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American Indian Culture and Research Journal

Title

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Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/766859tk>

Journal

American Indian Culture and Research Journal , 41(2)

ISSN

0161-6463

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Publication Date

2017-03-01

DOI

10.17953/aicrj.41.2.tahmahkera

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“We’re Gonna Capture Johnny Depp”: Making Kin with Cinematic Comanches

Dustin Tahmahkera

During our phone visit across the airwaves of la Comanchería from Austin to Albuquerque on June 7, 2013, two weeks to the day before the Comanche Nation hosted an advance screening of Disney’s and Gore Verbinski’s western *The Lone Ranger* (2013), the Comanche elder Ladonna Vita Tabbytite Harris reflected on recent deeply politicized events. In early 2012, Harris—the champion for transnational indigenous rights and star of Comanche filmmaker Julianna Brannum’s PBS documentary *LaDonna Harris: Indian 101* (2014)—had been reading about the controversial casting of Johnny Depp in the role of a Comanche Tonto in the forthcoming blockbuster reboot of the classic film and TV series.¹ She heard of critics’ suspicion and rejection of his longtime claims to Cherokee or possibly Creek ancestry, which were now amplified in response to Depp’s playing Tonto. Even some self-identifying Cherokees in Depp’s Kentucky birthplace did not support him. The skepticism of this Kentucky community is ironic, since some citizens of the federally recognized Cherokee Nation based in Tahlequah, Oklahoma, doubt the legitimacy of this group’s claims to Cherokee identity.²

In addition to these already-vexed Cherokee contexts, Harris expressed concern about the Cherokee Freedmen, who had recently been disenrolled from Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma citizenship by a referendum of Cherokee voters, in purported violation of an 1866 treaty.³ At a time of “tribes disenrolling people” and adhering to US blood-quantum standards as the primary criteria for citizenship, Harris said she “felt sorry for [Depp] because he got rejected.”⁴ As someone, she says, whose own “relatives are captives”—her great-grandfather emigrated from Spain to Mexico, where he

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was captured by her tribal sister Iola Hayden's Comanche great-grandfather—Harris empathized with Depp's search for an indigenous identity offscreen and appreciated his determination to showcase a Comanche character onscreen. So, she decided, as she audibly grinned into the phone that day, to be like "real Comanche women: we're gonna capture Johnny Depp!"⁵

Harris's phrasing seriocomically recognizes the strength and determination of traditional Comanche women. Her use of "real" suggests she positions herself in a cultural genealogy of *recognized* Comanches, or those whom Comanche Nation citizens and descendants already acknowledge as fellow Comanches, as compared to *fictive* Comanches like Depp's imagined and fictional character of Tonto. At the same time, she playfully undermines authenticity debates on what constitutes "real Comanches" in a popular discourse that often confines the "real" indigenous to the distant past. Moreover, mainstream media largely negates representational space for indigenous women and, when it does show Comanches, privileges hypermasculine warriors of the nineteenth century.

On May 16, 2012, Harris adopted Depp, thus inverting the formulaic onscreen capture of white women by Indian men in Hollywood westerns like the fictive Comanches in John Ford's *The Searchers* (1956). Harris and her "captive" also become costars of a modern-day Indian captivity narrative.⁶ In contrast to the narratives written or inspired by white female captives, however, such as Mary Rowlandson's best-selling 1682 book or former Comanche captive Rachel Plummer's 1838 account, Harris's take on the adoption represents the indigenous captor's perspective. She redirects the conversation and opens space not just for recognizing Comanche representation in a movie, but also for centering Comanche perspectives in some of the discourse about Depp's controversial role as Tonto. Ultimately, as Harris intercedes and complicates the conversations between competing camps either supporting or protesting production of *The Lone Ranger* and Depp's Tonto, she constructs an irremovable Comanche imprint on both the Comanchería and Hollywood that effectually declares, "Comanches were here. Comanches are still here."

Lone Ranger producers had decided early on to make Tonto a Comanche. Executive producer Jerry Bruckheimer explained, "It made complete sense to us geographically, historically and culturally that since the Lone Ranger is from Texas, Tonto should have been born into the great nation that had lived on those lands for generations: the Comanche."⁷ However, once Harris captured Depp offscreen, and as the film's Comanche consultants recognized and embraced Depp's Comanche-specific role, and as Comanches recognized the fictional Tonto's Comanche affiliation, tribal specificity became more significant in Indian country discourse and Tonto's Comanche-ness increasingly transcended its representation in the film's fictional 1870s Texas storyworld. "Comanches"—including Comanches and others' imagined ideas of who Comanches are (or were)—became a much bigger part of the conversation about Depp and Tonto.

This article analyzes contemporary Comanches' contributions to the indigenous identity controversy resulting from Disney's "decision to assign the role of the Indian character Tonto not to an actor unquestionably Native but to Johnny Depp."⁸ I

recognize “cinematic Comanches” like Depp’s Tonto not only as onscreen performers and characters, but also as offscreen cultural critics and social actors who, like Harris, maneuver through thorny layers of representing the indigenous.⁹ More specifically, I ask how Harris and other cinematic Comanches created opportunities to make kin with Depp, engage Disney, and expand the convoluted discourse on producing Comanche representation and cultural knowledge.

Both Harris’s decision to adopt and the adoption itself represent the Comanche tradition of performing a legacy of agency. From generation to generation, this legacy has been embodied and enacted by Comanches who construct and narrate their own histories and intervene in others’ narratives about Comanches, be they already federally recognized, celluloid or otherwise. As an elder who adopts Depp, Harris establishes a cross-cultural relationship representative of what anthropologist Mary Weismantel calls “making kin,” a process informed by indigenous cultural and familial protocol on constructing relationships not wholly dependent on biological definitions of kinship.¹⁰ For Harris, “relationship is the kinship obligation” in which “everyone/everything is related to us *as if* they were our blood relatives,” and “reciprocity is the cyclical obligation” that “is based on very long relational dynamics in which we are seen as ‘kin’ to each other.”¹¹ By rhetorically recasting the adoption as captivity, Harris invoked Comanche history and asked the public to reorient their attention toward the Comanche kin-making tradition of taking captives to repopulate and strengthen the tribe.¹² In effect, she brought Depp into what anthropologist Christina Gish Hill calls “the kinship web,” in which relationships are built on “reciprocity, and the respect inherent in it.”¹³

Harris’s traditional Comanche worldview of relationships and reciprocity form a foundation from which to conceptualize and actualize the capture of a Hollywood celebrity. Rather than suggest that Harris and certain other Comanches had simply “gone Hollywood” with Depp and Disney, I contend that Comanches made moves toward bringing Depp into Comanche ways of cultural kinship relations. By recreating a traditional mode of kinship in the twenty-first century, rather than working from biological relations or the US government-imposed blood quantum system, I suggest Harris took Depp in as a son to honor his onscreen efforts, to build and develop relationships, to express Comanche self-determination in kinship, and to increase the cultural capital of the Comanche Nation.

