claim of Dayea’s paternity. The only extant sources are from Superintendent Hummer and the asylum staff, whom he directed to compose letters regarding the child’s birth. Hummer’s confident assertion to the BIA that Dayea fathered the little girl contrasts with the descriptions of cloudy paternity he offered later in correspondence with Faribault’s oldest son, Solomon. Allegations that institutionalized men impregnated institutionalized women fit a broader pattern at Canton and most other state-run psychiatric and carceral facilities. Superintendents Gifford and Hummer both consistently disregarded claims by women that male staff fathered their children. Administrators at St. Elizabeths Hospital similarly assumed that an institutionalized man impregnated an Oglala Lakota woman held in their locked wards in the 1930s. This patterned interpretation reinforced settler ableist-eugenic logics that rendered Indigenous people problems, buffered institutions and staff from allegations of harm and mismanagement, and buttressed claims for the need to sustain institutionalization and institutional structures. See, for example, L. L. Culp to Commissioner, March 1, 1934, Box 4, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC; L. L. Culp to Commissioner, February 26, 1934, ibid.; H. R. Hummer to John M. Thompson, August 18, 1928, SA, ibid.; H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, March 2, 1928, Box 17, CA, ibid.; Winfred Overholser to James G. Townsend, November 17, 1937, Folder 7448, ibid.; CA abstract, Willie Dayea, 1933, Box 3, ibid.; H. R. Hummer to BIA, March 26, 1921, Box 7, ibid.; and Burch, “‘Dislocated Histories,’” 157–59.

28. H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, January 22, 1927, Box 17, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.

29. Burch, digital database. According to archival sources, two children were removed to orphanages. Staff began plans to move one other infant (“Baby Enaspah”), but the baby died before the transfer occurred.

30. Mary Alexis to Commissioner Charles Burke, September 13, 1921, Folder 121232-1916, Box 296, SA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.

31. For example, “List of patients now at the Asylum for Insane Indians, Canton, South Dakota, who have who have been received since July 1925,” November 22, 1929, Folder 56470, Box 18, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.

32. The name “Cora” became especially popular after the publication of American writer James Fenimore Cooper’s The Last of the Mohicans (1826). The novel’s dark-haired heroine was named Cora Munro. The other baby who survived Canton also was named
Cora. It is possible, though unlikely, that this first name was imposed by Canton staff rather than selected by the mothers.

33. Hyman, *Dakota Women’s Work*, 133.


37. Accounts vary on the number of nations whose people were incarcerated at Canton. According to journalist Steve Young, it was upward of sixty-three; other authors have estimated it closer to fifty. See, for example, Young, “Shameful Past,” 30; Leahy, “Canton Asylum,” 75.

38. See, for example, Susan Wishecoby to H. R. Hummer, June 14, 1925, Box 17, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC; unsigned report, October 23, 1929, Box 6, CA, Program Mission Correspondence, 1914–34, RG 75, NARA-KC; unsigned report, “Case No. 152: Peter Thompson Good Boy,” February 15, 1917, Individual Patient Files, 1910–16, Box 9, ibid.; “Translation by John Brown,” February 19, 1917, ibid.; and H. R. Hummer to Commissioner (describing Nellie Kampeska writing Elizabeth Faribault’s letter), December 31, 1918, Folder 1252-1916, Box 296, SA, 722.1, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC. Reports from St. Elizabeths Hospital—where some people later would be confined—continued to reference people taking care of one another. Two examples: One Cherokee man took care of “untidy” hallmates at Canton and at St. Elizabeths regularly fed, bathed, and clothed another man who had been detained previously at Canton as well. Admission note, Watt McCarter, January 3, 1934, Box 4, CA, ibid. A Turtle Mountain Chippewa elder was described as taking a “motherly interest” in a younger Native woman on her ward. St. Elizabeths Hospital admissions note, Madeline Dauphinais, January 15, 1934, ibid.; “Report Regarding Susan Burch,” January 1, 1913, Box 154, Decimal Files, Series 723-005, RCUA, RG 75, NARA-D.

40. As anthropologist Ella Deloria (Yankton Dakota) explained, “By kinship all Dakota people were held together in a great relationship that was theoretically all-inclusive and co-extensive with the Dakota domain.” Deloria, Speaking of Indians, 24–25. For more on Dakota kinship, see also DeMallie, “Kinship”; and Rumi, “Mitákuye Owásįį (All My Relatives).”

41. Affidavit, Nellie Kampeska, January 22, 1919, Box 14, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.

42. See, for example, see Fixico, American Indians in a Modern World, 5–6; Walker, DeMallie, and Jahner, Lakota Belief and Ritual, 198–200; and Holt, Indian Orphanages, 23. See also Jacobs, “Diverted Mothering,” 185n.

43. Milwaukee Public Museum, “Kinship.” See also DeMallie, “Kinship.”

44. Elizabeth Alexis to David Mazakute, January 2, 1922, Box 16, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.

45. Describing the impact of written language and literacy for Dakota people during battles with the United States during the 1860s, historian Collete Hyman has explained, “Letters could not compensate for the physical, emotional, and spiritual burdens of separation, and letter writing could no way re-create a living community among the Dakota. It did, however, give them knowledge about relatives several hundred miles away. With the centrality of tiospaye among the Dakota, communication through letters allowed for some fragmentary nurturing of familial bonds.” Hyman, Dakota Women’s Work, 114. K. Tsianina Lomawaima’s historical study of the Chilocco Boarding School as a “story of Indian students—loyal to each other, linked as family, and subversive in their resistance,” resembles in some ways the inner workings at Canton Asylum. Lomawaima, They Called It Prairie Light, xi. For insightful critiques of gender dynamics and institutionalization, including strategies of resistance, see Rembis, Defining Deviance.

46. H. R. Hummer to the Department of the Interior, June 30, 1919, Box 14, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC; H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, December 31, 1918, Folder 121232-1916, Box 296, SA, 722.1, ibid.

47. Affidavit, Nellie Kampeska, January 22, 1919, Box 14, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC; H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, January 23, 1919, ibid.

48. Kampeska’s discharge is additionally remarkable because the diagnosis Hummer assigned her was considered more chronic, serious, and heritable than many others who were not released, and she was still young and thus presumably capable of having children.

49. It is unknown whether Jesse, Mary, or Elizabeth’s other relatives on the outside knew at the time of her escape. It appears that not long afterward, Jesse married Mary Marlow. By the end of 1920, institutional documents listed Elizabeth Faribault as divorced, and even after she signed letters as “Elizabeth Alexis”—her original documented family name. The frayed familial ties with Jesse compounded Elizabeth’s physical dislocation.

50. Mary Alexis to Charles Burke, September 13, 1921, Folder 121232-1916, Box 296, SA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC; Elizabeth Fairbault to Charles Burke, September 13, 1921, Folder 45525–1922, CA, 722.1, ibid.

51. Hummer presumed that Faribault was headed to Sisseton and her family. H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, September 26, 1921, Box 15, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.
52. H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, September 29, 1921, Folder 121232-1916, Box 296, SA, 722.1, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.

53. The original expression is “is ci koda tuwena waamicyataninsni.” I am grateful to the Dakota elders who translated Faribault’s letter in 2012.

54. Elizabeth Alexis to David Mazakute, January 2, 1922, Box 16, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.

55. DeMallie, “Kinship.”

56. Elizabeth Alexis to David Mazakute, January 2, 1922. Historian Keith Thor Carlson details the multiple, overlapping, and sometimes contradictory identities Indigenous people simultaneously have lived, alongside contested ideas about memory and place, in The Power of Place, the Problem of Time.

57. H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, June 22, 1922, Box 16, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.


59. H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, March 2, 1928, Box 17, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.


61. Cora Winona Faribault’s continued detention at Canton lends support to the Faribault family’s claim that Elizabeth did not get sent back to Peever for burial. Infants at Canton were taken from mothers, but it was not likely that a toddler would be left behind there if her mother’s body was returned to a reservation for burial. To keep Cora Winona and return Elizabeth would have required significant administrative effort.

62. See E. Deloria, Speaking of Indians, 26, 49; DeMallie, “Kinship.”


64. DeMallie, “Kinship,” 323. See also Peers and Brown, “There Is No End to Relationship among the Indians,” 529–55. Native American historian Margaret Jacobs has explained: “Indigenous communities defined family broadly and designated many caregivers beyond the biological mother and father, particularly grandparents. In many matrilineal Indigenous cultures, a mother’s brother played the fatherly role to his nephews and nieces, and a child might consider all his or her maternal aunts as mothers.” Jacobs, Generation Removed, xxxiii.

65. Unsigned report, October 23, 1929, Box 6, CA, Program Mission Correspondence, 1914–34, RG 75, NARA-KC.

66. Iron Cloud telephone interviews, May 19, 2015, March 27, 2018; Elizabeth Red Owl to Charles Burke, April 18, 1924, Box 17, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC; Elizabeth (Lizzie) Red Owl to Amos Red Owl, March 15, 1926, Box 538, Pine Ridge, ibid.; Elizabeth Red Owl to Commissioner, May 18, 1930, Box 1, CA, ibid. Her parents also yearned for
her return. Amos Red Owl to John Collier, September 15, 1933, Box 18, ibid. See also Commissioner to Amos Red Owl, December 10, 1929, ibid. Amos Red Owl petitioned the BIA commissioner on November 18, 1929, emphasizing that he could take care of Lizzie, that she was his daughter, and that he wanted her to be allowed home. Amos Red Owl to Commissioner, December 10, 1929, ibid. A relative of Lizzie Red Owl, Richard Iron Cloud, would later bring a group of Oglala Lakota youth to swim from Alcatraz to the San Francisco shore as a collective act of survivance and Indigenous self-determination. Their experiences were documented in a film, directed by Nancy Iverson, entitled From the Badlands to Alcatraz (2009).

