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# Trappers' Brides and Country Wives: Native American Women in the Paintings of Alfred Jacob Miller

JENNIFER MCLERRAN

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Few nineteenth-century artists used native women who participated in the North American fur trade as the subjects of their paintings. Of those who did produce a significant number of representations of such individuals, Alfred Jacob Miller is among the best known.<sup>1</sup>

The purpose of this study is to explore how a number of nineteenth-century conventions of depiction employed by Miller perpetuated and/or challenged two culturally dominant discourses that furthered the subjugation of Native American women. The first discourse to be examined, Orientalism, functioned through literary and artistic representations that positioned colonized individuals as irrevocably other than, and morally inferior to, their European colonizers. The second discourse, commonly labeled "domestic ideology," functioned through an ideal of feminine domesticity that positioned women as moral, civilizing influences on the frontier.

I have chosen to focus on Miller for two reasons. First, over the span of his long career, he produced an unusually large number of paintings and drawings of native women that offer abundant opportunity for exploration of the artistic conventions used in portraying this subject. Second, as the products of an individual

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of high social standing and considerable professional repute, Miller's representations exhibit most clearly the culturally dominant attitudes reproduced in and perpetuated by nineteenth-century representational practices.

Among Miller's contemporaries who made Indian women their occasional subject is Charles Deas. Deas will be examined briefly for the contrast he provides to Miller. His works, like Miller's, received wide popular distribution through prints. Unlike Miller, however, Deas preferred the margins to the mainstream of society. Also unlike Miller, Deas had a very short career. Although a significant proportion of the works Deas produced took Indians as their subject, few of these included depictions of Indian women. Only one painting that includes a native woman has been located and attributed to Deas, but this singular work is highly significant in that it provides a notable exception to dominant nineteenth-century artistic and cultural conventions for representation of native women. Deas's representation serves in several ways as a point of rupture in an ideological discourse that circumscribed the roles of nineteenth-century women.

Fur trade society developed as a unique mixture of Euro-American and Indian cultures.<sup>2</sup> Its participants inhabited the margins of polite society. By most accounts, they demonstrated a much higher degree of tolerance for Indian-white intermarriage (usually according to native custom) than did the majority of early Euro-Americans.<sup>3</sup> Most of the continent's newcomers had contact with Native American women only through literary and visual representations. Those visual representations of native women with which New World explorers and colonists would most likely have been familiar were allegorical figures of America as a native woman or depictions that conformed to the Indian princess stereotype. Such representations, which served to position the Indian as irrevocably "other," became instrumental in furthering the cultural domination necessary to the colonialist enterprise.<sup>4</sup> As Anglo settlement increased, cultural mixing in general, and intermarriage in particular, between whites and Indians became an increasing subject of moral objection. The social constraints of frontier Anglo culture, based on an ideology of domesticity and an idealized conception of "true womanhood," produced significant changes in popular representations of Indian women.<sup>5</sup> Although the Indian princess stereotype persisted, in situations of extensive interaction between Euro-Americans and Indian women, the repulsive, lascivious "squaw" was at least as likely to form the

prevailing stereotype of the native woman.<sup>6</sup> The work of artists such as Miller and Deas includes depictions of Native American women that reflect, to varying degrees, these cultural attitudes. An examination of these artists' strategies will demonstrate how practices of visual representation function to reproduce and further the dominant ideologies.

ALFRED JACOB MILLER:  
ROMANTIC ARTIST OF THE AMERICAN FRONTIER

Miller, a highly regarded nineteenth-century American painter trained in the European academic tradition, was best known to his contemporaries as a portrait painter. Although fashionable salon portraits of members of the East Coast elite formed the staple of his trade, Miller is known today for his oil paintings and watercolors of the American frontier. Writings from his single trip west and the artist's comments regarding the work resulting from his travels are provided in *The West of Alfred Jacob Miller*.<sup>7</sup> Miller's journal and the captions he wrote to accompany the sketches and watercolors done in the field were written several years after his trip west. His narrative often duplicates, in words and tone, accounts found in early and mid-nineteenth-century popular literature on fur trade culture. They most closely reflect Washington Irving's and George Ruxton's works on the fur trade.<sup>8</sup>

Miller effects a tone of ethnographic objectivity in his writings. However, to the frustration of many scholars, he fails to provide essential details such as dates and locations. Despite these shortcomings, his writings, as well as the literary influences that inform them, provide valuable examples of nineteenth-century representations of women in the fur trade.<sup>9</sup> Miller traveled west in 1837, during a crucial decade in American history when the fur trade was in the last years of its prosperity, immediately preceding extensive Euro-American settlement.<sup>10</sup> He carried with him the Enlightenment ideal of the "Noble Savage" and an optimistic faith in the West as an unspoiled Eden. He joined these conceptions with the artistic influence of French romanticism to produce highly idealized depictions of life in the West.

Miller's expedition leader was a Scottish nobleman and British army retiree, Captain William Drummond Stewart. Stewart had been west before, but, on his 1837 expedition, he wished to take an artist along to document the trip. The highlights of Stewart's trips

were buffalo hunting and the annual Rocky Mountain rendezvous in the Wind River region of what is now Wyoming. Following the Oregon Trail, his group traveled overland through country populated by numerous tribes, including the Arapaho, Cheyenne, Crow, Pawnee, Shoshoni, and Lakota. This route also passed through the haunts of the region's more recent inhabitants, the American free trappers (the "mountain men" of American cultural mythology) and the French trappers and traders. Many of these men, who were often themselves of mixed ancestry, had married either full-blood or mixed-blood Indian women. By the time of Miller's visit, they and their families were full participants in a unique American culture engendered by the nineteenth-century fur trade. The annual rendezvous, where trappers and Indians gathered to meet with fur company representatives to trade their furs for provisions and other goods, was one of the more colorful products of this culture. Acquaintance with the wide diversity of individuals attending these gatherings could satisfy anyone's desire for the strange and exotic. Such was Stewart's desire, and he employed Miller to record these picturesque individuals for his own continued enjoyment after his return to Scotland.<sup>11</sup>

Upon his return, Stewart invited Miller to join him at his estate. There the artist worked on a number of large-scale paintings, including the first version of the *Trapper's Bride*, which was completed in November 1841. Miller produced seventeen additional oil paintings and eighty-seven watercolors for his patron within a period of less than two years. These were hung in Stewart's lodge, which was furnished so as to remind its owner of his Rocky Mountain excursions. Miller's paintings, including *Return from Hunting* (1840), *Indian Belle Reclining* (1840), and *The Death of a Panther* (1840–41), joined buffalo robes, Indian pipes, and other paraphernalia of native life in Stewart's lodge to create an atmosphere reminiscent of the American West.<sup>12</sup>

Having served under the Duke of Wellington, Stewart was no stranger to the colonial enterprise.<sup>13</sup> The captain's desire for the faraway and exotic, developed during his early military forays, was satisfied by annual trips to America. Miller recognized Stewart's taste. To satisfy his patron's wish for contact with the mysterious "other," Miller employed a standard European form of representation. Depicting America as a young, virginal Indian woman, he participated in an artistic convention that held wide cultural currency from the sixteenth century well into the 1800s.<sup>14</sup>

Attendant upon such gendering of the New World was a sexualizing of the exploration and conquest of the continent. In 1595, Sir Walter Raleigh described Guiana as "a country that hath yet her maidenhead, never sackt, turned, nor wrought."<sup>15</sup> Gendered representations of the New World were part of the European colonialist discourse—what has since become known as the "discourse of discovery."<sup>16</sup> America was represented as a young Indian woman upon whose passive, receptive body European colonists could carry out their project of exploitation and domination.<sup>17</sup>

The first voyagers to America described "her" inhabitants as living as in the "golden age." Indian women were described as unfailingly amiable, beautiful, and full of grace and good will. They served as symbolic representations of a land of bounty welcoming all comers. America was portrayed as an Indian woman, a sort of earth mother or Demeter, identified with the land. A representation of Pocahontas, daughter of the Algonquian chief Powhatan, as a Demeter-like figure appears in folklore that describes corn and bean plants springing from the earth upon which she has rested her palms.<sup>18</sup> In *The Return of the Vanishing American*, Leslie Fiedler tells one version of this myth of Pocahontas:

According to one version, the lost hunters lucky enough to come upon her in a secluded valley were directed by signs to return a year later to the place where she had been sitting—a hand on either side to sustain the weight of her reclining, naked body. And returning, they discovered corn sprouting where her right palm had rested, beans where her left hand had pressed the ground, and tobacco where her divine ass had touched the earth.<sup>19</sup>

Depiction of the land as feminine was common in promotional literature encouraging Western settlement.<sup>20</sup> The land was described as characterized by "valleyes and plaines streaming with sweete Springs, like veynes in a naturall bodie" with "hills and mountains making a sensible proffer of hidden treasure, never yet searched."<sup>21</sup> Frederick Jackson Turner's highly influential paper "The Significance of the Frontier in American History" (1893) proffered the thesis that central to American identity is the need for a moving frontier, a place where savagery and civilization meet.<sup>22</sup> In a later paper, "Contributions of the West to American Democracy" (1903), Turner asserted that the West was a woman who carried the eternal hope of rebirth and regeneration: "Into

this vast shaggy continent of ours poured the first feeble tide of European settlement. European men, institutions, and ideas were lodged in the American wilderness, and this great American West took them to her bosom . . . . [S]he opened new provinces, and dowered new democracies in her most distant domains with her material treasures . . . ."<sup>23</sup> Turner cites Henry Adams's passage in *History of the United States* (1903) as an expression of a typically American regard of the land as a maternal, regenerative force: "Look at this continent of mine, fairest of created worlds, as she lies turning up to the sun's never failing caress her broad and exuberant breasts, overflowing with milk for her hundred million children."<sup>24</sup> This meeting place of savagery and civilization, this eternally regenerative feminine land on whose body the forces of domination and expansion were played out, was, according to Turner, central to American identity.

Miller's *The Trapper's Bride* (1841, 1850; figure 1) has been interpreted by some as a symbolic depiction of the marriage of the wilderness (or savagery) and civilization.<sup>25</sup> In such a view, the Indian woman represents the uncivilized West in need of the taming influence of the civilized male.<sup>26</sup> This image of the man as the civilizer and the woman as the savage in need of civilizing is a reversal of the nineteenth-century majority culture's concept of the proper, natural state of things. A culturally dominant ideal of domesticity (which will be discussed more fully below) stipulated that the woman, not the man, should act as the civilizing influence.

