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Peer reviewed

Karl May's Western Novels and Aspects of Their Continuing Influence¹

CAROL HERSELLE KRINSKY

A curious phenomenon in reservation tourism is the prominence of central European, especially German-speaking, visitors. Recently, representatives from four reservations have been promoting their lands as tourist destinations at the world's largest travel trade exposition in Berlin.² This is surely due to the interest held by many educated Europeans in ecological matters and in aspects of alternative spiritual experience. They commonly perceive the indigenous population of the Americas as more sensitive to and protective of the natural environment than are members of other racial and ethnic groups. Many seem also to think that Native Americans can help them to understand primordial relations between human beings and nature.³ The German idealization of aboriginal life in the woods can be traced back to prints by Albrecht Dürer and Albrecht Altdorfer shortly after 1500. Another motive is simple human curiosity about the unfamiliar, but the national parks supply enough to satisfy the merely curious. For a century and a half, German-speakers have had available western novels in their own language, and as German was the *lingua franca* in much of central and eastern Europe, these works circulated well beyond one country's borders. Late in the nineteenth century, western shows—most conspicuously Buffalo Bill's—toured Europe, raising interest in the vanishing frontier and its inhabitants. One specific motive that drives central Europeans to visit reservations is their long acquaintance with the western novels of a prolific charlatan who never visited the American West.⁴

In southeastern Germany, in the suburb of Radebeul near Dresden, stands a private house with a large garden behind it. Tucked away at the end of the garden are totem poles and an oversized log cabin called the Villa Bärenfett—

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Bear Grease Lodge—opened in 1928 and filled with carefully labeled Native American artifacts.⁵ On a rainy day in summertime, the house and museum contain at least the same number of visitors as are inspecting the imposing collections of Native American arts in the metropolis of Berlin.

The explanation for this surprising flow of visitors to a backyard in a little-known town, and one explanation for their presence on reservations, has to do with the fact that the house, Villa Shatterhand, was occupied for several decades by Karl May (1842–1912), the Saxon author of astoundingly popular novels about the American West. Most of them feature a young Mescalero Apache, Winnetou, at first a less virtuous Sioux called In-nu-woh in May's early works of the 1870s, but rechristened "Winnetou, der Rote Gentleman" (the red gentleman).⁶ His companion, and the primary hero, is a young German immigrant named Charley (Karl, in German). Produced along with narratives of May's supposed travels in the Middle East, the subsequent volumes appeared regularly until 1900, with a few additions before the author's death, and they have been issued in many editions since then. Any general bookshop in Germany stocks at least a few, perhaps displayed in racks devoted entirely to them. The only German writing that has been more often translated is Luther's Bible; May's work, first translated into French, then Hungarian, Czech, and Polish, has been rendered into at least twenty-eight languages including all the Scandinavian and most of the Slavic tongues. May's volumes have even outsold Goethe's, with more than 80 million copies printed so far. In terms of popularity, May is the Louis L'Amour of Europe.

The scientists Albert Einstein and Albert Schweizer read May's adventure tales, as did the novelist Hermann Hesse, Karl Marx's socialist colleague Karl Liebknecht, and Adolf Hitler, who read about the young superman protagonist throughout his adult life,⁷ even though by then, May's works were generally read by children. Other avid readers include Hungarians, Czechs, Poles, Austrians, Scandinavians, and Yugoslavs. Between 1938 and 1941, performers in Rathen, a Saxon town, offered plays based on the novels, while others have been presented in Elspe in Sauerland, and since 1952, Bad Segeberg, a north German spa, has welcomed thousands of people each year to a festival in which versions of May's plots are enacted in an outdoor theater.⁸ True to the literary heroes' aversion to bloodshed and to the idea of family entertainment, the directors include in these performances far less shooting than can be found in most American western films and dramas. Among the attractions are actors on horseback, dressed as Apaches, Pawnees, and Comanches; one may see them silhouetted against striking chalk cliffs. (Another attraction is a Mississippi River steamboat about fifty feet long that cost 59,000 German marks—suggesting the insouciant inaccuracy of the "western" presentations.) The officials of the festival invited Ho-Chunks to interpret artifacts kept in the log Nebraska-Haus in the 3000-square-meter "Apache Reservation," that is, a theater compound which features painted tipis and a totem pole; in return, the festival made a donation to a Ho-Chunk school. Mandans have also visited the site.

Enthusiasts who prefer to stay at home can see movie and television presentations of May's stories, several of them filmed in a Croatian nature preserve. The stars, known to millions on the continent of Europe, include a

French baron, a former American Tarzan, Germans, a Serb who acts the part of Winnetou, and a Ghanaian who plays an African American. At the time of writing, a new film is being produced in which Winnetou is to be resurrected and played by the aging star who won this role in his youth.⁹ The actors' fan clubs have many thousands of members, and admirers swarm around the players when they appear in public. German-speaking children bear the invented names of Winnetou and Ribanna, his beloved. The *Süddeutsche Zeitung* noted similarities between the rock formations in the Elbe Valley and those May described in the American West.¹⁰ On April 16, 1997, the Native Lit listserv recorded the report of Stefanie Eversberg at the University of California, Davis, on her stay in Düsseldorf: "It still seems to be true that the average German receives his picture of native Americans from Karl May books." A German radio program of 1980 had the simple title, "Everyone Knows Winnetou."¹¹

The popularity of May's work helps to explain why there are many German and Austrian visitors to Indian reservations¹² and why other central and eastern European tourists come when they have the funds. May's books inspire many European "wannabes," some of whom go to great lengths to learn Native American crafts, dances, cooking methods, dwelling construction, customs, and occasionally even languages. Some are fraternities that counteracted the collectivization and anomie of life under the Communists or that offer an alternative to the venal materialism of capitalism. Other clubs are created to provide members with spiritual, ecological, and moral insights associated with Native Americans.¹³ A Canadian film, *If Only I Were an Indian*, shows Czechs in their thirties who reacted against the colorless, unethical, and lazy Communist society by camping out as Lakota every summer, living simply and crafting their own clothes and tipis; one, who called himself Tatanka the Younger, had even learned Lakota.¹⁴ Germans and Swedes are working on comparable films. All the participants in these Indian impersonations know May's works, and cite them as part of the background for their own desire to imitate Native American lifeways as May presented them. The serious and spiritual interest in Native American lore among these groups is different from the essentially recreational, though often well-informed, European "cowboy and Indian" amusements for which men in clubs such as the Western Bund or the Cercle Peau-Rouge Huntka dress up and play "cops and robbers." And while novels about the stalwart Winnetou and his German "brother" Charley do not by themselves explain the attraction of central and eastern Europeans to Native Americans, the books continue to be influential a century after their creation. Occasionally mentioned in American literary criticism, they are understandably more often the focus of European discussion.

A short account of May's background helps to make clear why he held certain attitudes and presented his characters as he did. The author began badly but would have ended well if he had admitted, when challenged about his public lies, that Charley was fictitious and was not May himself; nevertheless, May managed to keep a loyal public and his substantial earnings.