67. On other days, the child would sit and listen to the radio, likely with Lizzie nearby. Unsigned staff report, October 23, 1929, Box 6, CA, Program Mission Correspondence, 1914–34, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-KC; unsigned staff report, October 25, 1929, ibid.

68. Lizzie Red Owl to Commissioner Burke, April 18, 1924, 4; Elizabeth Red Owl to commissioner, May 18, 1930.

69. As quoted in Joshua Wetsit to John Collier, November 6, 1933, Folder 40642-28, Box 350, SA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.


71. Iron Cloud telephone interviews, May 19, 2015, March 27, 2018; Iron Cloud email correspondence, May 20, 2015. For more on Native American dolls and dollmaking, see Lenz and Kidwell, Small Spirits; and Lenz, Stuff of Dreams.


Chapter 4

1. This paragraph is a lightly edited version from Burch, “Disorderly Pasts,” 362–85. For general histories of Canton Asylum, see Riney, “Power and Powerlessness”; Putney, “Canton Asylum”; and Saxman, “Canton Asylum.” For more on Menominee Nation history, see Beck, Struggle for Self-Determination; Ourada, Menominee Indians. I especially thank Menominee Nation Tribal Historian David Grignon and elder Napos for their insights and guidance on researching and writing these stories.


3. Containment fundamentally framed everyday life at most asylums across the United States during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. See Grob, Mental Illness and American Society; Braslow, Mental Ills and Bodily Cures; Lunbeck, Psychiatric Persuasion; Dwyer, Homes for the Mad; Whitaker, Mad in America; Rothman, Discovery of the Asylum; Porter and Wright, Confinement of the Insane; Szasz, Coercion as Cure; Rothman, Conscience and Convenience; Jimenez, Changing Faces of Madness; Scull, Madhouses, Mad-Doctors, and Madmen; Szasz, Manufacture of Madness; Dowbiggin, Keeping America Sane, 75; Scull, Madness in Civilization; Deutsch, Mentally Ill in America; Goffman, “Characteristics of Total Institutions.”

4. Like other carceral institutions, Canton embodied additional levels of containment. Sex-segregated wards imposed social structures that were antagonistic to Native communities. Spouses who were simultaneously detained, as just one example, were
cordoned off to different rooms and wings from one another. For more on sex segregation as a form of institutional sterilization in psychiatric institutions, see Dwyer, *Homes for the Mad*, 25–26; and Whitaker, *Mad in America*, 55–60.

5. As one report implied, negligence contributed significantly to padlocked isolation rooms and to people being shackled to beds and steam pipes. Among the additionally secluded people the inspector had observed was a young barefoot boy in a solitary room, subdued in a straitjacket. “Untidiness and dribbling of saliva,” staff claimed, motivated this treatment. “1929 Silk Report,” 14.

6. John Noble to Commissioner, November 22, 1916, Box 296, SA, 722.1, RG 75, NARA-DC.

7. It appears that Faribault assisted in the laundry and the Hummer household concurrently for some time. Institutional correspondence about the Dakota woman’s pregnancy claimed that she and Willie Dayea met in the laundry area. H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, September 29, 1926, Box 17, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC; L. L. Culp to Solomon Faribault, February 26, 1934, Box 4, ibid.; L. L. Culp to Commissioner, February 26, 1934, ibid.


9. Elizabeth Fe Alexis to Commissioner Burke, May 22, 1922, Box 16, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.

10. H. R. Hummer, “Asylum for Insane Indians: Elizabeth Faribault (2331),” October 1, 1926, Box 17, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.


12. Reliable and efficient, Dayea would have been a likely choice when staff selected teams of people to clear the highway and water areas as well.

13. In 1926, 230 acres of Christopher family farmland was bought to expand the asylum’s campus. Commissioner Charles Burke to Secretary of the Interior, October 23, 1926, Box 1078, CA, CCF 1907–36, 5-1, RG 48, NARA-CP. See also “1929 Silk Report,” 29; and Meriam and Work, *The Problem of Indian Administration*, 306 (hereafter referred to as *Meriam Report*).

14. See, for example, CA abstract, Willie Dayea, 1933, Box 3, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.

15. Asylum for Insane Indians, *Annual Report*, 1925, SDSA, 2. Other farmers in the area at this time described long days and continuous work: tilling, seeding, planting, irrigating, harvesting, and storing wheat, corn, and other produce as snow-frozen ground softened in the spring, hardened under late summer heat, and submitted to the return of winter.


19. It was a standard contention that this practice reduced the need for more explicit forms of restraint, such as shackles or medications. McCandless, *Moonlight, Magnolias, and Madness*, 272. For other studies of asylums and labor, see Rothman, *Discovery of the Asylum*; Burch and Joyner, *Unspeakable*; and Scull, *Madhouses, Mad-Doctors, and Madmen*.


21. As with other settler enterprises that often loaned their charges to neighboring businesses, there is evidence to suggest that both of Canton’s superintendents supplemented the budget by detailing men like Willie Dayea to nearby highway and agricultural work. Burch, digital database. Other settler institutions with outing and other involuntary-labor practices included Indian boarding schools, prisons, and state asylums. See, for example, Parker, *Phoenix Indian School*; Hernández, *City of Inmates*; Christianson, *With Liberty for Some*, 184–88; Nichols and Swiffen, *Legal Violence and the Limits of the Law*; and Burch and Joyner, *Unspeakable*.

22. This was typical across institutions nationwide. McCandless, *Moonlight, Magnolias, and Madness*, 275.


24. In 1909, for example, there were twenty people above listed capacity. “Reply to Charges,” November 16, 1909, 7, Box 2, CA, CCF 1907–39, NARA-DC.

25. Affidavit, L. M. Hardin, November 19, 1909, Box 5, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.


27. “List of Canton Inhabitants with Diagnoses,” n.d., Box 2, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC. Drs. Hardin and Turner pointed out that Gregory ate well and had no cough or fever, but they were unable to overturn Superintendent Hummer’s directives.

28. Spaulding, “Canton Asylum for Insane Indians.” Peter McCandless has detailed conditions at southern institutions that especially encouraged disease spread, such as overcrowding, insufficient ventilation and sunlight, and poor plumbing. Canton embodied nearly identical conditions in this regard. McCandless, *Moonlight, Magnolias, and Madness*, 284. Jean A. Keller provides a similar assessment of tuberculosis spread in American Indian boarding schools during the early twentieth century in her work *Empty Beds*.
29. See, for example, affidavit, L. M. Hardin, November 19, 1909, 6; and Meriam Report, 307. For more on the history of medical research on tuberculosis, see Tomes, “Germ Theory, Public Health Education, and the Moralization of Behavior,” 257; Keller, Empty Beds, 151–54.

30. According to Dr. Hardin, the Diné woman with tuberculosis died shortly thereafter, as did the infant child she delivered not long after being committed to the asylum. Affidavit, L. M. Hardin, November 19, 1909, 6. See also W. T. Shelton to Commissioner, October 11, 1909, Box 13, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.

31. Dr. Hardin said that Emma Gregory did not have a persistent cough or fever and that she was eating well. Affidavit, L. M. Hardin, November 19, 1909, 6.

32. Although general public awareness of the disease’s origins increased during this time, carceral institutions, including prisons, psychiatric asylums, and colonies for the feebleminded, remained active locations for tuberculosis outbreaks and fatalities. When Dr. Samuel Silk from St. Elizabeths Hospital inspected the asylum in 1933, he reported: “In the cases of suspected pulmonary tuberculosis no examinations of sputum are performed, and in no case is the diagnosis definitely established. Three patients had active coughs and loss of weight, which would point to that diagnosis. They mingled with the other patients, and no special provision was made for their care.” “1933 Silk Report,” 12.


34. An attendant later attested that Gregory had been fully blocked from leaving the confined space.

35. Joseph A. Murphy to Commissioner, February 1, 1910, Box 2, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.

36. There were many other men and women who would intimately come to know such spaces. It was commonplace at the Indian Asylum for people to be confined for months at a time in the dormitories and isolation rooms.

37. Gregory interviews, July 3, 2017, December 28, 2018. Anthropologist Paul Farmer argues a similar point in “House of the Dead,” 240. For broader studies of the health consequences to Indigenous people because of settler colonialisms, see Kelton, Cherokee Medicine, Colonial Germs; and Cameron, Kelton, and Swedlund, Beyond Germs. See also Kauanui, “‘A Structure, Not an Event.’”

38. Herman was forcibly committed to Canton Asylum on February 28, 1914. H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, March 2, 1914, Box 13, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC. I thank descendants of James Herman for permitting me write about their ancestor and the colleagues at Rosebud’s Tribal Historic Preservation Office for their insights and advice in the process of writing this book.

39. James Herman, “Statement on Treatment of Patients at Canton Insane Asylum,” received June 17, 1915, Box 5, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC, 8. Years earlier, an observer had complained that “filth and disorder reigned supreme” at the Indian Asylum.

40. Report to Commissioner, January 31, 1912, Box 2, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.

41. Affidavit, Oscar Gifford, August 13, 1907, 4, Box 1, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC; Walter Stevens, “Medical Report,” September 1925, Box 10, ibid. See also “1929 Silk Report,” 17.