Before returning at length to a Comanche way of making kin, I will provide some of the backstory leading up to the adoption. First, I present an indigenous critique of Disney’s pre- and early-production hype of Depp’s Tonto in news and social media. Then I focus on the cultural politics and reception of the adoption and conclude with thoughts on post-adoption collaborative events between Comanches, Depp, and Disney. In all, I work with what media scholar Jonathan Gray calls “entryway paratexts,” the pre-film release texts that “hold considerable power to direct our initial interpretations” and that “draw many of the battle lines that surround media consumption”—in this case, of *The Lone Ranger* and its indigenous representations. As textual entities that address or relate to the main “text” (usually the actual film) under consideration, entryway paratexts (e.g., Harris’s adoption of Depp, Disney’s promotional materials,

and social media posts) become significant sites of making meaning of and assumptions about a movie and its characters long before its official release in theaters.¹⁴

RESURRECTING TONTO

To account for what trained the media spotlight on Depp's characterization of Tonto, I turn to the moment when Disney and Depp officially announced their new role. On September 24, 2008, nearly two thousand movie industry insiders and reporters crowded into the Kodak Theatre in Hollywood for the Walt Disney Studios Showcase to catch the latest news and sneak previews of forthcoming movies. Amid pomp and circumstance for their audience, Disney unveiled production plans for such films as *Princess and the Frog*, *Cars 2*, and *Toy Story 3* and screened footage of forthcoming films *Up*, *Bolt*, and *Race to Witch Mountain*. The most prominent spotlight, staged during the event's finale, belonged to Johnny Depp. Disney Chairman Dick Cook announced the "Depp trifecta" of roles, including reprising Captain Jack Sparrow in a fourth installment of *Pirates of the Caribbean* and the Mad Hatter in *Alice in Wonderland*.¹⁵ The other role for "the main man at the Mouse House" was surprising.¹⁶ As the University of Southern California marching band played the classic *Lone Ranger* theme music, Rossini's *William Tell Overture*, Depp appeared on stage dressed as Jack Sparrow with the iconic Lone Ranger mask.¹⁷

Afterward, Disney confirmed that Depp would play not the title character in the new reboot of *The Lone Ranger* but Tonto, arguably the most celebrated and condemned indigenous American character of all time. The Tonto of the mid-twentieth century is celebrated for his righteous principles, Hollywood stardom, and TV portrayal by the Mohawk actor Jay Silverheels in the 1950s, but is condemned for his sidekick subordination, pidgin English, and ideological submission to the white Lone Ranger, and, by extension, white America. Tonto was an empowering and rebellious "Uncle Tomahawk" all rolled into one character as embodied and projected by Silverheels, a highly respected Native actor in Indian country. "Although I've never met an Indian who admired Tonto," Comanche critic Paul Chaat Smith reflects, "I've also never met anyone who had an unkind word for the actor who played him on television."¹⁸ For Depp, Tonto represented a significant chapter of his childhood, during which he saw Silverheels play a character "getting the unpleasant end of the stick" in the Lone Ranger-Tonto relationship. "Why," Depp recalls asking himself, "is the f—ing Lone Ranger telling Tonto what to do?"¹⁹ Depp therefore set out to change the power dynamic by giving Tonto far more agency and wit than previously allotted in Hollywood.

The Hollywood press's initial reactions to Depp's decision to represent Tonto carried relatively little fanfare. Some reporters briefly expressed shock ("I never saw this coming," wrote one reporter), misunderstanding ("Johnny Depp is playing The Lone Ranger," said the same writer),²⁰ and borderline indifference (buried late into an article titled "Johnny Depp Is Back as Captain Jack" is the afterthought, "He'll also be Tonto in a *Lone Ranger* movie").²¹ Other news sources tidily skirted over the contentious politics of race and blood quantum in Indian country and justified the casting

decision by meshing Depp's offscreen and onscreen identities. Upon learning Depp is "going to play Tonto," one site's contributor exhaled, "I'm glad he's part Cherokee so there's more basis to this pick."²² MTV UK similarly reasoned, "Alas, Johnny won't be rocking a white cowboy hat, he's set for the role of trusty sidekick Tonto. Depp's grandmother was a full blooded Cherokee and Johnnys [sic] embraced his native American roots before in his self-directed movie *The Brave*," in which he stars as an indigenous character.²³ For a while, Depp's IMDB.com bio curiously included "some Navajo as well."²⁴ Although many consider Depp predominantly white despite the actor's self-identification as indigenous, such fleeting nods to Depp's purported indigenous ancestry affirm casting him in the role of the unequivocally indigenous Tonto.²⁵

Native media critics tended to show more insight into the politics of on- and offscreen indigeneity. Writing for the former site NativeVue.com, Carol Levine questioned, as many Natives did, why someone "from the flourishing crop of talented Native actors" was not cast (Cree actor Adam Beach, for example, expressed strong interest in the role), but then responded by collapsing multicultural talent and blood: "Yet, let's be honest, there isn't an actor of any ethnic background who could add the *savoir faire* to the patently uncool Tonto that Depp can. And lest we forget, he is of Native blood and has always proudly acknowledged this."²⁶ For the Caddo critic Michael Sheyahshe, casting Tonto requires more than "Native blood." Citing the IMDB biographical references to Cherokees and Navajos, Sheyahshe respectfully complicates the conversation with a pointed but rarely asked series of inquiries to actors claiming indigeneity: "While [I] do not dispute his ethnicity [including indigenous ancestry] in any way, I must question whether [Depp] is actually a part of these Native communities. Was he raised near one of the tribal communities . . .? Did he have relatives that demonstrated specific Indigenous culture to him? Has he taken part in . . . tribal communities, either socially, culturally, or ceremonially?"²⁷ Rather than shut down the debate about Depp's claims to Native ancestry, Sheyahshe expands it into a tribal-specific and, generously, a pan-Native realm. In all, the early reports from news outlets offer a sneak preview into the emergent voluminous discourse surrounding the film, including the subsequent unsettling and simplistic approval of the casting for some (generically framed as "Johnny Depp says he has Indian blood, end of story"), and disapproval for others ("Johnny Depp is not of Indian people, end of story").

