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The Role of Music in Assimilation of Students at the Carlisle Indian Industrial School

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Abstract
Despite the vast research on the Carlisle Indian Industrial School, music is often overshadowed by the recognition of the school's athletic program in the discussion of the place of extracurricular activities in Native American assimilation. This paper discusses the role of music in the assimilation of students at the Carlisle Indian School, drawing from the fields of both history and ethnomusicology to demonstrate that music had a much more profound effect on assimilation than athletics. Through a discussion on the differences between Native American and Western art music, and the disparity between their functions in society, it is clear that music marked a more profound transition toward assimilation for Native Americans at Indian boarding schools like the Carlisle Indian Industrial School.

The Role of Music in Assimilation of Students at the Carlisle Indian School

By Abigail Winston

On Thursday, March 11, 1897 at two o'clock in the afternoon, the Carlisle Indian Industrial School in Carlisle, Pennsylvania held the commencement ceremony for the ninth graduating class. Twenty-six students graduated. The ceremony was comprised of speeches by students and performances by school musical ensembles. The ceremony and the performances in it were a culmination of the students' years of education and ideologies taught at the Carlisle School. Topics of orations included: "*The Conqueror to the Conquered*," "*Are the Indians Better for the Coming of the White Man?*" and "*What the Indians Owe the United States Government*." Musical performances included a piano solo of "*Remembrance of Home,"* and a "*March to Victory"* by the Carlisle School choir.[170] The titles of these songs evoke feelings of nostalgia and pride, values that are associated with the American experience. These performances were an ironic display of patriotism by a place that was designed to strip away the rights and culture of the original inhabitants of the United States. Contradictions such as these scar both the history of the Carlisle School and larger efforts by the United States government to assimilate Native American populations into white society during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The experiences of Carlisle School students were not unique. By 1900, there were 20,000 students in Indian boarding schools across

[170] *1897 Commencement Program, March 11, 1897*, program, Dickinson College Archives & Special Collections, accessed November 1, 2018. http://carlisleindian.dickinson.edu/documents/1897-commencement-program.

the nation. By 1925, seven years after the Carlisle School closed, this number had tripled, and over 357 boarding schools were being operated in thirty states.[171] Government officials thought that education was the answer to Indian assimilation, believing that, "if it be admitted that education affords the true solution to the Indian problem, then it must be admitted that the boarding school is the very key to the situation…. Only by complete isolation of the Indian child from his savage antecedents can he be satisfactorily educated."[172] Boarding schools were the preferred method of assimilation, as they were effective in isolating students from their families and other members of their nations. School officials intentionally targeted the children of leaders of nations that were recently aggressive, essentially holding these children hostage in order to pacify leaders and prevent future violence.[173] This depiction of Indian boarding schools and their students likens them to juvenile detention centers, which to some, they basically were. Richard Henry Pratt, founder of the Carlisle Indian Industrial School, the first Indian boarding school, modeled the school and its curriculum after an Indian prison that he had developed in Fort Marion.[174] The traditions pioneered at the Carlisle School influenced the hundreds of other Indian boarding schools that

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[171] The National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition, "U.S. Indian Boarding School History," accessed November 7, 2018, https://boardingschoolhealing.org/education/us-indian-boarding-school-history/.

[172] "Annual report of the commissioner of Indian affairs, for the year 1886," manuscript, University of Wisconsin Digital Collections, accessed October 15, 2018, http://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/cgi-bin/History/History-idx?type=turn&entity=History.AnnRep86.p0066&id=History.AnnRep86&isize=M.

[173] National Public Radio, "American Indian Boarding Schools Haunt Many," aired May 12, 2008, https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=16516865.

[174] National Public Radio, "American Indian Boarding Schools Haunt Many."

followed, which is why the Carlisle School is the basis for this paper.

The legacy of the Carlisle Indian Industrial School is one of incongruity and juxtaposition. Though founded on a racist ideology, the positive impact of the Carlisle School on the lives of many Native Americans cannot be disputed. Even today, some nations consider the Carlisle School and other boarding schools like it to be a source of intergenerational trauma, while others view it as a means by which Indians gained recognition and success in American society.[175] Part of what makes the Carlisle School unique among Indian boarding schools is the national recognition of its extracurricular programs, such as the school band and later, the football team. The music program at the Carlisle School is an especially compelling lens through which to critique the school. Music is an important cultural practice, especially in cultures rooted in oral tradition. To many Native American cultures, music is not simply a form of entertainment, but a central part of daily life and ritual. Where Western tradition is focused on music, Native American tradition emphasizes *musicking.* Ethnomusicologist Christopher Small defines *musicking* as "taking part, in any capacity, in a musical performance, whether by performing, by listening, by rehearsing or practicing, by providing material for performance (what is called composition), or by dancing."[176] By applying concepts in ethnomusicology, historians can pose the question, "what does it mean when this performance (of this work) takes place at this time, in this place, with these

[175] Joseph Cress, "Carlisle Indian School legacy presents a conflicted point-of-view," *The Morning Call*, last modified September 9, 2018, https://www.mcall.com/news/nationworld/pennsylvania/mc-nws-carlisle-indian-school-20180904-story.html.