42. Silk also noted that some people had been left in their own excrement for days and even weeks. “1929 Silk Report.”

43. See, for example, letter, Peter Thomson Good Boy, trans. John Brown, February 19, 1917, Box 9, CA, Individual Patient Files, 1914–16, Decimal 414–580, Program Mission Correspondence, 1914–34, RG 75, NARA-KC. This source is cited with concurrence from the Rosebud Tribal Historic Preservation Office.

44. See James Herman, “Statement on Treatment of Patients at Canton Insane Asylum,” received June 17, 1915, Box 6, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC, 8; Dr. L. F. Michael, “Report to Commissioner,” June 12, 1915, ibid., 18–19.


46. Herman, “Statement on Treatment of Patients at Canton Insane Asylum,” 3. Menominee member Susan Wishecoby similarly documented mistreatment in the wards. A formal letter to Superintendent Hummer in 1925 sought intervention with the staff: “I wish you would please learn them to treat us like human beings not like beast to be teasing all the time.” Susan Wishecoby to H. R. Hummer, June 14, 1925, Box 17, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.

47. James Herman was among the minority of Native people with strong English literacy and personal connections to influential white people outside the asylum. These advantages contributed to the creation, dissemination, and preservation of his affidavit. Norman Ewing, Canton’s only Native staff member at the time, secreted Herman’s written observations out of the institution and delivered them to BIA officials.

48. For example, H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, December 18, 1909, Box 6, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC; H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, August 6, 1931, Box 6, CA, Program Mission Correspondence, 1910–34, RG 75, NARA-KC; H. R. Hummer to Tom Robinson, May 14, 1932, Box 18, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC; H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, March 26, 1920, Box 6, ibid.; H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, September 27, 1926, Box 17, ibid.; notes, H. R. Hummer, March 18, 1929, Box 6, CA, Program Mission Correspondence, 1910–34, RG 75, NARA-KC; affidavit, Jesse Watkins, November 23, 1909, Box 13, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC; Elizabeth Coleman to Commissioner, July 17, 1926, Box 5, ibid. Historian Scott Riney also details assaults of institutionalized people by staff at Canton in “Power and Powerlessness,” 1–3.

50. Basements, staff quarters, secluded places on the grounds, and women’s dormitories were among the identified sites of attacks.

51. Affidavit, Nellie Kampeska, January 22, 1919, Box 14, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.

52. Affidavit, Nellie Kampeska, January 22, 1919.

53. As cited in H. R. Hummer to BIA, March 26, 1921, Box 7, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.

54. Other Indigenous women inhabiting single or double rooms, often near stairways, appear in similar accounts of sexual assault at Canton.

55. H. R. Hummer to Department of the Interior, June 30, 1919, Folder 57067, Box 14, CA, 722.1, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC. Legal expert Sarah Deer has shown that rape has been and continues to be a pervasive, sustained result of settler colonialism. Deer, Beginning and End to Rape. See also Freedman, Redefining Rape.

56. H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, March 26, 1920, Box 5, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC. Pathologizing the victim of sexual assault fits a larger pattern of systemic sexual assault on Native Americans. Deer, Beginning and End to Rape; Freedman, Redefining Rape.


58. E. B. Merritt to H. R. Hummer, February 1, 1919, Box 14, CA, 722.1, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC. Responding to the assault on Caldwell and Amour, the commissioner also had informed Hummer that he “may give William E. Juel and Louis A. Hewling, male employees of the asylum, an opportunity to resign if they desire to do so.” Cato Sells to H. R. Hummer, April 5, 1920, Box 5, CA, ibid.

59. Commissioner Merritt, responding to Superintendent Hummer, noted at the time, “In view of the fact that all of the employees indicated in Nellie’s charge have left the institution, it is doubtful that anything further should be done.” E. B. Merritt to Hummer, February 1, 1919, Box 14, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.

60. Environmental humanities specialist Rob Nixon has challenged scholars to attend to “violence that is neither spectacular nor instantaneous, but rather incremental and accretive, its calamitous repercussions playing out across a range of temporal scales.” Nixon, Slow Violence, 2–3.

61. H. R. Hummer to Commissioner (documenting Herman’s first breakout), March 24, 1919, Box 13, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC; H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, March 15, 1919, ibid.; H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, February 9, 1920, Box 15, ibid.; H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, October 9, 1919, Box 13, ibid.; H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, August 29, 1922, Box 16, ibid.; H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, January 22,
1919, Box 14, ibid.; H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, October 10, 1919, Box 13, ibid.; H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, June 12, 1920, Box 15, ibid.; telegram, H. R. Hummer to Indian Office, October 23, 1919, Box 13, ibid. James Herman was formally discharged from Canton a few weeks after he had already escaped the campus. H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, October 29, 1919, ibid.; H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, January 14, 1920, Box 14, ibid.; H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, January 16, 1920, ibid.; H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, January 21, 1919, Folder 82331, Box 35, Pipestone, 722.1, ibid.

Many relatives on the outside repeatedly pleaded for families to be reunited as well, a resounding pattern of kinship and resistance.

As one of numerous examples, an institutionalized man described employees “using us rough,” using a “Black Hand” on them, and making “sick people work.” Describing others in his locked ward, he added, “Many of them die” because employees “get mad and kill them.” The witness directed another Native man to translate his testimony into English and show it to the commissioner. Letter, Peter Thomson Good Boy, trans. John Brown, February 19, 1917, Box 9, CA, Individual Patient Files, 1914–16, Decimal 414–580, Program Mission Correspondence, 1914–34, RG 75, NARA-KC. See also Susan Wishecoby to H. R. Hummer, June 14, 1925, Box 17, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.

Emma Gregory died on Sunday, March 3, 1912. CA cemetery list, Box 4, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.

James Self had received updates on his sister and wrote to the BIA to ask about her condition. See, for example, unsigned letter to J. A. Self, November 10, 1906, Box 1, Misc. Records Relating to Lunacy Cases, 1904–8, RG 75, NARA-FW; H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, March 13, 1912, Box 19, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC; and Gregory interviews, May 9, 2012, February 23, 2015, July 3, 2017, December 28, 2018, July 19, 2019.

This individual died on May 4, 1911.

Map of CA cemetery, Box 4, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC; Asylum for Insane Indians, “Table 5: Number of Discharges Divided into Yearly Periods,” Annual Report, 1912, 7.

Workers broke ground for the cemetery within months of the asylum’s opening.

According to archival sources, at least 189 people out of 382 died while institutionalized. Burch, digital database; Soule and Soule, “Death at the Hiawatha Asylum for Insane Indians,” 17; Spaulding, “Canton Asylum for Insane Indians.”

The asylum ledger references 121 individuals, but archival documents confirm that 2 additional people—unnamed, and with no tribal affiliation or date of death recorded—are buried there as well.


Burch, digital database.

H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, February 23, 1909, Box 18, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC. Some BIA medical professionals, like Winnebago Agency physician W. J. Stevenson, contended that tuberculosis was “slowly, but surely, solving the Indian problem.” Dr. W. J. Stevenson, “Reports of Agents in Nebraska: Report of Omaha and Winnebago Agency,” August 24, 1897, in Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 179. Historian Christian W. McMillen has underscored that rampant infections of tuberculosis
and other diseases were never natural or neutral occurrences but the result of particular power structures and human actions. McMillen, “The Red Man and the White Plague,” 617. By this time, Western medical researchers had identified that tubercle bacillus, not hereditary illness, caused tuberculosis. See Tomes, “Germ Theory, Public Health Education, and the Moralization of Behavior,” 257.

74. Farmer, “House of the Dead,” 240; McCandless, Moonlight, Magnolias, and Madness.

75. Soule and Soule, “Death at the Hiawatha Asylum for Insane Indians,” 17.

76. Medical notes dated April 1, 1913, for the person referred to as Susan Burch described her as “unchanged” mentally; her physical condition was “not satisfactory” because she had “irregular fever and headache. Slight cough. Profuse nasal discharge.” “Report Regarding Susan Burch,” Box 154, Decimal Files, Series 723-005, RCUA, RG 75, NARA-D.

77. H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, August 16, 1913, Box 17, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.

78. CA cemetery ledger, Box 4, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.

79. Numerous people detained at Canton had been held in hospitals, asylums, or sanatoriums before their dislocation to the Indian Asylum. The US government transferred some from Canton before the BIA closed the Indian Asylum, placing them in other (usually state-run) disability-related facilities; others were sent from St. Elizabeths to state hospitals or colonies for the feebleminded. See, for example, Oscar S. Gifford to Department of Interior, January 17, 1903, RG 418, Entry 13, NARA-DC; H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, July 20, 1925, Box 17, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, ibid.; H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, September 26, 1933, Box 18, ibid.; J. M. Scanland to H. R. Hummer, December 12, 1921, Box 15, ibid.; H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, January 2, 1921, ibid.; L. L. Culp to Commissioner, January 5, 1934, Box 4, ibid.; “Transferring of Patients from St. Elizabeth’s to Canton,” 2; Brings Plenty telephone interviews, September 8, 29, 2014; Brings Plenty email correspondence, September 30, 2014; Iron Cloud telephone interviews, May 19, 2015, March 27, 2018; F. Jensen telephone conversations, January 30, April 1, July 21, September 5, October 20, 2014; Judah interviews, June 24, December 28, 2011; and Teeman email correspondence, March 12, April 5, May 19, July 16, 18, 2014.

80. Silk reported that he had “personally examined each patient.” He also noted that the interviews were brief. Samuel Silk to commissioner (through Dr. W. A. White), October 3, 1933, Folder 4, Box 3600B, H83-1, CA, SDSA, 1, 15.


82. The admissions form for St. Elizabeths in 1934 describes Marlow as having black hair and brown eyes; standing five feet, six inches tall; and weighing 124 pounds. Admission note, George Marlow, December 30, 1933, Box 4, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.