#THELONETONTO

During Disney's paratextual hype of *The Lone Ranger*—beginning with announcing the film in 2008, to the film's trailers in 2012 and 2013, to its premiere in summer 2013—a new precedent may have been set in terms of the volume of indigenous critique concerning a film. Before the days of Twitter and Facebook, Kevin Costner's *Dances with Wolves* Lakotas in 1990 and Michael Mann's vanishing Mohicans in 1992 garnered considerable indigenous praise and ire. Now, along with Stephanie Meyers' topless *Twilight* wolf pack in 2008, and James Cameron's 10-foot-tall blue Na'vis in the 2009 *Avatar*, Verbinski's and Depp's representation of Tonto would soon captivate and repulse Native peoples on social media.

After the initial surprise at Depp's casting as Tonto faded, social media chatter concerning the character's representational indigeneity was relatively quiet until four years later, when a lone production photo began to circulate. On March 8, 2012, executive producer Jerry Bruckheimer tweeted the first publicity pic of Depp as Tonto on location in Albuquerque—where he would become a Comanche captive just two months later. The photo ignited a major firestorm of critiques and confusion in Indian country. In contrast to previous thinly headbanded, heavily buckskinned Tontos, Depp sported a crow headdress atop a broad southwest-style headband and white face paint with black horizontal stripes. "This isn't going to be your grandfather's Lone Ranger and Tonto," Bruckheimer tweeted the day before.²⁸ A month later, Depp publicly confirmed in an *Entertainment Weekly* exclusive what some critics had already suspected about his character's visual inspiration: "I'd actually seen a painting by an artist named Kirby Sattler, and looked at the face of this warrior and thought: 'That's it.'" In Sattler's painting, called *I Am Crow*, Depp knew the bird flew behind the Native figure's head, but the actor decided, "Tonto's got a bird on his head. It's his spirit guide in a way."²⁹

Right after Bruckheimer's tweet came news headlines like "Johnny Depp as Tonto: How Racist Is That?" and "Stunned by Tonto: A New and Improved Version?"³⁰ Twitter raged with the spreadable power of hashtags.³¹ Facebook feeds overflowed. "Android phones lit up across Turtle Island," wrote Paul Chaat Smith, "as we stared at the glowing screens and prepared to render judgment."³² Across the Comanchería and social media, my tribe, my relatives, and my friends agreed, disagreed, and agreed to disagree and all the standpoints in-between about the new Tonto. In sum, the discourse swirled into an ambivalent ebb and flow of expressed excitement and outrage, delight and disgust, and curiosity and disinterest that practically came from, to quote A Tribe Called Red and Das Racist song, "Indians in all directions."

Retweeted more than 700 times, "filtered to over 1.6 million web pages," and reprinted in countless publications and social media posts, Bruckheimer's pic drew swift reactions.³³ Upon seeing the photo, Lakota journalist Dana Lone Hill claimed, "There was going to be a stir—an uprising, perhaps—among the American Indian community's social networks."³⁴ Cherokee critic Adrienne Keene called it a "horrific image" in her blog post "Johnny Depp as Cultural Appropriation Jack Sparrow . . . I mean Tonto."³⁵ "That bird," Navajo writer Natanya Ann Pulley wrote in her "Open Letter to Johnny Depp," "might pluck your eyes out, man. The moment it hit my Facebook newsfeed the updates from my friends went nutso [*sic*]."³⁶ "This is what we thought in rapid succession," Paul Chaat Smith recounted: "outrageous, shocking, wait, is that a bird?, and okay, pretty fabulous."³⁷ *Indian Country Today* writer Ray Cook (Mohawk) countered by calling the "Tontomania" clamor a waste of time in his divisive and dismissive argument that media representations do not matter in comparison to more pressing issues like health care and poverty.³⁸ A year later, filmmaker Chris Eyre (Cheyenne-Arapaho) similarly reflected on the Tonto "debate" in Indian country as a "ridiculous use of our time" since, he contended, *The Lone Ranger* is "just entertainment."³⁹

Discourse about Depp's Tonto on Twitter and other sites, and, as I will discuss, Comanche-centered events with Depp, challenged Cook's dismissal and Eyre's

frustration with cinematic conversations in Indian country. *Lone Ranger* discussions had the potential “to advance the conversation” on the current state of indigenous portrayals.⁴⁰ Recognizing the remake of a Hollywood film and TV franchise known for historically marginalizing Natives, numerous critics perceived a continuation of Disney’s problematic history with Indian representations, such as in Clyde Geronimi’s *Peter Pan* (1953) and Mike Gabriel and Eric Goldberg’s *Pocahontas* (1995).⁴¹ Critics also called attention to Disney’s casting yet another actor not readily recognized by most as undeniably Native to play an undeniably Native costarring role. Critics cognizant of the history of performing indigeneity in the United States accused the production of appropriation and redface in casting Depp—despite reports he may be, however remotely, Native—and on allowing the bird headpiece.

In accordance with Hollywood’s historically loose, racialized standards for passing as Indian, Disney had green-lighted Depp’s decision to play Tonto after learning he would not play the white title character. The corporate approval joined a representational economy of examples, such as Chuck Connors’ title character in Arnold Laven’s *Geronimo* (1962), Taylor Lautner’s Jacob Black in Catherine Hardwicke’s *The Twilight Saga* (2008–2012), Charles Bronson’s Harry Starr, a Comanche, in the *Bonanza* episode “Underdog” (December 13, 1964), and, for double the fun, William Shatner as twin Comanche-Anglo brothers in Razzie recipient José Briz Méndez’s *White Comanche* (1968). Other examples include white characters “gone Native” like star and director Kevin Costner’s Lakota character in *Dances with Wolves* (1990), Daniel Day-Lewis’s Hawkeye in Michael Mann’s *The Last of the Mohicans* (1992), and Sam Worthington’s Jake Sully in James Cameron’s *Avatar* (2009).