[176] Christopher Small, *Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press), 9.

participants?"[177] It is important to note that students at the Carlisle School were not playing their own native music. Instead, they were being instructed only in the tradition of Western art music as an intentional attack on Native American artistic traditions. Worst of all, Carlisle students' performances of pieces in the Western art music canon were often used as publicity for the school, further diminishing the value of native practices and traditions.

There are academic foundations for the study of music and the Carlisle School in the fields of both history and musicology, though they are not typically discussed in conjunction with one another. The study of Indian boarding schools has grown since 1979 when historian David Wallace wrote in the *Pacific Historical Review* that "a study of the federal Indian boarding school system does not exist."[178] Since then, the field has evolved with the efforts of scholars like Brenda Child and Michael C. Coleman. Specifically, the book *American Indians, the Irish, and Government Schooling: A Comparative Study*, which Coleman and Child both contributed to, provides unique insight into the Indian boarding school system by comparing and contrasting it to similar efforts to acculturate the Irish and discussing boarding schools as a "weapon of the state."[179] Other remarkably insightful books and articles in the secondary literature include: "American Boarding School Experiences: Recent Studies from Native Perspectives" by Julie Davis, *Away from home: American Indian boarding school experiences, 1879-2000* edited by Margaret L. Archuleta, Brenda J. Child, and K. Tsianina Lomawaima, *Indians in Unexpected Places*

[177] Small, *Musicking*, 10.
[178] David Wallace Adams, "Schooling the Hopi: Federal Indian Policy Writ Small, 1887-1917," *Pacific Historical Review* 48, no. 3 (August 1979), doi:10.2307/3638757.
[179] Michael C. Coleman, *American Indians, the Irish, and Government Schooling: A Comparative Study*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007).

by Philip J. Deloria, and *Shades of Hiawatha: Staging Indians, Making Americans, 1880-1930* by Alan Trachtenberg. All of these sources use research through archival searches, oral history interviews, and even, in the case of Child, Deloria, and Lomawaima, personal heritage to explore the complexity of Indian boarding schools and its meaning in both the lives of individuals who attended these schools and in the larger history of the Native American experience. Deloria specifically addresses music in *Indians in Unexpected Places*, discussing the appropriation of Indian melodies and musical qualities by white composers, which provides a fascinating contradiction to the kinds of music being performed at the Carlisle School and other Indian boarding schools. Deloria's work also seamlessly bridges the gap between history and ethnomusicology, as Deloria is a historian writing about musicological ideas, including commenting on specific musical concepts like rhythm, timbre, and pitch.

The role of music in the indoctrination of Native Americans at the Carlisle Indian Industrial School has been underestimated in the study of Indian boarding schools. Through education at the Carlisle School, native music traditions were pushed aside in favor of the Western art music tradition. This Western art music was then used by the school as a means to promote the Carlisle School as the model of Indian education in America, therefore further undermining Native American cultural practices.

II

The Carlisle Indian Industrial School was the brainchild of Richard Henry Pratt. Pratt's background in the military influenced the ways in which he thought about Native Americans and their role in American society. In 1875, he was sent to lead prisoners from the Indian Wars on the Great Plains to detainment

at Fort Marion in St. Augustine, Florida.[180] At Fort Marion, he began to experiment with Indian education in efforts to civilize his prisoners. Pratt's attitudes toward Native Americans were conflicting. Though he claimed to strive toward equality and understanding and did seem to honestly view Indians as more than savages, he believed that this equality could only be achieved through Indian adoption of white culture. Rather than a cultural exchange, Pratt suggested complete assimilation, still elevating white Americans as the superior race. Pratt himself spoke of his own feelings toward Native Americans in his autobiography: "I conceived it my highest duty to correct the unwarranted prejudice promoted among our people against the Indians through race hatred and the false history which tells our side and not theirs, and which has been so successfully nursed by keeping them remote and alleging that they alone have irredeemable qualities."[181]

At Fort Marion, the primary focus of education was the English language, as it not only allowed Indians to communicate with their white captors, but with each other in a common tongue as well. Besides language, one of Pratt's original focuses in Indian education was religion. Realizing that the "Great Spirit" that many Indians believed in was similar to the singular deity "God" in the Christian tradition, Pratt used this commonality to convert Indians to Christianity. Pratt saw his desire to assimilate Native Americans as a religious calling, and viewed assimilation as a form of religious conversion. Christianity figured so prominently in Pratt's

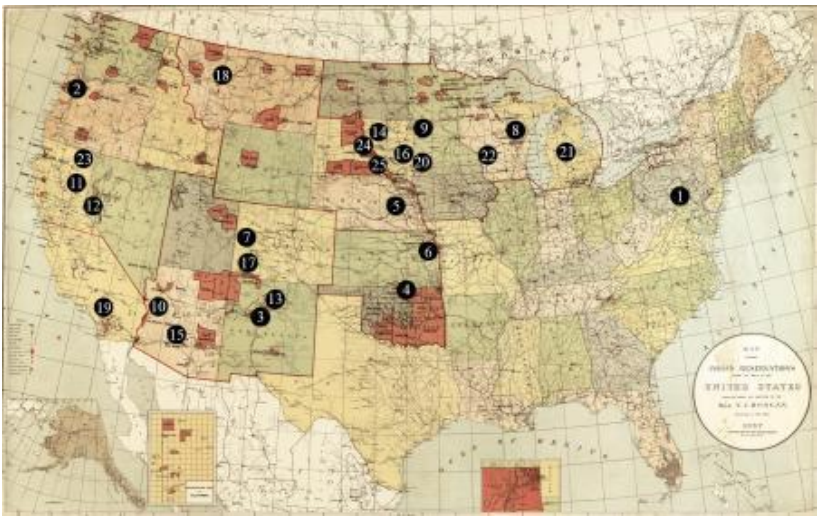
[180] Dickinson College, "Visualizing a Mission: Artifacts and Imagery of the Carlisle Indian School, 1879-1918," accessed October 30, 2018, http://chronicles.dickinson.edu/studentwork/indian/2_pratt.htm.