83. “All the reports on the asylum are reminiscent of the terrible incidents as Charles Dickens leveled against English poor houses and schools.” Cited in Herbert T. Hoover, “Canton Asylum,” Canton Insane Asylum File, CPL, 2. See also “Hummer Asked to Disregard Closing Order,” 1.
84. Public Health Service researcher Ruth Raup argued in 1959, “By the early 1920s, the Indian Bureau had a definite policy of limiting the growth of the Canton Asylum and placing more of the mentally ill Indians in State institutions.” According to Raup, the Meriam Report added momentum to the process of closing the Indian Asylum. Raup, Indian Health Program, 16. See also “Only 125 of 225,000 Indians Insane,” 1. Historical works about Collier and the BIA offer only passing references, if any, to Canton’s closing. When noted, the interpretation follows a progress narrative that casts Collier as a hero for closing the Indian Asylum and transferring those detained there to St. Elizabeths. See, for example, Kelly, Assault on Assimilation; Kvasnicka and Viola, Commissioners of Indian Affairs, 277; and Philp, John Collier’s Crusade for Indian Reform. See also Dejong, “If You Knew the Conditions,” 67. For historical examples of transinstitutionalization and the malleability of institutional systems, see Parsons, From Asylum to Prison; Ben-Moshe, Chapman, and Carey, Disability Incarcerated; and Chow and Priebe, “Understanding Psychiatric Institutionalization.”

85. Ewing directly “related a series of truths” to Dr. L. F. Michael during the inspector’s visit to Canton in June 1915. In addition to his own observations of mismanagement by Dr. Hummer, Ewing gave the inspector James Herman’s written testimony. Ewing corresponded with the physician afterward, reaffirming that abuses were continuing. Norman Ewing to Dr. L. F. Michael, June 18, 1925, Box 6, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC; affidavit, Norman Ewing, June 24, 1915, Box 5, ibid.; Norman Ewing to Commissioner, June 19, 1915. A visit to Washington, D.C., that year enabled Ewing to convey his concerns to Assistant Commissioner Edgar B. Merrit. No administrative changes were made, and Ewing was transferred to Fort Peck, Montana. Affidavit, Norman Ewing (Flying Iron), October 19, 1933, Box 3, ibid. See also Merritt to Ewing, June 30, 1915, Box 5, ibid.; and telegram, Norman Ewing to John Collier, October 16, 1933, Box 3, ibid. On October 18, 1933, Ewing headed to Washington. The Department of the Interior gave a press release that cited his telegram and affidavit attesting to Canton’s brutal conditions, describing Ewing as “an important Indian source” and who approved of their effort to close the facility. Telegram, Norman Ewing to John Collier, October 18, 1933, ibid.; Department of the Interior, Memorandum for the Press, October 18, 1933, ibid.

86. Since his transfer, Ewing had honed his activist work, eventually becoming national chairman of the Inter-Tribal Committee. “Says Indians Have Fewer Rights Than Newly Arrived Immigrants,” 4; “Chief Flying Iron Makes Plea for Indian’s Citizenship Rights,” 15; “Sioux Chief Asks Fair Play from U.S. for Indians,” 2.

87. Telegram, Norman Ewing to John Collier, cited in Department of the Interior, Memorandum for the Press, October 18, 1933.

88. At the time, Harold Ickes questioned the town’s motives: “Those responsible for securing this injunction presumably are actuated by a desire to save for Canton the revenue the continued operation of the institution there means. . . . They appeared to be willing to make a profit out of the degradation of helpless Indians. They do not object to locking up sane human beings in an Indian asylum.” Ickes quoted in “Canton Asylum Conditions ‘Sickening,’” 1.

89. See, for example, “Dr. Culp, Physician, Will Take Charge,” 12; “Hummer Asked to Disregard Closing Order,” 1; “Canton Asylum Conditions ‘Sickening,’” 1; “Hummer


91. John Collier to L. L. Culp, December 16, 1933, Box 3, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.


96. “Surprise Move Came without Warning Here,” 1.

97. Two others who were ill at the time were transferred in early 1934. “Two More Indian Patients Are Taken to Washington,” 23; “Surprise Move Came without Warning Here,” 1. See also letter to Dr. William A. White, St. Elizabeths Hospital, January 10, 1934, Box 4, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.

Chapter 5


2. St. Elizabeths confined Native Americans before Canton Asylum was established. For more on some of the Indigenous individuals detained at the Government Hospital, see Farr, Blackfoot Redemption; Mihesuah, Ned Christie; Thomas Ryan to Superintendent, January 10, 1903, RG 418, Entry 13, NARA-DC; A. C. Tonner to A. B. Richardson, June 12, 1902, ibid; A. C. Tonner to Superintendent, February 16, 1903, ibid; note, Oscar Gifford, January 17, 1903, ibid.

4. Staff reported this as “presented a dull facial expression.” “Mrs. Maggie Hale,” (#39216), St. Elizabeths Hospital, January 15, 1934, Box 4, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.

10. F. Jensen interviews, April 7, 8, 2014; F. Jensen telephone conversations, July 21, September 5, October 20, 2014.
11. Evelyn B. Ruchenbach to Rebecca Butler, September 30, 1938, Box 3, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC; Evelyn B. Reichenbach to Julia Darling, September 20, 1938, ibid. See also Riley Guthrie to Rebecca Butler, February 26, 1940, ibid.
12. Evelyn B. Reichenbach to Rebecca Butler, September 30, 1938. See also Evelyn Reichenbach to Nettie Grinnell, September 8, 1938, Box 3, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC; and Evelyn Reichenbach to Julia Darling, September 20, 1938.
15. Riley Guthrie to Rebecca Butler, June 28, 1940, Box 3, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.
16. As cited in Evelyn Reichenbach to Rebecca Butler, September 30, 1938, Box 3, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.
17. F. Jensen interviews, April 7, 8, 2014; F. Jensen telephone conversations, January 30, April 1, July 21, September 5, October 20, 2014. O-Zoush-Quah’s daughter Julia Darling lived on the property at the time of O-Zoush-Quah’s funeral. See “Obituary, Mrs. Maggie Hale,” 6.
18. Jensen, “Reclaimed Heritage,” 29; F. Jensen interviews, April 7, 8, 2014. For more on the Drum Religion, see, for example, Clifton, *Prairie People*, 384.
22. St. Elizabeths Hospital admissions note, George Marlow, December 30, 1933, Box 4, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC. The author thanks Joe Rabon for sharing photos of the Marlow home from his personal collection.
23. R. H. Guthrie to Louis Marlow Sr., May 30, 1942, Box 4, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC; Prandoni email correspondence, March 29, 2017. Very little is known about what happened to these men and even less about how they experienced this chapter of their lives. Most of what remains comes through fragmentary administrative records and across generations of family members’ recollections. O-Zoush-Quah and the other women were not transferred to the Narcotic Farms. The Public Service Hospital admitted women, but for unknown reasons, the surviving Native women remained in the locked wards in Washington. Because all but one of the men were affiliated with midwestern and western reservations (and perhaps because of the long reach of Canton Asylum as an identifying marker), federal administrators initially selected the Fort Worth prison-hospital over its Kentucky counterpart to hold them. This smaller Narcotic Farm primarily held people who originally came from west of the Mississippi River. Burch, digital database; Prandoni email correspondence, July 28, 2011, March 11, April 14, August 20, 2014, January 25, February 1, 8, March 1, 8, 29, November 5, 2017; “For Board and Care of Indian Insane Patients in Saint Elizabeths Hospital for the months of July, August, and September, 1942,” E. 13, RG 418, NARA-DC; “For Board and care of Indian Insane Patients in U.S. Public Health Service Hospital, Fort Worth, Texas, for the months of July, August, and September, 1942,” ibid.
25. Executive Order 9079 enabled St. Elizabeths administrators to transfer the men. Within a month of the order’s issuance, Superintendent Winfred Overholser contacted J. R. McGibony, the director of health within the Office of Indian Affairs, expressing his desire that American Indians at St. Elizabeths be removed to the other facilities. In April, the hospital’s medical director, Riley Guthrie, began mailing template letters to BIA superintendents and relatives of the American Indians who would be moved, including one to Louis Marlow. The executive order built on longstanding beliefs that psychiatric institutionalization benefited individuals and the broader public. Practically, the shift also served larger institutional management. In the context of global conflict, institutionalization was additionally cast as protecting the nation’s especially vulnerable members—those deemed mentally ill—and providing for its especially worthy and vulnerable people—disabled soldiers—and ultimately serving as a resource in the effort to save democracy itself. Executive Order 9079, Box 3522, Folder: Insane Indians, 5-6 Health Conditions, CCF, 1937–53, RG 48, NARA-CP.
26. The Narcotic Farms were intended primarily for people incarcerated in federal prisons convicted of crimes, those whose probation in federal court cases required “treatment until cured,” and veterans. See “Medicine: Drug Addicts.” At the time of its opening, Fort Worth was described as one of the largest in the Treasury Department building program, with an anticipated cost of $4.5 million. “Medical Officer Assumes
Custody of New US Public Health Service Hospital Here,” 8; W. L. Treadway to Henry Hutchings, March 3, 1938 (and related correspondence), Box 124, Narcotic Hospital (1930–38), Amon G. Carter Papers, Special Collections, Mary Couts Burnett Library, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth. For more background on the two federal prison farms, see Porter Narcotic Farm Act (or “Narcotic Farms”), Pub. L. No. 70-672 (1929); “Part I: The Public Health Service Narcotic Hospital in Lexington,” 38; Time Magazine, February 15, 1937; Acker, Creating the American Junkie; Furman, Profile of the United States Public Health Service; Williams, United States Public Health Service, 51–52, 335; Gerstein and Harwood, Treating Drug Problems; and Courtwright, “A Century of American Narcotic Policy.”