COMANCHES RECASTING COMANCHES IN THE AMERICAN IMAGINARY

Two months after Bruckheimer’s lone Tonto tweet traveled the world’s electronic networks came news about a lone Comanche, who once likened herself to the masked Lone Ranger for bringing social and political justice to Indian country, and prompting US politicians to ask, “Who was that woman?”⁴² Set to “capture” Johnny Depp in spring 2012, LaDonna Harris arrived from Albuquerque to the nearby *Lone Ranger* set in Puerco Valley. Through William Voelker and Troy, the on-set Comanche consultants for *The Lone Ranger*, she had reached out to Depp who, in turn, invited her to visit the set. After conversing with the actor, Harris reciprocated by inviting him to her home, where she captured and adopted Depp into her maternal Comanche family at a private traditional ceremony attended by her daughter Laura and staff from their nonprofit organization Americans for Indian Opportunity (AIO). “I reached out,” Harris recalls, “and Johnny was very receptive to the idea.”⁴³

Voelker and Troy led the adoption ceremony and gave Depp the name Mah woo meh, a fitting name from the Namu tekwapuha, or Comanche language, for the actor to embody and represent the rest of his days, both onscreen and off. One English translation of Depp’s name is “He can change.”⁴⁴ As Depp’s new Comanche *pia* Harris, or “mother,” also explained, Mah woo meh can mean “shape shifter,” which evokes the actor’s ability to “change into all of these entities,” including his shift to a Comanche

character in *The Lone Ranger*, which at the time of the adoption was still in production.⁴⁵ To determine Depp's real-life Comanche name, Voelker and Troy worked at the cultural confluences of onscreen and offscreen realities, as Comanches by performing a traditional naming ceremony, and, as film consultants, by carrying forth a tradition of producing cinematic Comanches for the camera. The name suggests recognition of Depp's onscreen performances in more than fifty feature films, from his onscreen debut as one of Freddie Kruger's victims in Wes Craven's *Nightmare on Elm Street* (1984) to his breakthrough title role in Tim Burton's *Edward Scissorhands* (1990), his recurring Captain Jack Sparrow in Verbinski's *Pirates of the Caribbean* franchise (2003–present), the Mad Hatter in Tim Burton's *Alice in Wonderland* (2010), and, more recently, Tonto. They also reconfigured and reclaimed a name often popularly relegated to fictive stories in Hollywood—shape shifter—like writer Tony Hillerman's and director Chris Eyré's shapeshifting Navajo witches in *Skinwalkers* (2002) and writer Stephanie Meyers's and director Catherine Hardwicke's shapeshifting wolf pack in *Twilight* (2008).

Harris and many other Comanches (though certainly not all) embraced the actor as a new relative and respected his new name as recognition of the actor's *puha*—a Comanche term for “medicine,” or personal strength—in entertaining the masses. Following Comanche tradition of expressing gratitude, Harris provided gifts to her new son who, in turn, gave them to attendees at the ceremony, including AIO employees and Comanche artist Nocona Burgess, whom Depp once called “a wizard with a paintbrush.”⁴⁶ Depp deemed his own new name “quite apt” and felt “great pride in that choice.” “[The adoption] was an honor beyond all honors,” Depp said afterward.⁴⁷ The actor and father of two compared the “ceremony itself” to “something [almost] as intense as the birth of my kids.”⁴⁸

Among those attending was the late Johnny Wauqua, chairman of the Comanche Nation at the time, who read the following proclamation:

Whereas the tradition of sovereignty of the Numunu [Comanche People] since time immemorial long predates the existence of the United States; and whereas the historic Numunu practice of taking captives is a long standing and vital tradition of the Numunu; and whereas Numu Wiape [Comanche woman] LaDonna Harris on behalf of her Tabbytite family has called forward a man of extraordinary talent and Tubitsi Puha [True Medicine] of unique entertainment spirit who has enriched millions of people through the world, I, Johnny Wauqua, Chairman of the Comanche Nation do hereby call forward Mr. Johnny Depp, here and after known by the Numunuu as 'Mah woo meh' taken this day as a ceremonial member of the Tabbytite/Harris family and do further call upon Mah woo meh, also known as Johnny Depp, to serve as the Goodwill Ambassador of the Comanche Nation (Schonchin).⁴⁹

Embedded within Comanche nationalist and familial discourses of sovereignty, captivity, medicine, and kinship responsibilities, Wauqua's wording illustrated the propensity for Comanches' critical-creative meshing of the onscreen and offscreen realms, as well as the historical and modern contexts.

As critics and proponents in Indian country and the United States added to the hype surrounding Depp-as-Tonto, Harris calmly entered the fray and through, as Wauqua says, “the historic Numunu practice of taking captives,” complicated matters by adopting Depp as her son and thereby blurring the identity politics of indigeneity and the tribal-specific politics of performance. An astute offscreen actor, Harris acted neither to legitimate the actor’s ancestral claims as “Cherokee or maybe Creek” (to quote Depp from a 2011 interview), nor to appease or anger critics whose arguments and counterarguments regarding Depp’s Tonto portrayal hinge on his ancestry and appearance.⁵⁰ Instead, she captured him in expressive agreement with a tribal legacy of agency that is in contrast to misleading media reports that either omitted the names of those who decided, or stated that Disney planned the adoption.

The adoption also entailed acts of teasing and humor that are not meant to detract from the seriousness of ceremony. When asked to account for why she adopted Depp, Harris responded with a line that humorously resonates with the importance of indigenous representation. Harris said with a grin, “We made him a Comanche so he’d act like one.”⁵¹ A classic line from a classly Comanche, it represents how acting is not confined just to cinema and the arts. In everyday vernacular, Americans say things like, “Act right,” “Act your age,” “Don’t act up,” and “Get your act together”—all said with jurisdictional convictions of what constitutes (in)correct behavior. But Harris’s line, including the analogous word “like,” bridges the offscreen and onscreen in a way that destabilizes static definitions of acting in a role as *only* onscreen, and acting Comanche as *only* having one offscreen way of being. In the documentary *LaDonna Harris: Indian 101*, she says absolute truth is nonexistent “in the Comanche philosophy because everybody was an individual. But people can’t understand how you can be an individual and be collective at the same time.”⁵²

For those who still couldn’t understand why she adopted Depp, Harris counters, “Why not adopt him?”⁵³ That concise comeback represents a form of resistance from Natives who are repeatedly asked to explain actions deemed outside of popular expectations of performing Indianness. She confounds those trying to reconcile romanticized Comanches of the past with modern-day Comanches and their eclectic communicative and performative sovereignties. Replacing the “why” with “why not,” Harris performs agency by asking listeners to understand the adoption as a continuance of Comanche tradition, foreclosing their desire to unfairly question the sovereign right of Comanche self-determination over who can be accepted into one’s family.