[181] Richard Henry Pratt. *Battlefield and Classroom: Four Decades with the American Indian, 1867-1904,* ed. Robert M. Utley (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press): 120.

ideology that he earned the nickname the "Red Man's Moses."[182] Christianity-based education gave Pratt the means by which to begin assimilating Native Americans who were being held prisoner at Fort Marion. In 1879, the Department of the Interior and War Department granted him permission to establish a boarding school for the purpose of Indian education in Carlisle, Pennsylvania.

The immersive nature of boarding schools like the Carlisle School made them the ideal vehicle for assimilation. Due to the residential nature of boarding schools, students were forced to spend time with one another in both curricular and extracurricular activities. In Indian boarding schools, Indians from across the country were suddenly brought together, all speaking different languages from their respective nations. In order to communicate with one another, they had to learn English, which would become their common language, relatively quickly. At a boarding school, students were more heavily immersed in white American society, and were able to learn more quickly and without interference from their home lives. Indian boarding schools also put a strong emphasis on religious education, which further isolated Indian children from their families. Pratt's vision of isolating Indian children from their families and native cultures by sending them to boarding schools proved successful. By 1892, only thirteen years after the Carlisle School opened, there were twenty-five Indian boarding schools across the United States.

[182] Linda F. Witmer, The Indian Industrial School, Carlisle, Pennsylvania, 1879-1918, 3rd edition (Carlisle, Pennsylvania: Cumberland County Historical Society, 2002) 50.



United States Office of Indian Affairs, and T.J. Morgan. *Map showing Indian reservations within the limits of the United States.* Washington, D.C.: Office of Indian Affairs, 1892. Map. https://www.loc.gov/item/2009579467/.

Though boarding schools were the most effective way to assimilate young Native Americans into American society, there were other types of schools as well. The U.S. government operated day schools both on and off reservation lands as an effort to work toward their goal of assimilation in a way that would garner less opposition from parents. Off-reservation boarding schools were obviously the most effective, as they required complete isolation from students' native homes. When students first arrived at schools like the Carlisle School, they were immediately given standard haircuts and uniforms in a European military style and given new American names. Students were forbidden from speaking their native languages and were often punished if they did, causing many of them to eventually lose their native languages after years of education at boarding schools. In addition to being a crucial part of the school's academic curriculum, religion also governed the

way of life at Indian boarding schools and aided in preaching the importance of assimilation. Students were taught with an emphasis on sin and guilt, and were instructed to fear retribution by God. They learned that their native religious practices were anti-Christian and were acts of sin.[183]

In addition to Indian boarding schools being a vehicle for the destruction of Native American languages and cultural practices, the schools were often dangerous to the students themselves. The increase in Indian boarding schools at the turn of the century coincided with tuberculosis and influenza epidemics across the country. Doctors and government officials alike did not understand germ theory as physicians do today, and were unaware that the close living quarters in boarding schools only increased the spread of disease. Physicians also believed that, due to their physical inferiority, Indians were more susceptible to disease and were naturally cursed with weak immune systems.[184] Between 1880 and 1918, at least 186 students were buried in the Carlisle Indian School cemetery. In March of 1898, the Carlisle School newspaper, The Indian Helper, reported "one of the saddest funerals that has occurred for a long time at the school."[185] The funeral was for fifteen year old Ida Bennett, a Klamath Indian from California who died suddenly of consumption, or tuberculosis. This newspaper article is significant in that it referred to Bennett's funeral as "one of the saddest," meaning that many other funerals came before hers. The report in the newspaper was also found in a column describing other important events like the baseball schedule, implying that this was a regular column in The Indian

[183] Northern Plains Reservation Aid, "History and Culture."
[184] Archuleta, Child, and Lomawaima, *Away from Home,* 39.
[185] *The Indian Helper,* March 1898, accessed November 14, 2018, http://carlisleindian.dickinson.edu/sites/all/files/docs-cemetery/Cemetery_Docs_BENNETT.pdf.

Helper. Disease was accompanied by violence as dangers to students at Indian boarding schools. Since Indian boarding schools were founded on Pratt's military ideologies, corporal punishment was both common and encouraged among the staff. Students were beaten if they answered questions incorrectly or if they disobeyed rules, and their mouths were rinsed out with soap if they dared to speak their native languages instead of English.[186] Less frequently discussed, but equally as important, was the sexual abuse that students, often female, experienced at the hands of male teachers. The abuse in Indian boarding schools like the Carlisle School was the result of the schools' vigorous commitment to erasing Indian identity through assimilation. Abuse was a means by which school staff could establish fear and begin to control the Indian students, therefore expediting the assimilation process.