The view of the trapper as a civilizing influence was common among nineteenth-century Americans and is often reflected in fur trade literature. Although opinion varied widely on the issue of miscegenation, the sentiment expressed by David Coyner in *The Lost Trappers* (1847) had some currency:

For these men, who by the way are very numerous, savage life seems to have its peculiar charms. They take to themselves wives, and domesticate themselves among the different tribes in the west.... The result of this intermixing and intermarrying, has been the springing up of a numerous hybrid race of beings, that constitute a medium, through which, it is hoped, at one distant day, the laws, arts, and habitudes of civilized life may be successfully introduced among the tribes of the west, and be the means of reclaiming them from the ignorance and barbarities in which they have been so long enthralled.<sup>27</sup>

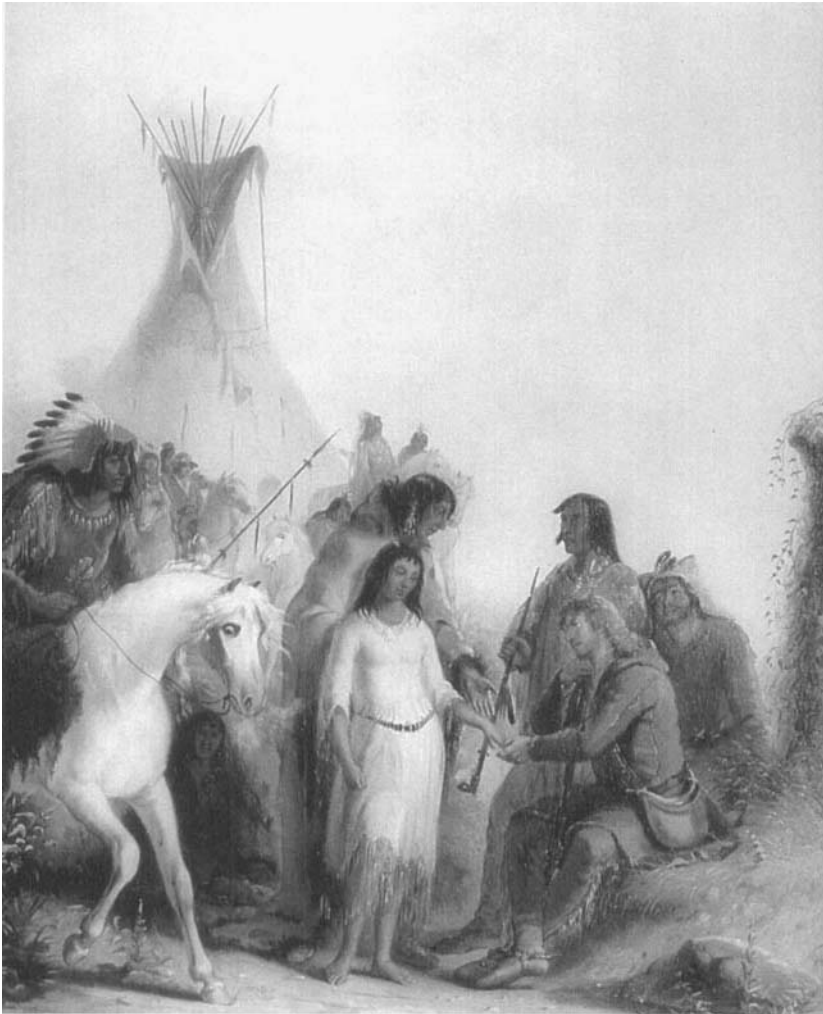


FIGURE 1. *Alfred Jacob Miller, The Trapper's Bride, 1850. Oil on canvas, 25" x 30".* Courtesy of Joslyn Art Museum, Omaha, Nebraska.

Miller's description of *Trappers* (1837; figure 2), written to accompany the painting in *The West of Alfred Jacob Miller*, shows the artist's regard of these individuals as agents of civilization:

The trappers may be said to lead the van in the march of civilization,—from the Canadas in the North to California in





FIGURE 2. *Alfred Jacob Miller, Trappers, 1837. Watercolor, 11-15/16" x 9-7/16".*  
*Courtesy of Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore, Maryland.*

the South;—from the Mississippi East to the Pacific West; every river and mountain stream, in all probability, have been at one time or another visited and inspected by them. Adventurous, hardy, and self-reliant,—always exposed to constant danger from hostile Indians, and extremes of hun-

ger and cold,—they penetrate the wilderness in all directions in pursuit of their calling.<sup>28</sup>

The view that Miller intended to position the trapper as a mediator between savagery and civilization is reinforced by comparison of the 1850 version of his *Trapper's Bride* to a well-known wedding scene by the Italian Renaissance artist, Raphael. In form and content, Miller's painting bears a striking resemblance to Raphael's *Marriage of the Virgin* (1504).<sup>29</sup> The figures in each of the paintings are similarly grouped; a building is similarly situated in the background of each; and the figures are similarly positioned relative to the viewer in each of the works. Both Raphael and Miller depict a wedding. Both portray, albeit symbolically, the young bride as chaste and virginal. However, in Raphael's case we witness the marriage of the spiritual and the material (with the priest acting as intermediary), while in Miller's case we see the marriage of savagery and civilization. In the latter work, both the young woman's father, who offers his daughter's hand to the trapper, and another elder male tribal member who holds a calumet ("a chief," according to Miller) act as intermediaries.<sup>30</sup> Art historian Dawn Glanz suggests that Miller intended to draw a parallel between the sacred and the secular, raising the symbolic meaning of the marriage here depicted to a higher level. She says,

The event takes on national significance, expressing the hope not only that the Indians might be assimilated rather than exterminated, but that the ambitions of the American nation might be successfully reconciled with the American landscape. The trapper acts as mediator between the conflicting values of the wilderness and civilization, thus providing an imaginative solution to a dilemma which in fact was never resolved in the nineteenth century.<sup>31</sup>

On a more literal level, Miller shows the marriage of a young woman, probably Arikara, to a free trapper (according to Miller, "white or half-breed").<sup>32</sup> The full- or mixed-blood Indian wives of trappers were commonly called "daughters of the country," reinforcing the identification of Miller's young bride in particular, and Indian women in general, with the land.<sup>33</sup> Such marriages were not legally sanctioned. Instead, they were performed according to tribal ritual, according to what was known as "the custom of the country" (or "*à la façon du pays*").<sup>34</sup> Commonly regarded by Euro-Americans as no more than financial transac-

tions, such unions were perceived as highly degrading to women and highly immoral. When white men observed the women's fathers or brothers exchanging horses and other objects for the women, they concluded that the Indian women were being purchased by their husbands. Actually, however, such observers were witnessing only one of a series of customary exchanges between the bride's and groom's families.<sup>35</sup> The prominent positioning of the horse in Miller's painting may refer to such an exchange, since, by many accounts, horses were commonly exchanged in marriage transactions.<sup>36</sup>

Another practice that Euro-Americans perceived as immoral and reported as common in a number of tribes, including the Cree, Mandan, Lakota, and Arikara, was wife-lending.<sup>37</sup> Although they did not often refuse such offers, white men were reportedly shocked by such practices. They were also mystified by the fact that such "promiscuity" was selective. They could not understand why, if these women were willing to engage in sexual activity with strangers, such favors had to be offered by the woman's husband rather than initiated by the one desiring the woman's favors. Such behaviors were interpreted by Anglos as simply random promiscuity; consequently, intimate behavior with Indian women was often regarded as an act lacking in social significance and therefore lacking in attendant social obligations.

### MILLER AS NORTH AMERICAN ORIENTALIST

In order to fully convey the perceived immorality of these people and their practices, Miller employed strategies common to European Orientalist painters such as Jean-Léon Gérôme and Eugène Delacroix.<sup>38</sup> Orientalism in European literature, as cultural theorist Edward Said explains, is one of the mechanisms by which the European colonialist project of dominance and control has been both justified and perpetuated.<sup>39</sup> Art historian Linda Nochlin, who extends this mechanism to nineteenth-century European painting, explains that a common Orientalist strategy is to portray the cultural "other" as immoral, and therefore inferior, thereby justifying dominance.<sup>40</sup> Miller's description of the scene depicted in *The Trapper's Bride* emphasizes the financial aspects of the transaction. He says, "The scene represents a Trapper taking a wife, or purchasing one."<sup>41</sup> He further notes, "The price of acquisition, in this case, was \$600 paid for in the legal tender of this

region: viz: Guns, \$100 each, Blankets \$40 each, Red Flannel \$20 pr. yard, Alcohol \$64 pr. Gal., Tobacco, Beads &c. at corresponding rates."<sup>42</sup> The profanity of the situation is underscored by contrast to Raphael's *Marriage of the Virgin*, well-known at that time as a sacred image.

Another typical Orientalist strategy is to produce works that display an apparent lack of artifice. The artist uses the technical and pictorial devices of the medium in such a way as to present a seamlessly realistic image. The artwork thereby works to conceal the artifice that produced it. Authenticating details of costume, ornament, architecture, and so on are presented to enhance a sense of accuracy. They serve to denote the "real" and signify its presence in the work as a whole. The artist thereby conveys "truth" and, further, controls the truth of the subject depicted. Through representation, the artist controls, and thereby implicitly dominates, the cultural "other." Such authentication through attention to realistic detail is apparent in the meticulous rendering of native dress and ornament in *The Trapper's Bride*.

The Orientalist typically represents exotic lands as spaces of fantasy onto which the Euro-American viewer's desires can be projected. The nineteenth-century French painter Gérôme produced a number of images in many ways similar to Miller's *The Trapper's Bride*. Gérôme's *The Slave Market* (ca. 1867; figure 3), from the early 1860s, is probably the best example of a work similar to Miller's. In this scene, set in the midst of a busy Middle Eastern market, a naked young woman passively submits to inspection by both the viewer and the men gathered around her. Facing the viewer, frontally exposed, she stands between one man (presumably her owner) on her left and a group of men (presumably potential buyers) on her right. One man inspects her teeth while the others look on. The positioning of the young Indian woman in Miller's painting is similar to that in Gérôme's painting. Posed frontally in relation to the viewer, she stands between an older member of her tribe, presumably her father, and the young trapper. The elder man's hand, held open as if to indicate offering, is positioned behind the hand of the young trapper who grasps the shyly proffered hand of the young Indian woman. The similarity of Miller's *The Trapper's Bride* to such works by Gérôme becomes more than simply visual when one considers that the marriage customs of Indian tribes were often regarded by nineteenth-century Euro-Americans as thinly disguised practices of slavery.

