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**Unsettling Domesticity:
Native Women Challenging U.S. Indian Policy in the
San Francisco Bay Area, 1911-1931**

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Societal Issues

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This paper examines the ways Native women domestic workers negotiated and challenged – in subtle and overt ways – the Bay Area Outing Program. First, I examine federal Indian policy that paved the way for “outing” and illuminate the connections between outing, Allotment and Indian boarding schools. To this end, I historicize both the national and local forms of outing while revealing the gendered, settler colonial effects of this imposing domestic institution. To provide a point of comparison, I consider other forms of domestic service performed at the time, including those found in Americanization programs of the early twentieth century. Second, I elucidate the contours of the Bay Area Outing Program, describing its official operation and process while highlighting the policing and surveillance of Native women in the program. I then analyze Native women’s resistance in fighting for commensurate wages and fighting Indian child removal. My final section, informed by early 20th- century Bay Area newspapers, examines a series of articles on outing runaways. Here I consider runaways in early iterations of the program, while examining how localized rhetoric sought to justify the control of Native women. I thus examine how local social discourse shapes material conditions for Native women.

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INTRODUCTION

In 1922, the Thursday evening edition of the Berkeley *Daily Gazette* declared, “Indian Girls Prefer Park to Housework.” Reportedly “...[t]he call of the open was stronger than the city home for four Piute [sic] girls...”¹ Allegedly, these young Native women camped out at Oakland’s Lakeside Park before they were discovered by a police officer and “turned over.”² The last words of the article explain that the girls were “placed” in Berkeley and Piedmont homes for summer work, under the care of Indian Matron Mrs. B. V. Royce.

This brief glimpse into history describes a once thriving project of government assimilation known as the Bay Area Regional Outing Program. “Outing,” coined by Richard Henry Pratt, founder of Carlisle Indian School, was a means to transfer Indian children “out” of their communities to work in white homes. Half a century after its creation, these outing programs were commonplace. From 1918 to roughly 1942, the Bay Area Outing Program recruited thousands of Native women from federally-operated Indian boarding schools and the greater region to work as housemaids in affluent homes across Berkeley, Oakland, Alameda and the greater Bay Area. In exchange for room, board and menial pay, young Native women—as young as fourteen—cooked, cleaned, and served as caretakers in the private homes of their employers. Because acculturation and assimilation ideologies dominated Indian policy at the time, outing was meant to transform Indian children and thus Indian people into hardworking, thrifty individuals who worked within the capitalistic nation state.³ While Native children performed “outing” labor in city homes, they also provided in-school labor on campus. Cheap and essentially unfree student labor was a regular

¹ “Indian Girls Prefer Park to Housework,” *Berkeley Daily Gazette*, August 17, 1922, Thursday Evening edition.

² Ibid.

³ Robert A. Trennert, “From Carlisle to Phoenix: The Rise and Fall of the Indian Outing System, 1878-1930,” *Pacific Historical Review* 52, no. 3 (August 1, 1983): 268, doi:10.2307/3639003.

practice at boarding schools and provided budget relief. At boarding schools, it was expected that Indian boys would construct the dormitories and Indian girls would clean them.

This chapter examines the ways Native women domestic workers negotiated and challenged – in subtle and overt ways – this localized federal assimilation program. First, I examine federal Indian policy that paved the way for “outing” and illuminate the connections between outing, Allotment and Indian boarding schools. To this end, I historicize both the national and local forms of outing while revealing the gendered, settler colonial effects of this imposing domestic institution. To provide a point of comparison, I also consider other forms of domestic service performed at the time, including those found in Americanization programs of the early twentieth century. Second, I elucidate the contours of the Bay Area Outing Program, describing its official operation and process while highlighting the policing and surveillance of Native women in the program. I then analyze their resistance in fighting for commensurate wages and fighting Indian child removal. My final section, informed by early 20th-century newspapers examines a series of articles on outing runaways in Bay Area newspapers. Here I consider runaways in early iterations of the program, while examining how localized rhetoric sought to justify the control of Native women. I thus examine how local social discourse shapes material conditions for Native women.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

The Outing Program drew upon both gender and racial ideologies to serve its project of assimilation. Within this framework, settler colonialism – which sought to replace Native traditions with Euro American values – is paramount. Patrick Wolfe succinctly asserts, “Settler colonialism

destroys to replace.”⁴ Wolf famously declares, “[I]t erects a new colonial society on the expropriated land base.... invasion is a structure not an event.”⁵ In this structure, assimilation through domestic programs was a main tool of the settler colonial project. Boarding schools and outing programs together served as conduits of assimilation. Though each school has its specific histories, nationally, boarding school education worked to dismantle Native home and gender ideologies. Under the guise of Estelle Reel, Superintendent of Indian Education from 1898 to 1910, Indians were to be trained as “worker[s], not thinker[s].”⁶

Katrina Paxton’s research on the outing program at Sherman Indian School in Riverside, California, states that Sherman “encouraged a transformation,” much in the way Wolfe reminds us of the settler colonial imperative to *transform* the Native. Victorian gender ideologies were meant to ‘displace the old habits of aimless living, unambition [sic], and shiftlessness’.⁷ Girls were to gain “civilization” through their work in American homes.⁸ This gendered assimilation practice continued throughout the inception of outing and domestic work for Native girls and women. This power shift re-inscribed Western notions of gender that affected generations of Native families. Through invading the most intimate spaces, domesticity facilitated this transformation and served as a central tool of the assimilation project.

Though the outing project was implemented nationwide, the Bay Area Outing Program was unique in that it extended beyond Indian educational institutions. Unlike many federally-run outing programs that operated out of Indian boarding schools, the Bay Area Outing Program funneled

⁴ Patrick Wolfe, “Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native,” *Journal of Genocide Research* 8, no. 4 (December 2006): 388, doi:10.1080/14623520601056240.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Katrina A. Paxton, “Learning Gender: Female Students at the Sherman Institute, 1907–1925,” in *Boarding School Blues: Revisiting American Indian Educational Experiences*, ed. Clifford E. Trafzer, Jean A. Keller, and Lorene Sisquoc (Lincoln: Bison Books, 2006), 179.

⁷ Ibid., 183.

⁸ Ibid., 182.

Native girls and women laborers from both the region (apart from schools) and a range of western-based Indian boarding schools including Chemawa Indian School in Salem, OR, Sherman Institute in Riverside, CA and Stewart Indian School in Carson City, NV. In whole, the program established a far-reaching, regional system that was independent of a specific boarding school.

Methodologically, I explore the Bay Area Outing Program at two scales; at the macro level I examine BIA files that reveal the program's larger structural framework, and at the micro level I examine BIA files and early 20th-century *Berkeley Daily Gazette*, *San Francisco Call* and *Oakland Tribune* newspaper articles that reveal the on-the-ground, local consequences of the program. In particular, I focus on three articles from the summer of 1922 that report a high occurrence of runaways, highlighting overt forms of resistance in the program's infancy. Woven through this analysis is an interview that illuminates one Native woman's perspective on domestic training in Indian boarding schools. In fall 2013 through fall 2016 I conducted several formal and semi-formal interviews with Esther Wasson, a Paiute elder who attended Stewart Indian School in Carson City, Nevada, in the 1930s and 1940s. As a young girl, Wasson labored on the school grounds, contributing to in-school labor and also participated in outing. She later worked as a domestic throughout California and Nevada. Because the Bay Area Outing Program stems from Stewart administration and a network of Indian schools that relied upon and produced Indian laborers, Wasson's story is representative of the experiences of thousands of other Native girls and young women placed in the outing program.

The BIA's Relocation, Training and Employment Assistance archival records demonstrate the government's detailed, day-to-day management and exploitation of Native women in the outing program. They also reveal Native women's subtle and overt forms of resistance to domesticity and assimilation. My inclusion of newspaper analysis and in-depth interviews expands our knowledge of outing in a way that BIA files alone cannot. Newspaper articles capture historic discourse on Native

women and the social anxieties of the time, and expose the justifications given for a program that sought to control Native women through domesticity.

This three-way data strategy has allowed me to explore outing in ways that scholars have yet to examine. These never-before analyzed articles about outing runaways demonstrate the local public's view of the assimilation program and the value of Indian employment; they also capture local modes of informing and justifying Indian policy.⁹ In the same way, contemporary interviews with women who experienced boarding school domestic training first-hand reveal the labor-intensive industrial work within the school as well as the constrained choices women had after school. When one considers these profound examples of federal coercion, Native women's resistance is all the more triumphant.

Temporally, I examine instances of resistance in early iterations of Bay Area outing and in the first decade of the official program, roughly 1911-1931, a time when the San Francisco Bay Area Indian community was small.¹⁰ Though the Bay Area Indian community grew in the mid-nineteenth century relocation era, in its first years the Bay Area Outing Program hosted Native women who were isolated from an Indian community and likely very lonely and had difficulty securing kinship networks and resources outside of the program.

⁹ Indeed, local homeowners' complacency and engagement with the Bay Area Outing Program contributed to the growth and proliferation of the decades-long program.

¹⁰ At this time, many local Native communities in the Bay Area like the Ohlone had been displaced by settler incursion or suffered immense genocide in the mission system. Moreover, while some communities like Pomo women from Mendocino County came to the Bay Area for temporary work, they did not stay or settle for longer periods of time. For references on the growth and development of the Bay Area Urban Indian community, see *Urban Voices: The Bay Area American Indian Community* edited by Susan Lobo and *Native Hubs: Culture, Community, and Belonging in Silicon Valley and Beyond* by Renya Ramirez.

THE HISTORY OF OUTING & DISPOSSESSION

Because outing operated as a means to transform Indian people into hardworking, thrifty individuals it was foundationally connected to the “Dawes” Severalty/General Allotment Act of 1887 and subsequent Indian boarding schools and their curriculum. Together, outing, boarding schools and Allotment were used to promote “Indian civilization” through labor and domestic training. In particular, outing facilitated Indian labor and training from federally operated institutions into privately owned homes, ranches and businesses. Working as an interconnected trilogy of federal Indian policy, outing, Allotment and Indian boarding schools also hinged upon a gendered division of labor intended to foundationally transform Indian communities. From generally egalitarian societies, these policies forced Indian peoples into reproducing Euro American heteropatriarchal nuclear families. Native women were especially targeted by these systems.