28. Louis telephone interview, March 23, 2014; Louis, “US Public Health Service Hospital, Fort Worth,” 1; Campbell, Olsen, and Walden, Narcotic Farm, 89–91. Likely, Louis Marlow’s younger brother would have come to know the underground tunnels that linked the various structures, enabling greater management and surveillance of people’s movement within the property and providing some buffer from harsh weather conditions.

29. Farm work especially dominated. Technological innovations and economic motivations contributed to workshops where institutionalized members produced materials that supported Narco and other federal carceral facilities. Campbell, Olsen, and Walden, Narcotic Farm; Olsen and Walden, The Narcotic Farm (2009), film.

30. Members of Marlow’s group in 1942 ranged in age from thirty to eighty-five. Earlier Canton Asylum documents suggest that at least one individual may have been unable to walk since childhood and that several others, likely including Marlow, were unable or unwilling to provide labor.


32. “Part I: The Public Health Service Narcotic Hospital at Lexington”; Campbell, Olsen, and Walden, Narcotic Farm, 36.

33. The Lexington facility was vast, with art deco lines, “United States Narcotic Farm” carved into the stone entryway, and a soaring iron gate facing the driveway. Often, ten people a day were processed into the facility. “Part I: The Public Health Service Narcotic Hospital at Lexington”; Campbell, Olsen, and Walden, Narcotic Farm, 36. For general histories of the Lexington Narcotic Farm, see Campbell, Olsen, and Walden, Narcotic Farm. William S. Burroughs was detained at Narco and wrote about the experience in his 1953 memoir-novel, Junkie. Jessica Williams, “A Look at Treatment History: The Narcotic Farm,” Institute for Research, Education, and Training for Addictions, September 11, 2014, accessed January 12, 2016, https://ireta.org/resources/a-look-at-treatment-history-the-narcotic-farm/; Kosten and Gorelick, “Images in Psychiatry,” 22; Lowry, “Treatment of the Drug Addict at the Lexington (Ky.) Hospital,” 9–12; Handbook for Employees, United States Public Health Service Hospital, Lexington, 3. See also “Jobs for Every Able Patient at Lexington Narcotic Farm Provide Therapy and Training,” 152.

34. Tuberculosis claimed a thirty-seven-year-old shortly after the group arrived in Fort Worth; another died of the disease several years later. Death certificates attest that at least one man from the Pueblo of Isleta died within months of arriving at Fort Worth, on September 30, 1942. The death certificate of an Oglala Lakota man from this group asserts that he entered Lexington on January 5, 1944, and died on April 13, 1945. Kentucky

35. On January 4, 1950, Marlow (and probably the remaining others) were relocated to St. Elizabeths again. As part of a larger restoration project at St. Elizabeths decades later, Jorge Prandoni and Frances McMillen began work to identify the graves of people previously detained at Canton. See, for example, Trinkley, Hacker, and Southerland, “Preservation Assessment of St. Elizabeths East Campus Cemetery,” 32; McMillen telephone interview, April 14, 2017; and Prandoni interview, May 12, 2017. Dr. Prandoni requested that the following disclaimer be included: “The information and views represent Dr. Prandoni’s understanding of events and perspectives of them. He does not represent the District of Columbia government or its Department of Behavioral Health.”


39. Marlow’s unmarked but registered grave is located at the bottom of a hill near the southern perimeter of the cemetery. According to the president of Congressional Cemetery, the row of nearby graves surrounding Marlow’s are populated primarily by indigent people and those who had been incarcerated at St. Elizabeths. Williams email correspondence, May 16, 2017. The author thanks Thomas Lu for research assistance and photographic documentation of Congressional Cemetery.

40. H. R. Hummer to Commissioner, July 24, 1930, Box 11, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC; John G. Hunter to Commissioner, August 7, 1930, ibid. Thomas Lubeck conducted an oral history interview with Clara Christopher in 1979. She did not recount her experiences with Cora Winona Faribault but offered observations of other people detained at Canton. Christopher interview, April 10, 1979.


42. Indian boarding schools were, according to American Indian studies scholar K. Tsianina Lomawaima, “the most minutely surveilled and controlled federal institutions created to transform the lives of any Americans.” Lomawaima, “To Remain an Indian,” 2–3. See also Grinde, “Taking the Indian Out of the Indian,” 25–32; Jenkins, “Good Shepherd Mission to the Navajo”; and Coleman, American Indian Children at School, 174.

43. Janet Waring’s 1929 report strongly suggests that this schedule had been and would remain the standard for Good Shepherd Mission. Jenkins’s history of the mission aligns with this as well. Letter and report, Janet Waring, September 1929, Folder 6 (Ft. Defiance: Good Shepherd, 1920–42, Episcopal Diocese of Arizona Records), Box 72, ID MSS-164, Arizona State University Library and Archive, Tempe; Jenkins, “Good Shepherd Mission to the Navajo.”
44. Labor assigned to boys and young men in the “outing system” also reflected settler gendered expectations. For more on the outing systems, see Paxton, “Learning Gender,” 174–86; Haskins, “‘Matter of Wages Does Not Seem to be Material,’” 323–46; Jacobs, White Mothers to a Dark Race; Jacobs, “Working on the Domestic Frontier,” 165–99; Coleman, American Indian Children at School, 43–44, 114; Haskins, One Bright Spot; Hyer, One House; Archuleta, Child, and Lomawaima, Away from Home; Parker, Phoenix Indian School; Malehorn, Tender Plant; Trennert, Phoenix Indian School; Bailey and Bailey, History of the Navajos.

45. Cora Winona Faribault to Diamond Roach, July 17, 1943, personal collection of Caroline Jean Kiger-StClair; Fred Darker to Supt. C. L. Ellis, Sept. 17, 1943, ibid. Providing domestic work for white households was a typical experience for Native female students. As historian Dorothy Parker has noted: “Girls had fewer opportunities than boys: mostly how to sell, prepare meals, prepare for motherhood. Domestic service was a primary area of training.” Parker, Phoenix Indian School, 6–7. See also Paxton, “Learning Gender,” 174–86.

46. Western industrial schools’ administrators, responding to chronic shortage of resources, regularly relied on student labor. As Robert Trennert has written: “Instead of receiving a full-time education, Indian pupils were pressed into service making school uniforms, doing the laundry, serving as cooks, and providing other menial labor. By the end of the 1880s this pattern had become institutionalized, and students were playing an increasingly significant role in maintaining the schools. Unfortunately, the drudgery discouraged students, many of whom ran away. Even those who remained at school acquired few usable skills and quickly returned to the ways of their people once their school days ended.” Trennert, Phoenix Indian School, 9.


49. As historian Marilyn Holt has explained, boarding schools and orphanages “often undermined young adults’ abilities to establish family relationships and develop parenting skills. . . . They did not grow up in an environment that nurtured them emotionally, taught the behavior expected of close relatives, or transmitted the social consequences of shunning responsibilities.” Holt, Indian Orphanages, 15. See also Berger, “After Pocahontas.”


51. Winona Faribault to Diamond Roach, August 18, 1943, personal collection of Caroline Jean Kiger-StClair. Cora Winona apparently did not know and had never been in direct contact with her maternal grandmother, Mary Alexis, or other members of her extended family, including Elizabeth Faribault’s sisters, Lizzie Small and Lucy Mary Greeley.

52. Winona Faribault to Diamond Roach, August 18, 1943; Diamond Roach to Cora Winona Faribault, July 30, 1943, personal collection of Caroline Jean Kiger-StClair; Cora Winona Faribault to Diamond Roach, July 17, 1943, ibid.

53. Diamond Roach to Winona Faribault, August 24, 1943, personal collection of Caroline Jean Kiger-StClair.

54. Diamond Roach to Winona Faribault, August 24, 1943.
55. In her work on the Phoenix Indian School, historian Dorothy Parker noted the enforced sex segregation between boys and girls, which she argued reflected the belief that Protestant sexual mores were one of the most important aspects of the child’s indoctrination. Parker, *Phoenix Indian School*, 8–9. For more on New Deal education and the BIA, see Treglia, “A Very “Indian” Future?,” 357–80. For a history of the Navajo Methodist School, see Malehorn, *Tender Plant*, 108; Jenkins, “Good Shepherd Mission to the Navajo,” chap. 10.


60. In her correspondence from the time, Fairbault references a “Mrs. Walters,” who likely had hired her for domestic work. In 1945, Fairbault was listed in the Phoenix directory at 117 W. Lynwood.

61. Ruth Harmon to Elizabeth Davis, February 22, 1945, personal collection of Caroline Jean Kiger-StClair.


63. This was a prevalent outlook among social workers, educators, and much of mainstream settler society. See, for example, Holt, *Indian Orphanages*, 5; and Broder, *Tramps, Unfit Mothers, and Neglected Children*, 126, 129, 142. Margaret Jacobs described racialized attitudes toward American Indian mothers in the years after World War II that cast unwed Native mothers as “psychologically unstable and unfit.” Jacobs, *Generation Removed*, 53. See also Clothier, “Psychological Implications of Unmarried Parenthood,” 531–49; Solinger, “Maternity Homes,” 360–62; and Solinger, *Wake Up Little Susie*, 151. Faribault and others experienced what writer-activist Talila Lewis details in a working definition of ableism: a “form of systemic oppression [that] leads to people and society determining who is valuable and worthy based on a person’s appearance and/or their ability to satisfactorily [re]produce, excel, and ‘behave.’” T. Lewis, “Ableism 2020.”