Born to a family of Lutheran weavers, he trained to be a teacher after a painfully poor childhood, thereby shifting his social class. He moved from one

job to another and spent several periods in prison during the 1860s and early 1870s for non-violent crimes. A Roman Catholic prison chaplain did not succeed in converting the young man but provided May with religious ideas of a more Catholic than Lutheran cast; the heroes, for instance, are deeply moved upon hearing church bells ring the "Ave Maria." In the later 1870s, May turned to writing fiction and produced great quantities of it quickly for magazines that serialized novels. He is thought to have read a good deal of popular prose while incarcerated, including westerns by German authors, and also newspaper and magazine reports of the American West.¹⁵ Recreational fiction is full of Robin Hood figures who provided the imprisoned May with comforting ideas: personal freedom, living in natural rather than rigid industrial or penal settings, and helping the needy. Most of his fiction disdains agents of the law.

Once released, he worked as an editor, sometimes on translations of books about the western United States. Changing his book subtitles from *Travel Novels* to *Travel Narratives* or *Travel Experiences*, he persuaded others and perhaps eventually himself that he had recorded his own exciting adventures in the Americas, Egypt, and the Middle Eastern deserts.¹⁶ Americans can easily spot his many errors of fact, chronology, and context—errors unknown to readers who are four thousand miles away from the locations described.¹⁷ Like most writers of children's westerns, he wrote primarily about Apaches, Comanches, and Sioux.¹⁸ His information about Apaches may have come from the German translation of John Ross Browne's narrative of a journey to the Southwest, *Reisen und Abenteuer im Apachenlande*, published in Jena in 1871 by the Costenoble Press, which later published an edition of May's own works. May created a noble Apache hero, but most white Americans probably thought of that people as fiercely warlike. To be sure, May never crossed the Atlantic until 1908, long after he had invented Winnetou, and even then he never traveled west of Niagara Falls. His principal Indian-related activity in America was a visit, photographed of course, to a monument in Buffalo honoring Sagoyewathat, a Seneca.

May's books contain exciting albeit sometimes absurd adventures, told with page-turner narrative skill. Ambushes, escapes, solemn rituals, tests of endurance, murders, thwarted happiness—the books tell stories about Winnetou and members of his family and show conflicts between the original inhabitants and white invaders, even including intertribal enmity. They describe frontier justice and divine justice, tell of the coming of the railroad and evil oil prospectors, and introduce those who resisted. Searches for treasure inevitably bring disaster. We read about fraternal love and poignant (or mawkish) death. The novels transmit stereotypes about noble and ignoble savages, but with more expressions about the fraternity of all God's children than are usual in men's action stories. The books have the usual best-seller characteristics of supposed realism, accessible vocabulary, painless instruction, a hero of the author's race or culture, and enough action to provide escape from adult concerns.¹⁹ Like all westerns, they are markedly anti-urban, thereby reinforcing the feelings of readers disturbed by aspects of industrial capitalism in May's time and our own. But why are May's books so exceptionally popular? And what values do they present that have inspired many Europeans for a century?

There is more in Karl May's novels than a simple listing of fictional episodes suggests, and they are not simply about Winnetou. Nor are they written from a Native American perspective: the honor given to certain Native people, but given by a white protagonist, helps to explain why Europeans can relate their aspirations to those of the good people in the novels. The real hero is Charley, a splendid specimen of German manhood who is clearly the author's wish-fulfillment fantasy. Neither May nor Charley wanted to become an American; remaining true to Europe confirmed readers' own preferences. The hero does not, then, have to embody all the western stereotypical characteristics expected by American readers.²⁰ Charley is so adept at everything from learning Indian languages to sharpshooting, so morally elevated and sensitive to the greatness of God embodied in all of humanity, and yet so eager to improve his already admirable self that he has become an example whom many idealistic young people have longed to imitate. The most obvious sign of his elevated character is Charley's unwillingness to use firearms, apart from exceptional circumstances. May emphasized Charley's use of his wits. He leaves most of the lethal punishing to God, who smothers villains in avalanches, drowns them in floods, or causes other natural calamities.

Charley, a middle-class fellow who is clean, respectful of authority, religious, and disinclined to challenge the existing social order, is a surveyor with the railroad, presumably in the 1860s. He is at first unaware of the railroad's potential for eradicating the Native cultures in its path. A miraculously accurate marksman who is instructed by an old hand in the ways of true "Men of the West," Charley the "greenhorn" prepares to go to unfamiliar territory to pursue his work. Shortly after arriving on the job, he realizes the damage that he and his far less virtuous colleagues are doing. Just about simultaneously, he meets Winnetou, who will follow his father as the next Apache chief; fortunately, the young Apache is remarkably mature, intelligent, wise, judicious, moral, and physically strong. (May was unaware that the Apaches had no patrilineal inheritance of chieftom.) The young men recognize each other instantly as spiritual brothers and, after some introductory difficulties, individually or together embark on innumerable adventures. Since the novels are written in the first person, Charley remains the focus of attention; narrative variety is enhanced by Winnetou's occasional absence.

Owing to the strength of his fist, Charley receives the nickname "Old Shatterhand"; as May seems to have thought that *Old* was an Americanism expressing respect, he attached the adjective to an annoying number of other characters. Charley is already in control of himself and others although he is apparently only in his early twenties, an age that seems attainable to most adolescents; he is hard to imagine with the resonant, mature voice of Brace Beamer, the Lone Ranger of radio programs, but may have a voice in the middle range, confident but still young, and earnest. He is the older brother whom one would like to have had or the youth group leader that one hopes to become. Readers, who cannot be Charley, can at least follow his ideals closely. If that is too ambitious, one can imitate characters who are close to him, who are equally admirable but constrained by circumstance.

Winnetou is among those. He is almost as elevated as his white "brother"

is; he even speaks German and reads Longfellow's "Hiawatha," overemphasizing the idea of a Europeanized "noble savage."²¹ Nevertheless, he cannot perform in exactly the same ways as Charley does because—to name the principal constraint—he is a member of a group with a small and dispersed population and with little material power. May wrote that whites had come with sweet words and sharpened knives to cheat Indians of their rights and land.²² He believed that Indians were threatened with extinction.²³ While May wrote these books to make money, he also hoped to show what humanity was losing by the death of the indigenous population. Distance from the events, lamentation, and ignorance allowed May to be free of guilt. Winnetou's response to his situation is to begin separating himself from his doomed culture, insofar as he adds aspects of white culture; European readers would not have criticized this response a century ago.

People disadvantaged, as many adolescents consider themselves to be—limited as they are by their parents, their dependence, their immaturity, their poverty, or by discrimination—may find it easier to identify with Winnetou than with Charley, although they probably admire both. Looking nervously into a future of adult work and expected success, adolescents can be tempted to escape westward, in fantasy at least, while they learn every day to accommodate themselves to the demands of the "palefaces"—their parents.²⁴ What is more, Winnetou at his death claims to have become a Christian, so that European adolescents did not have to feel guilty about admiring a pagan, and Roman Catholic officials could praise these moral books about chaste heroes.²⁵ Charley does his best to introduce Apaches to Christianity, following the example of characters invented by one of May's literary predecessors, the French Viscount François-René de Châteaubriand.