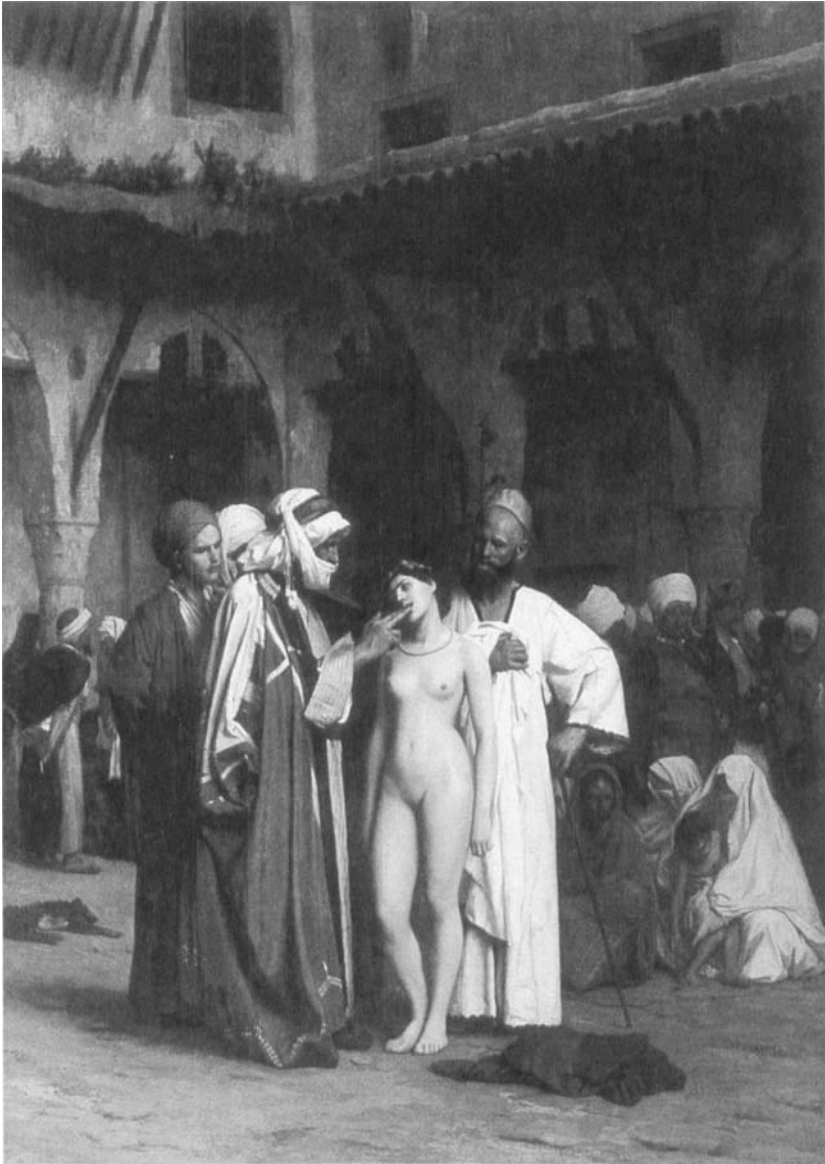


FIGURE 3. *Jean-Léon Gérôme, The Slave Market, ca. 1867. Oil on canvas, 33-3/16" x 24-13/16". Courtesy of Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, Williamstown, Massachusetts.*

Nochlin has pointed out that Gérôme's work in particular, and Orientalism in general, typically exhibits two nineteenth-century European assumptions regarding relationships of power. One of these concerns the power of men over women. Such representations place both the male subject(s) of the picture and the presumed masculine viewers of the painting in positions of dominance over the women depicted. In Gérôme's painting, the young woman, with head bowed, submits to the dominance of her present and potential possessors. In Miller's work, the bride demurely averts her gaze. Each woman submits to the dominating gaze of the presumably male viewer. Such representations thereby reproduce a nineteenth-century Euro-American belief in the natural superiority, and thus justified dominance, of men over women, whether those women occupy exotic lands or one's own cultural ground. The other assumption to which Nochlin refers concerns "white men's superiority to, hence justifiable control over, inferior, darker races, precisely those who indulge in this sort of regrettably lascivious commerce."<sup>43</sup> Nochlin explains that, in Orientalist painting, "the (male) viewer was invited sexually to identify with, yet morally to distance himself from, his Oriental counterparts depicted within the objectively inviting yet racially distancing space of the painting."<sup>44</sup> The male viewer of such work is allowed the pleasurable fantasy of placing himself within the scene, yet he is also allowed the self-delusion that the degrading practices depicted are not part of his world. Gérôme's slave market is placed in the exotic land of the Orient. Miller's marriage scene, which would have been perceived by many Euro-Americans as similarly positioning women as commodities of economic exchange, takes place in the exotic land of the American frontier, an uncivilized place inhabited only by dark-skinned savages and "half-breed" trappers.

Another Orientalist strategy is to position the exotic Other as the occupant of a timeless space characterized by atemporal customs and rituals.<sup>45</sup> Those depicted are thereby presented as always—whether in the past, present, or future—Other. The marriage ritual represented in *The Trapper's Bride* is but one example of Miller's employment of such a distancing practice. This strategy can be seen in a number of other works by Miller that depict young native women. Miller's caption for *Indian Courtship* (1837; figure 4) places his subjects in a timeless space. The artist further betrays his Orientalist intentions by drawing a parallel to *The Arabian Nights*. The caption reads,

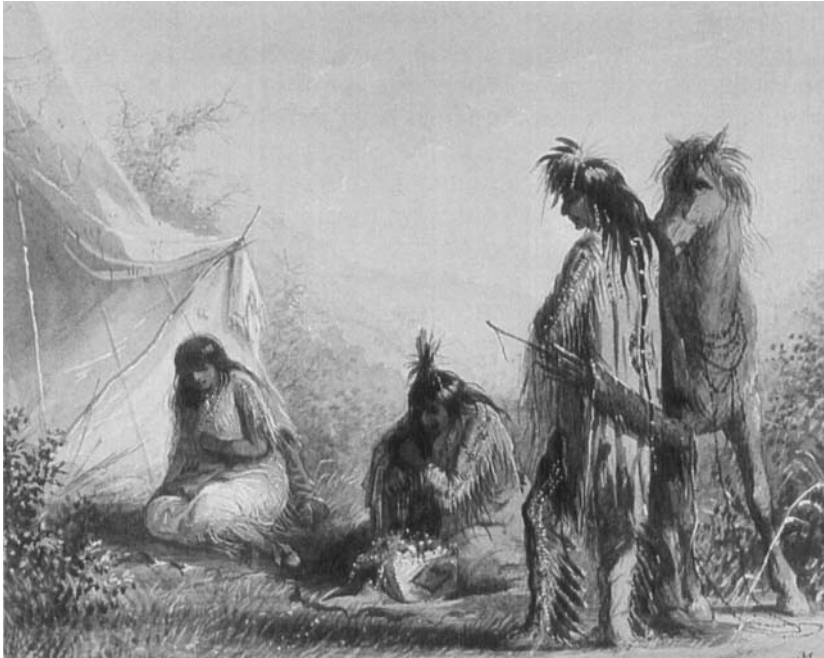


FIGURE 4. Alfred Jacob Miller, *Indian Courtship*, 1837. Watercolor, 9" x 11-17/16". Courtesy of Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore, Maryland.

The North American Indian carries his wonderful stoicism into every transaction of his life,—even the tender subject of selecting a helpmate does not disturb his tranquility—neither is he affected with the slightest romance in regard to the subject. He brings his presents and casts them at the feet of his bronzed favorite, ostensibly for her; but intended for the optics of the father,—these consist of cloths of brilliant colors, beaver skins, beads, trinkets &c.

The Arabian Nights is a sealed book to her,—not unlikely however she has in day dreams brooded and waited for a kind of Prince "Firouz Schah" with his enchanted horse, who had but to turn a peg and mount into the air with her, to go away & be forever happy;—her Prince generally comes in the guise of a free trapper,—but she has (like many another poor girl) waited in vain for the "Prince."

The next best offer must now go under consideration, the belle is to be bought,—it can be also surmised that the *beau*

may be *sold*, but luckily for the latter, time will only prove to him this fact.

It is remarkable that Seventeen centuries before Christ appeared matters of this kind were arranged and transacted in the very same manner that we find now, amongst the Indians of the North-West.

It may as well be remarked here, once for all, that the Indian is not a sentimental creature.<sup>46</sup>

Miller's description of young Indian women and marriage customs that accompanies *Indian Girl (Sioux)* (1837; figure 5) also clearly reflects an Orientalist strategy:

They enjoy a life of comparative freedom and happiness until about 15 years of age, when a lord of the prairie, in the person of a free trapper or a[n] Indian takes a fancy, and generally without saying a word to her, marches off to her father who makes the best bargain he can under the circumstances—augmenting the price, if she is pretty,—*Elle faut souffrir pour être belle!*

It is curious to remark that similar customs prevailed in Egypt, about 3,500 years ago, under the administration of Governor Potiphar and others of that time. Indeed many of their customs bear a strong resemblance to that ancient people.<sup>47</sup>

Although Orientalist painting finds its subjects in the timeless space of faraway lands, it employs artistic devices firmly rooted in the artistic conventions of Western culture. One such convention is the picturesque.<sup>48</sup> The idea of the picturesque in visual art, originally developed in European painting of the 1700s, is applied to paintings of natural scenes that induce an aesthetically pleasing, contemplative state of mind. Picturesque scenes are characterized by rustic charm and often a very subtle degree of disorder or even decay. Favored subjects include peasants, ruins, and irregular and craggy hillsides. In Orientalist work, the picturesque serves to position its subjects as occupants of pristine natural realms and as members of ancient, exotic cultures, both of which are threatened with imminent demise. Nochlin explains that the picturesque is used to convey a deceptive tranquility in a land and culture that is actually in a state of turmoil. Scenes of tranquility are used to mask conflict. For example, Miller presents a placid, harmonious scene in *The Trapper's Bride*; however, the picturesque subjects of this piece were members of Plains tribes





FIGURE 5. *Alfred Jacob Miller, Indian Girl (Sioux), 1837. Watercolor, 9-1/4" x 7-1/2". Courtesy of Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore, Maryland.*

that were, at the time, experiencing widespread disease and encroachment and domination by Europeans. True to an Orientalist strategy, Miller presents none of the destructive aspects of the meeting of two cultures.

Although it may not be immediately apparent in depictions employing this convention, the picturesque is predicated on

destruction. The particular variety of aesthetic pleasure it yields relies on a subtle lack of stasis and classical order. The picturesque is commonly found in Orientalist works in details of architecture and interior ornament that are in a state of ruin, signifying a once-powerful and highly developed civilization that has fallen into disarray due to the barbarism and immorality of its members. Nochlin's description of the picturesque in the art of this period, while written in reference to French Orientalist paintings of the Middle East, could serve equally well as a description of Native Americans and/or the American wilderness: "The picturesque is pursued throughout the nineteenth century like a form of peculiarly elusive wildlife requiring increasingly skillful tracking as the delicate prey—an endangered species—disappears further and further into the hinterlands . . ."<sup>49</sup>

The picturesque quality of the American wilderness, like the image of the Noble Savage, represents the exotic and untamed. It is both that which is in need of the civilizing influence of Euro-American culture and that which serves to set the colonized apart from the colonizer. In Orientalist depictions of the Middle East, picturesque ruins represent the disorder that results from the decay of civilization. The Orientalist painter implies that the Middle East may return to order only through the benevolent guidance of its colonial fathers. In Orientalist depictions of the New World, the picturesque signifies a place that has never known the influence of civilization and will remain in an undeveloped state of primitive disorder unless colonized.