Outing was an official Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)¹¹ program that ran through off-reservation boarding schools. Outing, coined by Richard Henry Pratt, founder of Carlisle Indian School, was a means to remove Indian children and transfer them “out” to work in white Christian homes.¹² Pratt believed white contact was the “supreme Americanizer.”¹³ In 1878, Pratt, the “father of the outing system” conducted his first outing experiment on Indian prisoners at Fort Marion in Florida.¹⁴ From their chains, these prisoners were sent to labor for local whites and earned a small wage. The fact that outing initiated with Indian prisoners is telling, for the institution would grow to control, detain and exploit Indian people.

¹¹ Initially and in the scope of this paper it was first known as the Office of Indian Affairs (OIA).

¹² Though Pratt established outing in the federal Indian boarding school model, the concept of placing Indian children in religious homes as a means to educate them stemmed from American colonial period practices.

¹³ Trennert, “From Carlisle to Phoenix,” 267.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 269 – 270.

The perceived success of outing inspired Pratt to continue his experiment in 1879 at the first U.S. off-reservation boarding school—the Carlisle Institute in Pennsylvania.¹⁵ Pratt’s “civilization” program consisted of a half-day of basic education, reading and math and a half-day of manual labor in white households through his outing program.¹⁶ Pratt’s “happy results” at Carlisle served as proof that civilization among Indians was possible.¹⁷ His curriculum became the standard for Indian education and outing became the cornerstone of nineteenth and twentieth century Indian policy.

In 1887, less than a decade after the creation of the Carlisle Institute, Congress adopted the Allotment Act. Largely, the Act intended to release massive amounts of Indian land for white settlement and attempted to break up collective tribal use of land, a practice that reformers saw as wild and uncivilized. Individual Indians were allotted parcels of their own land intended for nuclear male-led households. Allottees able to successfully farm their allotments and reside “separate and apart from any tribe,” and able to “[adopt] the habits of civilized life” were entitled to U.S. citizenship.¹⁸ With the end of tribalism facilitated by private property, reformers believed that Indians would cease to be nomadic and adopt Euro American domestic practices.

Allotment was fundamentally related to the ideologies that produced outing programs. As it was designed, Allotment was intended to create responsible, useful and industrious Indians. Allotment was also a gendered project; Indian men were intended to labor as yeoman farmers aside their Indian wives, who were expected to be virtuous, moral housekeepers. Both husband and wife were to learn civility through reproducing Euro American gender and domestic roles that were

¹⁵ Brenda Child, *Boarding School Seasons: American Indian Families, 1900-1940* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000), 6.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 5.

¹⁷ Francis Paul Prucha, ed., *Americanizing the American Indians: Writings by the “Friends of the Indian,” 1880-1900*, New edition (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1978), 276.

¹⁸ An Act to Provide for the Allotment of Lands in Severalty to Indians on the Various Reservations (General Allotment Act or Dawes Act), Statutes at Large 24, 388-91, NADP Document A1887. Allotments were held in trust for twenty-five years until they could be made fee-simple land.

integrally male-dominated, thus reducing Native women to male dependency and subordination. In defense of the Act, Senator Henry Dawes insisted that with hoe and plow an Indian would farm his allotment and make a “man of him[self].”¹⁹ Dawes declared, “The good you can do these Indians is to show them how to work for themselves, to show them that they can work and that work is best.”²⁰ Gendered labor was vital to the perceived success of the policy.

Ostensibly, Allotment was intended to “emancipate” Indians, however it was far more successful at land theft and dramatically altering Native kinship and gender norms. Allotments were distributed to male heads of household and required a monogamous, heterosexual and “legal” nuclear family—traditional marriage was not enough.²¹ N. Eric Olund stresses that this “patriarchal domestic space” was a “necessary underpinning of American civilization...”²² So, as Allotment served to expand white settlement, and create Native citizens, it did so by transforming Native forms of gender and domesticity. From typically egalitarian and communal extended kinship, Native families were forced into reproducing Euro American heteropatriarchal nuclear families.

As boarding schools for Indian children expanded across the country this civilization plan maintained its gendered roots. Commissioner of Indian Affairs Thomas J. Morgan envisioned a detailed plan for schools and believed it would give the “innocent papoose [...] the possibility of a sweet and gentle womanhood or a noble and useful manhood.”²³ Children were targeted as the future of their race—especially young women as procreators of that race. Morgan’s gendered assessment here assumed Indian boys and men to be ignoble and Indian girls and women callous and unpleasant. Indeed, reformers believed Indian women were mistreated and overburdened by

¹⁹ Prucha, *Americanizing the American Indians*, 101.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 108.

²¹ Eric N. Olund, “Public Domesticity during the Indian Reform Era; Or, Mrs. Jackson Is Induced to Go to Washington,” *Gender, Place & Culture* 9, no. 2 (June 1, 2002): 154, doi:10.1080/09663960220139662.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ Prucha, *Americanizing the American Indians*, 242.

their communities thus inspiring gendered curriculum intended to encourage docile women. In fact, Morgan insisted that co-education was the only way Indian women could be “lifted out of [...] servility and degradation [...]”²⁴ In this way, Native women were targeted for domestication through gendered education.

Under Morgan, schools were regimented, and militaristic, and girls were incorporated into “soldierly routine.”²⁵ In 1901, Superintendent of Indian Education Estelle Reel authored *Uniform Course of Study*, establishing a detailed curriculum that endured long past her tenure. Under Reel, Indians were to be trained as “worker[s], not thinker[s].”²⁶ Reel emphasized practical training for Indian children and specifically domestic education for Indian girls. She stated, “If there is no time for nothing else, housekeeping must be taught.”²⁷ Reel’s *Course of Study* did not imagine lofty goals for young Indian women. Instead, they were treated as only capable of domestic labor.

Though Indian boys were also subjected to hard labor, their skills allowed them greater access to a variety of trades in public spaces. Also, comparatively, boys were not as controlled as Indian girls.²⁸ So while men were allowed more flexibility, Native women were relegated to private, controlling, domestic(ating) space. Brenda Child found that in boarding schools, girls were granted “fewer privileges” than boys.²⁹ Interestingly, Kevin Whalen’s recent study of Sherman Institute’s outing program reports that compared to young men, girls had fewer opportunities to resist

²⁴ Ibid., 226. Morgan’s use of “servility” here is ironic, for his plan of action for Indian schools emphasized outing with hopes that it would allow Indians to mingle with whites and thus absorb the habits of a civilized life. However, for Indian women, outing rendered them nothing more than menial servants.

²⁵ Robert A. Trennert, “Educating Indian Girls at Nonreservation Boarding Schools, 1878-1920,” *The Western Historical Quarterly* 13, no. 3 (July 1, 1982): 281, doi:10.2307/969414.

²⁶ Paxton, “Learning Gender: Female Students at the Sherman Institute, 1907–1925,” 179.

²⁷ K. Tsianina Lomawaima, “Estelle Reel, Superintendent of Indian Schools, 1889-1910: Politics, Curriculum, and Land,” *Journal of American Indian Education* 35, no. 3 (1996): 6.

²⁸ K. Tsianina Lomawaima, “Domesticity in the Federal Indian Schools: The Power of Authority over Mind and Body,” *American Ethnologist* 20, no. 2 (1993): 232.

²⁹ Child, *Boarding School Seasons*, 92.

unfavorable living and working conditions. Whalen found this to be especially true in the Sherman outing system.³⁰ This finding stresses how significant Native women's resistance is in the face of outing.

As a whole, outing was nothing short of government coerced indentured servitude. While the intentions and practice of the program shifted over time, recent scholarship has uncovered a national legacy of exploitative Indian child labor through the outing system—a cornerstone of nineteenth and twentieth century Indian policy.³¹ Together outing, Allotment and Indian boarding schools functioned to assimilate Indian communities through labor and domestic training with a distinct gendered division. The exemplary Indian husband and wife would break away from their kin and learn civility through reproducing Euro American gender and domestic roles. In this male-dominated, patriarchal structure, Native women were thus subordinated. Subsequent Indian policy continued to target women as procreators of their race. Within boarding schools, officials emphasized practical training for Indian children and specifically domestic education for Indian girls which outing achieved. For Native women assimilation doctrine was unevenly applied—indeed disproportionately on the basis of race and gender.

³⁰ Kevin Whalen, *Native Students at Work: American Indian Labor and Sherman Institute's Outing Program, 1900-1945* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2016), 49.

³¹ For example, see *White Mother to a Dark Race: Settler Colonialism, Maternalism, and the Removal of Indigenous Children in the American West and Australia, 1880-1940* by Margaret Jacobs; "Labored Learning: The Outing System at Sherman Institute, 1902-1930" by Kevin Whalen; and "Learning Gender: Female Students at the Sherman Institute, 1907-1925" by Katrina Paxton.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Outing Programs and Indian Boarding Schools

In recent decades, scholars have taken up the question of outing and Indigenous child labor at global, national and local levels.³² Victoria Haskins has examined Native American outing in comparison with similar Aboriginal labor programs in Australia. Katrina Paxton and Kevin Whalen have both focused on the impact of Sherman Indian School's expansive outing program in southern California. Margaret Jacobs, who has also explored Aboriginal Australian connections through the lens of settler colonialism, has offered the most thorough account of the San Francisco Bay Area Outing Program. Overwhelmingly, these researchers have found that Indian child labor in and out of boarding schools was damaging, exploitative and yet vital to the upkeep of the boarding school institution. Significantly, these scholars found that Indian children rejected, refused, and frustrated these imposed labor structures associated with the outing system.

Katrina Paxton's research on the Sherman Institute draws upon a theory of "gender assimilation" to underscore that young Native women were targeted for indoctrination in Protestant gender and domestic ideals. Through the school's outing program girls were to gain "civilization" working in American homes.³³ Victoria Haskins' work on outing in Tucson found that the program worked to override Indian interests and was "designed to constrain indigenous power and autonomy."³⁴ In fact, Haskins recognizes that Southwest Anglo-Americans, "perpetuated and refined" long standing Indian labor exploitation and slavery through the outing program.³⁵ Kevin

³² See for example the work of Tsianina Lomawaima, David Adams, Brenda Child, Robert Trennert, Margaret Jacobs, Victoria Haskins, Kevin Whalen, and Katrina Paxton to name a few.