The primary appeal of the books, intended for adults and originally read by them, has long been to adolescent boys, for whom formulaic fiction still presents some challenges. The young readers may not yet have the desire for sex or cannot imagine themselves as responsible family men. Almost all the characters are male, so that the role models are there to instruct other males. Charley is forming himself and has no time for girls, but this is the only sign of his immaturity; alternatively interpreted, this is evidence of the anti-feminist myth in which a man flees from white women to his Native, darker-skinned companion.²⁶ Peer group friendship and male bonding are important here, and devoted friendship between men has a history in European literature stretching back through the *Chanson de Roland* to ancient Greek epics; May used this formula, as he used others. Homosexual aspects attributed to May's novels have been examined by German literary scholars.²⁷ The book covers by Sascha Schneider (1870–1927) for the 1905–10 edition, showing slender male nudes without genitals, relate to, while they seem visually to deny, the occasionally almost erotic attachment of Charley and Winnetou. Their friendship is, however, repeatedly called a purely spiritual love. Conveniently, Winnetou's sister dies before she can pursue Old Shatterhand. Ribanna disappoints Winnetou by marrying someone else, whereupon Winnetou forswears marriage entirely, thereby ensuring that his own line would end; May expected all Indian lines to die out. Old Shatterhand marries

a German woman only long after his days of western adventure are over and long after Winnetou's death.

May's introduction of Charley's wife in the fourth volume of the *Winnetou* series is a prosaic detail that shows May's ability to persuade readers that he is telling a true story. He dwells on descriptions of landscape, having been cleverer than other commercial writers about researching travelers' descriptions and geographic surveys, although he mixed up much of what he read about geography and ethnography.²⁸ His novels are even provided with maps. Verisimilitude is also reinforced by the first-person narrative.

One aspect of the novels that appeals especially to young people is the independence of the heroes. Karl becomes Charley and then Old Shatterhand, losing his old identity as fast as the Lone Ranger later shed his. Like most western heroes, the young men are not constrained by their jobs and seem to move about at will. It is clear that they have decent families, and readers meet part of Winnetou's before villains kill them off, but Winnetou's father expects his son to develop independence and no fearful mothers are present to restrain their sons from dangerous adventures. This is the material of which much young people's fantasy literature is made, and even fictional young heroines from Heidi to Nancy Drew are often motherless. May, whose early life was almost wrecked by his neglect of society's rules, fantasized through his books about living on the frontier or in the ungoverned deserts of the Middle East, where those rules could not easily be applied and where the self-made man (like May) could chart his own course.

Among the moral values cherished by May's heroes is indifference to material wealth—the very thing desired by competitive capitalists, the international robber barons of May's own time. "Yankee" or eastern businessmen, representatives of finance and greed, fare badly in May's books, and oilmen fare no better.²⁹ Readers of pulp fiction relate to heroes who seem to have self-respect and the admiration of others even though they have no obvious income. Earlier nineteenth-century novels on both sides of the Atlantic had featured the independent western woodsman, hunter, or guide, sometimes of a grizzled appearance and rough backwoods manner like the nonfictional Daniel Boone and sometimes in a heroized and gentlemanly form of Kit Carson. In either case, the character was independent, sometimes a leader of others from whom he kept his distance, and—until the late nineteenth century—in communion primarily with nature rather than with organized society.³⁰ Intelligence, prowess, and the ability to reason calmly are virtues repeatedly associated with the heroes and denied to the villains; these are attributes that May could call his own, even if he had a socially insignificant background. May's novels celebrate princes who wear crowns of virtue, not golden crowns. While Charley is mistaken in finding European Christian civilization to be the only correct and reasonable one, May's readers may not all notice this deficiency, as most are European Christians themselves.

Morally and physically stalwart, Charley and Winnetou can argue others into submission. In the late-nineteenth-century era of strife between nations and between labor and capital, the idea of a great leader imparting moral order fit some people's needs. They try to evade captors in the first place or

to use their brains when caught. A ruse is better than a fist, and a fist is better than a bullet, although there are plenty of fights against plenty of villains. The heroes help the weak and oppose the unjustly strong. This theme appealed to readers who had suffered, as May's family had, from being proletarian workers in a newly industrialized country. For readers everywhere, the western described personal liberty and sometimes a new kind of community-building; the genre was not based on fantasies of financial success.

Nineteenth-century readers could understand the political implications of these and other western novels according to their situation. For Germans, this type of fiction showed the process of building a nation, something denied to Germans until 1870. For all but the Austrian members of the Habsburg Empire, the idea of creating a nation against great odds was of intense concern throughout the nineteenth century but especially between 1867 and the years after the First World War when new nations were created from the old Empire. In the Low Countries and Scandinavia, territorial and national adjustments had been made during the century. For all Europeans who participated in colonial domination, the demise of the Indians offered assurance that there was a worldwide and therefore divine plan to have the strong control the weak. For others who questioned types of authority—king, prime minister, generals, usurpers—the American experiment with a president, representative democracy, and personal liberty was a meaningful one. And while all westerns suggested these themes, May's references to religion and peace made his books seem more serious, more elevated, and therefore more persuasive than those of his popular competitors.

In Europe, where bullets and thuggish behavior have accompanied authority during much of this century, the expressed morality of both young men still gives welcome relief. The ethnic and national enmities ubiquitous in twentieth-century Europe find no place in the hearts of the Apache and the Saxon newcomer. As soon as they meet each other, they recognize a sense of fraternity that continues as long as both live and in Charley's heart after Winnetou's death. They show that it is possible to love someone of an entirely different background. Even those Indians who oppose the Apaches are not shown as intrinsically evil but as people corrupted by money-seeking whites who dupe naive innocents into committing sins. Although this suggests that May thought that Indians were uncommonly susceptible to persuasion, and thus not as clever as the wily whites, he wrote about Native Americans who resisted.

For today's American readers, perhaps the most remarkable evidence of May's desire to promote interethnic harmony is found in Charley's conversations with people who meet Bob, an African American. In the first volume of *Old Surehand*, a racist ignoramus named Cutter disparages Bob as "A Black. A nigger." Charley, righteously astonished, suggests "Negro" instead. The villain persists. "I'm sorry to hear that!" exclaims Charley. "It seems that you don't count Negroes among human beings." Obviously, Charley does, and tries to persuade the doubtful Cutter that in his travels among people of all races, he has found at least as many good people among strangers as among whites.³¹ Later in the same novel, a young Comanche refers to Bob in the same hateful way. Charley reproves him, asking, "And don't you know that the great

Manitou has created all men, and loves them all, whether they now have black, red, or white skins?"³² Bob is, however, one of May's comic characters, and as the stories are set some time between 1850 and 1870, he calls his friend Massa Shatterhand and himself Masser Bob. He speaks an odd German to suggest a southern dialect, occasionally gives childlike replies, and can be persuaded and flattered at a level far below that possible with our heroes. At one point, he opens his eyes wide so that only the whites are visible—a stereotype that May learned from books or racist cartoons, having seen few if any African Americans in Germany. All the same, it was uncommon for other than overtly socially reforming authors to express egalitarian thoughts about all of humanity. The audience at Bad Segeberg hisses actors dressed in Ku Klux Klan robes, and the African American character, though retaining an exotic accent (the actor is Ghanaian, speaking German), is protected by his fellow townsfolk. This may subtly suggest to members of the audience what entire European towns might have done for their Jewish and Roma neighbors between 1933 and 1945.