Indian schools were not met without dissent from Native American communities. The government reacted to this rebellion in a number of ways, but most commonly by withholding rations from nations that were unwilling to send their children to boarding schools. On some occasions, police were actually sent into reservations to forcefully take children from their parents. Families would often offer up orphans or negotiate a family quota in order to avoid sending all of their children away.[187] Indian parents subverted the boarding school system in other ways by encouraging their children to run away and by reintroducing language and cultural practices when students were home for the summer.[188] Students themselves were active agents of resistance as well. They refused to eat, ingested toxic substances, continued speaking native languages, held secret powwows, and even committed arson.

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[186] Archuleta, Child, and Lomawaima, *Away from Home*, 42.
[187] Northern Plains Reservation Aid, "History and Culture."
[188] Northern Plains Reservation Aid, "History and Culture."

III

The purpose of the Carlisle Indian Industrial school in particular was clear. The school, according to a "Description of the Grounds, Buildings, Industries and Aims of the Carlisle Indian Training School" written in 1880, would serve as "an educator of those who are here and second as an educating and controlling influence over the Indians of the West."[189] Pratt himself opened the school knowing that having children of powerful chiefs at the school would guarantee good behavior and cooperation of those tribes.[190] The curriculum at the Carlisle Indian Industrial School was similar to curriculums in other Indian boarding schools across the nation. Instructors used the English language as a basis to teach classes in arithmetic, science, history, and the arts, in addition to industrial skills that would help students secure trade jobs after graduation as to "make them feel self-reliant and incite them to free themselves from the position of government paupers."[191] As demonstrated by this quote from the same "Description of the Grounds, Buildings, Industries and Aims of the Carlisle Indian Training School," Pratt believed that Native Americans, in their existing capacity, were of no real value to society and were simply financial burdens on the government. If they were to be educated in white academia, they would be able to contribute to the

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[189] *Description of the Grounds, Buildings, Industries and Aims of the Carlisle Indian Training School, February 23, 1880,* report, Dickinson College Archives & Special Collections, accessed October 20, 2018, http://carlisleindian.dickinson.edu/sites/all/files/docs-documents/NARA_RG75_79_b574_1880_P0269.pdf.

[190] *Description of the Grounds, Buildings, Industries and Aims of the Carlisle Indian Training School,* Dickinson College Archives & Special Collections, accessed October 20, 2018.

[191] *Description of the Grounds, Buildings, Industries and Aims of the Carlisle Indian Training School,* Dickinson College Archives & Special Collections, accessed October 20, 2018.

economy and society as a whole. At the end of the nineteenth century, superintendent of Indian schools, Estelle Reel, standardized the schools' curricula by issuing the *Uniform Course of Study for the Indian Schools of the United States.* This course of study was distributed to all Indian schools, as well as colonial holdings in Puerto Rico and the Philippines, in August of 1901.[192]

Much of the daily life for students at the Carlisle School was highly structured and almost militaristic in organization, stemming from Pratt's military background. When students first arrived at the school, their hair was cut in standard styles and their native clothes were replaced with uniforms. Though the Carlisle School eventually held students from virtually every Indian nation in the United States, the highest number of students came from the upper Midwest Sioux (Lakota, Nakota, and Dakota) and Chippewa (Ojibwe) nations.[193] According to Cumberland County Historical Society historian Barbara Landis, The Lakota children in particular considered the cutting of their hair to be "a sign that someone had died. Something did die. Their culture was being eradicated."[194] Perhaps most significantly, new arrivals to the school were given a new Anglicized name that would become their new identity at the Carlisle School. In many Native American traditions, names are given very intentionally to reflect certain places, traits, or family relations. Stripping away these names tore away a critical piece of a students' identity, further dissociating them from their past

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[192] Archuleta, Child, and Lomawaima, *Away from Home,* 31.

[193] Jacqueline Fear-Segal and Susan D. Rose, "Introduction," in *Carlisle Indian Industrial School: Indigenous Histories, Memories, and Reclamations*, edited by Jacqueline Fear-Segal and Susan D. Rose (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press): 6.

[194] Joseph Cress, "Indian School: Experts explain how the Carlisle School transformed and traumatized," *The Sentinel,* published September 2, 2018, https://cumberlink.com/news/local/closer_look/indian-school-experts-explain-how-the-carlisle-school-transformed-and/article_cacc2889-5ced-563a-8e97-62ceb0dd29e4.html.

lives.[195] Students were housed in repurposed army barracks. Other school buildings included stables, a gymnasium, a chapel, a hospital, a blacksmith shop, a bakery, and a guard house.[196] Half of the day was spent learning traditional academic disciplines while the other half was spent learning industrial skills. Boys learned carpentry, farming, and blacksmithing, and girls learned cooking, sewing, laundry, and other domestic arts.[197] In an additional attempt to fully immerse students in white society, students were able to participate in Outings over the summer, where they would be sent to live and work with a white family on their farms or as apprentices in their trades. In 1910, there were 205 girls in homes and 400 boys working on farms.[198] These programs were successful in further isolating students from their families and native homes by actually placing them in white society where they could use their new civilized manners in practice.