³³ Paxton, "Learning Gender: Female Students at the Sherman Institute, 1907–1925," 182.

³⁴ Victoria K Haskins, *Matrons and Maids: Regulating Indian Domestic Service in Tucson, 1914-1934* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2012), 166.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 21. Throughout Northern and Southern California for example, outright peonage and slavery were commonly practiced throughout the Spanish, Mexican and American periods galvanizing in 1850 with the Act for the Government and Protection of Indians.

Whalen's work on the Sherman Institute reveals just that: "at worst" the outing system turned schools into "employment agencies, sending young Indian people to perform dangerous, physically demanding tasks at discount wages."³⁶ At Sherman, women were regarded as superior representatives of the school and yet were traded as commodities. Indian girls between the ages of ten and thirteen worked for as little as one dollar a month and Sherman Superintendent Harwood Hall assured one labor recipient, "if the girl is not satisfactory, you may return her at once."³⁷

Margaret Jacobs' research on the Bay Area Outing Program found similar forms of exploitation and surveillance. Because women boarded in private homes, they were subjected to the rules and morals of their employers and matrons. In this way, the BIA continued its long established wardship over Indian people, and therefore rendered Indian children what Beth Piatote calls "unnatural children"—an invention of the state with material consequences.³⁸ In Piatote's U.S. and Canadian analysis, Indians are rendered unnatural children in two senses: first, their unnatural federally-invented racialized "ward" status presumes Indian people are childlike and simple; and second, Indian wards were not permitted to "grow up," and were to remain in the custody of the government.³⁹ This reality certainly plays a role in the making and managing of the Bay Area Outing Program. In turn, Indian women would resist round the clock surveillance and challenged their low wages.⁴⁰

In effect, domesticity served as a disciplinary method and governmental assimilation tactic that normalized domestic work for Native women. This lens emphasizes how assimilation and

³⁶ Kevin Whalen, "Labored Learning: The Outing System at Sherman Institute, 1902-1930," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 36, no. 1 (2012): 152.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 156.

³⁸ Beth H. Piatote, *Domestic Subjects* (Yale University Press, 2013), 87.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ Margaret D. Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race: Settler Colonialism, Maternalism, and the Removal of Indigenous Children in the American West and Australia, 1880-1940* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), 358 – 359.

discipline actively collaborate. David Wallace Adams' research on Indian education underscores the shift from expensive bloody wars with Indians towards efficient, cost-effective, civilizing schools. Indian boarding schools, Adams declares, could civilize in "record time," and it was "less expensive to educate Indians than to kill them."⁴¹ Encoded in the boarding schools and particularly in the outing program were regulations of control and surveillance aimed at Indian children, especially young Native women.

Certainly, non-Native women were subjected to rigid Victorian standards. However, for Native women, discipline was unevenly applied—indeed disproportionately on the basis of race and gender. From a young age, in the boarding school, these women were actively trained for labor exploitation and the boarding school institution was literally built on the backs of these Indian children. Tsianina Lomawaima's examination of Native women's agency in the boarding school institution illuminates counter resistance from the ground up. In her study on Chilocco Indian School in Oklahoma, Lomawaima chronicles "spaces of resistance."⁴² In these spaces policy makers worked to mold, shape, discipline and control Native children's minds and bodies. Focusing on "bloomer stories" Lomawaima uncovers subtle and collective resistance to boarding school uniforms and dress policy. Federally mandated uniforms and bloomers worn beneath them demonstrated the "battleground" of power between students and school officials.⁴³

Lomawaima found that Indians girls hated to wear the old fashioned garment and worked together to resist in strategic and creative ways. Collectively through complex networks, bonds and friendships young Indian women united to outwit school matrons and frustrate stifling boarding

⁴¹ David Wallace Adams, *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928* (Lawrence, Kan.: University Press of Kansas, 1995), 19 – 20.

⁴² Lomawaima, "Domesticity in the Federal Indian Schools," 237.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 228.

school regulations.⁴⁴ In this example, Native women’s resistance to regimentation was a result of their subjection. Significantly, and especially in the framework of this chapter, Lomawaima underscores that authorities were much more focused on Indian girls than boys. She states, “Educators attempted complete surveillance of and control over female Indian bodies within the schools.” Brenda Child and Kevin Whalen among others have also found this to be true. Nonetheless, Lomawaima maintains that students “successfully exercised their own power in their resistance.”⁴⁵ Therefore bloomer stories symbolize Native girls’ resistance and power against federal assimilation programming. In the same way that these uniforms were a “battleground” imposed on Native bodies, domesticity itself was equally forced upon Native women.

Americanization Programs

Significantly, while boarding schools were engaging in domestic service curriculum and integrating outing programs aimed at what Pratt called the “supreme Americanizer,” the United States underwent an influx of immigration and sought to assimilate immigrants through “Americanization” programs. According to Evelyn Nakano Glenn, Americanization grew out of the Settlement Houses movement and jointly developed out of nativist anxieties regarding national identity. During the peak of the Americanization movement, 1914 – 1924, foreign-born immigrants were seen as a cultural threat to the fabric of America. Significantly, by the 1910s the labor force was sixty percent immigrant and thus contributed to these rising fears.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ The fact that Native girls and women worked together collectively to resist assimilation doctrine speaks to the fact that runaways often traveled in groups and worked together to resist policies meant to control and marginalize them.

⁴⁵ K. Tsianina Lomawaima, *They Called It Prairie Light: The Story of Chilocco Indian School*, Reprint edition (University of Nebraska Press, 1995), 96.

⁴⁶ Evelyn Nakano Glenn, *Forced to Care: Coercion and Caregiving in America* (Cambridge, Mass.; London: Harvard University Press, 2012), 72.

As a solution, reformers sought to establish “Americanization” programs that would inculcate immigrants with American values. Immigrant women were especially targeted. If they could be taught to “foster individualism and ambition” these women could “thereby raise the standard of living.”⁴⁷ Americanization programs sought these aims especially through domestic programming for immigrant women. Nakano Glenn affirms that while the goal of training immigrant women in domestic skills was a means to Americanize them, it was also intended to prepare them for household service in American homes. Once skilled, these newly immigrated women were imagined to relieve the chronic shortage of household servants.⁴⁸

As a whole white, nativist women were central actors of the Americanization movement.⁴⁹ With the advent of the California Home Teacher Act in 1915, which authorized the appointment of home teachers to assimilate immigrant women within their own homes, white women sought a role in these national and local interventions. Organizations like the California Federation of Women’s Clubs facilitated such programs.⁵⁰ Nakano Glenn posits that these Americanization reformers cultivated a “social feminism,” arguing that women—especially white women—were particularly suited to address these kinds of domestic needs.⁵¹ In return they increased the concept of the women’s sphere, not unlike matrons in the outing program, as I will explore. Thus, Americanization fit into the frame of “gendered patriotism” that considered the home as a space to build a family environment supportive of the established American societal norms.⁵²

⁴⁷ Ibid., 79.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 73.

⁵⁰ Interestingly, in the larger scheme of Indian programs, such organizations also had ties with the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) or as it was then referred to the Office of Indian Affairs (OIA), especially with implementation of programs for Indian women.

⁵¹ “Contract,” June 1930, File: Josephine Natchez, Relocation, Education, And Employment Assistance Case Files 1926 – 1946, RG 75, NARA San Bruno.

⁵² Glenn, *Forced to Care*, 74.

In many ways, Americanization echoed the rhetoric wielded by matrons in the Bay Area Outing Program. For example, reformers like Helen Boswell, Chair of Education for the General Federation of Women's Clubs, proclaimed, "Make immigrant women good citizens. Help make the homes they care for into American homes..."⁵³ While outing matrons and federal officials did not purport to be engaging in a project of Americanization, they nonetheless sought the same aims.

In creating these patriotic homes reformers sought to improve homemaking techniques; their efforts resulted in a number of published lessons not dissimilar from Indian boarding school curriculum of the time. Moreover, quite similar to the experience of Native girls in boarding schools, Americanization projects utilized cottages outfitted to resemble "American" homes so that immigrant women would model their homes and housekeeping after them.⁵⁴ As Nakano Glenn asserts, it was assumed that immigrant women were in need of and would be responsive to lessons in domestic science. Interestingly, this kind of programming largely affirmed that immigrant forms of domesticity were inherently flawed and backwards. Immigrant women thus served as a foil to nativist women, who were in turn confirmed patriotic and *American*.

In the same way that Native families were thought to be backwards and their culture inherently flawed, Americanizers felt the same about the newly immigrated. These supposed deficiencies were based in hygiene, diet, and even home décor. Mexican women for example were targeted in the West for their diet. According to one Americanizer, "the modern Mexican woman should serve bread instead of tortillas, lettuce instead of beans and broil foods rather than fry them."⁵⁵

⁵³ Ibid., 75.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 78.

⁵⁵ Pearl Idelia Ellis, *Americanization Through Homemaking* (Los Angeles, Calif.: Wetzel Pub. Co., 1929), 29.

Magdalena Barrera examines how reformers sought to address the “Mexican Problem” through Americanization programs especially in California. According to Barrera, California developed one of the most highly regarded Americanization programs, through the California Commission of Immigration and Housing (CCIH).⁵⁶ Established in 1913, the CCIH was an extension of the Los Angeles Settlement Association (LASA), founded in 1894.⁵⁷ The goals of the program were to assist with assimilation of recently immigrated groups including Russians, Italians, Portuguese, Chinese, Japanese, and Mexicans. Recently immigrated Mexicans were the largest of this wave of immigration and were thus “aggressively singled out,” especially, younger women and girls who were expected to pass these skills on to their children and families.⁵⁸

In practice CCIH volunteers integrated themselves into local institutions like schools and closely monitored immigrant women, offering English classes, lessons on cleanliness and homemaking.⁵⁹ Volunteers sought guidance through manuals and lesson plans published by the CCIH between 1915 and 1918. These materials were praised as effective models of Americanization practices to implement throughout the country.⁶⁰ In one example, Amanda Chase, who designed CCIH manuals, insisted that “hot water and soap, the white towels and shining dishes which [students] use in the school kitchen are silent teachers of home hygiene whose force and value can not [*sic*] be spared”.⁶¹

This “silent teacher” spoke volumes to the assumed filthiness of immigrant women, especially Mexican women in California. For example, Chase explains how a group of her students

⁵⁶ Magdalena L. Barrera, ““Doing the Impossible,”” *CALIF HIST* 93, no. 4 (November 1, 2016): 24, doi:10.1525/ch.2016.93.4.20.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 26.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 25.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 26.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 21.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 24.