Heroes of one's childhood and adolescence tend to remain in the memory, especially if one can renew acquaintance with them over a dozen times and in thousands of pages. The books offer innumerable opportunities for adolescent self-development fantasy at a higher level of morality than is common in westerns: Our heroes' chaste self-denial, Charley's independence of his family, the young men's freedom to roam over half a continent, their solid friendship that endures for years until Winnetou's death, their shared adventures, their espousal of honorable values—all this means that the American West and the best of those who inhabited it make significant impressions on May's readers.

Winnetou's sister dies. His father dies. Winnetou dies, despite his amazing strength and intelligence, while saving Charley's life. Villainous whites seeking material wealth, and Indians whom they have duped into helping them, prevail at times over the virtuous. The earliest readers wept and remembered. They saw that these three Apaches represented the end of an entire race, with the Comanches and other misled Native Americans soon to follow, betrayed as they would be by their evil white mentors. The end of the race is attributed to disparities in power, not to cultural inadequacies of Native Americans, although no reader is expected to mourn warriors who torture their white captives.

Later readers understood that the indigenous population was not eradicated—this was clear by the 1920s—and they could concentrate on the living Indians. Missionaries' reports and the presence of churches and church-run schools persuaded visitors that the "noble savages" had been resurrected, converted to Christianity, and instructed in literacy. And yet they preserved many of their traditional lifeways. This cultural combination continues to be appealing, as the tourists know that they share certain aspects of the American Indians' lives but not others, and they are curious about those.

In the 1930s and 1940s, national unity, male bonding, racial separation, and white supremacy were virtues for the National Socialists, who permitted new editions to be prepared during their years of power. The Nazis understood the appeal of the novels to idealistic boys, but the characters as May con-

structed them resisted thorough incorporation into Nazi ideology.³³ The books contain many pacifist and egalitarian ideas, so that many Nazis worried about the potential effect of these ideas on young soldiers.³⁴ Hitler had identified with the superman hero, monstrosly exaggerating the idea of one race dominating others.³⁵ He also understood that the disunity of Native Americans had contributed to their political decline and tried to make sure that his countrymen and their allies were bonded securely. This does not, however, mean that May was a proto-Fascist; the books lend themselves to many political interpretations, and there is a long distance between May's simplistic Saxon chauvinism and the Austrian Hitler's militaristic fanaticism.

In reaction against the general Nazi enthusiasm for May's work, and fearing the self-sufficiency of the free heroes, the Communist East German government forbade further printing of the nationalist May's seductive pulp fiction. Older copies continued to circulate in parts of the country and in other Communist-led nations during the postwar years. Meanwhile, a press in West Germany had taken over the pre-war publishing house. In late 1981,³⁶ when the East German authorities allowed renewed publication in their own territory, the first printing sold out immediately, even though booksellers did not feature the books in shop windows or on the shelves.³⁷ May, whom the government had regarded as a bourgeois author of escapist fiction, came, after all, from a proletarian family. The Communist leaders could also rationalize their profit-seeking change of mind by noting that the books showed how capitalist America had overwhelmed a non-white race. This had special meaning in East Germany, which never acknowledged guilt for the genocidal crimes that its citizens perpetrated under Hitler. The government of the German Democratic Republic chose instead to remember May's proletarian origins and the fact that he had written for the masses, not for the elite. To be sure, Communist editors (like Nazi editors) doctored the texts. They eliminated references about a unified Germany, since their ideology insisted that East Germany was an entity entirely separate from the corrupt West Germany, and, because they were serving a state favoring atheism, eliminated several Christian ideas.³⁸ In 1985, May's birthplace reopened as an enlarged version of the museum it had become since the author's death. As reinterpreted by Communists, Winnetou stood for self-determination of nations, anti-colonialism, and struggles for racial freedom.³⁹ But it is only since the governmental changes in 1992 that May's works are again being published in Russia.⁴⁰

From the earliest narratives of Columbus onward, Europeans had avidly read stories and ethnographic descriptions of indigenous Americans. The supply and variety of this literature increased in the nineteenth century with settlement and improved access. Washington Irving's accounts of *The Adventures of Captain Bonneville in the Rocky Mountains and in the Far West* (1851) and *Astoria, or Anecdotes of an Enterprise Beyond the Rocky Mountains* (1848) and Longfellow's "Hiawatha" are among the works available in translation in European languages, including German.

Among European works of fiction concerning Indians, those most admired by students of literature, rather than ethnology, were written by the

French Viscount François René de Châteaubriand (1768–1848). He, like May, had gone only as far west as Niagara,⁴¹ although his “noble savages”—at least one of whom was a Christian—lived in what is now Louisiana. He wrote both about indigenous Americans and about his travels to the Middle East; May also produced accounts of his own fictitious travels in the same regions, as did others among May's literary predecessors; both the Middle East and North America were exotic but accessible. Wise elders and eager young men, some Indian and some European-born, are major characters in Châteaubriand's stories, and they deal with tribes that were much diminished as a result of white invasions. Some of the French author's Indians responded favorably—or even converted—to Christianity, as did a few of May's Native characters. A considerable part of the narrative in *Atala* is recounted in the first person, a device that May used to deceive readers into thinking that his tales were autobiographical. The young immigrant Frenchman has an older mentor, as Charley has. The novels include examples of cross-cultural and unrequited love, as well as adventure and violence. In these ways, the French works stand as precedents for May's novels, although by the late nineteenth century, May could no longer present Indians as Rousseau-inspired innocents in an Edenic state of nature.⁴²

In the books featuring Charley and Winnetou, threats of torture to test a captive's mettle, chases, escapes, and devious plots read like episodes of the old Lone Ranger radio program, with the white and Indian heroes joining to make the West a safe and decent place to live—the white man emphasized, the Native American skillful and admirable but subordinate. But the Lone Ranger came later; the Deerslayer came earlier, and it is the *Leatherstocking Tales* of James Fenimore Cooper (1789–1851) that inspired May's characters and relationships, as well as those of countless others, from the Masked Man of the Plains and his Faithful Indian Companion to characters in *Dances with Wolves*. May, dishonest as usual, promised his publisher that his own work would be significantly different from Cooper's by being more genuine and honorable;⁴³ one of May's literary predecessors, Charles Sealsfield, had also criticized Cooper's inaccuracies, and May could draw on Sealsfield's work.