A paradox of nineteenth-century colonialism was the desire to preserve, in ethnographic detail, traditional elements of conquered cultures. The same practices and customs that were suppressed and annihilated in the interests of conquest and domination were recorded, collected, and preserved.<sup>50</sup> A vast archive was created to allow those so inclined, through immersion in its contents, to be transported to another realm. It seems apparent that Miller's patron, William Drummond Stewart, was so inclined. Stewart's goal in employing Miller was to procure paintings that, when combined with diverse native artifacts gathered on his many travels, would recreate (and thereby transport the captain to) the American West. Miller provided Stewart with the elements essential to creating his own little oasis of American wilderness within the confines of his Scottish hunting lodge.

## MILLER AND DOMESTIC IDEOLOGY

Miller produced works for a patron highly enamored of the American West and its native inhabitants as an exotic land and people on the brink of extinction. Consequently, his representations are highly idealized. Although Miller's large finished paintings and some of his watercolor sketches contain highly romanticized depictions of Indian women, some of his smaller works, which serve as recordings of bits of quasi-ethnographic detail, present their female subjects engaged in decidedly unromantic, "unfeminine" pursuits. Miller sometimes portrays native women engaged in hunting or other activities contradictory to a Euro-American ideal of womanhood. In his pictures' captions, however, he is quick to disclaim the prevalence of such "unnatural" activities. His caption for *Buffalo Chase—by a female* (1837; figure 6) reads,

To win renown amongst the Indians and adventurers of the Far West, the first step is that of being a successful hunter. Every one at all ambitious strives to this end, and as the fever is catching;—An Indian woman at intervals starts up who is capable of running and bringing down a Buffalo. Her success is not attained suddenly, but by practice and perseverance. First attempts are invariable failures, and when it is considered how many things are to be attended to in the same moment, the default is not to be wondered at.

To do all this requires great presence of mind, dexterity, and courage,—and few women are found amongst them willing to undertake or capable of performing it.<sup>51</sup>

*Shoshone Female—catching a horse* (1837; figure 7) carries a caption similar in tone:

At rare intervals females take the field in pursuit of game or catching horses. They are not well adapted to this service, but either through a frolic or at the command of that inexorable mother necessity, she tries her hand . . . . The sketch represents her in the act of throwing the lariat, and from inexperience, she makes several ineffectual throws, before the intention is accomplished. The fact of her requiring a saddle, however, fixes on her an indelible disgrace in the eyes of the male Indian,—who regards such effeminacy with contempt.<sup>52</sup>



FIGURE 6. Alfred Jacob Miller, *Buffalo Chase*—by a female, 1837. Watercolor, 8-7/8" x 12-1/4". Courtesy of Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore, Maryland.

Miller observed and recorded women engaged in activities that were, from a Euro-American point of view, either degrading and immoral (as in *The Trapper's Bride* and *Indian Girl [Sioux]*) or unnatural, and thus improper, feminine pursuits (as in *Buffalo Chase* and *Shoshone Female*). Displaying an Orientalist intent, he portrayed the colonized as morally inferior. In the commentary accompanying these pictures, which qualify such behavior as unusual and even possibly aberrant in their own cultural context, he shows deference to the moral constraints of another dominant nineteenth-century cultural discourse, domestic ideology.

As a revered member of Baltimore high society, Miller brought with him to the West the cultural values of the "civilized" eastern United States. His representations of frontier life were decidedly Orientalist. Additionally, they reproduced an ideology of domesticity firmly ensconced in long-settled areas of the country but only fully realized in the West with the imminent Anglo settlement of the region. Orientalism functioned as an effective form of domination and control of native inhabitants of colonized lands. A nineteenth-century Euro-American ideology of domesticity,



FIGURE 7. *Alfred Jacob Miller, Shoshone female—catching a horse, 1837. Watercolor, 8-1/2" x 10-1/16". Courtesy of Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore, Maryland.*

which positioned women as fulfilling their natural destiny within the confines of the home, similarly functioned as a form of domination and control. This ideology, which (unlike Orientalism) was limited to women, worked to produce its subjects' collusion in their own oppression. Euro-American women assented to and worked to reproduce an ideology of domesticity because they had come to perceive it as productive and empowering. They worked to secure their own domination by the forces of patriarchy. On the other hand, native women, already the subjects of a colonialist ideology of domination, found themselves the unwilling subjects of an additional, and equally oppressive, ideology of domesticity. In the last half of the nineteenth century, Euro-American women participated in what Barbara Welter has called "the cult of true womanhood," characterized by the virtues of "piety, purity, submissiveness, and domesticity."<sup>53</sup> In his examination of the workings of domestic ideology on the frontier, Robert Griswold

purports that the nineteenth-century Euro-American ideology of domesticity gave women a heightened and protected moral status that increased their influence not only within the family sphere but also within the wider community. Griswold explains that "domesticity lay at the heart of the nineteenth-century definition of gender roles for both men and women. Domesticity empowered women to demand of men respect, consideration, emotional commitment, and even a measure of deference to their better moral judgment."<sup>54</sup> Domestic ideology offered Anglo wives the expectation of male behavior respectful of women's position as arbiters of morality within the family. The home thus became women's base of power.

Anglo women were perceived as carrying primary responsibility for homemaking and raising children. They were also responsible for preservation of morality and for ensuring promulgation of familial values. As protectors of the family, their moral influence was extended to the community, so as to assure a proper environment for their children's upbringing. Middle-class women, regarded as the carriers of moral virtue, became involved in movements and institutions through which they could exert influence. Their efforts, intended to reform the "uncivilized" male behavior that presumably dominated the West prior to the migration of Anglo women and their families, found expression in temperance movements, antiprostitution efforts, and antigambling campaigns. Women banded together to create and support institutions such as churches, schools, and charities, in order to bring order to a previously disordered world. Griswold comments on how domestic ideology served to draw many middle-class Anglo women together: "It did so by offering women a cultural system of social rules, conventions, and values—a moral vocabulary of discourse—that gave meaning to their daily behavior and to their friendships with other women."<sup>55</sup> Lack of adherence to this ideology became the basis for exclusion of those who did not observe the behavioral constraints it dictated.

According to most sources, Indian women were perceived by the majority of Anglo women as lascivious and uncivilized.<sup>56</sup> Native women's relationships with white men, perceived as resulting from the immorality of the early frontier, were regarded as threatening to traditional family values. Despite the fact that many relationships of Euro-American men with Indian women were stable and of long duration, they were not represented as such. Since Indians were perceived as patently immoral, it was

necessary to depict Indian-white relationships as only temporary and merely of convenience. Although, out of necessity, Anglo women on the frontier engaged in many activities considered more properly the province of men, Euro-Americans persisted in upholding an ideology that separated men's and women's proper activities into mutually exclusive spheres. Any activities of the Indian wives of fur traders that violated established divisions of labor along gender lines were viewed as improper.

### NATIVE WOMEN IN THE NORTH AMERICAN FUR TRADE

Most depictions of fur trade life, whether visual or literary, make little mention of women. However, women played a prominent role in the fur trade. Full- and mixed-blood Indian women were integral to its functioning, since they performed much of the labor necessary to produce marketable pelts. They not only prepared the animal pelts (mostly beaver) but provided and prepared food, built birchbark canoes, and constructed snowshoes, clothing, and packs. Fur trappers' Indian wives and children accompanied them into the wilderness and worked alongside the men. The failure of trader Samuel Hearne's first fur trade expedition was attributed, by his Chipewyan guide Matonabee, to an insufficient number of female workers. Hearne explained the value of women as working partners:

When all men are heavy laden, they can neither hunt nor travel to any considerable distance; and in case they meet with success in hunting, who is to carry the produce of their labour? [O]ne [woman] can carry, or haul, as much as two men can do. They also pitch our tents, make and mend our clothing, keep us warm at night; and in fact there is no such thing as travelling any considerable distance, or for any length of time, in this country; without their assistance.<sup>57</sup>

Indian women often independently engaged in the trapping and trading of the furs of small game. Hudson's Bay Company officer David Thompson reported, "Among the Natives the snareing of hares and trapping of martens are the business of the Women and become their property for trade."<sup>58</sup> Indian women were sometimes recognized as surpassing their male counterparts in trapping and trading skills. As the supply of beaver decreased in heavily trapped areas, the furs of small animals snared by the

women became increasingly important and were viewed as highly beneficial in offsetting the costs of living expenses at fur posts.<sup>59</sup> Indian women trapped small animals for the food they provided as well as for their furs. One case is reported of Mary, the Cree wife of bourgeois John Dugald Cameron, keeping the men at her husband's fort alive through providing them with meat caught in her snares.<sup>60</sup> Numerous other such cases have been reported of fur company men's Indian wives providing food through their trapping.<sup>61</sup>

Although Indian women played a productive role in fur trade economy, they were commonly depicted by Euro-Americans as lazy opportunists, hoping to live a life of leisure and ease through marriage to a white man. In his journal documenting his travels in the West, Rudolph Kurz expressed a common view when he asserted that "an Indian woman loves her white husband only for what he possesses—because she works less hard, eats better food, is allowed to dress and adorn herself in a better way—of real love there is no question."<sup>62</sup> The popular notion in nineteenth-century America was that alliances between Indian women and trappers and traders were only temporary and, at best, stormy. However, such documentary evidence that exists indicates the stability and long duration of Indian women's relationships with trappers and traders. By John Mack Faragher's account, seven in ten of these relationships were long-lasting. Faragher bases his figures on Le Roy Hafén's ten-volume study, *The Mountain Men and the Fur Trade of the Far West*. In this work, Hafén provided the biographies of 292 mountain men. Faragher found that seven out of ten of the marriages reported by Hafén were "stable" (that is, continuing through the death of one or the other spouse) and long-lasting. Fifty-two mountain man-Indian woman marriages, for which there is adequate dating, lasted an average of twenty-six years, considerably longer than typical contemporary marriages between whites.<sup>63</sup>

Native American culture was dramatically changed by the fur trade. Indian men were employed as guides, trappers, and boatmen. Paid in European goods, both native men and women rapidly became dependent on the tools, firearms, and alcohol proffered in trade. The traditional social structure was dramatically affected. Marriage patterns were altered, and traditional divisions of labor were strained. Some believe that polygyny, already practiced by a number of Plains tribes including the Mandan, Blackfoot, and Crow, became more widespread, with



Indian men taking additional wives in order to produce more trade-ready furs.<sup>64</sup>

The economic advantages of trade alliances effected through marriages of Indian women to white trappers and traders also significantly impacted traditional social structures. Intermarriage with Euro-Americans was viewed by members of most tribes who participated in the fur trade as the opportunity for economic as well as social gain. In Miller's painting, the encouragement exhibited by the father of the young bride in offering his daughter's hand to the trapper reflects the high regard that native families held for such unions. Not only was the Indian woman who married a trapper or trader perceived as benefiting from the relationship, but all the members of her family were seen as the fortunate beneficiaries of highly coveted European goods and trading privileges.<sup>65</sup> As Jennifer Brown notes, in Hudson's Bay Company posts, wherever the officers allowed contacts between their men and native women, the Indians were eager to fulfill the traders' wishes for female company. They saw such relationships as the opportunity to extend ties with the Europeans and thereby to further trade; consequently, they were eager to proffer their daughters as "gifts."<sup>66</sup> According to many sources, the young women were equally eager to play a role in furthering their status and the welfare of their families. These alliances also provided much-desired objects of practical use, including pots made of durable metals and various tools.<sup>67</sup> The trappers and traders benefited greatly as well; marriage to Indian women cemented trade alliances and provided valuable working partners.