“evolved” from a “sloppy” lot to an “honorable” group after her thorough instruction: “The most striking evolution, however, is seen in such women as attend group lessons with any regularity. Their improvement in personal appearance and intelligence of countenance is really thrilling. One class of Mexican women, a timid, sloppy, baby-submerged lot to begin with, now take an honorable place on general school programs with songs and recitations in English.”⁶²

Even with such instruction, Barrera notes, lessons in housekeeping were terribly irrelevant to the living conditions of these immigrants’ communities. She writes, “Immigrant women quickly discovered upon their arrival in the United States that tidy housekeeping would prove impossible in the marginalized, impoverished neighborhoods to which they were relegated.⁶³ Whether living in “boxcarvilles” or workers camps it would be near impossible and impractical for women to achieve such a level of cleanliness much less acquire the furniture or appliances that were socially and economically out of their reach. The same level of irrelevancy could be said of curriculum in federal Indian boarding schools and the outing programs that stemmed from them.

Alice Littlefield, who has examined in-school child labor at Mt. Pleasant Indian School, argues that agricultural vocational training students received was entirely irrelevant to the emerging labor market.⁶⁴ Though these children were trained to farm and maintain a farmhouse, few would ever have the chance. Nonetheless, reformers upheld similar goals of domestic science for young Indian women as was maintained in Americanization programs. Thus, rather ironically, Native women indigenous to the United States were treated in a strikingly similar fashion to their

⁶² Ibid., 28.

⁶³ Ibid., 30.

⁶⁴ Alice Littlefield and Martha C. Knack, *Native Americans and Wage Labor: Ethnohistorical Perspectives*, First Edition (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996), 102. For example among the father’s occupations of interviewed students, only one was a farmer on his own land and Allotment plots proved too small to provide a living. Such instruction was irrelevant, yet a cornerstone of national Indian policy.

immigrant counterparts. Nonetheless, while Americanization programs ended by the mid-1920s as the country moved toward exclusion, these Indian outing programs continued well into the 1940s.

BAY AREA REGIONAL OUTING PROGRAM

Official Operation

The Bay Area Outing Program officially launched in 1918 at 2576 Prince Street in Berkeley, California. Bonnie V. Royce—the same “Royce” from the *Daily Gazette* article that introduced this paper—was a former field matron at Stewart Indian School in Carson City, NV. In 1918, Royce was given official authority to create the outing program and “give special attention to procuring homes for Indian girls...”⁶⁵ From the start the program was intended to domesticate Indian girls and women through housework in white homes. It continued the long-standing belief that laboring Indians—especially Indian women in domestic work—would eventually solve the “Indian problem.”

While outing in the Bay Area was initially facilitated through Stewart Indian School’s outing program, once in its official capacity, the Bay Area Outing Program pulled women from several western boarding schools. Because the program was regionally based in Berkeley, CA, and not tied to a specific school, all Indian women—students or not—were considered for employment.⁶⁶ However, among these cohorts, young girls in schools had less of a choice about whether or not they would participate in the program and their integration into the Bay Area Outing Program—especially in its early years—was coercive. In contrast, women who had previously graduated Indian schools had the opportunity to decide whether or not to apply for work through the outing

⁶⁵ Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race*, 354.

⁶⁶ As an interesting point of comparison, the Phoenix outing program, which grew from Phoenix Indian school, controlled all Native women in the Phoenix area, including non-student, reservation based women. As Robert Trennert has found, Phoenix outing matron Chingren had the power to place, punish or jail local Native women.

program. Nonetheless, many women found that domestic outing work was all that they were deemed qualified for and had no choice but to return to the BIA-run program for employment. Thus, lack of choice colored most Native women's experiences.

Each year, hundreds of Native women were placed in homes in Alameda, Berkeley, Oakland and the greater Bay Area. In the early years cohorts were smaller; about sixty students labored during the summers. Over time the program grew to include school-aged students who worked into the school year. The outing matron was responsible for arranging young women's transportation to the Bay Area and securing live-in positions in a local home. Within the home young women were responsible for several physically demanding chores: cooking, cleaning, laundering, childrearing and caretaking. Due to the low level of technology before and after World War II, laundry, ironing and housecleaning were arduous tasks. Through this program, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) perpetuated its goal of assimilation: to supplant Native values and traditions with Western substitutes.

Though the outing program offered no training to young women, in all boarding schools women were instructed in "domestic science": basic household skills, cooking, ironing and laundry. In fact, many would argue that it is all they learned. Esther Wasson, a Yerington Paiute woman from Smith Valley, Nevada, attended Stewart Indian School in the 30s and 40s. In her youth, she was employed in domestic work and later settled in the San Francisco Bay Area. At Stewart, Wasson recalls, her education was divided equally between classroom time and industrial work—what Tsianina Lomawaima recognizes as Superintendent Reel's "half-day plan."⁶⁷ Considering the labor-intensive schooling Wasson received at Stewart, she wholeheartedly believes that the boarding school prepared her for future domestic work. Even with a ninth or tenth grade

⁶⁷ Lomawaima, "Estelle Reel, Superintendent of Indian Schools, 1989-1910," 8. This half-day plan started with Pratt, and became entrenched in official boarding school policy.

education from a boarding school like Stewart, women were more experienced in labor activities than formal schooling. And many, like Wasson, felt that the need for employment superseded any scholastic ambitions. Wasson states, “My reading [or spelling] was never [very] good . . .so I figured I might as well go work.”⁶⁸

Significantly, the crucial element of live-in domestic work is the “on call” nature of employment. Even during breaks and off time, live-in domestics were expected to respond to employers’ needs as they arose. Evelyn Nakano Glenn asserts that with live-in positions, “there was no clear line between work and non-work time.”⁶⁹ In contemporary interviews with domestic workers, Hondagneu-Sotelo was regularly warned of the ills of live-in work. Many domestics felt the work was depressing and they were frequently taken advantage of. For one participant, live-in work necessitated “social isolation, morning-to-midnight work schedules, and additions to cleaning tasks without commensurate raises in pay.”⁷⁰

Outing Process, Policing and Surveillance

Participating in the Bay Area Outing Program was largely initiated in one of two ways. Girls were recruited through their respective boarding schools, or girls directly or indirectly—by way of the boarding school matron—wrote to the outing matron in search of work. For those coming by way of boarding school, the Bay Area Outing Program was affiliated with mostly western-based boarding schools such as Stewart Indian School in Carson City, Nevada, Sherman Institute in

⁶⁸ Interview with Esther Wasson, December 7, 2013. Victoria Patterson and Robert Trennert have both found that Indian women in outing regularly sent remittances home to their families living on impoverished reservations. In fact, for the Phoenix outing program, Trennert maintains that financial benefits were the main reason Indian women joined the program.

⁶⁹ Evelyn Nakano Glenn, *Issei, Nisei, Warbride: Three Generations of Japanese American Women in Domestic Service* (Philadelphia: Temple Univ. Pr., 1986), 141.

⁷⁰ Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo, *Doméstica: Immigrant Workers Cleaning and Caring in the Shadows of Affluence*, 2007, 65.

Riverside, California, and Chemawa Indian School in Salem, Oregon. However, girls also ventured from Haskell Institute in Lawrence, Kansas, and other Midwest Indian boarding schools.

When girls were recruited through school, it was typically because of the outing matron's recruitment efforts. For example, Matron Mildred Van Every who served the program from roughly 1934 until its end in the mid 1940s, conducted recruitment trips to Sherman Indian School every summer. And in general, Matrons kept regular contact with boarding school staff and superintendents for recruitment purposes.⁷¹

Though this particular outing program started in 1918, by the 1930s Indian girls and women were well aware of the outing program and knew to contact the outing matrons for work. Often girls referenced the kind of placement they desired, and occasionally set pay rates. Adult women well out of boarding school were more vocal in asserting commensurate wages.⁷² For example in 1936, twenty-six-year-old Freda Eleck, a Pomo woman from Potter Valley wrote to Matron Van Every in search of domestic employment,

Dear Mrs. Van Every: Will you please try and secure employment for me. I have very little experience. It has been a long time since I worked for families. I would like to do housekeeping of some sort, take care of babies and I can do a little cooking. Will you write me to the above address if you find a place? Yours Truly, Freda Eleck.⁷³

A month later Eleck established her salary stating, "I am willing to start at either \$20 or \$25 a month. I will get my report as to my physical condition and general health on February 15. I would rather not go down there until I know for certain there is a job for me. Please let me know

⁷¹ Margaret D. Jacobs, "Working on the Domestic Frontier: American Indian Domestic Servants in White Women's Households in the San Francisco Bay Area, 1920-1940," *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* 28, no. 1 (2007): 175.

⁷² "Commensurate" as in wages relative to other Native women doing similar domestic work and/or relative to Native women's established pay rate based on their skill set.

⁷³ "Freda Eleck to Mildred Van Every," January 20, 1936, File: Freda Eleck, Relocation, Education, And Employment Assistance Case Files 1926 – 1946, RG 75, NARA San Bruno.

when you find a job. Then I will let you know the day I will arrive.”⁷⁴ Eleck’s mention of a health report references a post-1930 requirement that women and girls submit a health clearance prior to placement.