Harris’s decision to capture a global celebrity like Depp in the twenty-first century harkens back to the sociopolitical savvy, agency, and creativity that sustained Comanches as a borderlands superpower built on a multitude of practices including taking captives, Harris’s ancestors among them. For Harris, “Welcoming Johnny into the family in the traditional way was so fitting. He’s a very thoughtful human being and throughout his life and career, he has exhibited traits that are aligned with the values and worldview that Indigenous Peoples share.”⁵⁴ In these days of always-connected, always-on digital media, when sounds and images and ideas are incessantly produced and disseminated, Harris both stays current in the media climate and recognizes what it means to be culturally and politically astute by continuing the old Comanche

tradition of capturing and adopting non-Comanches. At a time when some tribes disenroll their citizens and cling to scientific fictions of blood quantum as the sole citizenship criteria for Comanches and other nations, she calls for circling back to older ways of understanding Comanche kinship responsibilities while creating new opportunities for a future of respectful interdependence.

News media hyped the private ceremony and communicated surprise, if not shock waves, across Indian country, the United States, and the world. To cinematic Comanches, however, Comanche relationships with Hollywood celebrity were nothing new. Closely corresponding to Harris's adoption of Depp, the late Baldwin Parker, grandson of famous Comanche leader Quanah Parker, adopted soap opera star Maree Cheatham (*Days of Our Lives* and *General Hospital*) in the early 1980s. Having "dreamed as a child of being carried away by an Indian," Cheatham was honored to be brought into the Parker family for her portrayal of Baldwin's great-grandmother Cynthia Ann Parker, Quanah's white captive mother, in a Parker family pageant written by the late Vincent Parker—who, incidentally, also went to Hollywood to make a feature film about his great-grandfather Quanah.⁵⁵

Onscreen, Quanah Parker and his children White and Wanada entertained audiences on the big screen in the early 1900s. Quanah costarred in William Tilghman's silent film *The Bank Robbery* (1908), White starred in Frank Wright's *Sign of the Smoke* (1915), and White and Wanada costarred in Norbert Myles's *Daughter of Dawn* (1920).⁵⁶ In addition, numerous film and TV productions, including Tsui Hark's *Once Upon a Time in China V* and Chuck Norris's *Walker, Texas Ranger* (1993–2001), invited my uncle, the late Monroe Tahmahkera, great-grandson of Quanah, to appear onscreen. Comanches have long worked behind the scenes, too. For example, *Lone Ranger* consultants Voelker and Troy served as Comanche advisers for the CBS TV miniseries *Comanche Moon* (2008), which costars Wes Studi and Adam Beach as Comanches. The Comanche and Blackfeet artist and producer Jhane Myers was the cultural adviser and dialect coach for Martin Sensmeier (Tlingit) and Denzel Washington on their Comanche lines in Antoine Fuqua's *The Magnificent Seven* (2016), and the Comanche artist and educator Juanita Pahdopony is cultural adviser in the new AMC series *The Son* (2017–present). Offscreen, elected officials of the Comanche Nation have hosted actors Gil Birmingham (*The Lone Ranger*, *Twilight*, *Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt*) and Rudy Youngblood (*Apocalypto*), both reportedly of Comanche ancestry. The Nation's invitations extended to other Native actors, too, like Irene Bedard (*Pocahantas*, *Smoke Signals*), Gary Farmer (*Dead Man*, *Smoke Signals*), Chaske Spencer (*Twilight*, *Winter in the Blood*), and Adam Beach (*Dance Me Outside*, *Flags of Our Fathers*) and non-Natives Mel Gibson (director of *Apocalypto*), Chuck Norris (*Walker, Texas Ranger*), and Dolph Lundgren (*Robocop*).

Despite Comanches' cinematic and televisual history, Harris's decision to privately adopt Depp in her home became another source of public controversy, conflict, and confusion over how family, tribe, and Hollywood claim to represent themselves and indigeneity. Reactions varied, to say the least. Many recognized Harris as an undisputed elder and longtime champion for indigenous rights who enacted her sovereign right to capture. Choctaw author and filmmaker LeAnne Howe aptly deems it "a

case where art becomes life. Depp plays Comanche and is then adopted by respected Comanche elder LaDonna Harris.⁵⁷ Comanche filmmaker Julianna Brannum calls Harris's adoption of Depp "strategic and brilliant" for bringing increased recognition to Comanches and indigenous initiatives.⁵⁸

For some, there was no gripe with Harris, but rather a concern that her actions excused Depp from critique and legitimated his controversial casting as Tonto. As Adrienne Keene says of the adoption, "It's really complicated for me" because Harris is "very well respected in Indian country. But my reaction is mixed, because I feel like others will say the adoption excuses Johnny from any sort of criticism for his portrayal of Tonto."⁵⁹ For example, if Comanches like Harris and Wauqua embrace Depp in his Comanche role, the logic goes, then who are non-Comanches to say otherwise? Yet for some Comanches, the Harris-Depp relationship was not enough to fully excuse Depp. In his op-ed for the *Wichita Eagle* newspaper in Kansas, Comanche filmmaker Rod Pocowatchit thinks it is "cool to say that Depp is now one of my tribal brothers," but adds that Comanches and others should protest Depp being cast as Tonto and that "an unknown native [should] have the part."⁶⁰ Disney, however, would likely have never green-lighted *The Lone Ranger* blockbuster without Depp as a principal actor, executive producer, and proven box office draw.

Other indigenous critics lambasted Harris and chalked up the adoption to a publicity stunt. Right after the adoption, the Blackfeet author and musician Gyasi Ross wrote, "Johnny Depp has never done anything for Native people and was adopted 100% on the basis of his celebrity status. . . . We need to stop being groupies and start having some standards about our Nations."⁶¹ Over a year later, perhaps wanting to finally shut down the conversation, the Rosebud Sioux citizen Sonny Skyhawk called it "a farce and a photo opportunity for LaDonna Harris and nothing more." In the same article, in which Skyhawk discusses Depp as Tonto, Mexican-American actor Lou Diamond Phillips' Cheyenne character on the Netflix series *Longmire* (2012–present), and Puerto Rican actor Benicio del Toro's Blackfoot title character in Arnaud Desplechin's feature film *Jimmy P: Psychotherapy of a Plains Indian* (2013), he turns to the colonized criteria of Indian blood quantum for authenticating indigeneity and Native cinematic roles. He cites Del Toro as perhaps "the only one of the three that has indigenous blood. Just sayin'."⁶² Founder of the advocacy organization American Indians in Film & Television, Skyhawk fails to consider the significance of the adoption to Depp and many Comanches. Nor does he, like Ross and Cook, see larger, long-term possibilities for Comanches and other Native peoples inspired by Harris's actions.