#### CHARLES DEAS: ARTIST WITH "A ROCKY MOUNTAIN WAY OF GETTING ALONG"

The mutually advantageous and productive aspects of marriage between native women and Euro-American trappers and traders are represented in the work of popular nineteenth-century American painter Charles Deas. Asserting that he deserves the label "painter of the frontier," John Francis McDermott says that, in the 1840s, Deas was "probably the best known and most highly appreciated of western artists."<sup>68</sup> Deas is most widely known for his romanticized depictions of American free trappers, such as *Long Jakes*, or *Long Jakes, The Rocky Mountain Man* (1844; figure 8). Deas presents these men as national heroes who embody the



FIGURE 8. Charles Deas, Long Jakes (Long Jakes, The Rocky Mountain Man), 1844. Oil on canvas, 30" x 24-7/8". Courtesy Babcock Galleries, New York, New York.

preeminent American frontier values of independence and bravery. In *Long Jakes*, Deas draws on the European artistic convention of the equestrian portrait,<sup>69</sup> which traditionally is reserved for depictions of military heroes or heads-of-state. Glanz points out the resemblance of Deas's painting to Jacques-Louis David's *Napoleon Crossing the Alps* (1800), a painting often reproduced and widely disseminated in nineteenth-century America. Deas's de-

piction of Long Jakes elevates the trapper to the status of cultural hero.<sup>70</sup>

Born in Philadelphia in 1818, Deas began his artistic career in 1838 and continued to paint professionally until 1849, when he was institutionalized for "melancholia." His condition never improved, and he remained in an asylum until his death in 1867.<sup>71</sup> Although Deas was active for only eleven years, the works produced during the short span of his career provide valuable representations of fur trade culture and of both cooperation and conflict between Indians and Euro-Americans. Alfred Jacob Miller traveled west only once. Charles Deas, however, lived on the edge of the frontier. Using St. Louis as his home base in the 1840s, he made numerous trips into the wilderness. He first journeyed west in 1840, when he traveled to Fort Crawford at Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin, to visit his brother, Lieutenant George Deas of the Fifth Infantry.<sup>72</sup> At this time, Prairie du Chien was the locale of that contingent of fur trade commerce dominated by the French. H.T. Tuckerman, who provides one of the few sources of information on Deas's career, describes Prairie du Chien:

Prairie du Chien, at this period, was almost a French village, and the lively manners of the inhabitants, their races, and other out-door amusements, during the fine autumn weather, afforded new subjects of observation. The groups of half-breeds, Indians, and *voyageurs*, always to be found about the trading-houses and fur depots, realized all that an artist needs in the way of frontier costumes and manners.<sup>73</sup>

Another of Deas's trips was recorded in the journal of Lieutenant J. Henry Carleton. Carleton documented the locale of a number of Deas's sketches over the course of a journey from Fort Leavenworth to a Pawnee encampment on the Platte River in 1844 and reported numerous humorous anecdotes regarding the artist. Noting that the soldiers had named Deas "Rocky Mountains" because of his resemblance to a mountain man, Carleton described Deas as wearing "a broad white hat—a loose dress, and sundry traps and truck hanging about his saddle, like a fur-hunter. Besides he had a Rocky Mountain way of getting along; for, being under no military restraint, he could go where he pleased, and come back when he had a mind to."<sup>74</sup>

From his home base on the edge of the frontier, Deas undoubtedly observed the comings and goings of the French fur traders, the *voyageurs*, who navigated the upper Missouri and other West-

ern waterways. Such firsthand experience may account for the significant differences between Deas's depictions of *voyageurs* and his representations of American free trappers. His free trappers are idealized individuals who lead a solitary existence far from civilization; his *voyageurs*, on the other hand, are social beings.<sup>75</sup> They work with partners, and often these partners are their native wives. Deas's painting titled *The Voyageurs* (1845; figure 9) depicts one instance of a long-term relationship established between a white man and an Indian woman on the American frontier. In this work, Deas depicts a relationship apparently of long standing, as evidenced by the presence of children of varying ages in the family group. Such mixed-blood families as Deas portrays were common in the frontier West. They often gathered together in communities that offered acceptance of diversity. In Canada and the far West, Hudson's Bay trading posts



FIGURE 9. Charles Deas, *The Voyageurs*, 1845. Oil on canvas, 31-1/2" x 36". Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Rokeby Collection, New York, New York.

served as gathering places for such individuals.<sup>76</sup> Although it officially discouraged intermarriage of Indians and whites, the Hudson's Bay Company did much to provide an atmosphere of acceptance. Many Hudson's Bay officials were married to full- or mixed-blood Indian women and were thus sensitive to the problems that such families encountered.<sup>77</sup> Deas seems to show a similar sensitivity and attitude of acceptance, depicting miscegenation as a positive and attainable ideal.

In fact, Deas's trapper seems to have fulfilled the role of civilizer in having formed a lasting bond resulting in an economically productive relationship. The marriage partners he portrays appear to work together without adherence to an ideology that regards women as productive only within a domestic sphere. However, Deas's image can be interpreted as a not entirely positive view of such relationships. There are hints of impending doom in the scene he presents. The landscape includes a conventional European symbol of the hostile wilderness, a blasted tree stump.<sup>78</sup> The family is leaving the lush greenery on the right side of the painting for a dark, ravaged landscape on the left. They travel through water filled with snags and move into a gathering storm. Ducks that flee the storm's approach seem to indicate it would be wise to avoid its course. Inclusion of such details leads one to wonder if Deas may have been suggesting that the *voyageur* he depicts, due to lack of the countervailing civilizing influence of an Anglo wife, has reverted to a less-than-civilized state. He is, after all, leading his family into a storm, exposing them to the dangers of a hostile wilderness. Although Deas offers a representation of a Native American woman that does not conform to the norm, he seems not entirely convinced of the virtues of miscegenation.

Deas may not valorize such relationships; however, relative to Miller's representation, Deas's depiction is probably more objective and more reflective of the everyday reality of the lives of mixed-blood families engaged in the fur trade. Miller's painting, in its Orientalizing tendencies, furthers a process of differentiation between Indian women and Anglo women. Miller's native woman occupies an exotic world of atemporal custom and ritual. Positioned as irrevocably Other, she is thereby not an individual but a type. Through such a depiction, Miller reproduces culturally dominant ideologies, constructed on oppositions of male and female, Anglo and Indian, that have constrained individuals to mutually exclusive and hierarchically ordered spheres. Deas, on the other hand, seems to avoid stock types. He presents a group

of diverse individuals united by family ties. The Indian woman in Deas's *The Voyageurs* is not idealized, not romanticized, not Orientalized. She is portrayed as engaged in an economic enterprise as a working partner. Not abstracted into a type, she seems to display individual qualities, representing a real woman of the frontier. Unlike Miller, who provides us with a representation of an Indian woman that easily falls into the stereotype of the beautiful young Indian princess, Deas does not reproduce ideologies instrumental to a nineteenth-century Euro-American project of domination and expansion.

#### CONCLUSION: REPRESENTATION, IDEOLOGY, AND POWER

My approach to these images has been informed by a poststructuralist methodology. I have examined the ways in which particular artistic representations function within cultural apparatuses of power. Although I have attempted to articulate what these artworks say, what is more important (and what I am most interested in opening to discussion) is what these representations do. Art critic Craig Owens explains how representation within the poststructuralist view is regarded "not simply as a manifestation or expression of power, but as an integral part of social processes of differentiation, incorporation and rule."<sup>79</sup> According to Owens, those who employ this method of critique work "to expose the ways in which domination and subjugation are inscribed within the representational systems of the West. Representation, then, is not—nor can it be—neutral; it is an act—indeed the founding act—of power in our culture."<sup>80</sup> The artist uses the technical and pictorial devices of the medium in such a way as to present a seamlessly realistic image. The representation does not reveal the artifice that produced it. The artist thereby conveys "truth" and, further, controls the truth of the subject depicted. Through representation, the artist controls, and thereby implicitly dominates, the subject and reinforces existing cultural constraints. The poststructuralist critic/historian works to reveal the use of such devices and the functioning of such constraints within the artwork. Representation is thereby revealed as an apparatus of power.

The native woman in nineteenth-century America was in the paralyzing position of being subject to two exclusionary dis-

courses. She was constrained both by the ideology of domesticity which, in the eyes of most Euro-Americans, pertained to all women. She was, at the same time, constrained to conform to the Euro-American need for a "white man's Indian."<sup>81</sup> Euro-Americans needed Indians to appear as irrevocably Other so as to have something that, in contradistinction, would define their whiteness. Such positioning served to consolidate the Euro-Americans' presumption of cultural superiority. The native woman was expected by Anglos to conform to an ideal of domesticity that properly positioned women as civilizing influences and restricted their activities to the home. At the same time, she was constrained by a Euro-American ideology that required a savage Other who, as part of a less culturally developed race, served to establish white superiority. The Indian woman was destined to fail in the role of civilizer because she was constrained by another cultural discourse, specific not to gender but to race, that positioned her as savage. Domestic ideology, which provided nineteenth-century Euro-American women a position of power from which to operate, was denied Indian women through a racial discourse. Native women were consequently denied even the narrowly restricted, but at least existent, power base that offered Anglo women a degree of control over their own and family members' lives.

Although there are numerous depictions of native women in the work of artists such as Miller and Deas who observed fur trade culture first-hand, the presence of such women in representations of fur trade life later declines dramatically.<sup>82</sup> It seems, as art historian Susan Prendergast Schoelwer suggests, that cultural conventions for depiction of Indian women and ideological constraints on the nature of representations of such women intervened when the artists' works were not the result of direct observation. The depictions of those artists, such as Deas, who presented relatively unromanticized scenes of everyday fur trade life, show a high degree of interracial marriage and cultural blending. They show native women and other members of mixed-race families engaged in a productive economic enterprise.