64. Cora Winona Faribault to Mrs. Clark, March 30, 1945, personal collection of Caroline Jean Kiger-StClair.


67. “Coercion was inherent in incarceration of any kind, however benevolently intended,” historian Regina Kunzel explains. This made it nearly impossible for Crittenton Home staff “to keep homes in which they obliged unmarried mothers to stay from becoming jails.” Kunzel, *Fallen Women, Problem Girls*, 101. For more on settler custodialism, see D. K. Miller, “Spider’s Web.”
68. Beginning in the late 1930s, the Phoenix Crittenton Home began admitting young girls deemed delinquent by the courts.


70. Cora Winona Faribault to Mrs. Clark, March 30, 1945, personal collection of Caroline Jean Kiger-StClair. Institutionalization through placement in maternity homes, along with counseling and supervision by social workers and other professionals, became a common response to individuals whose pregnancies were stigmatized. By the mid-1940s, professional social workers and related secular specialists staffed Florence Crittenton Homes and other similar institutions across the nation. The Florence Crittenton Home also was closely tied to other institutions in Arizona, including penal and welfare. They coordinated with the Social Services Center, Catholic charities, and juvenile courts over all the state as well as with members of State Board of Juvenile Penal Institutions of Arizona and the convent of the Good Shepherd Work. “Arizona News,” 5. For more on the institutionalization of unwed pregnant people, see Broder, Tramps, Unfit Mothers, and Neglected Children; Solinger, Wake Up Little Susie; and Solinger, “Maternity Homes,” 360–62. For a photograph of the home, see Wilson and Barrett, Fifty Years Work with Girls, 78.

71. Faribault’s letters to adults from the Good Shepherd Mission shared concerns about the cost of staying at the Phoenix Home while assuring herself and others not to worry.

72. Faribault maintained correspondence with several Navajo soldiers during their deployment, some of whom would later be honored as Code Talkers, including Timothy Notah, Jimmy Begay, and David Tsosie. Some of Faribault’s former classmates contacted her to find additional news about others in their friendship group. Winona Faribault to Mrs. Davis, April 9, 1945, personal collection of Caroline Jean Kiger-StClair.

73. Cora Winona Faribault to Diamond Roach, April 11, 1945, personal collection of Faith O’Neil. Many Native American Indigenous studies scholars have critiqued the relationships between land, selfhood, and Indigenous identity. See, for example, Teuton, Red Land, Red Power, 46–47, 92–93, 202–4, and passim; Tuck and McKenzie, Place in Research; and C. Allen, Blood Narrative.

74. C. L. Ellis to Cora Winona Fairbault, April 16, 1945, personal collection of Faith O'Neil.

75. Cora Winona Faribault to Diamond Roach, April 11, 1945, personal collection of Faith O’Neil. Shortly after delivering her son, Faribault informed the BIA superintendent in Sisseton so that David would be recognized as an enrolled member of Sisseton-Wahpeton Tribe. He was listed in subsequent government documents as “David Faribault.”

77. Winona Fairbault to Miss Davis, April 9, 1945 from the Florence Crittenton Home, May 7, 1945, personal collection of Caroline Jean Kiger-StClair. Residence at the Crittenton Home was finite: by early summer, 1946, the young mother had to leave.

78. Journalist Patricia Susan Hart has described a similar policy at the Washington State home, and this likely was followed nationally. Hart, A Home for Every Child, 41, 45.
79. Cora Winona Faribault to Mrs. Elizabeth Clark, March 30, 1945, personal collection of Caroline Jean Kiger-StClair; Cora Winona Faribault to Miss Davis, April 9, 1945, ibid.; Cora Winona Faribault to Mrs. Clark, May 7, 1945, ibid.

80. According to Faribault’s daughter Caroline Jean Kiger-StClair, on June 26, 1946, Faribault went to work at the Navajo Medical Center. “She was trying to find work to establish herself and keep David,” Kiger-StClair explained. Kiger-StClair interview, February 25, 2017.

81. Kiger-StClair interview, February 25, 2017. People like Faribault were especially vulnerable; poverty, limited employment opportunities, and few social connections—common outcomes of broader settler policies—constricted her chances of accessing resources to sustain herself and her child. See, for example, Jacobs, *Generation Removed*, 81; Solinger, *Wake Up Little Susie*, 15–16, 148–86.

82. Correspondence from the time refers to a “Mrs. McLean” as the adviser who oversaw Faribault’s relinquishment of David.

83. It was a difficult and increasingly common decision to make. Faribault was among the tens of thousands of people between 1937 and 1945 who relinquished parental rights to their children. Scholars have noted that adoption was especially encouraged for white women, but Native women and other minoritized people were also increasingly advised to allow their children to be adopted out. Carp, *Adoption in America*, 219; Solinger, *Wake Up Little Susie*, 23–24. According to Michelle Kahan, “Adoption began to increase considerably during the World War II era, rising from 16,000 annually in 1937, to 55,000 by 1945, and then growing tremendously over the next thirty years (to 142,000 in 1965).” Kahan, “‘Put Up’ on Platforms,” 51–72. See also Melosh, *Strangers and Kin*, 39, 159. Margaret Jacobs has noted the broad pattern of social workers and others pressuring Native women to adopt out their young children, particularly in the decades following World War II. Jacobs, *Generation Removed*, 72.


85. He was listed on adoption papers as “David Howard Tsosie.” Adoption papers. David Faribault Abrahams, personal collection of Edward Abrahams. Some family members doubt that his original surname actually referred to David’s other birth parent, as the form states the father’s name as “John Doe.” Other correspondence suggests that Cora Winona Faribault had at one time planned to marry a man named David Tsosie. Her child’s name may have recognized Tsosie’s important place in Faribault’s life, whether or not he was biologically related to the baby. For administrators at the time, and for relatives since, David’s name reflects complex belongings and adaptations, as does his broader life story.

86. Escorted back to the Crittenton Home after relinquishing David, Cora Winona was directed to retrieve her belongings. Former Good Shepherd Orphanage matron Ruth Harmon, still living in Phoenix herself, met with her that October afternoon in 1946. As Harmon recounted, “She was quite upset, having just given up her baby.” Ruth Harmon to David Clark, October 7, 1946, Faribault family correspondence and photographs, personal collection of Caroline Jean Kiger-StClair. Faribault searched for options to anchor
her. Apparently, she reached out to another friend in the area and was planning to live with her “until she could secure work.” Ruth Harmon to David Clark, October 7, 1946, ibid. Connections between David and his Dakota kin similarly were undermined, as extended family would have no access to him.

87. In Los Angeles, Faribault worked for a time as a maid in a downtown hotel, where she joined many other American Indians recently relocated to the city. According to her daughter Caroline Jean Kiger-StClair, Cora Winona “worked in the laundry at the orphanage. She was a laundress. She knew how to change bedding. I guess they gave her a room at the hotel.” Kiger-StClair interview, February 25, 2017; Kiger-StClair correspondence, April 17, 25, 2017.

88. There are many members of Navajo Nation with the listed last name on David’s adoption form—Tsosie.

89. Abrahams, “Inquiry Answers Re. David Abrams,” June 24, 2017; Abrahams telephone interview, December 9, 2016. The author especially thanks Ed Abrahams, David’s brother, for sharing family history.


91. Roth telephone interview, November 19, 2014.

92. According to his brother, David did not discuss or show interest in finding out more information about his birth family. As Edward Abrahams explained: “In fact, after our mother’s death, I located his adoption papers among her papers and contacted him to discuss when to send them. He flatly stated he had no interest in seeing them and asked me to keep them. . . . I’m sure he had zero knowledge of his siblings. Had he known of them I’m sure he would have made contact.” Abrahams, “Inquiry Answers re. David Abrahams,” June 24, 2017; Abrahams telephone interview, December 9, 2016.

93. Cora Winona Faribault and her son had limited kinship relations and other Native communal supports. The Florence Crittenton Home and other church and state agencies filled immediate needs even as they reflected broader forces that undermined Indigenous lifeways.

94. Faribault’s story in Los Angeles bears certain similarities to the story of yearning, intimacy, rage, neglect, and gentleness in the city’s Urban Indian Community captured in The Exiles, a 1961 semidocumentary film. Yvonne Walker (San Carlos Apache) explained: “I don’t remember much as a child, after my mother died or even before. But right now it isn’t so bad as, as when I was a child. I always wanted to go and get away from my people there and all that. And go someplace where somebody will, maybe uh, make me feel different. Be happier. That’s why I’m glad I came out to Los Angeles.” Walker, who was expecting at the time, added: “I want to raise him up myself. I think I could do it.” Mackenzie, The Exiles.

95. Kiger-StClair Oral History Interview Information Sheet, 2017. In her study of Indian adoption and fostering—primarily by white settlers—historian Margaret Jacobs has asserted, “We cannot fully understand the gravity of the fostering and adoption of Indian children outside their communities without recovering the traumatizing experiences of Indian families who lost children.” Jacobs, Generation Removed, 71. Faribault may have faced compelling reasons to relinquish her child, and her daughters later both expressed gratitude that David grew up in a more stable home than he might have
otherwise experienced. These realities—of wounds and loss, of contingencies and diverging paths—are carried by generations of the Faribault family.

96. Faith O’Neil recalled, “My dad said my mom had gone to see ‘David’ one time who had come in on a ship in Long Beach.” O’Neil interview, March 6, 2012.


100. Faribault family correspondence, all undated, personal collection of Faith O’Neil.


102. The author wishes to thank Faith O’Neil for sharing her personal scrapbook and making copies of its contents available for this book.