Observing the battle lines of praise and protest over the captivity, Comanche filmmaker Jason Asenap calls for a moment of culturally reflective pause in his op-ed "In Defense of Comanches": "Let's all of us, in Indian Country, take one big collective deep breath now." More pointedly, he calls for non-Comanche "naysayers" unfamiliar with Comanche history to recognize the tribe's "long history of taking captives and making them Comanche." Citing the whiteness and Indianness of Comanche celebrity Quanah Parker, Asenap adds, with tongue in cheek, "when cavalry soldiers were being chased by Quanah they didn't stop and ask for his Certificate degree of Indian Blood" to prove he is Comanche.⁶³

For Asenap, the captivity of Depp “is a grand opportunity for Indian Country to build bridges of communication.” Depp “gets an opportunity to learn about a tribe who accepts him and his goodwill and heart,” and the Comanche Nation “gets to have a say, albeit a small one, in how they can be portrayed in the future by having opened this line of communication.” Following Harris’s commitment to making kin, Asenap says, “I welcome the notion that Depp will now keep in mind his new Comanche family.” In his call for respecting Comanches’ communicative sovereignty in relation to the representational politics of Comanche and indigenous portrayals in film, Asenap suggests that Harris’s act of adoption may mark not simply a case of Comanches gone Hollywood, but rather “the beginning of a beautiful friendship and dialogue” in Indian country.⁶⁴

POST-CAPTIVITY

Both relationships and communications continued to develop in a subsequent series of pre-film release interactions between Comanches and Depp, all of which were set into motion by the actor’s commitment to his Comanche-specific character, Voelker and Troy’s consulting work on *The Lone Ranger*, and Harris’s captivity of Depp. The first major event occurred four months after the adoption and nearly four years to the day after Disney announced Depp would play Tonto. On September 29, 2012, the tribe hosted Depp at the twenty-first annual Comanche Nation Fair at its tribal complex just outside of Lawton, Oklahoma. Comanche Nation Chairman Wallace Coffey, who calls Harris his sister, recalls Depp asking him, “Ah-tah [Comanche for “uncle”], will you not advertise it?” I said, “Word of mouth?” He said, “Word of mouth.”⁶⁵ News traveled quickly among Comanches, who showed up in droves to the parade, though such attendance is common each year. The actor served as grand marshal at the fair’s annual morning parade. Seated next to Harris in a new convertible Chevy Camaro on a very rainy day, Depp waved to hundreds of onlookers with one hand and held an umbrella over his adoptive mother with the other. Then upon Depp’s request, he visited with Comanche youth and their parents for a two-hour question-and-answer and autograph session. Young Comanches asked questions like “Why are you so sexy?” and “Will you come back to visit?” To the latter, he replied, “Of course.” Depp also encouraged the youth to work hard and embrace their ancestral “warrior spirit” to achieve their dreams. As Dana Attocknie (Comanche) reports in closing, “Depp made time to shake hands, take pictures and lift up little kids to take pictures after he spoke.”⁶⁶

Led by Harris throughout the day—“He didn’t go anywhere without LaDonna. He loves LaDonna,” observed Asa Attocknie (Comanche)—Depp had lunch at Sia, an eagle aviary and feather repository operated by *Lone Ranger* consultants Voelker and Troy; visited historical Comanche leaders Quanah Parker’s and Ten Bears’ gravesites; met Fort Sill’s commanding general; and exchanged gifts with Coffey and Harris.⁶⁷ As part of his acceptance into Harris’s family, Depp received traditional Comanche clothes from Coffey. As Depp’s uncle in a Comanche web of kinship, Coffey explains, “I completed that cycle of adoption by putting [Comanche] clothes on him . . . that identify him as being part of a Comanche family.”⁶⁸ In return, Depp gifted his own

painting of Quanah Parker. In all, the actor stayed “focused on Comanches” the entire time, Julianna Brannum attests. He “never once took out his phone” as she, Harris, and others hosted their new relative.⁶⁹

Over the next several months, more hype and protest of *The Lone Ranger* unfolded. The first trailer debuted on October 3 during the week after Depp’s Comanche Nation Fair visit. Subsequent trailers premiered in December 2012 and April and May 2013. In April 2013, Depp delivered “greetings and salutations” in a prerecorded message to attendees at the thirtieth annual Gathering of Nations powwow in Albuquerque. Seated in a room adorned with lit candles, guitars, and Alice Cooper memorabilia, and wearing a jacket embroidered with the name “Mah-Woo-Meh,” he spoke of his new relatives: “I received so much in being adopted by the Comanche Nation under the guidance of my amazing Comanche pia, the beautiful LaDonna Vita Tabbytite Harris, and, of course, the late chairman Johnny Wauqua. It is also an honor unlike any I’ve ever known to spend time with the new chairman Wallace Coffey, the brilliant William Voelker and, of course, Troy from SIA.”⁷⁰

In May, Disney collaborated with the American Indian College Fund (AICF) to sell tickets at \$1,000 each to an advance screening of *The Lone Ranger* in Anaheim, California, with all of the revenues going to support indigenous students. AICF President Cheryl Crazy Bull said her organization was “pleased to be the beneficiary of this event because our scholarships are an investment in a healthier, more prosperous future for tribal students and their families.”⁷¹ Reactions to Disney’s community outreach efforts ranged from viewing it as genuine goodwill to deeming it shameless self-promotion for trying to boost box office numbers.

Depp returned to Lawton on the summer solstice of June 21, 2013, for an advance screening of *The Lone Ranger* the day before the Anaheim showing. After months of planning, the Comanche Nation—mainly its elected officials of the Comanche Business Council and Director of Special Projects Donna Wahnee—attracted Hollywood celebrities, indigenous dignitaries, and a global media spotlight on the longest day of the year. The Comanche Nation hosted a luncheon at the Best Western Hotel, located next to the Comanche Nation Casino and Comanche Nation Tourism Center. Coffey emceed the occasion, with speeches by professional boxer George “Comanche Boy” Tahdoahnippah, lieutenant governor of the Chickasaw Nation and then-president of the National Council of American Indians, Jefferson Keel, Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly, Disney executives, and others.