For example, in 1933 prior to laboring in the Bay Area eighteen-year-old Hazel Emm, a Washoe and Paiute girl from Schurz, Nevada, was required to submit a health clearance.⁷⁵ Similarly, fifteen-year-old Alice Marshall Nix, a Hualapai and Hoopa girl, received a doctor’s note of clearance just days before her start of employment in San Anselmo, CA. She was reportedly “free from all and any communicable diseases.”⁷⁶

On the surface these clearances were meant to protect homeowners from contracting illness from these Native women—which frames Indian women as pathologically unhealthy. However, further records demonstrate how health clearances attempted to locate promiscuity and gauge whether girls might be sexually active. For example, Marcie Martin, a twenty-three-year-old Mono woman from North Fork, California, participated in outing in 1931. Martin’s record includes a note from a Madera, California, physician certifying a negative “Wassermann” test for syphilis.⁷⁷ The test results dated a year prior suggests that Indian girls might be expected to have these results on record and that some other agency or institution may have requested them.

⁷⁴ “Freda Eleck to Mildred Van Every,” February 11, 1936, File: Freda Eleck, Relocation, Education, And Employment Assistance Case Files 1926 – 1946, RG 75, NARA San Bruno.

⁷⁵ “Dr. Eagleton to Ray R. Parrett, Superintendent of Walker River Agency,” October 21, 1933, File: Hazel Emm, Relocation, Education, And Employment Assistance Case Files 1926 – 1946, RG 75, NARA San Bruno.

⁷⁶ “Physician’s Note Re: Alice Nix,” December 28, 1933, File: Alice Marshall Nix, Relocation, Education, And Employment Assistance Case Files 1926 – 1946, RG 75, NARA San Bruno.

⁷⁷ “Complement Fixation Test for Syphilis (Wasserman Test),” October 16, 1930, File: Marcie Martin, Relocation, Education, And Employment Assistance Case Files 1926 – 1946, RG 75, NARA San Bruno. The “Wasserman” test, developed in 1906 is an antibody test for syphilis, which takes its name after the bacteriologist August Paul von Wassermann. Though tests for syphilis have developed exceedingly in the last hundred years, this test was incredibly common for the time, yet it also had a tendency to result in false positives to other diseases.

Moreover, women and girls were required to have current health clearances throughout their time in the program. In 1934, about two years after her first stint in the outing program, Martin wrote to Matron Royce in search of another domestic job promising to be “good.”⁷⁸ She was also interested in returning to her old employer in Berkeley, Mrs. Gurnett. Martin wrote to Royce, “But find out whether if Mrs. Gurnett wants me back or not...I do really want to find a job if you do want to place me. I’ll be good if I got to Oakland. I[’ll] be willing to get on [a] bus back soon.”⁷⁹ In return Royce’s assistant Jeannette Traxler wrote Marcie reminding her that “before we can go further in regard to a position for you, you will have to send us a Doctor’s certificate stating that you are in good physical condition....”⁸⁰ Accordingly, Native girls and women had to keep current health clearances with the outing program prior to living and laboring in outing homes.

In other exchanges, Matrons were more explicit about the fear of contamination among white outing homeowners. In 1935, Matron Mildred Van Every made notes of an outing girl who had contracted and recovered from syphilis stating, “I told her to get the medical certificate from the Yolo County Hospital, where she had last been treated, and if she was non-contagious she could be recommended for work.”⁸¹ Records reveal a few confirmed cases of syphilis and other venereal diseases present among the outing girls, however overwhelmingly the agency was tracking promiscuity and placing judgment on sexually active girls—or girls who they perceived were

⁷⁸ Presumably because Martin left her previous outing position in 1931 “without consent or knowledge” of the employers. Though she returned to the Gurnett household in 1932, this one infraction seems to have colored her perceived character.

⁷⁹ “Marcie Martin to Matron Bonnie V. Royce,” February 9, 1934, File: Marcie Martin, Relocation, Education, And Employment Assistance Case Files 1926 – 1946, RG 75, NARA San Bruno.

⁸⁰ “Jeannette Traxler to Marcie Martin,” February 15, 1934, File: Marcie Martin, Relocation, Education, And Employment Assistance Case Files 1926 – 1946, RG 75, NARA San Bruno.

⁸¹ “Re: Patricia Ince, M. Van Every Notes,” 1935, File: Patricia Ince, Relocation, Education, And Employment Assistance Case Files 1926 – 1946, RG 75, NARA San Bruno. In her notes, Van Every refers to Circular 3051 from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs that details the processes of quarantining Indians with contagious or infectious diseases. Although boarding schools were a hot bed for disease, school officials often ironically blamed their Indian students for the spread of contagions.

sexually active. Because all women post-1930 were required to submit health clearances, all women were implicated.

Once in the outing system with health clearance, girls were prompted to formally “apply” for work. Forms like “Application to Bay Region Employment Agencies for Employment,” or “Application for Older girls” gathered relevant data about the young Native woman in question—her education, years in public school or at Indian schools, weight, height and skills.⁸² In particular, this form calculated her abilities in training in home economics, nursing and practical experience especially regarding housekeeping, cooking, serving a table and answering a doorbell. Such documents also gauged the applicant’s personal appearance, her “neatness,” “alertness,” and cheerfulness.” In short, Native women’s sexuality was controlled; they were monitored and policed, and also their general appearance and emotional state were scrutinized.

Outing Matrons typically filled out these forms based on their knowledge or judgment of the girl, as well as notes provided by boarding school officials. On occasion, girls may have filled out these forms. The archive reveals no formal test for Native girls and women; general appraisal of her fitness for work was subject to the evaluation of the Matron or school officials familiar with the girls. Matrons graded one’s capabilities as either “poor,” “fair” or “good”. Throughout similar assessment forms Matrons sometimes took liberties to expand further on their praise or disdain of said young woman.

On the other side of the outing program, employers had a much simpler process for applying for “girls.” At the height of the program in the 1930s, an official Department of the Interior, United States Indian Field Service form entitled “Application for Girls” facilitated the placement process.

⁸² Specifically, the form in 1936 lists “Graduate of Stewart, Haskell Inst., Sherman Inst. or Chemawa,” thus illuminating the official ties between these Indian boarding school institutions and the young women they transferred among them for domestic employment.

For example, in February of 1936 Mrs. W.A. Henderson of 3655 Caldafina Street in Oakland applied for a Native girl to do general housework in her one-story home. At the time, Henderson was seven months pregnant and had a little girl in need of caretaking.⁸³

Because she indicated that she was good with children, Matron Mildred Van Every arranged for Freda Eleck to work in the home. Eleck worked for the Hendersons for about five months that summer. Overall, Matrons facilitated the placement process, which more or less appears haphazard. If girls noted they wanted to work with small children, they were often placed in a home with children. If they requested not to work with children, that was often honored as well. In general, the Matron was an intermediary between the employers and these Native women. However, it seems employers' desires were often placed above girls' needs.

Though Indian girls' application forms collected minute details about her skills and abilities, applications for homeowners did not. Homeowners were not required to respond to the suitability of their home nor their ability to care for Indian girls. In some cases, the Matron noted conducting an interview with prospective employers.⁸⁴ However records reveal that no site visits were made to ensure the safety of outing girls and women.

Moreover, within the structure, many girls were regarded as disposable labor commodities. For example, Hazel Emm periodically engaged in outing work in Berkeley, Oakland, San Mateo and Richmond until 1935. Matron Van Every commended Emm as "one of the best girls with children."⁸⁵ In November of 1933 during her first stint in the program, Emm decided to leave her placement on account of loneliness. A concerned Dorris C. Taft wrote to the Girls' Placement

⁸³ "Application for Girls," February 17, 1936, File: Freda Eleck, Relocation, Education, And Employment Assistance Case Files 1926 – 1946, RG 75, NARA San Bruno.

⁸⁴ "Eleck, Freda," 1937, File: Freda Eleck, Relocation, Education, And Employment Assistance Case Files 1926 – 1946, RG 75, NARA San Bruno.

⁸⁵ "Index Outing System - Hazel Emm," 1935, File: Hazel Emm, Relocation, Education, And Employment Assistance Case Files 1926 – 1946, RG 75, NARA San Bruno.

Officer, Mrs. Traxler. Taft explained that Emm expressed loneliness working in San Mateo, far away from other outing girls in the East Bay. Taft wrote “she would rather work in Oakland where she knows someone ... she said her good girl friends had gone home and that seemed to upset her a bit.” She continued, “I am dreadfully disappointed; she is an excellent girl, as clean and neat as possible, very capable and apparently well trained... Would it be possible for me to get another Indian girl as good as Hazel?”⁸⁶

Employees similarly coveted Kathryn Jones, a Paiute and Shoshone girl from Owyhee, Nevada. Jones was fourteen years old when she started outing and worked at six homes intermittently from 1926 – 1935 in Alameda, Berkeley, Oakland, Piedmont and San Francisco. Her record notes Jones was “very dependable and an excellent worker.”⁸⁷ In the summer of 1930, Jones worked for Lettie Holland in Brookdale, California, and had to leave to return to Stewart Indian School. In August Holland wrote to Matron Royce explaining that she was sad she could not keep Katie through the summer, “I am hoping you will bring me a nice girl as a helper for the three more months we expect to remain down here after we return to Oakland. I would like a thirty dollar girl if possible.”⁸⁸ As girls transferred homes and left to return to school, they were often treated as material goods—replaceable and exchangeable.

⁸⁶ “Dorris C. Taft to Jeannette Traxler,” November 13, 1933, File: Hazel Emm, Relocation, Education, And Employment Assistance Case Files 1926 – 1946, RG 75, NARA San Bruno.

⁸⁷ “Outing Certificate - Kathryn Jones,” June 1931, File: Kathryn Jones, Relocation, Education, And Employment Assistance Case Files 1926 – 1946, RG 75, NARA San Bruno.

⁸⁸ “Lettie Holland to Bonnie V. Royce,” August 7, 1930, File: Kathryn Jones, Relocation, Education, And Employment Assistance Case Files 1926 – 1946, RG 75, NARA San Bruno.

Contracts

In a brief example from the archives we learn of further surveillance of Native women and their forms of agency through outing contracts. Throughout the Bay Area Outing Program files, these contracts were especially common in the 1930s. In 1930 and 1931, Josephine Natchez, a seventeen-year-old Pyramid Lake Paiute student at Stewart Indian School worked for the outing program for two summers. In June of 1930, upon starting the program, Natchez signed a contract between herself, the Outing Matron and her employer for the summer. The contract declared four main points regarding wages, how young women would be monitored and checked for disobedience, and the program's gendered and supposed "educational" intentions.

