Marketing Desire: The "Normative/Other" Male Body and the "Pure" White Female Body on the Cover Art of Cassie Edwards' *Savage Dream* (1990), *Savage Persuasion* (1991), and *Savage Mists* (1992)

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Abstract

The popular romance novel genre of "American Indian Historical Romance" primarily features pairings between Indigenous men and white women. Visually and textually, these novels draw upon their predecessor, the captivity narrative. This thesis examines how the cover art of this genre visualizes and markets race, gender, and sex for the fantasy and consumption of the assumed white female reader. Building upon Peter van Lent's " 'Her Beautiful Savage': The Current Sexual Image of the Native American Male," (1996) S. Elizabeth Bird's "Savage Desires: The Gendered Construction of the American Indian in Popular Media," (2001) and Drew Hayden Taylor's "Indian Love Call (minus Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy)," (2008) this thesis argues that the hero on the cover art of the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre inhabits a mode of performance in which the figure is read as both "Normative" and "Other" - the "Normative/Other" body. This is achieved through the grafting of colonial constructs of Indigeneity onto an idealized white male body, and the pairing of this "Normative/Other" male figure with the "pure" white female figure who displaces sexual agency onto the male figure. The creation of the "Normative/Other" figure allows the white female reader to access the titillation of the "exotic," while still signalling the possibility of the happy ending intrinsic to the popular romance novel. This thesis analyzes the cover art of Cassie Edwards' *Savage Dream* (1990), *Savage Persuasion* (1991), and *Savage Mists* (1992) as specific examples.

Le roman d'amour populaire du genre «American Indian Historical Romance» comprend principalement des accouplages entre les hommes autochtones et les femmes blanches. Visuellement et textuellement, ces romans s'appuient sur leur récit prédécesseur, le récit de captivité. Cette thèse examine comment l'art de couverture de ce genre visualise et commercialise la race, le genre et le sexe pour la fantaisie et la consommation de la supposée lectrice blanche. En s'appuyant sur l'œuvre de Peter van Lent's " 'Her Beautiful Savage': The Current Sexual Image of the Native American Male," (1996) S. Elizabeth Bird's "Savage Desires: The Gendered Construction of the American Indian in Popular Media," (2001) et celle de Drew Hayden Taylor's "Indian Love Call (minus Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy)," (2008) cette thèse soutient que le héros sur l'art de couverture du genre «American Indian Historical Romance» habite un mode de représentation dans lequel la figure est perçue à la fois «Normative» et «Autre» - le corps «Normative / Autre». Ceci est réalisé par le greffage des constructions coloniales de l'indigénéité sur un corps masculin blanc idéalisé, et l'appariement de cette figure masculine «Normative / Autre» avec celle de la figure féminine blanche «pure» qui déplace l'agence sexuelle sur celle de la figure masculine. La création de la figure «Normative / Autre» permet à la lectrice blanche d'accéder à la titillation de l'exotique tout en signalant la possibilité d'une fin heureuse intrinsèque au roman populaire. Cette thèse analyse en tant qu'exemples spécifiques l'art de couverture des romans suivants de Cassie Edwards : *Savage Dream* (1990), *Savage Persuasion* (1991) et *Savage Mists* (1992).

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Introduction

The Twentieth-Century Captivity Narrative: Cover Art of the "American Indian Historical Romance" Genre and Colonial Constructions of Indigenous Masculinity and White Femininity

The cover of the romance novel is a distinct visual signifier of the story within its pages. When the consumer sees a book with specific visual tropes on the cover, it is meant to immediately convey particular elements of the story. This can be narrowed down even further to particular genres within the romance canon - historical, western, contemporary, fantasy, and more. How has the consumer been trained to read this image? Who is the ideal viewer? When deconstructed, what does this image reveal about constructions of race, gender, and sexuality? The romance novel, and the cover art of the romance novel, have not been subject to extensive study within academic scholarship, and are often treated with humour or scorn within mainstream culture. This underestimates both the power of the genre, which in 2013 generated $1.08 billion in sales in the United States alone,[1] as well as the power of the romance novel cover as a visual signifier, and how it can shape constructions of race, sexuality and gender in culture. This thesis aims to contribute to a small body of literature on romance novel cover art, with the hopes that this scholarship will continue to grow and contribute to our understanding of the role of visual representations in identity production. This thesis will examine cover art of the "American Indian Historical Romance"[2] genre, specifically Cassie Edwards' *Savage Dream*

[1] "Romance Industry Statistics," Romance Writers of America, https://www.rwa.org/p/cm/ld/fid=580 (accessed November 16, 2016).

[2] This romance novel genre is also frequently titled with some variation of "Native American Historical Romance." ["Native American Romance," Goodreads, https://www.goodreads.com/genres/native-american-romance (accessed February 26, 2017); "Historical Romance - Native Americans: Books," Barnes & Noble, http://www.barnesandnoble.com/b/books/historical-romance/historical-romance-native-americans/_/N-29Z8q8Z17yy (accessed February 26, 2017).] This thesis will use the term "American Indian Historical Romance throughout. Though I have not been able to locate the source where I first read this specific term, the following sources have influenced my choice to use "American Indian Historical Romance" rather than "Native American Historical Romance": Jackie C. Horne, "Rethinking Columbus Day: Native American Romance," Romance Novels for Feminists, October 15, 2013, http://romancenovelsforfeminists.blogspot.ca/2013/10/rethinking-columbus-day-

(1990), *Savage Persuasion* (1991) and *Savage Mists* (1992), with a careful analysis of the interracial couples depicted and the constructions of Indigenous masculinity and white femininity marketed to the assumed white female reader.