Perhaps because Deas was in a position to observe the everyday realities of fur trade life, he was less prone to produce images that partook more fully of culturally dominant discourse. From a position of greater distance—a position occupied by most Euro-Americans—such discourse produced romanticized stereotypical representations like Miller's, which reproduced dominant ideology concerning both women and Native Americans. Through

Orientalist means, Miller's representations worked to produce a comfortable distance between the viewer and the subject. Miller, whose paintings enjoyed wide distribution through prints, reproduced and thus reinforced and propagated a colonialist ideology through images of the Indian woman as exotic Other. At the same time, he furthered an ideology of domesticity that represented women as properly productive only within the domestic sphere.

Deas's work, like Miller's, received wide public exposure. Deas's paintings show an attraction to the exotic aspects of life on the American frontier equal to that displayed in the works of Miller. However, Deas's representations of native women do not exhibit Orientalist tendencies. They do not present a passive, inferior Other. Orientalist art depends on positioning its subjects as irrevocably different from and culturally inferior to those who produce the representation. A highly realistic depiction is necessary to accomplish the Orientalist's goal. Through manipulation of the medium so as to hide artifice, the artist produces "truth." Orientalism depends, as well, on preclusion of the viewer's identification with the subjects of the artwork. Anything that would lead the viewer to identify with the subjects portrayed is excluded. This is why such work normally does not include westerners. Miller's trappers are acceptable subjects only because they have become so adapted to native culture that it is no longer possible to determine, according to Miller, whether they are "white or mixed-blood." Identification with these individuals is thus disrupted.

Deas's representation cannot be considered properly Orientalist, because the artist does not disrupt the viewer's identification with the subjects; he presents a family group with which Euro-Americans can identify. No polygyny or "wife-selling" is depicted. The *voyageur's* wife in Deas's painting tends her children within the quasidomestic space of the canoe, while her husband transports the family into the wilderness. Although the domestic space portrayed is unconventional, the group does conform to a Euro-American concept of the family. Deas paints the scene realistically, but he includes few authenticating details that would serve the Orientalist purpose of positioning the individuals portrayed as members of a culture untouched by Euro-American influence. We see a mix of modern Euro-American and Indian dress and paraphernalia. Unlike Miller, Deas does not present an atemporal world untouched by colonization. Also unlike Miller, Deas pre-



sents a somewhat ambiguous attitude toward the proper role of women.

The Indian wife in Deas's *The Voyageurs* does not appear to have "civilized" her husband. She seems a vital partner in an economic enterprise carried out under physically challenging and often dangerous circumstances. Calm and unconcerned with the danger threatened by an impending storm, she appears to share in the qualities of heroism with which Deas endows his male trappers. In depicting a woman, especially an Indian woman, as effective in a realm wider than the domestic, Deas violates convention. In contrast to Miller's work, which clearly perpetuates culturally dominant attitudes of the artist's time, Deas's representation serves to rupture an ideology that circumscribed the roles and delimited the actions of nineteenth-century American women.

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#### NOTES

1. A more comprehensive study of artists who represented such women would include George Catlin, Seth Eastman, Karl Bodmer, Peter Rindisbacher, Rudolph Friedrich Kurz, and Paul Kane. All of these artists can be shown to reflect, to varying degrees, culturally dominant Euro-American attitudes toward native women. However, Miller demonstrates more clearly and consistently than his contemporaries both an Orientalist intent and an attempt to conform to the dictates of a domestic ideology.

2. Several major studies of Indian women in the fur trade have served as sources for this study. Sylvia Van Kirk's *"Many Tender Ties": Women in Fur-Trade Society in Western Canada, 1670-1870* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980) and Jennifer S.H. Brown's *Strangers in Blood: Fur Trade Families in Indian Country* (Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia Press, 1980) were the most useful. Van Kirk's and Brown's accounts take as their subject the Canadian fur trade, which had its own peculiarities stemming from the slightly different interests of the trading companies, the cultural backgrounds of the traders, and the cultural context of the particular Indian tribes involved. For a

review of Van Kirk and Brown see Arthur J. Ray, "Reflections on Fur Trade Social History and Métis History in Canada," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 6:2 (1982): 91–108. Two recent studies that focus on the fur trade in the United States were also useful. These are John A. Hussey's "The Women of Fort Vancouver," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* (Fall 1991): 265–308; and John Mack Faragher's "The Custom of the Country: Cross-Cultural Marriage in the Far Western Fur Trade," in *Western Women: Their Land, Their Lives*, ed. Lillian Schlissel, Vicki L. Ruiz, and Janice Monk (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1988), 199–225. Also useful was Mary C. Wright's study of Indian women in the Pacific Northwest fur trade, "Economic Development and Native American Women in the Early Nineteenth Century," *American Quarterly* 33 (Winter 1981): 525–36. Julie Schimmel's essay "Inventing 'the Indian'" in the catalog from the 1991 *West as America* exhibition at the National Museum of American Art, Washington, DC (William H. Truettner, et al., *The West as America: Reinterpreting Images of the Frontier, 1820–1920* [Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991], 149–90); and Susan Prendergast Schoelwer's essay "The Absent Other: Women in the Land and Art of Mountain Men," in *Discovered Lands Invented Pasts: Transforming Visions of the American West*, ed. Jules David Prown et al. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992), 135–66, were also sources for this study.

3. Attitudes toward intermarriage between Anglo colonists and Indians are explored at length in several articles by David D. Smits: "'Abominable Mixture': Toward the Repudiation of Anglo-Indian Intermarriage in Seventeenth-Century Virginia," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 95: 2 (April 1987): 157–92; "'We Are Not to Grow Wild': Seventeenth-Century New England's Repudiation of Anglo-Indian Intermarriage," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 11:4 (1987): 1–32; and "'Squaw Men,' 'Half-Breeds,' and Amalgamators: Late Nineteenth-Century Anglo-American Attitudes Toward Indian-White Race-Mixing," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 15:3 (1991): 29–61. Smits contends that intermarriage among Anglos and Indians was never highly tolerated or widespread and that, at best, America's settlers displayed an attitude of ambivalence toward relationships between Euro-Americans and Indian women. In "'Abominable Mixture,'" he admits to the greater tolerance for intermarriage between Indian women and the area's early French inhabitants but cites Jaenen's study of French and Indian relations as evidence that these unions were not common, although "much illicit miscegenation" occurred (note 1, p. 157; see Cornelius J. Jaenen, *Friend or Foe: Aspects of French-Amerindian Cultural Contact in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*. [New York: Columbia University Press, 1976], pp. 161–65). He admits, as well, to the high frequency of "country" marriage among French trappers and traders; and, citing Van Kirk and Brown as sources, he says that, in the case of Hudson's Bay employees, intermarriage "sometimes became institutionalized" when the English engaged in fur trade with Indians ("'Abominable Mixture,'" note 1, p. 157). Also see James Axtell, *The Invasian Within: The Context of Cultures in Colonial North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985); Neal Salisbury, *Manitou and Providence: Indians, Europeans, and the Making of New England, 1500–1643* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982); and Charles M. Segal and David C. Stineback, *Puritans, Indians, and Manifest Destiny* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1977).

4. In "The Work of Gender in the Discourse of Discovery," *Representations* 33 (Winter 1991):1–41, Louis Montrose discusses European gendering of the

New World as feminine, describing this sexualization of its conquest, exploration, and settlement as a colonialist strategy. Annette Kolodny in *The Lay of the Land: Metaphor as Experience and History in American Life and Letters* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1975) discusses gendering of the New Land in psychoanalytic terms.

5. In "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820–1860," *American Quarterly* 18 (Summer 1966):151–74, Barbara Welter bases her conclusions on a survey of women's magazines published between the years of 1820 and 1860, gift annuals and gift books published from 1825 to 1865, religious tracts and sermons, and cookbooks published during the same period. She offers corroborating evidence in the form of women's memoirs, diaries, autobiographies, and personal papers. Welter's analysis, however, is limited to middle-class women who made their homes in the eastern United States. In *The Gentle Tamers: Women of the Old Wild West* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1958), Dee Brown contends that women carried the "cult of true womanhood" with them as they moved West, serving as equally strong civilizing forces on the frontier. In "Anglo Women and Domestic Ideology in the American West in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries" (in *Western Women: Their Land, Their Lives*, 15–34), Robert L. Griswold observes a tendency in the writings of many of those who have attempted to apply Welter's conception of true womanhood to domestic ideology on the frontier. He believes such writers misrepresent domestic ideology by treating it as a cult (the "cult of true womanhood") that rigidly circumscribed women's behavior rather than an ideology. Griswold contends that this has caused debate to focus on how closely women did or did not subscribe to the tenets of the cult. Other recent sources that discuss the degree to which the frontier experience transformed sex roles and behavioral expectations of nineteenth-century women include Sandra L. Myres, *Westering Women and the Frontier Experience, 1800–1915* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1982); Julie Roy Jeffrey, *Frontier Women: The Trans-Mississippi West, 1840–1880* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1979); and Susan Armitage and Elizabeth Jameson, eds., *The Women's West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987).

6. See Rayna Green, "The Pocahontas Perplex: The Image of Indian Women in American Culture," *Massachusetts Review* 16 (Autumn 1975), pp. 710–12.

7. Marvin C. Ross, *The West of Alfred Jacob Miller (1837) From the Notes and Water Colors in the Walters Art Gallery, With an Account of the Artist by Marvin C. Ross* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1951). Other sources of information on Alfred Jacob Miller include *Alfred Jacob Miller: Artist on the Oregon Trail* (Fort Worth, TX: Amon Carter Museum of Western Art, 1982); Dawn Glanz, *How the West Was Drawn: American Art and the Settling of the Frontier* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1982); Bernard De Voto, *Across the Wide Missouri* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1947); Peter H. Hasrick, *The Way West: Art of Frontier America* (New York: Abrams, 1977); and Ronnie C. Tyler, *American Frontier Life: Early Western Painting and Prints* (Fort Worth, TX: Amon Carter Museum, 1987).

8. In *Across the Wide Missouri* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1947), 309, Bernard De Voto notes,

There appears to be not even one day-to-day journal of the caravan trip west in 1837, and as far as the rendezvous it must be described by inference—inference from the journals that describe the rendezvous, from slender fur company records and a line or two in the

scant Stewart-Sublette correspondence, and from the notes which Miller wrote to identify and accompany his water-color sketches. These last make a frequently interesting, sometimes valuable document in Western history. There are one hundred and sixty-six notes in the manuscript that is nearest the original state. Some of these, however, have been revised in line with Miller's later reading of Ruxton and Fremont, and there is no way of knowing whether others may not have been revised in line with his reflections.

Glanz points out that, in his comments accompanying one of his watercolors (watercolor no. 110 in the Waters Collection), Miller repeats Irving's description in *Adventures of Captain Bonneville* of the rendezvous as a "saturnalia" (Washington Irving, *The Adventures of Captain Bonneville*, 1837, 144, in Glanz, *How the West Was Drawn*, 168).