Students at the Carlisle Indian Industrial School did not just learn academic and industrial skills, but were also allowed to participate in a number of extracurricular activities. Activities included writing for the school newspapers, performing in theatrical productions, drawing and painting, singing in choir or playing in band, or, later, playing sports such as football. Like the

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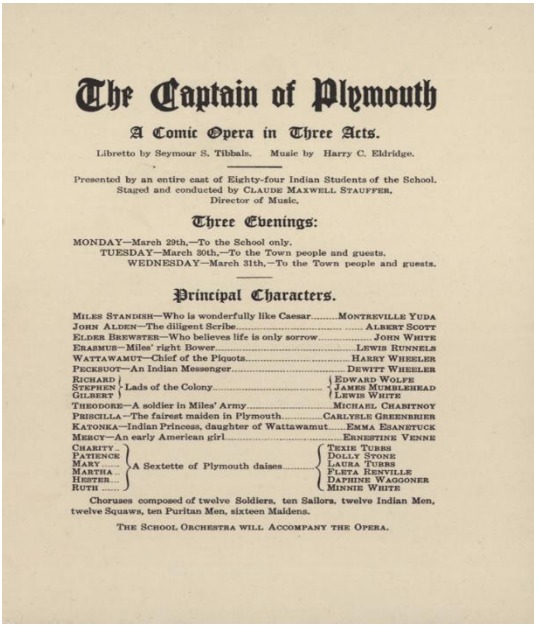
[195] Barbara Landis, "The Names," in *Carlisle Indian Industrial School: Indigenous Histories, Memories, and Reclamations*, edited by Jacqueline Fear-Segal and Susan D. Rose (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press): 91.
[196] *Description of the Grounds, Buildings, Industries and Aims of the Carlisle Indian Training School,* Dickinson College Archives & Special Collections, accessed October 20, 2018.
[197] Barbara Landis, "About the Carlisle Indian Industrial School," *Modern American Poetry*, accessed November 5, 2018, http://www.english.illinois.edu/maps/poets/a_f/erdrich/boarding/carlisle.htm
[198] *Outing Placement Statement for 1910,* letter, Dickinson College Archives & Special Collections, accessed November 3, 2018, http://carlisleindian.dickinson.edu/sites/all/files/docs-documents/NARA_RG75_CCF_b032_f21.pdf.

rest of the Carlisle School curriculum, these activities were all centered around promoting American ideals and eliminating any semblance of Native American culture that may still exist in the students. In 1909, for example, 84 students at the Carlisle School performed a comic opera called "The Captain of Plymouth." As evidenced in the program below, this play was intended to promote American ideals and celebrate the arrival of white settlers into America. Important historical figures in the settling of Plymouth, including Miles Standish, were ironically played by Indians. In these plays, Indians took on the role of both the colonized and the colonizers, representing the very people who had worked toward their destruction. In addition to playing white characters, students filled the roles of choruses including "twelve Indian Men" and "twelve Squaws."[199] The school orchestra accompanied the opera, and the performances were open to the public so people who lived nearby could attend and enjoy the performances of the savages who were being civilized in their own neighborhoods.

[199] *Program for "The Captain of Plymouth," 1909,* program, Dickinson College Archives & Special Collections, accessed November 1, 2018, http://carlisleindian.dickinson.edu/sites/all/files/docs-documents/CIS-I-0070.pdf.



The Captain of Plymouth

A Comic Opera in Three Acts.

Libretto by Seymour S. Tibbals. Music by Harry C. Eldridge.

Presented by an entire cast of Eighty-four Indian Students of the School.
Staged and conducted by CLAUDE MAXWELL STAUFFER,
Director of Music.

Three Evenings:

MONDAY—March 29th,—To the School only.
TUESDAY—March 30th,—To the Town people and guests.
WEDNESDAY—March 31th,—To the Town people and guests.

Principal Characters.

MILES STANDISH—Who is wonderfully like Caesar.....MONTREVILLE YUDA
JOHN ALDEN—The diligent Scribe.....ALBERT SCOTT
ELDER BREWSTER—Who believes life is only sorrow.....JOHN WHITE
ERASMUS—Miles' right Bower.....LEWIS RUNNELS
WATTAWAMUT—Chief of the Piquots.....HARRY WHEELER
PECKSUOT—An Indian Messenger.....DEWITT WHEELER
RICHARD, STEPHEN, GILBERT } Lads of the Colony..... { EDWARD WOLFE, JAMES MUMBLEHEAD, LEWIS WHITE
THEODORE—A soldier in Miles' Army.....MICHAEL CHABITNOY
PRISCILLA—The fairest maiden in Plymouth.....CARLYRLE GREENBRIER
KATONKA—Indian Princess, daughter of Wattawamut.....EMMA ESANETUCK
MERCY—An early American girl.....ERNESTINE VENNE

CHARITY, PATIENCE, MARY, MARTHA, HESTER, RUTH } A Sextette of Plymouth daises..... { TEXIE TUBBS, DOLLY STONE, LAURA TUBBS, FLETA RENVILLE, DAPHINE WAGGONER, MINNIE WHITE

Choruses composed of twelve Soldiers, ten Sailors, twelve Indian Men, twelve Squaws, ten Puritan Men, sixteen Maidens.

THE SCHOOL ORCHESTRA WILL ACCOMPANY THE OPERA.