The connections between Cooper's Natty Bumppo and May's Charley Shatterhand are too numerous to be coincidental. Both heroes come, it is implied, from respectable families that have been left behind after inculcating Christian virtues into their sons. The young men appear out of the blue at the premises of men who are older and worldly-wise. The advisers help to prepare the youths for independent adult life—Charley's in St. Louis, Natty's among the Delaware (and Châteaubriand's young René's among Native peoples in Louisiana). They are ready students, eager to learn and grow, to become Men, although neither one marries in his youth. By the time Charley marries a German woman, he is apparently too old to consider fathering children to continue his line; Winnetou and Châteaubriand's fictional Chactas similarly fail to become full heroes, founders of dynasties.⁴⁴ Each is open-minded about people of other races, serving as the author's voice that seeks to utter Christian truths about all people being children of God; Cooper, however, was more inclined to mention disagreeable differences, while allowing

the Indian hero to retain many of the ways of his people. Each young hero forms an intense, brotherly attachment to an Indian of the same age, the Indian in each case holding the equivalent of a prince's status in his tribe. It is made clear that there are good Indians, even if they are not (yet) baptized Christians; evil, fierce, and deceptive Indians are enemies of the Delawares or the Apaches. Expert marksmen as denoted by their nicknames and quick learners, Natty and Charley castigate rapacious whites who seek gold, furs, or scalps at the expense of their fellow human beings. Not coincidentally, both Natty and Charley receive the gift of an uncommonly accurate rifle. Even better, they receive nicknames based on their prowess.⁴⁵

As for the two Indian heroes, they embody all the virtues attached to their white "brothers" except that they are already wise and thus poised to become chiefs when they are old enough. They are also handsome in European terms, as the first volume of *Winnetou* refers to his and his family's almost Roman faces, while Cooper refers to Indian visages as recalling those of ancient Greeks. The eminence of the Native American heroes is ascribed primarily to personal worth within a community, rather than to an accident of birth, as in a monarchy. The young men know how to maintain observant silences worthy of Tonto listening outside a cafe and to feign indifference while they notice everything. As friends, they are devoted, but in their more profound understanding of both wilderness and the ways of mankind, they are more distant and less spontaneous than whites are. Both *Winnetou* and *Chingachgook* speak of themselves in the third person and use stilted English, as Tonto did later, and they usually refer to their white companions as "my brother" instead of using names. The linguistic tricks suggest cultural differences, and *The Deerslayer* is especially full of distinctions made between Euro-American and Native American lifeways; it is a matter of innate traits—"gifts" in Cooper's language—and each set of traits is given by God and therefore good. All the same, the reader understands that the authors find white ways preferable, and part of the nobility of Charley's favorite savage has to do with *Winnetou*'s willingness to do such European things as learning German and reading poetry.

Neither hero marries outside his culture. Charley declines to marry *Winnetou*'s beautiful, intelligent, resourceful, and English-speaking sister who dies while traveling east at her own expense to learn the ways and the religion of the palefaces, thus to make herself acceptable to the white hero whom she loves. Natty declines *Chingachgook*'s offer of matchmaking. Neither Natty nor Charley shows any sign of erotic attachment even to white women. This distance enables the hero, like the Lone Ranger, to remain independent and available for further adventures in the next novel. Cultural differences among the young have particular resonance today, when the European Union and NATO membership have drawn European nations together, and when a common currency has just been introduced—while both intermarriage and ethnic divisions have intensified in ex-Yugoslavia, ex-Czechoslovakia, Belgium, France, and Germany.

For his descriptions of landscape in the West rather than in eastern forests, May had to find sources in books other than Cooper's. Among the many German-language writings on the Americas were volumes on Native life-

ways and on geology and geography. These included ethnographic travel accounts by Prince Maximilian zu Wied (1782–1867) who traveled from St. Louis up the Missouri to Montana, eventually visiting Oto, Omaha, Iowa, Assiniboine, Yankton, Blackfeet, Mandan, and Hidatsa communities. His memoirs were published as *Reise in das innere Nord-America in den Jahren 1832 bis 1834*.⁴⁶ The landscape painter Karl Bodmer (1809–93) accompanied the prince and made numerous images especially of the Yanktons, Hidatsas, and Mandans, the last group nearly exterminated by an epidemic of smallpox months after the Germans' visit. The young Bodmer made friends in America, including a Mandan named Sih-Chida who was his own age and who allowed Bodmer to see Mandan ceremonies and earth dwellings. This friendship, probably known to May, reinforced the literary model of youthful, open-minded European/Indian amity known from Cooper's *Leatherstocking Tales*.⁴⁷

May's library included a German translation of writings by George Catlin (1796–1872), with twenty-four of Catlin's original four hundred illustrations made in the 1830s. This work, *Die Indianer Nordamerikas*, provided both factual material and inspiration through text and pictures. As there existed a German translation of Paul Kane's *Wanderings of an Artist among the Indians of North America* (1859), May could have known this, too.⁴⁸ May also read the publications of Balduin Möllhausen (1825–1905), the author of many novels and genuine travel reports. One of them, the *Tagebuch einer Reise vom Mississippi nach den Küsten der Sudsee*, (Diary of a Journey from the Mississippi to the Pacific Coast), was first issued in 1858 with an introduction by the famous scientist Alexander von Humboldt. Möllhausen later took part in the Colorado expedition of 1857–58 sponsored by the United States Corps of Topographical Engineers, and published other well-informed volumes featuring his own illustrations.⁴⁹ This prolific author produced many novels, and among those concerning the United States, *Der Leuchtturm am Michigan und andere Erzählungen* (The Lighthouse on Lake Michigan and Other Stories, 1882) had an introduction by the eminent novelist Theodor Fontane. The collaboration of the scientist and the man of letters in the publication of the American narratives reveals the widespread interest in nineteenth-century Germany in midwestern and western America, its geographic features and its peoples. The existence of travelers' guides to the American West demonstrates the same interest among those who could afford to travel, or at least hope to do so.

There were additional ethnographic and geographical reports, novels for the instruction of would-be immigrants, and recreational fiction. Even children's westerns were available in German. The Irish-born Thomas Mayne Reed had visited the Mississippi Valley, the prairies, and Indian groups along the Missouri and Platte Rivers especially in the 1850s and produced such popular works as *Die Skalpjäger* (The Scalp Hunter) and pleasanter titles that remained popular among children into the present century.⁵⁰ Among the serious publications, a legal work was apparently the source for a long passage describing Yellowstone Park in the third volume of *Winnetou*,⁵¹ and May's 3000-volume library provided information about the land and customs of the Americas and the Middle East. In the 1870s and 1880s, Robert von

Schlagintweit (1832–1885) published books about American railroads, Mormons, and the peoples of California, including *Die Santa Fe und Sudpazifikbahn in Nordamerika* (1884), while Friedrich Gerstäcker (1816–72) described his adventures in Indian country first in the 1820s, then from 1839 to 1854. May knew the exceptionally popular Cooper-based novels of the Frenchman Eugene Gabriel Louis de Bellemarce, alias Gabriel Ferry (1809–51), a man sometimes able to write a book a month; at one point, May edited Ferry's work for a German publisher. May had read the fiction in German of the pseudonymous French writer Gustave Aimard (1818–83), for whom the Apaches were savages; of the Moravian Karl Postl, alias Charles Sealsfield (1793–1864), who encouraged Germanic people to form a political union like that of the United States; and of the German Armand (Friedrich Armand Strubberg, 1806–89).⁵² Unlike May, these authors knew at least some parts of North America, although Sealsfield had no personal contacts with Indians.⁵³ The goal of these fiction writers was to write lively, money-making stories for Europeans, not to produce plausible texts for Americans. The authors reduced most characters to types; I know of no one in their fiction or in May's who has the human complexity of Cooper's Judith Hutter. For Europeans, America was a place of exotic escape, larger and respectably less sensual than Islamic regions, the other major locations for stereotypical nineteenth-century European escapist fiction.⁵⁴ The popularity of Buffalo Bill Cody and his Wild West Show in Germany postdated May's early western fiction, but Cody's buckskin garments, wide-brimmed hat, goatee, and pose with a rifle inspired May to have himself photographed in a similar costume as the middle-aged Old Shatterhand. Neither May nor Charley, however, is described as wearing any of Cody's more elaborate costumes.⁵⁵ May probably did not draw on American "dime novel" westerns popular in North America from about 1870 onward. There was comparable fiction in Germany, and his access to the North American material was limited, as was his knowledge of English.