9. Comments from the journals of other travelers and from trappers and traders themselves are numerous and can be found in many sources. Some of these have proved valuable in this study: James P. Beckworth, *The Life and Adventures of James P. Beckworth, as told to Thomas D. Bonner* (1856; Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1981); Henry Marie Brackenridge, "Journal of a Voyage up the River Missouri; Performed in Eighteen Hundred and Eleven," in *Early Western Travels*, ed. Reuben Gold Thwaites, column 5 (Cleveland, OH: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1904); George Catlin, *Letters and Notes on the Manners, Customs, and Conditions of the North American Indians*, 2 vols. (1844; New York: Dover Publishing, Inc., 1973); Robert Glass Cleland, *This Reckless Breed of Men; The Trappers and Fur Traders of the Southwest* (New York: Knopf, 1950); Pierre Jean De Smet, *Life, Letters and Travels of Father Pierre Jean De Smet*, 4 vols., ed. H.M. Chittenden and A. T. Richardson (New York: Francis P. Harper, 1905); Le Roy Hafen, ed., *Mountain Men and the Fur Trade of the Far West: Eighteen Biographical Sketches* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982); Duncan M'Gillivray, *Journal of Duncan M'Gillivray of the Northwest Company at Fort George on the Saskatchewan, 1794-95*, ed. Arthur S. Morton (Toronto: Macmillan Company of Canada, 1929); William T. Parker, *Personal Experiences among Our North American Indians From 1867 to 1885* (Northampton, MA: 1913); George Frederick Ruxton, *Life in the Far West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1951); Constance Lindsay Skinner, *Adventurers of Oregon: A Chronicle of the Fur Trade* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1920); Thwaites, *Early Western Travels*, vols. 21-23; and Washington Irving, *Astoria, or Anecdotes of an Enterprize Beyond the Rocky Mountains* (1836; New York: Putnam, 1895). The journals and writings of white inhabitants of U.S. Army posts and of the Anglo wives of men engaged in the fur trade have provided additional sources. See Sherry L. Smith, *The View from Officers' Row: Army Perceptions of Western Indians*. (Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 1990).

10. De Voto points out the crucial timing of Miller's visit:

Captain Stewart had seen the mountain fur trade at its climax and it was already crumbling away when he brought his artist west. A few years later would have been too late. It was already too late in 1843 when, having lately sold one of his estates for £203,000, Stewart went West for the last time and made one of the most luxurious millionaire sportsmen. But Miller got there in time—and he was the only artist who did (De Voto, *Across the Wide Missouri*, 414).

11. Stewart not only wished to have depictions of Indian life to transport back to his castle in Scotland; he also transported several Indians back to "furnish" his home. See Carol Clark, "A Romantic Painter in the American West," in *Alfred Jacob Miller: Artist on the Oregon Trail*, 51. In addition, he brought back with him Antoine Clement, the mixed-blood trapper who had accompanied him on his travels in America, to serve as his valet.

12. Tyler, 42.

13. In *Alfred Jacob Miller: Artist on the Oregon Trail*, Tyler describes Stewart as "a bored veteran of Wellington's Peninsular campaigns and of the victory at Waterloo" (p. 19).

14. See Green, *passim*; E. McClung Fleming, "The American Image As Indian Princess," *Winterthur Portfolio* 2 (1968), 74; Hugh Honour, *The European Vision of America* (Cleveland, OH: The Cleveland Museum of Art, 1975); Hugh Honour, *The New Golden Land: European Images of America from the Discoveries to the Present Time* (New York: Pantheon, 1975); Kolodny, *The Lay of the Land*; Clare Le Corbeiller, "Miss America and Her Sisters: Personifications of the Four Parts of the World," *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, n.s., 19 (1961): 209-23; and Philip Young, "The Mother of Us All: Pocahontas Reconsidered," *The Kenyon Review* 24 (Summer 1962): 391-415.

15. Quoted from Walter Raleigh's "Discovery of Guiana" (1595) in Kolodny, *The Lay of the Land*, p. 11. Kolodny's source is Richard Hakluyt, *Principal Navigations* (London, 1598), 10:430. At this time, confusion in Europe as to the geography of the New World was so great that descriptions of any portion of the New World, whether in South, Central, or North America, were interpreted as descriptive of the whole area. Thus, Raleigh's description of a virgin land, never sexually violated, applies to North America as well as to Guiana.

16. See Montrose, "The Work of Gender," 1-41; and Stephen Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

17. In *The Lay of the Land*, Annette Kolodny argues that one of the American people's oldest and most favored fantasies is a regard of the land as essentially feminine. In this fantasy, the land is experienced as "woman, the total female principle of gratification—enclosing the individual in an environment of receptivity, repose, and painless and integral satisfaction . . . a realm of nurture, abundance, and unalienated labor within which all men are truly brothers" (p.4).

18. Pocahontas is best known in stock form as savior of the white man. Intervening in what appears the imminent execution of John Smith, thus saving his life, she is an example of the Indian woman as lifegiver and protectress. See Green, *passim*; and Young, *passim*. According to Kolodny, the celebration in standard American lore of the marriage of Pocahontas and John Rolfe in 1614 resulted from its serving as "a kind of objective correlative for the possibility of Europeans' actually possessing the charms inherent in the virgin continent." The story of Pocahontas (ca. 1595-1617) was originally told in John Smith's *Generall Historie of 1624* (book 3, chapter 2). This story became a repeated theme in subsequent American literature, particularly in works from the early and mid-nineteenth century, including John Davis's 1805 novel *The First Settlers of Virginia* and plays by J.N. Barker (*The Indian Princess* or *La Belle Sauvage*, 1808), G.W.P. Custis (*Pocahontas*, 1830), and Robert Dale Owen (*Pocahontas*, 1837).

19. Leslie Fiedler, *The Return of the Vanishing American* (New York: Stein and Day, 1968), 85-86.

20. See Kolodny, *The Lay of the Land*, chapter 2, for a discussion and description of these documents of colonization.

21. Robert Johnson, *Nova Britannia, in Tracts and Other Papers, Relating Principally to the Origin, Settlement, and Progress of the Colonies in North America, From the Discovery of the Country To The Year 1776*, vol. 1, comp. Peter Force (Washington, DC: Printed by P. Force, 1836–46), 11; in Kolodny, *The Lay of the Land*, 11.

22. Turner's paper was delivered to the American Historical Association meeting in Chicago, 12 July 1893 and published in the Proceedings of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 14 December 1893.

23. *Atlantic Monthly* (January 1903). Quoted here from Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Frontier in American History* (1920; New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1950), 267.

24. Turner, "The Problem of the West" *Atlantic Monthly* (September 1896), in Turner, *The Frontier in American History*, 214.

25. Glanz, *How the West Was Drawn*, 36–41. All following references to Miller's *The Trapper's Bride* pertain to the 1850 version of the painting.

26. This is Dawn Glanz's assertion in *How the West Was Drawn*, 36–41.

27. Coyner, *The Lost Trappers*, 82, quoted in Glanz, 39.

28. Miller, *The West of Alfred Jacob Miller*, 28.

29. Miller, who studied at the École des Beaux Arts in Paris, no doubt saw Raphael's painting, if not in the original, in reproductions. He traveled to Italy during his 1833–34 European trip and may have seen *Marriage of the Virgin* at the Brera Gallery in Milan. It has not been definitely determined whether he did, in fact, view and/or copy the painting in the original, since no copies of it have been found among the work resulting from his travels. Perception of a parallel between Miller's and Raphael's painting is reinforced by the fact that Miller was known as the "American Raphael." See Glanz, *How the West Was Drawn*, 40–41 and 170–71, and Carol Clark, "A Romantic Painter in the American West," in *Alfred Jacob Miller: Artist on the Oregon Trail*, 48–49.

30. Miller, *The West of Alfred Jacob Miller*, 11.

31. Glanz, *How the West Was Drawn*, 40–41.

32. Miller, *The West of Alfred Jacob Miller*, 11. Miller does not specify the bride's tribe; instead, he simply refers to her as "Indian." The conclusion that Miller's subject is Arikara is drawn from a comparison of individual features and details of dress and ornament to those of one of Miller's previous subjects whose tribal affiliation is given. The bride's features and dress are very similar to those of the woman in watercolor number 19 of the Walter Collection (published in *The West of Alfred Jacob Miller*), which carries the title *Aricara Female* (1837). In the caption written to accompany this painting, Miller writes, "One of our men became eventually affianced to this girl." (See *The West of Alfred Jacob Miller*, 19.)

33. See Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties*, 28–52.

34. Both Van Kirk (28ff, 36–37, and 39–40) and Brown, *Strangers in Blood* (51ff) give accounts of such marriage practices. Van Kirk explains that, among Canadian tribes, the Cree, Ojibwa, and Chipewyan most extensively practiced this custom. References to marriage "à la façon du pays" are abundant in accounts of trappers, traders, and other early travelers to both the Western U.S. and Canada. See Elliot Coues, ed., *New Light on the Early History of the Greater Northwest: The Manuscript Journals of Alexander Henry and of David Thompson, 1799–1814* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1965 [reprint]), 288

and 901; Ross Cox, *The Columbia River*, ed. Edgar Stewart and Jane Stewart (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1957), 142–43 and 209; W. Kaye Lamb, ed., *Sixteen Years in the Indian Country: The Journal of Daniel Williams Harmon, 1800–1816* (Toronto: Macmillan Co. of Canada, 1957), 53; and De Voto, *Across the Wide Missouri*, 948–102 and 124.

35. In “Beasts of Burden and Menial Slaves: Nineteenth Century Observations of Northern Plains Indian Women” (In *The Hidden Half: Studies of Plains Indian Women*, ed. Patricia Albers and Bea Medicine [Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1983], 44), Katherine Weist explains, “The mutual exchange of gifts served to cement ties between kin groups and was found among most Northern Plains groups including the Blackfeet, Arapaho, and Assiniboine.” By accepting the goods offered by the groom’s family, the bride’s family indicated agreement to the marriage and, in response, offered to the groom’s family an equal or greater quantity of goods once the couple was residing together.