Chapter 6

1. In 2005, the bungalow was moved to Newton Hills State Park, about seven miles outside of Canton.

2. O’Neil personal audio recording, August 14, 2012. O’Neil’s pilgrimage is both distinctive and unexceptional. Dakota history scholar Collette Hyman has written extensively about ways Dakota families have honored their ancestors and tribal communities through wide-ranging practices. Hymann, Dakota Women’s Work, 33. In her study of Canadian First Nation women’s felt experiences, Dian Million contended that lived experience “rich with emotional knowledges’ plays a vital role in understanding the past and present.” Million, “Felt Theory,” 53–76. See also Carlson, The Power of Place, the Problem of Time; Boyd and Thrush, Phantom Past, Indigenous Presence.


5. O’Neil personal audio recording, August 14, 2012. Faribault’s story is unique in many ways, but it is not exceptional. See Deer, Beginning and End of Rape.


10. O’Neil personal audio recording with Pete Alcaraz, Marie Skelly, and Bill Skelly, May 18, 2015. See also photographs, ca. 1910–30s, personal collection of Gertie Hale and Bill Skelly, CPL.

11. For more on the relational dimensions of disability and institutionalization, see Kafer, Feminist, Queer, Crip; Clare, Brilliant Imperfection; Erevelles, “Thinking with


13. The author thanks Professor W. J. (Sisokaduta) Bendickson and Tammy DeCouteau and Our Treasured Elders members at the AAIA Native Language Program for translating Faribault’s letter.


21. MacDowell and Dewhurst, To Honor and Comfort.


24. Nettie Tork to Oscar Gifford, March 12, 1909, Box 13, CA, CCF 1907–39, RG 75, NARA-DC.


26. Ellen Lofland, who worked with Jack Jensen on creating the current iteration of the quilt, noted that she—with an abundance of quality equipment—had spent two hundred hours on the project. She conjectured that it would have taken many more hours than that for O-Zoush-Quah and her daughter to make the various squares. Lofland telephone interview, August 4, 2019; Lofland email correspondence, August 3, 2019; “Ancestral Quilt,” 53–55.

27. Historian Jacki Rand (Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma) offers a cogent critique of artifacts’ biographies as a way to “recover the histories of people who are not to appear in conventional sources.” Jacki Thompson Rand, “Primary Sources: Indian Goods and the History of American Colonialism and the 19th-Century Reservation,” in Shoemaker, Clearing a Path, 142. In her scholarship on blankets, American studies scholar Kara Thompson has written that “so many others use blankets to intervene in dominant discourse, and to create their own narratives with materials available and familiar. . . . To quilt is to make a memory, a proxy to fill the absence.” Thompson, Blanket, 115. Social anthropologist Max Carocci observed that quilts and blankets can also be healing tools. Carocci, “Textiles of Healing,” 68–84.

28. Disability and public historian Katherine Ott has argued that “objects edit who we are.” Ott, Comment to Disability History Panel at the OAH Conference.
30. F. Jensen interviews, April 7, 8, 2014; J. Jensen interviews, April 22, 23, 2017; J. Jensen telephone conversation, February 17, 2017.
31. A particularly important part of this experience occurred when Jensen reread a family Bible that he had inherited. On the family tree drawn on its pages, kin had documented O-Zoush-Quah’s forced removal. Family Bible, ca. 1880s–, personal collection of Jack Jensen; J. Jensen interviews, April 22, 23, 2017; J. Jensen telephone conversations, February 17, 2017, August 26, 2018.
34. J. Jensen interviews, April 22, 23, 2017; J. Jensen telephone conversations, August 26, 2018, January 19, 2020. For a broad study of the dynamic relationships between Indigenous kin across generations, the fluidity of time, and the porous boundaries between natural and supernatural worlds, see Boyd and Thrush, Phantom Past, Indigenous Presence; Stevenson, Life Beside Itself.
37. For more on Potawatomi history, see Mitchell, “Stories of the Potawatomi People”; and Edmunds, Potawatomis.
39. Among the initial motivations for Iron Shield’s public gathering was South Dakota’s proclaimed Year of Reconciliation (1987), which commemorated the 125th anniversary of the U.S.–Dakota Wars. National movements for American Indian repatriation had gained significant momentum during the 1980s as well, and Iron Shield explicitly tied the commemorations at Canton to these larger repatriation and tribal-sovereignty campaigns. For example, he had founded the Native American Reburial Restoration Committee, which sponsored the ceremonies at the Indian Asylum. Iron Shield, “South Dakota Should Protect Remains in Sacred Burial Grounds of Indians,” 12A; Linck, “Indians Ask for Respect at Burials at Golf Course,” A4; Iron Shield, “Research Indicates Asylum Wasn’t in Indians’ Best Interest,” 10A; “Ceremony to Memorialize Those Buried at Old Asylum,” C3; Hascall, “Spiritual Walk Honors Indians Who Lived in Insane Asylum,” 27D; Jordan, “Golfcourse Graves a Painful Legacy,” B5; Jordan, “National Indian Asylum’s Legacy”; Miller, “Sad Legacy at Quiet Cemetery,” 1B; Tollefson, “Program to Honor Indians Who Died in Asylum,” C1; “Winter Memorial,” C3. See also Butler, “Proper Burial”; Bolding, “Journalist: Canton Golf Course No Place for Graveyard,” 1C; and LaDuke, Recovering the Sacred. For more on Indigenous self-determination work, see Barker, Native Acts; Barker, Sovereignty Matters; Mallon, Decolonizing Native Histories; Churchill, Struggle for the Land; Biolsi, “Imagined Geographies”; Simpson and Smith, Theorizing Native Studies; D. Cobb and Fowler, Beyond Red Power; and Champagne, “Self-Determination and Activism among American Indians.” I thank Yvonne Stretches
for sharing memories of her relative, Harold Iron Shield. Stretches telephone interview, February 17, 2017.

40. The superintendent of the golf course at the time explained that “the graves were caving in. . . . It had been neglected for too long.” “Indian Reburial Movement Spurs Interest in Asylum Graves,” H6.

41. “This Plaque Marks Burial of 120 Indians at Canton,” cover, 3; Hiawatha National Register of Historical Places Registration Form, Section 7, May 5, 1998, 1, SDSA. Archival sources and an archaeological study in 2015 confirmed that there are at least six additional people buried in the cemetery.

42. One eighty-nine-year-old Santee Sioux Tribe member said at the time: “As a child I remember when I was a student at Pipestone Indian school in Minnesota. They (school officials) threatened to send us to the insane asylum if we didn’t behave in school or the dorms.” Cited in Iron Shield, “Legacy of an Infamous Institution,” 3. The witness may have been classmates with Nellie Kampska, who was forcibly removed to Canton from the Pipestone School in 1917. Other elders have described similar memories to the author, including during a public meeting about the research for this book with members of the Oglala Lakota College community at Pine Ridge on November 7, 2019.

43. Quoted in Steen, “Walkers Honor 121 Indians Who Died at Asylum,” 1D; Iron Shield, “Letter to the Editor,” 10A; Steen, “Ceremony Dignifies Memory of Hiawatha Asylum Inmates,” 1C, 4C; Yellow Bird, “Wild Indians,” 7, accessed December 17, 2014. Pemina Yellow Bird observed: “Something sacred started moving, and a gentle breeze started blowing the dust off these stories. . . . Tell the story. Look what happened.” Yellow Bird, interview, July 22, 2019. Iron Shield’s relative Yvonne Stretches explained that he had “started by thinking it was about graves and a golf course, and it became how people got treated and how they got sent there. . . . Some were taken from their families and never seen again.” Stretches telephone interview, February 17, 2017.

44. Congress conveyed the property to the city of Canton in 1946. Deed Record No. 53, Lincoln County, SD. Before that, the grounds had been used as a farm and state penitentiary. “Will Put Canton Asylum into Use,” 11; “Canton Asylum May be Given to State,” 2; Hillgreen, “Institution Now Leased for $1 for Prisoners,” 4; “Tale of Two Cities,” 6E, 6E; “Dakota Given Canton,” 10; “South Dakota Executive Also Takes Up Seed Loan,” 1; “Berry Signs Asylum for Pen Use.”

45. Butler, “Final Place of Rest,” 3A; “Canton Asylum Lease Extended,” 4; “Idle Buildings Available for Use,” 6; “Indian Activists Want 119 Bodies Reburied,” A1; “Buried between Fairways,” 1A, 3A; “Vermillion Man Wants Indians Reburied,” A2; Bolding, “Journalist: Canton Golf Course No Place for Graveyard,” 1C; “Forgotten Cemetery to Be Remembered by Canton Indians,” 1A; Limoges, “Hiawatha Memorial Service Source of Mixed Emotions,” 5; Limoges, “Memorial Ceremony Held at Hiawatha Cemetery,” 1A; Native American Reburial Restoration Committee, “Call for Action.” See also Daniels, “Cultural Identities among the Oglala Sioux,” 198–245. Drawing on field research in the 1960s, Daniels noted that his “informants claimed that the Public Health Service hospital offered no services for people with ‘illnesses of the mind,’ but that sometimes hopeless cases were taken ‘East River’ (to Eastern South Dakota) and ‘locked up in a crazy house.’” I believe the “crazy house” refers to Canton. Ibid., 209n10.
46. Yellow Bird, “Wild Indians,” 5, accessed December 17, 2014. See also Iron Shield, “Ceremony Planned for S.D. Native Cemetery.” Leonard Bruguier (Yankton Sioux), director of the Institute of American Indian Studies at the University of South Dakota in the 1990s, echoed Iron Shield’s interpretation. He noted that all BIA officials had to do was claim that “this person’s insane,” and have him shipped to Canton to be administered by a whole different set of rules. Basically you’d just be able to get rid of ‘em.” Bruguier quoted in Stawicki, “Haunting Legacy.” For more on settler colonialism and resistance in South Dakota, see P. Hall, To Have This Land.