Program for "The Captain of Plymouth," 1909, program, Dickinson College Archives & Special Collections, accessed November 1, 2018, http://carlisleindian.dickinson.edu/sites/all/files/docs-documents/CIS-I-0070.pdf.

Disturbingly, this irony also occurred in debates held by the school's Debate Society. On February 3, 1887, Pratt held an "Evening with the Carlisle Indian School" to display the work of the students as an exhibition for the public. On this evening, students from the Debate Society publicly debated the question, "Resolved, that the Indians be exterminated."[200] In observing these two events, it is clear that the Carlisle School intentionally used artistic activities to promote assimilation to both their students and to the public. It would be impossible to discuss extracurricular activities at the Carlisle Indian Industrial School without at least

[200] *"An Evening with the Carlisle Indian School, January 15, 1887,"* manuscript, Dickinson College Archives & Special Collections, accessed October 2, 2018, http://carlisleindian.dickinson.edu/sites/all/files/docs-documents/CIS-I-0068.pdf.

mentioning athletics. The success of the Carlisle School's football team in particular dominates the popular narrative of the Carlisle School, and has for over a century. However, as historian John Bloom points out, "the inspiring stories of triumph and success associated with the Carlisle football and track teams can easily mask the fundamental pain and destruction created by assimilation policies."[201] Pratt was reluctant to adopt sports at the Carlisle School, in fear that violent, competitive games would simply fuel the nature of the savage. However, he began to recognize that participation in a sport that was such a prevalent part of American culture would serve as a public demonstration of the success of the assimilationist policies of the Carlisle School. According to Bloom, former students and their children almost always mention sports in oral history interviews, and that sports were clearly the main attraction at the Carlisle School.[202] It is for this reason that I chose to focus my research on music at the Carlisle School and its role in the assimilation process.

IV

Before discussing music as a means of assimilation at the Carlisle School, it is important to have a basic understanding of the key differences between Native American and Western art music. Despite the diversity of Native American beliefs and traditions, the following features applied, and continue to apply, to all Indian music in general. Native Americans consider music to be a crucial component of their creation story, as the Creator and other spirits

[201] John Bloom, "The Imperial Gridiron" in *Carlisle Indian Industrial School: Indigenous Histories, Memories, and Reclamations*, edited by Jacqueline Fear-Segal and Susan D. Rose (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press): 124.
[202] Bloom, "The Imperial Gridiron" in *Carlisle Indian Industrial School*, 132-133.

gifted specific songs and musical instruments to humanity.[203] One of the key features of the Native American musical tradition is that human beings are unable to compose new music, as music must be received. Music can be received in a number of ways, but typically new music is passed down through dreams, or oral traditions from elders in the community. Native Americans also hold different beliefs about the ownership of music. According to the Encyclopedia Britannica, "music has intrinsic value to individuals, ensembles, and communities, and performance rights are granted according to principles established by the group through long practice."[204] Where music in the Western tradition is most strongly associated with its' composer, Native American music is most closely linked with the people or communities that perform it. Indian music is often performed in conjunction with specific rituals, and rarely for the sake of pure entertainment. The music itself is characterized by polyrhythms, syncopation, and a four, five, or six-tone scale. Most vocal music is sung in unison, and rarely utilizes harmony. Sometimes, however, choral singing incorporates polyphony, or the simultaneous performance of separate musical lines.[205] Most importantly, Native Americans view music as a part of living, rather than a specific art form, as is the Western perception of music.

Features of Western art music differ depending on the era, but some common themes can be applied generally. Western art music is interpretive, and can be enjoyed for its own sake, regardless of its original intended purpose.[206] The height of the

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[203] Victoria Lindsay Levine, "Native American Music," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, published November 19, 2015, https://www.britannica.com/art/Native-American-music.
[204] Levine, "Native American Music."
[205] Levine, "Native American Music."
[206] Andrea Boyea, "Native American Music and Curriculum: Controversies and Cultural Issues," *Philosophy of Music Education Review* 7, no. 2 (Fall

Carlisle Indian Industrial School coincides with the end of the Romantic era of music, which lasted from approximately 1780 to 1910. Students at the Carlisle School were instructed in music from this era, as well as the earlier Classical and Baroque periods. The Romantic era in particular saw the rise of nationalist music, especially in Eastern Europe. Composers such as Antonín Dvorák brought their nationalist views of music to the United States, and were interested in discovering a distinctly American sound, and often drew inspiration from Native American music.[207] Western art music typically follows a distinct tonal scheme, based on the tonic scale, and is rooted in traditional concepts of harmony and melody. Piano became increasingly popular during the Romantic era, therefore, much of the music written during in the Romantic era was for piano. Students receiving private music instruction at the Carlisle School were instructed in piano and organ, as well as vocal music in European languages such as Italian and German, and in English.

Music was perhaps the most effective vehicle of assimilation at the Carlisle Indian Industrial School. It is important to note that students at the Carlisle School were not being encouraged to "musick," as was the traditional custom in their Indian nations.[208] Instead, they were being intentionally instructed in Western classical music as a means of assimilation. Western classical music was the ideal method by which to assimilate for a number of reasons. First, performance practice of Western classical music emphasized the formality of music and enjoying music

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1999): 106, http://ezpro.cc.gettysburg.edu:2048/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eue&AN=31763167&site=eds-live.