Later, limousines arrived to the hotel en route to Carmike Cinemas, carrying Coffey, Harris, Depp, *Lone Ranger* producers Jerry Bruckheimer and Gore Verbinski, and indigenous actors Saginaw Grant (Sac and Fox) and Gil Birmingham (Comanche). In nearly triple-digit temperatures, they walked the red carpet to the theater’s front doors as Comanche drum group Wild Band of Comanches, one of the most recognized drums in North America, sang songs for the large crowd and to honor Depp, whom they called their “Numu pavii,” or Comanche brother. Harris and Depp walked arm in arm a few steps behind Coffey and his wife Debra and ahead of *The Lone Ranger* entourage. Then Depp stayed outside for nearly two hours visiting with fans and fielding questions from reporters. “It really does feel like home after being

here last year," he reflected at the premiere. "It's good to be back. The Comanche people really welcomed me into their nation."⁷² Finally, he joined Coffey and his *Lone Ranger* colleagues inside the theatre, where he reciprocated by welcoming hundreds of Comanche attendees to the premiere in each of the screening rooms.

From the luncheon to the premiere, Comanches ran the show that day. Through a Comanche-hosted advance screening of a movie starring a Comanche character portrayed by a Comanche captive, Comanches curated the day's festivities. "It took a lot of work for us," Coffey said of the tribe's offscreen efforts to showcase the onscreen, "just to convince Disney that this needs to be done, that Indian Country needs to be given consideration to a special screening, not just the fact that it's a *Lone Ranger* movie but that it has a Comanche presence."⁷³ As one reporter in attendance concluded, the premiere "[capped] off a significant chapter for the Comanche Nation, which lent a lot of information and technical support for the making of *The Lone Ranger*."⁷⁴

Depp's visits to Oklahoma would likely not have happened without LaDonna Harris's captivity of the actor—without her making kin with a cinematic Comanche. Like the legacy of agency performed by Quanah Parker and other Comanche leaders before her, Harris carries on the long-standing tradition of engaging pop culture and Hollywood celebrity. With every captivity by Harris and other twenty-first-century Comanches' contributions to cinematic discourse and performance, the descendants of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-centuries' Comanche empire strike back against colonial forces that wished the indigenous to be vanished and destroyed. Today's Comanches, descended from a borderlands superpower, go beyond just cultural survival and preservation to creatively and fluidly continue the art of making kin.⁷⁵ Recognizing the ancestral agency of her people as a borderlands superpower, Harris sends forth a critical and creative message to all: if one uses the Comanche name, then expect Comanches to confront, critique, celebrate, or otherwise engage them. In short, expect Comanches to take notice—and sometimes, even captives.

Acknowledgments

My thanks to the *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* editorial board and staff, including Pamela Grieman and Judith DeTar. My thanks also to the three anonymous peer reviewers and to my University of Texas at Austin colleagues James Cox, Pauline Strong, Circe Sturm, and Anthony Webster for their feedback and conversations about this research. *Urahkoki*/special thanks to LaDonna Harris for all her support. Thanks to audiences at the Center for Greater Southwestern Studies at the University of Texas at Arlington and the Native American and Indigenous Studies Association meeting, where I shared earlier versions of this work.

NOTES

1. For more on Harris's work, see LaDonna Harris and Henrietta Stockel, ed., *LaDonna Harris: A Comanche Life* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000); LaDonna Harris and Jacqueline Wasilewski, "Indigeneity, an Alternative Worldview: Four R's (Relationship, Responsibility, Reciprocity, Redistribution) vs. Two P's (Power and Profit), Sharing the Journey Towards Conscious Evolution," *Systems Research and Behavioral Science* 21, no. 5 (2004): 489–503, <https://doi.org/10.1002/sres.631>; LaDonna Harris, Stephen M. Sachs, and Benjamin J. Broome, "Wisdom of the People: Potential and Pitfalls in Efforts by the Comanches to Recreate Traditional Ways of Building Consensus," *American Indian Quarterly* 25, no. 1 (2001): 114–134, <https://doi.org/10.1353/aiq.2001.0005>; and Amanda J. Cobb, "Powerful Medicine: The Rhetoric of Comanche Activist LaDonna Harris," *Studies in American Indian Literatures* 18, no. 4 (2006): 63–87, <https://doi.org/10.1353/ail.2007.0002>.

2. See, for example, a Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma citizen's blog, which lists four Kentucky-based groups she considers to be fraudulent. Thoughts from Polly's Granddaughter blog, "Fraudulent 'Cherokee' Organizations," September 16, 2009, <http://www.pollysgranddaughter.com/2009/09/fraudulent-choerokee-organizations.html>. See also NewAgeFraud.org, "Two Would Be Cherokee Tribes in Kentucky," October 4, 2005, <http://www.newagefraud.org/smf/index.php?topic=430.0>.

3. The Cherokee Freedmen includes the emancipated black slaves of Cherokees and their descendants. See Circe Sturm, "Race, Sovereignty, and Civil Rights: Understanding the Cherokee Freedmen Controversy," *Cultural Anthropology* 29, no. 3 (2014): 575–598, <https://doi.org/10.14506/ca29.3.07>.

4. Harris, Interview with author, June 7, 2013. On Harris's great grandfather, see Harris and Wasilewski, "Indigeneity, an Alternative Worldview." On disenrollment, see, for example, Sturm, "Race, Sovereignty, and Civil Rights" and "Disenrollment Affects Picayune Rancheria Leadership Fight," *Indianz.com*, February 27, 2012, <https://indianz.com/News/2012/004728.asp>.

5. *Ibid.*

6. On the genre of Indian captivity narratives, see Kathryn Derounian-Stodola, ed., *Women's Indian Captivity Narratives* (NY: Penguin, 1998); Pauline Strong, *Captive Selves, Captivating Others: The Politics and Poetics of Colonial American Captivity Narratives* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2000).

7. Jerry Bruckheimer, qtd. in Michael Singer, *The Lone Ranger: Behind the Mask: On the Trail of an Outlaw Epic* (San Rafael, CA: Insight Editions, 2013), 134.

8. Chadwick Allen, "Tonto as Taxidermy," *Native American and Indigenous Studies*, 1 no. 1 (Spring 2014): 100, <https://doi.org/10.5749/natiindistudj.1.1.0099>.

9. The Lone Ranger joins the representational resurgence of screening and writing "Comanches" into the post-9/11 American imaginary, such as in recent books by Pekka Hämäläinen, *Comanche Empire* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008); S. C. Gwynne, *Empire of the Summer Moon: Quanah Parker and the Rise and Fall of the Comanches, the Most Powerful Indian Tribe in American History* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2010); Glenn Frankel, *The Searchers: The Making of an American Legend* (Bloomsbury, 2013); Phillip Meyer, *The Son* (New York: HarperCollins, 2013); recent movies *Magnificent 7* (2016) and *Hell or High Water* (2016); and the current AMC television series *The Son* (2017–present).