In exchange for her paid services, Natchez was offered "suitable quarters," and the contract stated that the employer will "extend proper interest in the advancement, welfare, and safeguarding of the pupil."⁸⁹ The contract also established that "at no time will the pupil be allowed to leave the homes of the employer at night without proper escort."⁹⁰ Importantly, the contract included disobedience clauses threatening the removal of Indian women if they did not abide by the rules of the program, "...disobedience or misconduct on...part of the pupil, or absence without permission will be promptly reported to the matron in charge who may return the girl to the school." While the contract asserted surveillance of Native girls and the permission and approval they required from matrons and homeowners,⁹¹ it extensively affirms young women as "pupils"—students of their respective Indian boarding schools. This seemingly insignificant language demonstrates how outing was ostensibly educational and yet clearly oriented for labor exploitation.

⁸⁹ "Contract."

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Interestingly, placing Indian children to work as live-in domestics in the private homes of American citizens meant that the Office and later Bureau of Indian Affairs was effectively transferring the responsibility of the "Indian problem" from federal hands to private hands. In this way, the OIA/BIA reneged on its responsibilities to Indian communities. This practice would later manifest into federal Indian policy like Public Law 280, which transferred federal jurisdiction to state jurisdiction in select states.

Additionally, contracts further decreed the outing program's civilizing, gendered intentions.

Natchez's contract states,

It is also agreed and understood that the pupil will at all times conduct herself in a ladylike manner and always endeavor to improve herself in every possible way and earnestly endeavor to make a good record for herself.

In this way, contracts established the goals of the outing program as an assimilationist "improvement" tool. Simple words, "ladylike," "improve" and "good," accentuate a feminine form of inculcation. Moreover, these words highlight the patriarchal underpinnings of outing derived from preceding policies. Outing for example continued the work that Allotment had made official—re-working Native communities into hetero patriarchal nuclear families that then subjugated and subordinated Native women. Purportedly, outing was for the benefit of Indian girls and yet woven through the program was what Lomawaima would call, "training in dispossession." Bay Area Outing Program contracts made this goal visible.

Aside from daily surveillance and gendered intentions contracts also established pay rates. Natchez for example agreed to \$25 a month for services with room and board and free time on Sunday and Thursday afternoons. However, women only saw one-third of their actual monthly pay. Two-thirds of this amount was paid "through" the Superintendent of one's respective boarding school. The operative word "through" stressed that the outing program funneled Indian children's wages back into the schools that sent them.⁹² Ostensibly this safeguarded students' earnings and cultivated thrift. However, at the heart of this arrangement was the assumed incompetency of Indian students. Furthermore, the remaining one-third of funds that these women earned were managed through the Outing Matron. In most cases, Native girls and women needed the Matron's approval to withdraw her personal earnings. Presumably, in the Bay Area girls had a greater range of freedom than they had within the confines of a boarding school, yet they were nonetheless put to work

⁹² "Contract."

around the clock on a daily basis, laboring into their own dispossession under the surveillance of a Matron or employer. On the question of agency there was little, and yet some Native women were able to advocate for themselves.

Returning to Josephine Natchez, we find evidence of agency and also some semblance of hopes for a life outside of domestic work. During her brief time in the program, both school and outing officials advocated for Natchez to stay working in the Bay Area instead of returning to school. Upon receiving a petition letter from her employer, asking to keep Natchez through the winter, Stewart Indian School Superintendent Frederic Snyder approved the arrangement. Not long after the agreement, Natchez was eager to return to Stewart so she could finish her education and become a nurse. Her bags were packed for some time, suggesting that she unwillingly stayed due to the school's and outing officials' recommendation.⁹³ While only paid meager wages, during her employment Natchez was docked \$4.50 of her pay for ruining a bedspread and waited nearly a year to be paid her full wages. Natchez's outing record reveals the lack of agency many school-aged girls had within the program and yet it also demonstrates her strong will and determination to return to her homeland and work outside of the imposed field of domestic work.

Considering the gendered constraints, daily monitoring and low-wage servitude imposed upon her, Natchez's will is significant. Moreover, it is crucial to note that while contracts established disobedience clauses for girls, it made no mention of house visits or inspections to determine whether employers provided girls with good housing and meals. Outing matrons trusted the private, unmonitored homes that girls were sent to labor in, and checks and balances in the program were inherently one sided—aimed at young Native women. While this brief discussion of contracts demonstrates Natchez's agency and will it also highlights the limits and constraints she

⁹³ "Bonnie V. Royce to Frederic Snyder, Supt. of Carson Indian School," October 12, 1931, File: Josephine Natchez, Relocation, Education, And Employment Assistance Case Files 1926 – 1946, RG 75, NARA San Bruno.

was subjected to. Under the circumstances, Native women who became runaways of the outing program are unsurprising.

Fighting for Commensurate Wages

Many young women had to personally negotiate with their employers to set a monthly pay rate. In some cases, this was arduous. For instance, Sue Andrews Morgan, a member of the Colville Confederated Tribes and graduate of Cushman Indian School, relocated from Los Angeles to work near her husband who was stationed in Vallejo at Mare Island. At the time, Morgan was about 32 or 33 years old and was accustomed to a \$40 a month wage working at a Los Angeles refuge center. In the summer of 1935 she wrote to the Bay Area outing matron, Mildred Van Every, asking to meet local Indian girls and had some interest in working in the Bay Area. After a series of letters between the two and a possible picnic meeting with the Native women in the outing program, Morgan agreed to work for a Miss Ellis at a home in Berkeley.

At the start of her employment, Morgan wrote Van Every a “short note” to clarify her pay rate demands. In regard to her meeting with Miss Ellis, Morgan wrote: “I found her very pleasant....One thing[,] I couldn’t get her to promise to pay me \$40.00. And in the future if she still doesn’t see to pay me my price; I am only going to promise you that if she don’t I don’t want [to agree] to stay with her for only \$35.00.”⁹⁴ Morgan agreed to a week trial in the Berkeley home, but insisted that she would not stay past the trial if she were not paid her accustomed rate of \$40 a month. Ellis’ disregard for Morgan’s pay meant a \$60 reduction of annual wages or nearly two months of docked pay. Moreover, that Morgan worked for the outing program during the Great Depression speaks to the fact that every dollar contributed to her survival and wellbeing. And if Morgan were anything like other Native women working in the Bay Area, she would have sent

⁹⁴ “Sue Andrews Morgan to Mildred Van Every,” July 19, 1935, File: Sue Andrews Morgan, Relocation, Education, And Employment Assistance Case Files 1926 – 1946, RG 75, NARA San Bruno.

some of her wages back to her family at Pyramid Lake, underscoring that her additional \$5 a month was more than just a wage, it was a means of support for an entire family.

Morgan's refusal in her letter to Van Every is a more subtle form of resistance but resistance nonetheless. Morgan was well aware of the value of her skills and insisted that if she were not going to be paid her "price," then she would go elsewhere. In fact, that's what Morgan did—she held true to her promise. After her week trial in the Ellis household, Morgan stayed only three days longer and terminated her employment on August 1st. Her outing record indicates she was only paid a \$35 rate for the ten days of her service, which reveals that she did in fact leave for lack of commensurate wages.

While it is not clear what employment Morgan had in the interim, nearly two months later her husband was transferred to San Pedro, California, and the two returned to Los Angeles. Presumably she was able to return to her long-time position and paid her accustomed rate. It is certainly understood that Morgan would have greater agency and experience than her teenaged outing counterparts, yet her case demonstrates that Native women outright refused to keep themselves in less than ideal situations and fought for the wages they deserved. The same can be said for Native women who had children of their own. As live-in domestic workers, outing mothers were placed in a unique position—forced to manage the home at all hours of the day and somehow still find time to care for their own children under the same roof. Matrons and BIA officials discouraged this arrangement and regularly attempted to remove Native children through foster care, adoption or placement in Indian boarding schools. In these federal attempts to break up the Indian family, Native women fought back.

Fighting Indian Child Removal

From 1931 to 1936, Maude Mitchell, a Pomo woman and an eighth-grade graduate from Round Valley Indian School worked for the outing program.⁹⁵ She was a single mother raising two children one of whom was enrolled at Sherman Indian School during her time in the program. In Mitchell's file is an outing index, a one-page document listing each outing employee's personal information: name, tribe, blood degree, etc. This index, commonly found in files after 1930, includes records of employment, listing household addresses, rate of pay and dates of service. Most interestingly, the index comments on a given Native woman's "individual characteristics," her "morals" and "general remarks" about her. In these more abstract spaces, Outing Matrons like Mildred Van Every endeavored to categorize Native women. While some were praised for being "good," "very attractive" or "neat," some were marked otherwise. Such is the case with Maude Mitchell.

While employed for many years in the outing program, Mitchell had some brief instances where she reportedly "Did'nt [*sic*] fit in" at some homes and left after a couple days. However, her outing index reveals that she had regular employment with a Mrs. Baxter in Oakland, a position she reportedly secured herself.⁹⁶ While Outing Matron Van Every initially notes that Mitchell had a "good" ability to work with children, a later note reads "not good." Similarly, general remarks note that Mitchell is a "Good cook," she's "neat" and "takes care of things about the house," while being both "dependable" and "honest."⁹⁷ However, these notes then assert a caveat, that Mitchell had the "meanest disposition of any girl they ever had—big head."⁹⁸ Lastly, Mitchell is referenced as a "dissatisfied-grumbler." This index reveals that Mitchell was completely capable in her work, but

⁹⁵ "Index Outing System - Maude Mitchell," 1934, File: Maude Mitchell, Relocation, Education, And Employment Assistance Case Files 1926 – 1946, RG 75, NARA San Bruno.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

because of her apparent dissatisfaction, Mitchell was marked as an ungrateful servant. Considering that these women are targeted for dispossession, Mitchell's case proves that she contested this imposed place of servitude. Mitchell's temperament almost suggests that she is aware that this domestic service worked against her own interests. She is thusly marked in her remaining time in the program and pushed to fight for her youngest child.