[207] Ralph Thomas Daniel, "Western Music," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, published July 5, 2017, https://www.britannica.com/art/Western-music/The-tonal-era-and-after-1600-to-the-present.

[208] See Small definition of musicking.

solely as entertainment, where Native American music was used for many different, arguably more important purposes, including religious ceremonies and healing. For many native peoples, music is inseparable from not only culture, but life itself.[209]

Music was a crucial aspect of the Carlisle School curriculum and every student was required to take music classes, where they were taught the basics of Western notation and musical style. Primary sources on the actual curriculum used in Carlisle School music classes are very few, but conclusions about the curriculum can be drawn from photographs of music lessons and programs from concerts based on the difficulty of music that students were performing and the instruments that they were playing. Students who were instructed privately learned to read music, as was expected of trained Western musicians. Private lessons were formal, and they were taught in specifically designed music rooms, decorated with photographs and busts of famous white composers to inspire the students' learning.

[209] Boyea, "Native American Music and Curriculum: Controversies and Cultural Issues," *Philosophy of Music Education Review,* 106.

A Music Room. Photograph. Dickinson College Archives & Special Collections. Accessed October 30, 2018. http://carlisleindian.dickinson.edu/images/student-learning-music.

They were taught to play the piano, brass, string, and woodwind instruments, replacing traditional Indian reed or cedar flutes. Instead of playing hand drums or water drums, students were instructed to play bass and snare drums in a military style. In the Native American tradition, music was learned orally and was not notated. Historians can also draw conclusions about the Carlisle School music curriculum based on the music that was not allowed to be performed. In 1893, barely a decade after the opening of the Carlisle School, musicologist Alice C. Fletcher published her "Study of Omaha Indian Music."[210] Assisted by Francis LaFlesche, an Omaha Indian, Fletcher transcribed hundreds of Omaha songs. However, these songs were transcribed using Western notation, completely changing the music itself to fit Western standards. One example of this alteration is seen in how the rhythms were

[210] Alice C. Fletcher,"A Study of Omaha Indian Music," *Archaeological and Ethnological Papers of the Peabody Museum* 1, no. 5 (1893): 79-151, accessed November 15, 2018, https://archive.org/details/AStudyOfOmahaIndianMusic.

recorded when transcribed. Many Indian songs have a drum that moves in units of two, but a melody that moves in units of three. This was much more complicated than the music that white audiences were used to hearing. Through studying Indian music, white musicians were forced to re-examine their perception of what music was, and alter it to include this new tonal language. Though these Indian songs were transcribed using Western notation, these songs were not allowed to be taught or played at the Carlisle School, as they would encourage students to connect to their heritage and explore their native music. It is significant that a marked interest in musical nationalism and the exploration of true American music was taking place among composers at the same time that the Carlisle School was trying to suppress the same kind of music. Composers, as well as musicologists, of the early twentieth century were very interested in the so-called Indian sound, and many tried to replicate it in their music. One of the first successful American operas, *Shanewis: The Robin Woman,* tells the story of a musically talented Indian girl who is sent away from her reservation to study music in New York. The score is comprised of music that sounds Western, but also incorporates traditional Indian melodies arranged to be played by instruments in a white orchestra.[211] Charles Wakefield Cadman, the composer of *Shanewis,* was known in the popular music sphere for his authenticity in his idealizations of Indian songs. Rather than imagining Indian melodies, he took actual Indian songs and modified them to fit harmonies and rhythms that complemented the original, but produced a more Western and classical sound.[212] Even though Western art music inspired by Native American melodies existed, students at the Carlisle School were not allowed

[211] Philip J. Deloria, *Indians in unexpected places* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas): 184-185.
[212] Deloria, *Indians in unexpected places,* 186.

to play it. Despite the success of assimilation through music, students still found ways to practice their native traditions. Just as they learned from their teachers, they learned from their peers. Schools like the Carlisle School provided a breeding ground for new customs, including new music, that shared qualities from Native American traditions across the country in what was certainly an unintended consequence of the Indian boarding school system.[213] Teaching a strict curriculum of Western classical music to students at the Carlisle School was the ultimate experiment in assimilation, as Indians "rarely regarded it (music) as something to listen to apart from its social and ceremonial function" and considered it to be "a medium of communication and contact with the supernatural."[214] This clash of ideas would become even more prevalent when the Carlisle School began using music as propaganda for promoting the success of the school.

The Carlisle Indian Industrial School band was the most visible ensemble to the public eye. The school band played in the parade at the opening of the Chicago World Fair in 1893, acting as a display of the success of Indian boarding schools for those attending the fair. It is important to note that during this performance, the band played "The Star-Spangled Banner," "America," and "My Country Tis of Thee," all patriotic and quintessentially American songs.[215] In an edition of The Red Man and the Helper, the Carlisle Indian School newspaper, from 1900, an article discusses the band's eastern tour in which they played at

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[213] Archuleta, Child, and Lomawaima, *Away from Home,* 62-63.
[214]Boyea, "Native American Music and Curriculum: Controversies and Cultural Issues," *Philosophy of Music Education Review,* 107.
[215] St. Olaf College, "Chicago World Fair: Celebrating American Indian Culture or Erasing It?" last modified February 19, 2018, https://pages.stolaf.edu/americanmusic/2018/02/19/chicago-world-fair-celebrating-american-indian-culture-or-erasing-it/.