47. Quoted in Butler, “Unfit Resting Place,” 1A, 3A.

48. “Pipe Ceremony Held Oct. 4 at Cemetery”; Limoges, “Memorial Ceremony Held at Hiawatha Cemetery,” 1A; Limoges, “Hiawatha Memorial Service Source of Mixed Emotions,” 5. Horrific conditions and experiences have been common in many North American psychiatric and other disability-related institutions. See Ben-Moshe, Chapman, and Carey, Disability Incarcerated; Burch and Joyner, Unspeakable; Malacrida, Special Hell; Rossiter and Clarkson, “Opening Ontario’s ‘Saddest Chapter’”; Daly, dir., Where’s Molly?; and Parsons, From Asylum to Prison.


52. According to Pemina Yellow Bird, Iron Shield had reached out to her in the 1990s in part because they were active in repatriation organizational work. Yellow Bird interview, March 8, 2015. A brief reference to Deegan’s attendance at the 2000 ceremony can be found in Harriman, “Memories Honored at Asylum Site,” 1B, 9B. For more on Yellow Bird’s work in preservation and repatriation, see, for example, “New Agreement Meant to Help Preserve Tribal Culture,” 4C; Worthington, “Where Archaeologists See Discovery, Indians See Only Lost Souls,” A6; and Yellow Bird, “Indian Healers Were Spiritually Revered,” 12.

53. Iron Shield’s engagement with Canton Asylum history also sprang from long-established repatriation and sovereignty-movement work. For more on this broader history, see Fine-Dare, Grave Injustice. See also Trope and Echo-Hawk, “Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act”; Lonetree, Decolonizing Museums; Echo-Hawk, In the Light of Justice; and Krech and Hail, Collecting Native America. For more on the overlaps of disability and Indigenous North American histories, see Teuton, “Disability in Indigenous North America”; Lovern and Locust, Native American Communities on Health and Disability; Chapman, “Colonialism, Disability, and Possible Lives”; and Cowing, “Obesity and (Un)fit Homes”; Cowing, “Settler States of Ability.”

54. Deegan interview, February 20, 2017. For more on Deegan’s disability rights activism and recovery work, see Deegan, “Spirit Breaking,” 194–209; Deegan, “Independent Living Movement and People with Psychiatric Disabilities,” 3–19; Deegan, “Remember My Name”; and Danvers State Memorial Committee, “A Grave Injustice.” For more on mad people’s histories and histories of disability and institutionalization, see Ben-Moshe,
Chapman, and Carey, Disability Incarcerated; Rembis, Defining Deviance; LeFrançois, Menzies, and Reaume, Mad Matters; Reaume, “Mad People’s History”; Menzies and Palys, “Turbulent Spirits,” 149–75; Jackson, “In Our Own Voice”; and B. Lewis, “Mad Fight.”


56. This resembles in some ways what American studies scholar Renya K. Ramirez (Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska) described as a Native hub-making activity. These activities “bridge tribal differences so that Native Americans can unify to struggle for social change. The meeting offers a microcosm of the variety of differences—tribal, gender, and otherwise—across which Native Americans must work to communicate.” Ramirez, Native Hubs, 8.


60. English professor Deborah Miranda (Ohlone Costanoan Esselen Nation of California, and of Chumash and Jewish ancestry) has described similar experience with Indigenous inheritances: “Along the way, I’ve learned a lot about stories, their power to rebuild or silence,” and “sometimes our bodies are the bridges over which our descendants cross, spanning unimaginable landscapes of loss.” Miranda, Bad Indians, xiv, 74.

61. Anne Gregory quoted in Young, “S.D. Revisits Past at Native American Insane Asylum.”

62. Young, “Shameful Past,” 5. For more on the historical entanglement of institutionalization, kinship, and tribal sovereignty, see Burch, “‘Dislocated Histories’”; and Burch, “Disorderly Pasts,” 362–85. Disability studies scholar Julie Minich offers a cogent critique of structural and social conditions that propel injustice and ways that a critical disability studies analysis can identify and contribute to dismantling these structures and practices. Minich, “Enabling Whom?”

63. Davis worked in the BIA’s Branch of Acknowledgment and Research for several years and participated in numerous tribal efforts to gain federal recognition. Davis interviews, June 8–10, 2014; Davis, Oral History Interview Information Sheet, July 7, 2017. For more on her work as tribal historian, see Davis, “Christmastime Blessings,” 7; and Davis, “Hiawatha Insane Asylum for Indians Canton,” 9.

64. Describing another history project of Bois Forte people, Davis had noted, “As a Historian, I had collected numerous documents to enable our Tribe to know its history, but I collected mostly information about people: where they were, how they were living,
etc.” Davis, “Trygg Files.” In her study of enslaved women, professor of women’s and gender studies and history Marisa J. Fuentes details how structural forms of oppression and violence saturate the archive. See Fuentes, *Dispossessed Lives*.

65. Historian Donald Fixico described the power of story and of adaptation this way: “The survival of Indian people has enabled them to rebuild and adapt their communities and cultures. This ability might be called transformation of cultural adaptive systems.” Fixico, *Call for Change*, 6.

66. Gregory had added, “I realized I could do that—learning the history well and right.” Meeting Davis had “lit the fire to go to school and pursue this.” Gregory interview, July 3, 2017.

67. The ceremony that year was on Mother’s Day—May 13, 2012—which was also Kay Davis’s seventy-sixth birthday. Many Native American Indigenous studies scholars have detailed adaptations and transformations as part of Indigenous survivance. Native American literature scholar Scott Richard Lyons has pointed out that adaptations can travel in multiple directions—toward and away from traditional forms. Gregory and Davis described their kin connection as doing both of these things. See Lyons, *X-Marks*, 33.


69. For more on natural, supernatural, and interpersonal connections in American Indian worlds, see P. Allen, *Sacred Hoop*; and Johnson, “American Indians, Manifest Destiny, and Indian Activism.”


71. Davis, “Insight into a Bit of Nett Lakes’ History,” 2.

72. Gregory interview, July 19, 2019. This image or variations of it cover numerous books and anchor numerous popular and scholarly articles. Conspicuously absent from the image is any indication of the Native people detained within it. See, for example, Joinson, *Vanished in Hiawatha*; Young, “S.D. Revisits Past”; and Gevik, “Canton’s Hiawatha Indian Asylum.” See also “Indian Insane Asylum, Canton, S.D.,” postcard; “Indian Insane Asylum, Canton, S.D.,” postcards; and *Nice Place to Visit* (blog).


**Epilogue**

1. Garcia added: “And the one who gave me the ability to understand the gift of medicine started in the 1960s and he died in 2008 . . . his name was Danny Lopez. Along with my father. He told me who I was, who to trust.” Garcia went on to say: “I was healed by my grandpa, my dad, my uncles . . . the men in my community. . . . I was shielded by them and told every time that things happened why they happened and I was taken to other medicine. So I grew up with the older medicine until I got a chance to choose what
I was gonna be.” Garcia telephone interviews, January 3, 28, 2020. A delegation from Gila River Indian Community had invited Garcia to join them at Canton, where they offered additional tributes to their ancestors buried at the cemetery and to the others who had been detained at the institution. For documented examples of Garcia’s work, see “SANE Program Development and Operation Guide,” video; Belcourt, Facebook post, August 18, 2019; “Green Forests Work—UNEP in the Field”; Denby, “Keeping the Salt in the Earth”; and “Young Women’s Gathering.”

2. Garcia had been part of a delegation sponsored by Gila River Indian Community to attend the ceremony.


11. K. Anderson, Campbell, and Belcourt, Keetsahnak; A. Anderson, Kubik, and Hampton, Torn from Our Midst; Deer, Beginning and End of Rape; Adams, Education for Extinction; P. Allen, Sacred Hoop; Jacobs, Generation Removed; O’Brien, Firsting and Lasting; Child, Boarding School Seasons; L. Hall, “Strategies of Erasure”; Weaver, “Colonial Context of Violence”; Hernández, City of Inmates. For more on Indigenous activism and feminists of color coalitional work, see, for example, Seeding Sovereignty, website and blog; Coalition to Stop Violence against Native Women, “MMIW”; and Moraga and Anzaldúa, This Bridge Called My Back.


13. Garcia telephone interviews, July 6, November 1, 2016, September 11, 2019, January 3, 28, 2020. Garcia added: “How are we suppose to know who we are? If we don’t acknowledge what has been done to us . . . to deny this . . . Is the Genocide & Historical Trauma we carry forth to the new generations! Our Language, Songs, & Ceremonies can heal us . . . likewise others too.” Garcia correspondence, February 8, 2020. For more on stories and the universe of medicine, see P. Allen, Grandmothers of the Light.

14. See, for example, Thomas King, Truth about Stories; Mitchell, Stories of the Potawatomi People; Bruchac, Our Stories Remember; Sium and Ritskes, “Speaking Truth to Power”; Stromberg, American Indian Rhetorics of Survivance; Wilson, “Grandmother to Granddaughter,” 27–36; Weaver, Womack, and Warrior, American Indian Literary Nationalism; P. Deloria et al., “Unfolding Futures,”; and LaDuke, Recovering the Sacred.
See also Anishinaabe writer Leanne Simpson’s reflections on storytelling in “RBC Taylor Emerging Writer Award Leanne Simpson.”


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