36. This is Susan Prendergast Schoelwer’s suggestion in Prown et al., *Discovered Lands Invented Pasts*, 135–66.

37. Tabeau reported wife-lending among the Sioux and Arikara (Pierre-Antoine Tabeau, *Tabeau’s Narrative of Loisel’s Expedition to the Upper Missouri*, ed. Addie H. Abel [Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1939], 178–79). Jennifer Brown describes this practice as common among the Cree (58ff), and Alice Kehoe and Edward Bruner describe it among the Mandan and other Northern Plains tribes. Kehoe has put forth a theory that members of Northern Plains tribes believed that power could be transferred from one man to another through sexual intercourse with a common female partner. See Alice Kehoe, “The Function of Ceremonial Sexual Intercourse among the Northern Plains Indians,” *Plains Anthropologist* 15 (1970): 100. Edward Bruner believes that practices stemming from this belief were the source of whites’ misinterpretation of the sexual behavior of the Plains tribes. See Edward Bruner, “Mandan,” in *Perspectives in American Indian Culture Change*, ed. Edward H. Spicer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), 217. Possessors of technology and new and useful commodities, the white traders may have been perceived as possessing great power; consequently, Indian wives may have been proffered in the hopes of transference of such power. Whatever the reasons for such behaviors, they were perceived as decidedly immoral and were thus indicative of cultural inferiority within a Euro-American frame of reference. For other accounts of wife-lending practices see Coues, *New Light on the Early History of the Greater Northwest*, 324, 515, and 517; Cox, *The Columbia River*, 166–67; and Lamb, *Sixteen Years in the Indian Country*, 134 and 324.

38. See Ron Tyler, “A Romantic Painter in the American West,” in *Alfred Jacob Miller: Artist on the Oregon Trail*, ed. Ron Tyler (Amon Carter Museum, 1982), 49–50.

39. See Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Random House, 1978).

40. Linda Nochlin, “The Imaginary Orient,” *Art in America* (May 1983), 119–30, 187–91.

41. Miller, *The West of Alfred Jacob Miller*, 11.

42. *Ibid.*, 11.

43. Nochlin, “The Imaginary Orient,” 125.

44. *Ibid.*, 125.

45. *Ibid.*, 122.

46. Miller, *The West of Alfred Jacob Miller*, caption facing page 167.

47. *Ibid.*, caption facing page 22.

48. Nochlin, "The Imaginary Orient," 128.
49. *Ibid.*, 126–27.
50. Said, *Orientalism*, 165.
51. Miller, *The West of Alfred Jacob Miller*, caption facing p. 89.
52. *Ibid.*, caption facing p. 136.
53. Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood," 152.
54. Griswold, "Anglo Women and Domestic Ideology," 28.
55. *Ibid.*, 21.
56. See Van Kirk, "Many Tender Ties," especially chapter 9, 201–30.
57. J.B. Tyrell, ed., *Journals of Samuel Hearne and Philip Turnor, 1774–1792* (Toronto: Champlain Society, vol. 21, 1934), quoted in Brown, *Strangers in Blood*, 65.
58. Richard Glover, ed. *David Thompson's Narrative, 1784–1812* (Toronto: Champlain Society, vol. 40, 1962), 67, in Van Kirk, "Many Tender Ties," 72.
59. Van Kirk, "Many Tender Ties," 71–73.
60. Margaret A. MacLeod, ed. *The Letters of Letitia Hargrave* (Toronto: Champlain Society, vol. 28, lii), in Van Kirk, "Many Tender Ties," 58.
61. See Van Kirk, "Many Tender Ties," 58–59.
62. Rudolph F. Kurz, *The Journal of Rudolph Frederick Kurz*, ed. J.N.B. Hewitt, (Washington, D.C., U.S. Bureau of American Ethnology, bulletin 115, 1937), 155.
63. John Mack Faragher, "The Custom of the Country: Cross-Cultural Marriage in the Far Western Fur Trade," in *Western Women: Their Land, Their Lives*, 207.
64. In "Robes, Rum, and Rifles: Indian Middlemen in the Northern Plains Fur Trade" in *Montana the Magazine of Western History* 40 (Winter 1990): 2–13, Thomas F. Schilz contends that, as they became tied into a market economy, the Blackfeet experienced a quick rise in polygyny. Since there was a high demand for trade-ready furs, and an individual hunter could supply enough furs for more than one woman to prepare, the advantages of polygyny became apparent. However, the contention that the economic forces of the fur trade caused a rise in polygyny is ultimately insupportable due to lack of reliable data. Sources that do exist rely on accounts that could most easily be characterized as hearsay, as opposed to objective reporting. Accounts of those who observed an apparent rise in polygyny among the Blackfeet are contained in Oscar Lewis's *The Effects of White Contact upon Blackfoot Culture, with Special Reference to the Role of the Fur Trade*, Monographs of the American Ethnological Society 6 (New York: J.J. Augustin Publisher, 1942), 38–39. Lewis cites genealogies gathered from informants that trace ancestry back to 1840 and show a rise in the number of wives. He relies on a number of accounts to support his contention that, with the rise of the fur trade, "polygyny grew to an extent unprecedented for the Plains" (pp. 38–39). Lewis's sources include Joseph Burr Tyrell, ed., *David Thompson's Narrative of His Explorations in Western America 1784–1812* (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1916), 347; Elliott Coues, editor, *Alexander Henry and David Thompson's New Light on the Early History of the Greater Northwest: The Manuscript Journals of Alexander Henry . . . and of David Thompson . . . 1799–1814. Exploration and Adventure Among the Indians on the Red, Saskatchewan, Missouri, and Columbia Rivers*, 3 vols. (New York: F.P. Harper, 1897), 526; George Bird Grinnell, *Blackfoot Lodge Tales; The Story of a Prairie People* (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1920), 218; and Sir Cecil Denny, *The Law Marches West*, ed. W.B. Cameron (Toronto: J.M. Dent and Sons, 1939), 51. Reporting on polygyny among the Crow, Denig states



that "about one-half the nation have a plurality of wives" (p. 156) Denig also cites Larocque who, in his journal of 1805, reports that some Crow men had as many as "8 or 11 and 12" wives, but most had two or three and some only one. See François Larocque, *Journal of Larocque from the Assiniboine to the Yellowstone 1805*, Canadian Archives Publication no. 3 (Ottawa: Canadian Archives, 1910), 156. Reporting no polygyny among the Sioux or Assiniboine, Denig says that, among the Cree, "polygyny, though not forbidden, is generally not practiced. The majority have but one wife" (p. 132) But he notes that David Thompson reported that before 1812 Plains Cree men sometimes had as many as three wives. Thompson reported that these marriages "commonly resulted from a man's taking responsibility for a dead friend's widow, sister, or daughter." (Denig, 132, note 36, citing Thompson, 93) As Edward M. Bruner explains in his study of Mandan culture, polygyny may have resulted from the sometimes two or three to one ratio of females over males in Plains tribes. (Spicer, 187-277) De Smet reported a three to one ratio of women to men among the Blackfeet. See H. M. Chittenden and A. T. Richardson, editors, *Life, Letters and Travels of Father Jean De Smet*, vol. 3 (New York: Francis P. Harper, 1905), 952. Territorial conflicts which arose between neighboring groups when one encroached on the other's territory in pursuit of game, resulting in the death of young men, may have been one factor contributing to such a high ratio of men to women. Deaths from disease brought by whites may also have contributed to this imbalance.

65. See Van Kirk, "Many Tender Ties," 78-83.

66. Brown, *Strangers in Blood*, 58ff.

67. Jacqueline Peterson speculates on reasons why Indian women may have desired white husbands. She points out a number of things that may have attracted them to such unions: "heightened material comfort and physical security, access to trade goods, and personal role expansion. Other factors—the demographic pressure caused by a possible female surplus among hunting tribes, the benefits to kin of an alliance with whites, the appeal of a more permissive sexual code, a preference for monogamous marriage, and the influence of Christianization—may have been important" (p. 52).

68. John Francis McDermott, "Charles Deas: Painter of the Frontier," *Art Quarterly* 13 (Autumn 1950): 293.

69. Glanz, *How the West Was Drawn*, 44-45.

70. Like most of Deas's work, *Long Jakes* received highly favorable reviews. In a laudatory review from *The Broadway Journal* published on the occasion of its exhibition at the American Art Union in December 1844, it was described as follows:

"Long Jake" comes to us from the outer verge of our civilization; he is a Santa Fe trader, and with his rifle in hand, his blazing red shirt, his slouched hat, long beard and coal black steed looks as wild and romantic as any of the characters in Froissart's pages, or Salvator Rosa's pictures. But "Long Jake" was not always a Santa Fe trader—there are traits of former gentleness and refinement in his countenance, and he sits upon his horse as though he were fully conscious of his picturesque appearance. The purple hills and the brown furze harmonize finely in the picture, and give it a very romantic aspect. Altogether, "Long Jake" is not a picture to be forgotten. His red shirt and his honest face will live in many a mind's eye, during the next

generation (*The Broadway Journal*, 4 January 1845, in McDermott, "Charles Deas: Painter of the Frontier," 302).

71. Deas may already have begun his decline in 1847 since, by some accounts, the artistic quality of his work suffered a pronounced diminishment at that time. Deas continued to paint while institutionalized, but his works changed dramatically and were generally dismissed as the products of a deranged mind. Tuckerman describes one of the paintings Deas produced while institutionalized. He is probably describing *A Vision*, shown at the 1849 National Academy of Design exhibition: "One of his wild pictures, representing a black sea, over which a figure hung, suspended by a ring, while from the waves a monster was springing, was so horrible, that sensitive artists fainted at the sight" (McDermott, "Charles Deas: Painter of the Frontier," 310).

72. Louis Pelzer, ed., *The Prairie Logbooks, Dragoon Campaigns to the Pawnee Villages in 1844, and to the Rocky Mountains in 1845* (Chicago: The Caxton Club, 1943), in McDermott, "Charles Deas: Painter of the Frontier," 299.

73. H.T. Tuckerman, *Book of the Artists* (New York: G.P. Putnam and Son, 1867), 424–29, in McDermott, "Charles Deas: Painter of the Frontier," 298.

74. Pelzer, *The Prairie Logbooks*, in McDermott, "Charles Deas: Painter of the Frontier," 299.

75. See Glanz, *How the West Was Drawn*, 48.

76. See Hussey, "The Women of Fort Vancouver," 265–308, for a description of life in one such community.

77. Hussey describes one such union between the head of the Hudson's Bay post at Fort Vancouver—Dr. John McLaughlin—and Marguerite McKay, the daughter of a Swiss trader and a full- or mixed-blood Cree woman.

78. See Nicolai Cikovsky, Jr., "'The Ravages of the Axe': The Meaning of the Tree Stump in Nineteenth-Century American Art," *Art Bulletin* 61 (December 1979): 611–26.

79. Craig Owens, "Representation, Appropriation, and Power," *Art in America* (May 1982), 10. The subject of Owens's study is the art of modern western European and North American culture in general and contemporary Euro-American culture specifically. Of course, his general analysis would include the art of the American West.

80. Owens, "Representation, Appropriation, and Power," 10.

81. Robert F. Berkhofer, Jr., *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present* (New York: Vintage, 1979). Berkhofer chooses to use the label *white man's Indian* because he believes it best conveys the character of Euro-American representations of the original inhabitants of North America. He explains how the label *Indian* and the visual signs and conceptual constructs conventionally attached to it, when applied to the widely diverse indigenous peoples who have occupied the Americas, conveys the colonialist intentions of its European inventors.

82. Schoelwer, "The Absent Other," 137.