Despite the unquestionable presence of some American models in May's work, he cannot be placed easily within the American history of western writing. He was a European without permanent interests in the real America, so that the opposition between Native and newcomer was not personally troubling. Lacking any connection to the usurpers of the land, he had no reason to feel guilty about the process. His principal emotions were sorrow for the passing of the race and hope that Christianity would spread among the doomed people. His Indian hero is already receptive to the imported religion. May did not have the American Puritans' or even Cooper's aversion to Indian ways; he did not know enough about them, and those ways never threatened him and his manner of life. May's real hero is a Saxon, like himself, and May's fantasies were egotistical more than racial. The notion of personal achievement in a free environment, not domination, was his principal passion. If Leslie Fiedler was correct in thinking that Indians represented for May an id over which the European superego triumphed through faith and civilization,⁵⁶ May, unlike Euro-Americans, had nothing personal to gain from the victory. May's country was not a major colonial power, having become unified too late to be fully competitive in the southern hemisphere with Great Britain, France, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Portugal.

May's westerns have been most popular in countries with no or limited colonies, so domination of other peoples and races was not a major preoccupation for most of his readers, unless they identified with the Indian.

Other psychological matters inherent in the American experience have less resonance in May's work than they have in Cooper's or Melville's. The American writers' heroes form themselves gradually but May's hero comes ideally pre-formed, growing more in skills than in self-knowledge. Unlike pulp fiction writers, May believed in his hero. Charley is not the descendant of any European mythical hunter doomed to a haunted life. Like other heroes of popular fiction, Charley is generally untroubled. He is a willing participant in social life, whether Indian or white. Neither a Christian shaman nor often a killer, he is therefore unlike Hayowentha or Daniel Boone as various interpreters have pictured them. Nor is Charley troubled by leaving a family at home or by changing the ways of his ancestors, a matter that affects American memoirs and fiction. He expects to go home. In the meantime, he helps people in distress and promotes virtue. He feels only occasional remorse about helping to develop the West because for May the development was inevitable and thus likely to be a sign of God's will. Longfellow's Hiawatha had already confirmed that, and the decline in the Native population was well known in May's time. More reflective authors were troubled by the idea of manifest destiny; popular fiction writers largely ignored the problem. Since Indians seemed to be on the way out, May understood their violent opposition to whites as well as their eventual submission. For May, the Native population had lost the earlier nineteenth-century energy and possibly libidinal force that it held for earlier American writers.⁵⁷ As for the idea that chastity "is the hunter's salvation ... part of the acculturated American's ethic of solitude,"⁵⁸ Charley fits the construct only temporarily, during his years of adventure. He is not a mysterious hunter or a backwoodsman, and he is rarely alone; he's a well-bred young man with a taste for travel, but once back at home in Germany, he marries. Finally, while most late-nineteenth-century American "dime novels" raised the level of sadism so as to compete for popular attention, May's books did not. He was an inventive storyteller with appealing heroes who was perfectly competitive in the European market using older formulae. He ignored the contemporary American move toward the cowboy hero, and of course had no idea that twentieth-century western films would pay little attention to the Native population.⁵⁹

The predominant effect of May's novels has been to increase Europeans' interest in Native American civilizations, arts, and values. Curiosity about Native American culture and lifeways helps international understanding and brings income from tourists. Some European tourists visit the United States professing concern for the injustices that still exist as a result of historic crimes committed in May's generation as well as earlier and later. The opening paragraphs of *Winnetou* lament that ungrateful whites stole Native lands from the original inhabitants who welcomed them. May understood that the whites introduced disease and alcohol to their displaced victims.

Anachronistic misimpressions may arise if naive readers mistake literary convention for reality. Nevertheless, it is unlikely that even children believe

that May's novels represent today's Native Americans; they know that their own parents and grandparents read the same books years ago. Do European readers believe that Native Americans are dying out? The idea of a dying race can create a reverential or patronizing attitude. Native Americans today stress their survival, needing neither reverence nor patronization. Visitors come to North America in search of additional knowledge. If there are Europeans who remain unaware of population increase, business enterprise, educational attainment, and cultural revival, they have no visible influence. An informal survey of dozens of my well-educated European friends shows that they separate their mature interest in Native America from its nostalgic components based on adolescent acquaintance with *Winnetou* and other literary Indians.

Do Europeans expect Native Americans to be exotic? Surely most do; cultural differences with spiritual aspects constitute part of their appeal in a land known otherwise for technological attainment, high finance, jazz, and film. (Conversely, Americans visit Europe in part to experience unfamiliar indigenous customs.) It is a benign, if sometimes incompletely informed attraction to Native American history and culture that lingers into adulthood among many central and eastern Europeans. My informants attribute at least some of their interest, as one jovially put it, to many youthful hours "wasted with Karl May."

NOTES

1. For articles, Internet conference references, and encouragement, I owe thanks to Dr. Zena Pearlstone, Dr. Peter Krieger, and Susanne Philippon. I thank Dr. Krieger for the opportunity to lecture to the Deutsch-Amerikanische Gesellschaft at Bad Segeberg in 1996.

2. Jeff Barnard, "International Tourism Trade Show Opens Avenue for Oregon Tribes," *The Oregonian*, 9 March 1998. The North Carolina Cherokees first attended the trade fair in 1991; in 1998, the Umatillas, Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, and the Blackfeet of Montana did so.

3. Hartmut Lutz, "*Indianer*" und "*Native Americans*": zur Sozial- und literarhistorischen Vermittlung eines Stereotyps (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1995).

4. For German-western connections that go beyond May's, see Ekkehard Koch, *Karl Mays Väter. Die Deutschen im wilden Westen* (Husum: Hansa, 1982).

5. The name comes from a comic episode first published in the magazine *Der gute Kamerad* 2:52 (September 1888) and later in the novel *Der Oelprinz*; explanation from Klaus Hoffmann, *Karl May. Leben und Werk* (Radebeul: Karl May Stiftung, 1988), 75, 77.

6. Freiburg im Breisgau: Fehsenfeld, 1893. The name may come from the writings of George Catlin, in which the name Wuen-nae-ta appeared in the German translation; Werner Poppe, "'Winnetou' Eine Name und seine Quellen," *Karl May's 'Winnetou': Studien zu einem Mythos*, ed. Dieter Sudhoff and Hartmut Vollmer (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1989), 37–38. The English term *gentleman* denotes a "noble savage."

7. Hoffmann, *Karl May, Leben*, 6. For Hitler, see Bradley F. Smith, *Adolf Hitler: His Family, Childhood and Youth* (Stanford: Hoover Institution, 1967), 66–68; Wilhelm Brauneder, ed., *Karl May und Oesterreich: Realität—Fiktion—Rezeption. Bildung und Trivilliteratur* (Husum, Hansa, 1996), 236 for Hitler, 238 ff. for other readers.