the Longfellow Memorial Association and at the White House for President McKinley.[216] By performing in very public venues such as the White House, the Carlisle School was able to not only make their assimilation through music known to the world beyond the school walls, but also emphasize its importance and significance to the students performing. In 1914, the band performed at a Belgian Relief Fund Benefit, where they played "Lustspiel," a nineteenth century overture by Hungarian composer Béla Kéler and The Star-Spangled Banner, two pieces of music that were very engrained in the Western musical tradition.[217] The Carlisle Indian School band was even asked to play at President Wilson's inauguration in 1913.[218] Music as a means of assimilation was not restricted to the Carlisle School. The Chemawa Indian School organized the Indian String Quartet, an ensemble that performed both in traditional Western concert attire, and full Indian regalia.[219] Though they performed in both white and native attire, all of the music that they played was of the Western art music tradition. No matter the attire worn, these students were seen as model Indians—either so far assimilated into Western culture that they donned the concert apparel of white musicians, or tamed savages who were capable of learning traditionally white instruments. The Carlisle School attracted successful musicians to teach there, most notably Zitkála-

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[216] "The Indian Band that Did Not Go to Paris," *The Red Man and Helper*, Friday, July 13, 1900, accessed October 26, http://carlisleindian.dickinson.edu/sites/all/files/docs-publications/RedManHelper_v01n01.pdf.

[217] *Belgian Relief Fund Benefit Entertainment Program, December 5, 1914*, program, Dickinson College Archives & Special Collections, accessed November 20, 2018, http://carlisleindian.dickinson.edu/sites/all/files/docs-documents/NARA_RG75_CCF_b002_f10_130868.pdf.

[218] F.H. Abbott, *F.H., Abbott to Moses Friedman, December 28, 1912*, letter, Dickinson College Archives & Special Collections, accessed November 29, 2018, http://carlisleindian.dickinson.edu/sites/all/files/docs-documents/NARA_RG75_CCF_b002_f03_00.pdf.

[219] Deloria, *Indians in unexpected places*, 207.

Šá, a Lakota Indian who had attended boarding school and then studied violin at the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston. Interestingly, Zitkála-Šá eventually dedicated her life to protesting Indian assimilation, and was eventually dismissed from her position at the Carlisle School. The general public was very impressed with the talent of Carlisle School musicians. According to a history of the band written in 1896, the New York *Tribune* distinguished them in a parade as "the one that caught the crowd was the Indian band that headed the delegation from Carlisle. With the smoothest harmony and the most perfect time, this band of forty or fifty pieces played a marching anthem as it swept past the reviewing stand. Both the melody and the spectacle were so unusual that the people rose to their feet and cheered."[220] One of the main reasons why the Carlisle School band garnered such a strong following and reputation is because of the spectacle. The goal of Pratt and the United States government was complete assimilation, and seeing a band of fifty Indian children wearing Western military-style uniforms and playing patriotic tunes on Western instruments is the ultimate achievement. Indian school musical ensembles allowed white assimilationists to see the fruits of their labor end in success.

[220] "A History of the Band," *The Red Man*, February 1896, accessed October 16, 2018, https://home.epix.net/~landis/band.html.

Hensel, Gustave, photographer. *Carlisle Indian School Band seated on steps of a school building.* Photograph. 1915. From National Archives and Records Administration: *American Indian Select List number 155.* Accessed October 25, 2018. https://www.archives.gov/research/native-americans/pictures/select-list-155.html.

The Carlisle Indian Industrial School band also played at the opening of the Brooklyn Bridge in 1883, acting as a living metaphor for the ability of the gap between Western and Native American culture to be bridged. The Carlisle School's close proximity to Washington D.C. enabled Pratt to invite congressmen and other wealthy benefactors to tour the school and showcase the students and their transitions from savage to civilian. On these tours, Pratt highlighted the military band as a particular area of success.[221] The combination of the Carlisle School band being in the public eye so often as well as their intentional programming of patriotic music solidified music as one of the cornerstones and

[221] Fear-Segal and Rose, "Introduction," in *Carlisle Indian Industrial School: Indigenous Histories, Memories, and Reclamations*, 8.

certainly one of the most effective means of assimilation for Native American students at the Carlisle School.

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Though sports have typically overshadowed music in popular narratives of assimilation at the Carlisle Indian Industrial School, music clearly played an important role in assimilation for both students and for the public image of the Carlisle School. Not only were Indian students at the Carlisle School forced to abandon their own native languages, but they were forced to abandon their musical traditions as well. Instead of music being fully integrated with every aspect of life, as is typical in most Native American cultures, music was treated as an extracurricular activity, and something to be done solely for the sake of entertainment or art, rather than for native rituals or religious ceremonies. Indian students learned Western notation and Western art music from the Baroque, Classical, and Romantic periods, all while Western composers were actually developing an interest in Native American music as the root of the true American sound, inhibiting further cultural exchange through music. The success of Indian students at the Carlisle School in Western art music was used as propaganda by the school to promote their assimilationist policies both locally and nationally. Through music, Richard Henry Pratt and the United States government were able to prove that not only were Indians capable of assimilating, but that they would contribute to American culture by doing so.

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