10. Mary Weismantel. "Making Kin: Kinship Theory and Zumbagua Adoptions," *American Ethnologist* 22, no. 4 (1995): 685–704, <https://doi.org/10.1525/ae.1995.22.4.02a00010>. See, too, Janet Carsten, ed., *Cultures of Relatedness: New Approaches to the Study of Kinship* (Cambridge University Press, 2000).

11. Harris and Wasilewski, "Indigeneity, an Alternative Worldview," 493.

12. On the history of Comanche captivity, see James F. Brooks, *Captives and Cousins: Slavery, Kinship, and Community in the Southwest Borderlands* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011); Brian Delay, *War of a Thousand Deserts: Indian Raids and the US-Mexican War* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008); Joaquín Rivaya-Martínez, "A Different Look at Native American Depopulation: Comanche Raiding, Captive Taking, and Population Decline," *Ethnohistory* 61 no. 3 (2014): 391–418, <https://doi.org/10.1215/00141801-2681714>.
13. Gish Hill, *Webs of Kinship: Family in Northern Cheyenne Nationhood* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2017), 43.
14. Jonathan Gray, *Show Sold Separately: Promos, Spoilers, and Other Media Paratexts* (New York University Press, 2010), 36.
15. John Young, "Johnny Depp, Miley Cyrus, and Other Stars Show for the Unveiling of Disney's Upcoming Movie Slate," *Entertainment Weekly*, September 25, 2008, <http://ew.com/article/2008/09/25/disney-showcase/>.
16. Marc Graser, "Disney, Depp Return to 'Caribbean,'" *Variety*, September 24, 2008, <http://variety.com/2008/digital/features/disney-depp-return-to-caribbean-1117992798/>.
17. Depp wearing the title character's famous mask caused confusion. For example, *ComingSoon.net* reported this: "During Disney's preview today in Hollywood, the studio questioned who could possibly play the titular character in its upcoming feature *The Lone Ranger*. With that, Disney rolled out the USC marching band to come down and play the Ranger's theme song. This was followed by an appearance by Depp himself who took to the stage in full Captain Jack Sparrow attire...wearing *The Lone Ranger's* mask. According to our Disney reps, Depp is officially signed to play Tonto and not the Lone Ranger as initially implied." See Edward Douglas, "In Disney Future with Johnny Depp," *ComingSoon.net*, September 25, 2008, <http://www.comingsoon.net/movies/features/49142-in-disney-future-with-johnny-depp#bX50HZJKUiOP2UB2.99>.
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19. Depp, qtd. in Anthony Breznican, "Johnny Depp on 'The Lone Ranger,'" *Entertainment Weekly*, May 8, 2011, <http://www.ew.com/article/2011/05/08/johnny-depp-tonto-lone-ranger>.
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22. Monika Bartyzel, "Captain Jack Officially Returns, and Signs On for Tonto Too!" *MovieFone*, September 25, 2008, <https://www.moviefone.com/2008/09/25/captain-jack-officially-returns-and-signs-on-for-tonto-too/>.
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27. Sheyashe, "The New Tonto—Johnny Depp," November 3, 2008, <http://www.alter-native-media.com/2008/11/03/the-new-tonto-johnny-depp/>.

28. Jerry Bruckheimer@BRUCKHEIMERJB, "What's coming will show you why this isn't going to be your grandfather's Lone Ranger and Tonto..." tweeted March 7, 2012, 9:16 PM, <https://twitter.com/BRUCKHEIMERJB/status/177623803201990657>.

29. Depp, qtd. in Anthony Breznican, "Johnny Depp Reveals Origins of Tonto Makeup from The Lone Ranger," *Entertainment Weekly*, April 22, 2012, <http://www.ew.com/article/2012/04/22/johnny-depp-reveals-origins-of-tonto-makeup-from-lone-ranger-exclusive>. Few sources indicate if Depp was aware of critiques of his Tonto look. During a June 2013 news conference at Bishop's Lodge Resort & Spa, Santa Fe, New Mexico, right before *The Lone Ranger* advance premieres in New Mexico and Oklahoma, Depp reportedly responded to a question on critiques of his character as "a red version of blackface": "I expected it. I still expect it. I have done no harm and represented at the very least the Comanche nation in a proper light. There's always going to be naysayers. Everybody's got an opinion." Depp, qtd. in Tom Sharpe, "Depp Says He 'Took Shot at Erasing' Clichés with Tonto Role," *The New Mexican*, June 19, 2013, http://www.santafenewmexican.com/news/local_news/depp-says-he-took-shot-at-erasing-clich-s-with/article_8fb05eb6-94fe-54ba-bdfb-650a72136eaa.html.

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32. Paul Chaat Smith, "The Toughest Movie Indian," June 27, 2013, National Museum of the American Indian weblog, <http://blog.nmai.si.edu/main/2013/06/the-toughest-movie-indian.html>.

33. Avi Santos, *Selling the Silver Bullet: The Lone Ranger and Transmedia Brand Licensing* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2015), 195.

34. Dana Lone Hill, "Why I'm Willing to Believe in Johnny Depp's Tonto," *The Guardian*, March 12, 2012, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/cifamerica/2012/mar/12/johnny-depp-tonto-long-ranger>.

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37. Smith, "The Toughest Movie Indian."

38. Ray Cook, "Tontomania—Who Are We'z Anyways?" *Indian Country Today Media Network*, March 15, 2012, <https://indiancountrymedianetwork.com/news/tontomaniawho-are-wez-anyways/#comments>. Cook was responding to Adrienne Keene's post "Johnny Depp as Cultural Appropriation Jack Sparrow... I Mean Tonto" (March 8, 2012). Keene replied with her post "Why Tonto Matters," March 16, 2012, <http://nativeappropriations.com/2012/03/why-tonto-matters.html>. For a timeline of the debate with links, see Adrienne Keene, "Real Indians Don't Care about Tonto," *Native Appropriations* weblog, <http://nativeappropriations.com/2012/07/real-indians-dont-care-about-tonto.html>.

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Behind the Facepaint," Indian Country Today Media Network, June 26, 2012, <http://indiancountry-todaymedianetwork.com/2012/06/26/tonto-files-behind-facepaint-120550>.

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\$215 million. Production resumed on October 13, 2011, but the budgetary interruptions, including another in June 2012 when production costs exceeded the revised budget, generated considerable negative press among entertainment news sources, even prompting producers and principal actors to later accuse critics of having written their scathing reviews long before seeing the film. On the box office numbers, see Box Office Mojo, "The Lone Ranger," <http://www.boxofficemojo.com/movies/?id=loneranger.htm>.

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