8. For early plays: H. Dimmler, *Winnetou. Reiseerzählungen von Karl May, für die*

Bühne gestaltet (Radebeul: Karl May Stiftung, 1928), not available for consultation. Werner Mauck, Ekkehard Bartsch, Hans Schaefer, *Der Wilde West Live. 40 Jahre Karl-May-Spiele Bad Segeberg* (Bad Segeberg: Kalkberg, n.d. [1992]); festival website: <http://www.karl-may-spiele.de>; Franz Lerchenmueller, "Und ewig reitet Winnetou," *Die Zeit*, 12 July 1996. Attendance in 1995 was over 230,000.

9. Christopher Frayling, *Spaghetti Westerns. Cowboys and Europeans from Karl May to Sergio Leone* (Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981); "Das Lügengebäude stürzt ein," *Hamburger Morgenpost*, 25 February 1992. "Ein Ritt auf Leben und Tod," *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 12 December 1997, reports that Pierre Brice, for more than thirty years the most famous actor in May-based stories, will make a new film about the middle-aged Winnetou.

10. Siggie Seuss, "Grand Canyon und dann links," *Süddeutsche Morgenpost*, 7–8 February 1998.

11. Sudhoff and Vollmer, *Karl May's 'Winnetou'*, 11.

12. Greg Langley's essay, "A Fistful of Dreams," from Nativelit-1@csd.uwm.edu, 11 April 1997, offers an overview of the subject, despite minor errors.

13. Elizabeth Neuffer, "Germans Make a Hobby out of Cowboys and Indians," *Boston Globe*, 6 August 1996. Some of the clubs emphasize cowboy lore (see "Sie Ritten da' Lang, Podner," *Time*, 18 June 1979: 51), but most emphasize Indian culture. Timothy Aepfel, "At One with Indians: Tribes of Foreigners Visit Reservations," *Wall Street Journal* (6 August, 1996), says that about 60,000 Germans now belong to Indian clubs, which attract British, Australians, and Koreans as well; English-speakers and Koreans are less likely to have read May's books. See also Stephen Kinzer, "Germans in their Teepees? Naturally," *New York Times*, 2 April 1996. Scholarly discussions include Colin Taylor, "The Indian Hobbyist Movement in Europe," in *Handbook of North American Indians IV: History of Indian-White Relations*, ed. Wilcomb Washburn (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1984), 562–569; Daniel Dubois, "Indianism in France," *European Review of Native American Studies* 7:1 (1993): 27–36; "Indianism in Hungary," *ibid.*, 37–42; Birgit Turski, "The Indianist Groups in the G.D.R.: Development, Problems, Prospects," *ibid.*, 43–48; Rayna Green, "A Tribe Called Wannabee: Playing Indian in America and Europe," *Folklore* 99:1 (1988): 30–55, who on pages 43 and 50 assumes without citing evidence that Germans are disappointed when today's Indians do not dress and act in a nineteenth-century manner; Daniel Francis, *The Imaginary Indian: The Image of the Indian in Canadian Culture* (Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 1992). I am grateful to anonymous readers for several of these references. See also Philip J. Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), published too late for consultation.

14. Filmmakers: David Scheffel, John Paskievich. Zenima Pictures, National Film Board of Canada, 1989. Feminist concerns, corrupted in Communist Czechoslovakia, were of particular concern to several women. The film also shows the reaction of Joseph and Irene Young (Cree) and Barbara Daniels (Ojibwe) who were at first disconcerted and eventually sympathetic. The film title originates from a line by Franz Kafka.

15. Hoffmann, *Karl May, Leben*, 11.

16. As early as the collected works edition of 1893, May posed for a photographic frontispiece holding a decorated rifle that supposedly had belonged to Old Shatterhand/Charley.

17. For some of the errors, see Lutz, "Indianer," 340–343.
18. Feest, "The Indian in Non-English Literature," 584; children's writers often describe Seminoles and Blackfeet as well.
19. For May's success specifically, see Viktor Bohm, *Karl May und das Geheimnis seines Erfolges*, 2 ed. (Gütersloh: Prisma, 1979), 51–52 for several of these points. On adventure literature, see John G. Cawelti, *Adventure, Mystery, and Romance: Formula Stories as Art and Popular Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976). For a comprehensive view of European stereotypes of the American west, see Ray Allen Billington, *Land of Savagery, Land of Promise: The European Image of the American Frontier in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Norton, 1981). The author relied on excellent translators and readers. The index lists numerous references to May, Old Shatterhand, and Winnetou.
20. For these, see Robert Baird, "Going Indian. Discovery, Adoption, and Renaming: Toward a 'True American' from *Deerslayer* to *Dances with Wolves*," in *Dressing in Feathers: The Construction of the American Indian in American Popular Culture*, ed. S. Elizabeth Bird (Boulder: Westview, 1996), 195–210. I thank a critical reader for the reference to this book.
21. Billington, *Land of Savagery*, 110–117; Hartmut Lutz depicts Winnetou as an "apple-Indian," red outside and white inside; see Lutz, "Indianer," 351–356.
22. "Der Weisse kam mit süßen Worten auf den Lippen, aber zugleich mit dem geschärften Messer.../Von Zeit zu Zeit gewährleistete man ihm [the Indian] 'ewige' Rechte auf 'sein' Territorium, jagte ihn aber schon nach kurzer Zeit wieder hinaus." Karl May, *Winnetou, der Rote Gentleman* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Fehsenfeld, 1893), Introduction.
23. Lutz, "Indianer," 335–340. May's idea of Indian-white relations was based on an earlier model of the hostility between individuals, or among small groups of Indians and white settlers, prospectors, and businessmen, not on massacres by army units.
24. Leslie A. Fiedler, *The Return of the Vanished American* (New York: Stein and Day, 1968), 171; for other aspects of children's interest in Indians, see Francis, *The Imaginary Indian*, chapter 7, esp. 144–145.
25. Hoffmann, *Karl May, Leben*, 23, citing the *Katholisches Kirchenblatt für Sachsen*, 30 April 1893, but once May's lies about his past were exposed from about 1900 onward, the Church disavowed his fiction: Martin Lowsky, *Karl May* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1987), 31–35.
26. Fiedler, *The Return*, 50, 81. Jane Tompkins expands upon the idea in *West of Everything: The Inner Life of Westerns* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), esp. 4–6, 12–14, 31–37, although Christianity, evidently not seen by May as emasculating, is retained in the German novels. There are other differences between May's nineteenth-century European works and the twentieth-century westerns that Tompkins describes. I thank an anonymous reader for this reference. For the system of norms and values in May's work, see Ulrich Melk, *Das Werte- und Normensystem in Karl Mays Winnetou* (Paderborn: Igel, 1992).
27. Especially Arno Schmidt, *Sithara und der Weg dorthin: eine Studie über Wesen, Werk, und Wirkung Karl Mays* (1963; reprint Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1976); this is a controversial interpretation; cf. Michael Sagorny and Arno Sund, *Karl May: Harte Attacken und Warme Gefühle: wie Arno Schmidt Karl May verarztet* (Paderborn: Igel, 1994).
28. Lutz, "Indianer," 322–6.