In 1936 while working for Mrs. Baxter, Mitchell had difficulty raising her daughter Vera while working as a live-in domestic servant. In the fall of that year, Mitchell terminated her employment at the Baxter household. One month later, an angered Mrs. Baxter wrote to the Superintendent of Stewart Indian School pleading for them to enroll Mitchell's youngest daughter, so her maid could return to work. Baxter believed this was for Mitchell's "betterment" and that of her daughter. She implored,

Maude Mitchell, Vera's mother worked for me for six years. She was satisfactory and it was only on account of Vera that she lost her position here. I needed her at night, but it was impossible to leave Vera alone. She is meeting the same misfortune at the present time; consequently, she is having much difficulty in supporting both Vera and herself. . . I believe it would be a solution to this problem if Vera were accepted into the Indian school and educated as other Indian girls are educated.⁹⁹

Baxter's letter seems to feign care for Mitchell, but her letter reveals her desire for Vera to attend Indian School so she can reclaim her "satisfactory" housekeeper. In this case Baxter seems more concerned with herself, but she exudes maternalist rhetoric to do so—affirming that such action would be prosperous and that Baxter is only doing "her part" in helping this "misfortunate" Indian family. It is also interesting to consider whether or not Baxter truly believed in the "civilizing" goals of outing or if she saw it simply as a job placement program for maids. While we cannot know, her plead suggests her interests were purely self-serving.

⁹⁹ "Mrs. Frank S. Baxter to Ross B. Wiley, Education Division for Alida C. Bowler, Supt. of Carson Indian School," October 30, 1936, File: Maude Mitchell, Relocation, Education, And Employment Assistance Case Files 1926 – 1946, RG 75, NARA San Bruno.

Despite terminating employment on her own accord, the issue of Mitchell's daughter continued to be seen as a barrier to employment and ultimately her successful assimilation. In fact, Matron Van Every researched the feasibility of placing Mitchell's youngest daughter in a county home against Mitchell's will. Van Every writes:

I have talked over the case with ... the Alameda County Charities Committee... There are many people ... with room and board who are supporting one child.¹⁰⁰

Van Every's ill-considered assessment did not consider the financial needs of the Mitchell family, nor Mitchell's wishes to raise her own child. In fact, Van Every's plan to place Mitchell's youngest into a home is a reference to what Sau-Ling Wong calls "diverted mothering," a social reality for many women of color.¹⁰¹ Indeed, Indian child removal, the practice of "saving" Indian children by separating them from their families was a common weapon used against Native communities. The practice was terribly prevalent in the 20th century and shattered Indian families and cultural ties.¹⁰² Margaret Jacobs' extensive research on Indian child removal affirms that government officials believed Indian families to be "inherently and irreparably unfit."¹⁰³ Therefore, the outing program implicates Mitchell as "unfit" or "better off" if relieved of mothering. Moreover, continuing to fill boarding schools with new generations of Indian children attempted to continue the cycle of intergenerational assimilation.

Mitchell did not take kindly to Van Every's interference. During an office visit to the outing program, Mitchell declared to the Matron, "I do not want to send my child to the boarding

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Evelyn Nakano Glenn, Grace Chang, and Linda Rennie Forcey, eds., *Mothering: Ideology, Experience, and Agency*, 1st Paperback Edition (New York: Routledge, 1993), 71.

¹⁰² Indian child removal as a practice is the sole reason for the 1978 Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), which established federal requirements in child custody proceedings for Indian children to be placed in Indian homes.

¹⁰³ Margaret D. Jacobs, *A Generation Removed: The Fostering and Adoption of Indigenous Children in the Postwar World*, First Edition, First Printing (Lincoln : London: University of Nebraska Press, 2014), 7.

school...You are to leave me absolutely alone and keep me off your list.”¹⁰⁴ According to the records, Mitchell’s daughter was not sent to a home or an Indian boarding school. In the end, the family separated their ties with the outing program and never returned. Nonetheless, Mitchell’s case suggests the larger workings of the outing program. Gendered domestic assimilation was designed to break the family structure and allow parents entrance into society through labor exploitation. In light of the physical demands of live-in domestic work as well as the emotional strain, isolation and government interference, it is not surprising that Native women challenged the program. In fact, while some women directly terminated their employment, others simply ran away.

NEWSPAPERS AND OUTING RUNAWAYS

Informal Beginnings

While the Bay Area Regional Outing Program officially launched in 1918, archival records reveal that federal Indian outing in the Bay Area began as early as 1911. These early outing endeavors ran through Stewart Indian school, also known as the Carson Indian School in Carson City, Nevada. Interestingly, many of these early reports of outing also capture stories of runaways.

In September 1911, the *San Francisco Call* reported that Minnie Rook, a student from Stewart Indian School, was employed in Oakland as a domestic worker.¹⁰⁵ That year, Rook ran away from Stewart Indian School with two other girls. She fled to an Oakland home where she was employed as a domestic. Rook was arrested and turned over to Mrs. S. Barnes of Stewart and sent back to the school. The article reported that the two other girls were still at large. A year later in

¹⁰⁴ “Mildred Van Every to Alida C. Bowler, Supt. of Carson Indian Agency,” November 30, 1936, File: Maude Mitchell, Relocation, Education, And Employment Assistance Case Files 1926 – 1946, RG 75, NARA San Bruno.

¹⁰⁵ “Escaped Indian Girl Located in Oakland: Minnie Rook Will Be Returned to School,” *The San Francisco Call*, September 26, 1911.

August 1912, the same paper reported that a cohort of twenty-five girls from Stewart Indian School worked as domestics for families in the “bay cities” earning their railroad fare.¹⁰⁶ That summer, a professor of Anthropology at UC Berkeley arranged for the girls to meet Ishi, a Yana man who had been captured a year prior and extensively researched by the academics.¹⁰⁷ At the reception Ishi exchanged songs with the Shoshone, Washoe and Paiute girls.

Further inspection of Bay Area newspapers also uncovers a number of “situation wanted” ads in the classified sections initiated by a matron at Stewart Indian School. One advertisement for example ran for a week in the summer of 1913 and listed “Wanted – Positions as general help in house for a number of Indian girls from Carson school, Nev., in private homes; ages 12 – 18; wages \$10 - \$20 per month.”¹⁰⁸ Interestingly, these ads were sometimes found adjacent to ads seeking Japanese domestics and day workers, which at the time were commonplace in the region. Subsequent articles in reference to a pre-Bay Area Outing Program continue to cover classified ads and document runaways. All articles that mentioned the girls’ home base referred to them as residents of the Carson Indian reservation¹⁰⁹ or students from the Stewart Indian School.¹¹⁰

Runaways

In 1922, in the course of several weeks during the summer, the Berkeley *Daily Gazette* published three articles that demonstrate there were runaways in the early years of the Bay Area Outing Program. In these early years, the Bay Area Indian community was very small and girls

¹⁰⁶ “Ishi Host at Reception to Indian Maids: Builds Primitive Fires; Sings Songs to Entertain Fair Carson Students. First Native Girls He Ever Saw; They Warble Love Notes; He Grows Sad,” *San Francisco Call*, August 26, 1912.

¹⁰⁷ For a critical account of Ishi’s life and legacy, see “Stop Hunting Ishi” by William Bauer Jr. in *Boom: A Journal of California*, Vol. 4 No. 3, Fall 2014.

¹⁰⁸ “Situation Wanted,” *Berkeley Daily Gazette*, June 16, 1913.

¹⁰⁹ In fact, there is no such thing as the “Carson Indian reservation.” The author of this article confused “reservation” for “school.” Contemporaneously, there is federally recognized reservation land in Carson City, Nevada, known as the “Carson colony” of the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California. However, this land acquisition occurs decades after publication of said article.

¹¹⁰ “Lost Indian Girl Sought By Police,” *Berkeley Daily Gazette*, October 22, 1914.

were isolated from any sense of community and also each other. In the context of outing scholarship, local newspaper articles about runaways have yet to be examined, but there is certainly a long history of scholarship on boarding school runaways and additional literature on runaways from outing programs run through schools.

In her research on the Haskell Institute in Kansas and the Flandreau School in South Dakota, Brenda Child found that boarding school runaways or “deserters” left for a number of reasons including, lack of viable vocational training, poor food, being overworked, mistreatment, abuse or discrimination by personnel, and confinement. Students were also regularly homesick and family visits were deliberately made difficult and discouraged.¹¹¹ Surprisingly, runaways were often well-behaved students, many of whom were remarkably resourceful. Nonetheless, the act of running away was difficult and a last resort effort. Girls and young women, for example, were likely subject to more dangerous threats than boys and young men, and without refuge they would be caught quickly. Indian agents were often sent to capture runaways and rewards were offered to local townspeople to turn over deserters.¹¹² Native communities were known to shelter Indian runaways, and fostering deserters was a kind of protest against schools and their deficiencies. Such rebellions, Child affirms, were a “permanent feature” of boarding school life.¹¹³

At the Sherman outing program in Riverside, California, Kevin Whalen found similar occupational difficulties presented in the Bay Area Outing Program. In Sherman’s outing program, it was difficult to maintain social lives, but archival documents suggest that young Indian women fought to maintain romantic contacts, socialize and build new relationships. For those seeking interaction and escape beyond the confines of outing, they ran away. One chronic runaway in the

¹¹¹ Child, *Boarding School Seasons*, 89.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 87.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 94.

Sherman outing system always ran away with another girl. Together, they frequented bars in a nearby city and enjoyed freedoms they would otherwise have not.¹¹⁴

Bay Area outing runaways may have been characterized as the social type, looking for amusement in the big city, but their circumstances are closer to the experiences of “deserters” Child found at Haskell and Flandreau. Whether on account of homesickness, mistreatment or being overworked, these girls sought their only viable option—running away. Even so, early twentieth century Berkeley *Daily Gazette* news articles, such as the one that begins this chapter, created a specific rhetoric that justified the control of Native women through domesticity and assimilation projects. Not surprisingly, the writers do not question the circumstances that created runaways.