29. On the values espoused by German writers of westerns, *ibid.*, and Peter Uwe Hohendahl, "Von der Rothaut zum Edelmenschen. Karl Mays Amerikaromane," in *Amerika in der deutschen Literatur. Neue Welt-Nordamerika-USA*, eds. Sigrid Bauschinger, Horst Denkler, and Wilfried Malsch (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1975), 229–245, esp. 232–241.

30. Henry Nash Smith, *Virgin Land: The American West as Symbol and Myth* (1950; reprint Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978), 57, 60–62, 85–89. Richard Slotkin, "Regeneration through Violence": *The Mythology of the American Frontier, 1600–1860* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1973), esp. chs. xi–xiii, 369–516.

31. *Old Surehand: Reiseerlebnisse von Karl May*, (Freiburg im Breisgau: Fehsenfeld, n.d. [1893]), I. 240–242: "Ein Schwarzer, ein Nigger." "Nigger? Neger wollt Ihr wohl sagen, Mr. Cutter!" "Nigger sage ich. Hebe das Wort all mein Lebtag nicht anders ausgesprochen." "Das thut mir leid! Es scheint, Ihr rechnet die Neger nicht mit zu den Menschen" (240). 242: "Ich ... habe unter den schwarzen, braunen, roten und gelben Völkern wenigstens ebenso viel gute Menschen gefunden wie bei den weissen, wenigstens, sage ich, wenigstens!" (Spelling in these passages is in nineteenth-century style, and, as with "hebe" rather than "habe," indicative of coarse speech.)

32. "Und weisst du nicht, dass der grosse Manitou alle Menschen erschaffen hat und alle gleich sehr liebt, mögen sie nun eine schwartze, rote, oder weisse Haut besitzen?" (385).

33. As an example of Nazi editing, Jürgen Wehnert says that the Nazis doctored Part 2 of the novel *Der verlorene Sohn* to read, "But to accept love from her, a Jew, was for him an unbearable thought," Wehnert, "Zur abenteuerlichen Textgeschichte Karl Mays," in *Karl May*, ed. Helmut Schmiedt (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1983), 310–336, note 47, 334. For more on this topic, see Reinhold Frigge, *Das erwartbare Abenteuer. Massenrezeption und literarisches Interesse am Beispiel der Reiseerzählungen von Karl May* (Bonn: Bouvier Verlag Herbert Grundmann, 1984); for a characteristic Nazi poem interpreting May's characters, see Christian Heermann, ed., *Old Shatterhand lässt grüssen: Literarische Reverenzen für Karl May* (Berlin: Neues Leben, 1992), 119–120; on Nazified later editions, see Claude Rozin, "'Winnetou' im Widerstreit um Idologie und Ideologiekritik," Sudhoff and Vollmer, *Karl May's 'Winnetou'*, 288–305; Regina Hartmann, "Winnetou. Band I. Zum Phänomen der zeitgenössischen und aktuellen Massenwirksamkeit," *ibid.*, 467–486; Lowsky, *Karl May*, 132–138 with further references. In Nazi eyes, Winnetou was not the only good Indian; Professor Nikolaus Vielmetti recalls a Nazi teacher in Coswig near Radebeul trying to inspire his students—future soldiers—by discussing Sitting Bull, who had defeated American troops.

34. Christian Heermann, *Old Shatterhand ritt nicht im Auftrag der Arbeiterklasse. Warum war Karl May in der SBZ und DDR 'verboten'?* (Dessau: Anhaltsche Verlag, 1995), 5.

35. Christian F. Feest, "The Indian in Non-English Literature," in *Handbook of North American Indians* IV, 585.

36. Heermann, *Old Shatterhand ritt nicht*, 116–118, corrects the earlier date of 1983.

37. *Ibid.*, 118.

38. *Ibid.*, 120.

39. Hoffmann, *Karl May, Leben*, 5; Lowsky, *Karl May*, 132–145, with further literature to ca. 1986.

40. Brauneder, *Karl May und Oesterreich*, 413.

41. Francois-René de Châteaubriand, *Voyages en Amerique suivis des Natchez*, etc., (Paris: Lefèvre, 1838).

42. Robert F. Berkhofer, Jr., *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present* (New York: Random House/Vintage, 1979), 91. Europeans did not long maintain the early nineteenth-century "thoroughgoing primitivism" in their approach to Native Americans that is the focus of Berkhofer's discussion.

43. "...viel gediegener, wahrer, edler—eine grosse, verbannte, hingemordete Nation als Einzelperson Winnetou geschildert. Es würde ein Denkmal der rothen Rasse sein," Hoffman, *Karl May, Leben*, 21, quoting May's letter to the publisher F. E. Fehsenfeld.

44. Slotkin, "Regeneration," 498.

45. Richard H. Cracroft, "The American West of Karl May," *American Quarterly* 19:2, part 1 (1967): 256, lists other similarities.

46. Maximilian zu Wied, *Reise in das innere Nord-America in den Jahren 1832 bis 1834* (Koblenz: Hoelscher, 1839–41).

47. On May's library, see Franz Kandolf, Adalbert Stuetz, "Karl Mays Bücherei," *Karl May Jahrbuch* 14 (1931): 212.

48. Francis, *Imaginary Indian*, 22–23. Kane and his reviewers wrote about the "vanishing" Indian.

49. Relevant titles include *Reisen in die Felsengebirge Nord-Amerikas bis zum Hochplateau von Neumexiko* (Travels in the Rocky Mountains of North America to the High Plateau of New Mexico), 1860 and later editions; *Wanderungen durch die Prärien und Wüste* (Wanderings through the Prairies and Deserts), 1860; and *Reliquien: Erzählungen und Schilderungen aus dem westlichen Nordamerika* (Relics: Narratives and Descriptions of the American West,) 1865. See most recently Wilma Ott, et al., eds., *Balduin Möllhausen (1825–1905): Ein Preusse bei den Indianern*, exhibition catalogue (Potsdam: Römische Bäder, May–July, 1995).

50. Hans Plischke, *Von Cooper bis Karl May. Eine Geschichte des völkerkundlichen Reise- und Abenteuerromans* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1951), 45.

51. Lowsky, *Karl May*, 58.

52. See Plischke, *Von Cooper bis Karl May*; George R. Brooks, "The American Frontier in German Fiction," in *The Frontier Reexamined*, ed. John Francis McDermott (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1967), 155–167; Billington, *Land of Savagery*, 37–44 and 339–342. Most of Billington's references concerning May (341) have been superseded by later studies. See also Koch, *Karl Mays Vaeter*, 82–83, 120–126.

53. Brooks, *op. cit.*, 163.

54. The standard reference is Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York, Pantheon, 1978).

55. Sarah J. Blackstone, *Buckskins, Bullets, and Business: A History of Buffalo Bill's Wild West* (New York: Greenwood, 1986); Tompkins, *West of Everything*, 179–203.

56. Fiedler, *The Return*, 24, 77, 118–119. Fiedler finds the Winnetou novels to be archetypes of the western in placing a transplanted white Christian hero into a new environment and in annihilating the Indian, though the "better" Native Americans seemed almost to welcome the end of their pagan world.

57. For ideas about the hunter, the shaman, and libidinal force, see Slotkin, "Regeneration," 557–561.

58. *Ibid.*, 531.

59. Tompkins, *West of Everything*, *passim*.