In “Indian Girls Prefer Park to Housework” (see above, p. 1), Indian women are read as unassimilable, “wild” and needing discipline.¹¹⁵ The title alone maintains that these four Paiute girls *preferred* the outdoors to domestic work, conveying the notion that they are not only disobedient, but also primitive and undomesticated. This particular choice of words harkens back to the kind of Indian that Allotment and boarding schools were meant to contain and civilize. The “call of the open” asserts the same rhetoric, and “call” itself, suggests these young girls were uncontrollably driven to the outdoors. The article asserts that they “deserted their temporary homes,” as if to say they abandoned outing—this supposed charitable act of goodwill. Therefore, the girls are deemed ungrateful deserters—essentially criminal enough to warrant police involvement.¹¹⁶ Interestingly, the article ends on the claim that Matron Royce is responsible for their “welfare.”¹¹⁷ Here “welfare,” is an apt expression to underscore the child/ward relationship of the government program. It is

¹¹⁴ Whalen, *Native Students at Work*, 48.

¹¹⁵ “Indian Girls Prefer Park to Housework.”

¹¹⁶ As an interesting point of comparison, Brenda Child found the same common use of the word “deserter,” to describe Indian children who ran away from Flandreau and Haskell in the Mid-West.

¹¹⁷ Royce’s regular mentions in the periodicals suggest and confirm in at least this one instance that she herself was personally reporting runaways. More research is needed to gauge whether other outing matrons were similarly involved in such reports.

claimed that Matron Royce is a *maternal* caretaker looking after the best interest of the Indian girls and thus enforces their deviancy as counteractive to the project. In just twelve quick lines, this article works to encourage the outing project as a necessary tool to discipline and contain Indian women's bodies.

Two months prior, the *Daily Gazette* published a similar article. (See below.) In boldface, the Monday edition of the paper read "Two Indian Girls Reported Missing." The article reports that two 16-year-old Indian girls "disappeared" earlier in the week. Both were "employed" as domestic workers and came from a cohort of 65 young women from Nevada who traveled to the Bay Area to work during the summer months.¹¹⁸ Of the four, only two returned to their live-in workplaces. The article reports, "It is believed the...girls were homesick and started on foot for the Indian reservation."¹¹⁹

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TWO INDIAN GIRLS REPORTED MISSING

The police of the bay district today were asked to locate Ella Bender and Lena Piper, 16-year-old Indian girls who disappeared from Berkeley and Oakland earlier in the week. The Bender girl was employed as a domestic in the home of M. S. Barnett, 648 Colusa avenue. Mrs. R. Royce, 2476 Prince street, government employe in charge of Indian girls assigned to the bay district, appealed to the police.

In her report Mrs. Royce said the two girls were members of a party of 65 from the Nevada Indian School that came to the bay district to work during the summer. They went to San Francisco with two other Indian school girls earlier in the week, but the other two returned to their temporary homes in Oakland. It is believed the Bender and Piper girls were homesick and started on foot for the Indian reservation.

This article contains much of the same rhetoric from the month's prior but establishes a good/bad binary between Indian girls that are obedient and those that are deserters. The article declares that these two runaways, Ella Bender and Lena Piper were "employed" as domestics, underscoring that they were hired and committed to do the work they were paid to do. So, as runaways they are disloyal and fickle, fleeing from this supposedly respectable government work. In fact, where two returned, they did not, thus

¹¹⁸ "Two Indian Girls Reported Missing," *Berkeley Daily Gazette*, July 31, 1922.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

establishing Bender and Piper as deviant. These girls are thusly marked like Maude Mitchell as unacceptable.

In the same way that the previous article underpinned “wild” rhetoric, this article accuses the girls of running “on foot” to their Indian reservation in Nevada.¹²⁰ “On foot,” establishes their “primitive” nature and declares the two as “untamed,” unlike their obedient counterparts. According to the archives, all 65 girls would have travelled by train or bus to the Bay Area. Yet, this account

INDIAN GIRLS ARE REPORTED MISSING

Tired of domestic life, five Indian girls under the care of Mrs. B. V. Royce, outing matron; U. S. Indian Service, 2426 Prince street, have disappeared from various Berkeley homes. Three of the girls have been away at least two weeks. It is supposed they have started on foot for their reservation in Nevada.

The girls are pupils in the Block-foot Reservation Indian school and were part of a delegation of 50 who came to the bay district for the summer, each being placed in a good home where they paid for their board by doing housework. The police were asked today to locate the girls.

inspires the image of Indian girls running hundreds of miles, barefoot. The language supposes that Indian women are, uncivilized and especially in need of domestication. Finally, the article affirms that Matron Royce is “in charge of the girls,” similar to the previous article underscoring her supposed interest in their well-being.

A third article in the *Daily Gazette* reports another disappearance. (See left.) The August 25, 1922, article read, “Indian Girls Are Reported Missing.”¹²¹ Allegedly, five Indian girls “tired of

domestic work” have “disappeared” from their “good homes” where they were “paid for their board by doing housework.”¹²² Once again the paper alleges that the girls have “started on foot” to their reservation. Similar to the two previous articles, Indian girls are read as idle, even ungrateful for their “good” homes and pay. “Tired” specifically evokes laziness or indifference, as if the girls were simply bored of the vocation and chose to take a leave of absence. There is no mention of the fact

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ “Indian Girls Are Reported Missing,” *Berkeley Daily Gazette*, August 25, 1922.

¹²² Ibid.

that they might be physically exhausted from the arduous housework they were forced to perform. Moreover, the fact that they were “paid” marks them as “ungrateful,” similar to the runaways in the weeks prior.

Just like the second article, it is supposed that the girls started “on foot” for their reservation. Similar to the “call of the open,” these girls are read as wild and undomesticated. Nonetheless, these “pupils”—boarding school students—are from the Blackfoot Indian Reservation in Montana which is roughly 1,200 miles away from Berkeley, California. The accusation that these girls would be “on foot” to Montana is laughable and improbable. In fact, if these runaways were like their counterparts at Flandreau or Haskell, they would have been highly resourceful and may have even train-hopped home.

Like the articles before it, this article states that the girls were under the “care” of Matron Royce. While asserting wardship over the girls, this precise word highlights Royce’s supposed compassionate intentions for the girls. Yet, the article reveals otherwise. The same word found in the second article, “disappeared,” is repeated—as if these girls just simply vanished. Yet in this case, the article reports that three of the girls have been gone for at least two weeks! This begs the question of whether or not Matron Royce actually tended to the girls and whether or not they were in fact safe and protected. If anything, this delayed report reveals the federal government’s outright neglect and mistreatment of Indian girls. They may have been monitored and controlled, but not protected.

Interestingly, this article reports a sizable group of five runaways, which supports Lomawaima’s bloomer story finding—that Indian girls banded together to outwit boarding school matrons. While we cannot know their specific intentions for running away, we can imagine some of the circumstances: homesickness, physical demands of domestic work, isolation of live-in positions or culture shock of the urban city when so many of these girls came from rural boarding school

communities. The articles do not reveal how Native women were in fact under constant surveillance from their employers as well as outing Matrons. And to reiterate, during this period, there is no evidence of house calls or home-visits to ensure the safety of the households girls worked for and if they were given proper care. These private unmonitored spaces could be dangerous.

Altogether, these runaway articles tell a one-sided story apparently crafted by Royce herself. In these three instances, Native women are read as primitive, lazy, ungrateful, wild and disobedient. In fact, the constant police involvement highlights the fact that they were treated like criminals. As these articles do not question the difficult conditions of forced domestic work, readers are led to believe these acts of resistance are proof that Indians girls *must* be disciplined, contained and assimilated. Therefore, the outing program and Royce's work is read as necessary—a beneficial program to *civilize* Native women.

Nevertheless, this one-sided account belies the program itself. The portrayal of Native women as childish, primitive wards is a total contradiction to the domestic labor they are contracted to in the outing program. These supposed “deviants” are being used as inexpensive servants in charge of housework, child rearing and caretaking—hardly the kind of work one might entrust to a child, and yet most are children! This foremost contradiction highlights the nature of the program. Outing is presented as a charitable act, for the good of young Indian women. Employers likely feel gratified in “doing their part.” Ostensibly domestic training worked to uplift Indian women's lives, and create good Americanized citizens. In reality, outing meant labor exploitation and enforced servitude, and Native women overtly resisted this domesticating assimilation project. Considering the mechanics of the Bay Area Outing Program, a young woman's escape is neither unreasonable nor surprising.

CONCLUSION

The problematic history of the Bay Area Outing Program and others like it demonstrates how domesticity becomes what Beth Piatote has called a site of “struggle.”¹²³ For Native women of this time, domestic work was quite literally woven into their boarding school “education.” When not laboring on school grounds daily, on summer breaks or after graduation the “natural” occupation was live-in domestic work. Moreover, the disciplinary-driven trade was fraught with issues. Engaging the Bay Area Outing Program system meant taking an automatic pay cut from already meager wages—in some years this was as much as forty-seven percent below the national average.¹²⁴ While adult women had more of a choice than their teenage outing counterparts, there was hardly another option aside from domestic work. Teenaged or not, at all times women were subject to the Matron’s surveillance, approval or consent. Engaging this system meant subjecting oneself to the Victorian morals of the outing matron and her employer. Live-in work often demanded isolating, around the clock labor and surveillance. Ostensibly, the workforce might afford Native women freedom and independence. Instead, the Bay Area Outing Program treated these Native women like wards—unnatural children—and continued a system of government paternalism or in this case, maternalism.¹²⁵

Despite the calculated assimilative mechanics of this settler project, Native women challenged these circumstances and resisted. For some young women—particularly in the summer of 1922—challenging the Bay Area Outing Program meant evading the racialized system and returning home. It must also be said that, for some, engaging the Bay Area Outing Program meant putting food on the table and being able to provide for their families. Native women acted as

¹²³ Piatote, *Domestic Subjects*.

¹²⁴ Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race*, 354.

¹²⁵ Piatote, *Domestic Subjects*, 87.

interlocutors. They negotiated this contentious program and profession while asserting their individual needs. Faced with the pervasive force of the assimilation doctrine on Native bodies, Native women complied, contested and actively unsettled domesticity.

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