Terminology

This thesis will use the term "Indian" only in reference to the white settler colonial construction of Indigeneity, which is a reflection of white settler colonial goals, desires, and fears, and does not reflect Indigenous identity.[3] This thesis will always use quotation marks around the word "Indian" in order to clearly differentiate the distinction between Indigenous peoples and the white settler colonial construct of the "Indian."[4] The word white will always be used when discussing a white person - for example, when discussing the heroine of a romance novel, she will always be referred to as the white heroine, rather than the simply the heroine, in order to contribute to the project of unmasking the idea of whiteness as a "non-raced" body, as discussed in Richard Dyer's *White* (1997).[5]

Positionality

It is important to state my own positionality in relation to the investigation which I have undertaken within this thesis. I am a white female scholar, with Western European ancestry (British, French, Irish, and Scottish). As a student at McGill University, I study and work on the unceded territory of the Kanien'kehá:ka nation.[6] My positionality has played a role in the way in which I engage with scholarship and the world, but it is my hope that self-reflexivity on

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native-american.html (accessed February 26, 2017); Sunset, "Sexy American Indian Romances, not silly candy coated mush," Amazon, https://www.amazon.com/gp/richpub/listmania/fullview/R1B1NFL46YKQ4J (accessed February 26, 2017); "Cassie Edwards," Kensington Publishing Corp, http://www.kensingtonbooks.com/author.aspx/23543 (accessed December 15, 2016).

[3] Philip J. Deloria, Playing Indian (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1998), 20.

[4] Thomas King, "Too Heavy to Lift," The Inconvenient Indian: A Curious Account of Native People in North America (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 53-54.

[5] Richard Dyer, "The Matter of Whiteness," White (New York: Routledge, 1997), 2.

[6] "Public Education is for Everyone: Traditional Territories," McGill University, https://www.mcgill.ca/edu4all/other-equity-resources/traditional-territories (accessed February 26, 2017).

this positionality will help mitigate to a certain degree the privilege which this positionality occupies. It is my intent to deconstruct the white settler colonial constructions of Indigeneity on the cover art of the "American Indian Historical Romance" art, and demonstrate how whiteness - in the form of the white female heroine on the cover, and in the form of the white female reader, towards whom these constructions are marketed - shapes the visualizations of race, sex, and gender presented on these covers.

The Romance Novel and its Cover - Definition, History, and Production

The popular romance novel has not been subject to extensive study in the same manner as other forms of literature. However, the scholarship surrounding it is beginning to grow with the launch of the International Association for the Study of Popular Romance in 2009, and the launch of the *Journal of Popular Romance Studies* in 2010.[7] There are two defining works of scholarship on this topic. The first is Janice Radway's *Reading the Romance: Women, Patriarchy, and Popular Literature* (1991). The second is Pamela Regis' *A Natural History of the Romance Novel* (2003). This thesis utilizes Regis' definition of the popular romance novel as the basis of its investigation: "A romance novel is a work of prose fiction that tells the story of the courtship and betrothal of one or more heroines."[8] This basic definition is supplemented by the outlining of "eight essential elements of the romance novel" and "three accidental elements characteristic of the romance novel" which this thesis has also used as the grounding of its investigation.[9] The eight elements are: 1) "Society Defined," (2) "the Meeting," (3) "the Barrier," (4) "the Attraction," (5) "the Declaration," (6) "Point of Ritual Death," (7) "the Recognition," and

[7] "History," International Association for the Study of Popular Romance, http://iaspr.org/about/history/ (accessed February 16, 2017).
[8] Pamela Regis, A Natural History of the Romance Novel (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), 19.
[9] Regis, A Natural History, 30, 38.

(8) "the Betrothal."[10] The additional three elements include: "Wedding, Dance, or Fete," "Scapegoat Exiled," and "the Bad Converted."[11] The "Betrothal" is the element for which romance novels are most commonly recognized - or what the Romance Writers of America define as "an emotionally satisfying and optimistic ending."[12] This element is alternatively referred to as the "happy ending" or "guaranteed happy ending" within this thesis.[13]

Jennifer McKnight-Trontz outlines the history of the popular romance novel cover in the introduction to *The Look of Love: The Art of the Romance Novel* (2001). McKnight-Trontz discusses the origins of the popular romance novel industry in the 1940s.[14] The author discusses how cover art for romance novels remained largely the same from the 1940s to the 1970s, and was created by "sought-after illustrators."[15] She then outlines how the romance novel cover underwent a significant change in the 1970s:[16]

> "While Harlequin maintained its deliberately old-fashioned art program, in the 1970s other romance publishers shifted toward more explicit sexual content on their covers. As the late 1960s freed society from some of its hang-ups, what was considered 'taboo' in the 1940s and 1950s hardly received a second glance by the 1970s. [...] You could feature a rapturous embrace, a passionate kiss, or a man with his shirt off on the cover of a romance novel without consequence. Previously, artists could only hint at lust [...]."[17]

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[10] Regis, A Natural History, 31-37.
[11] Regis, A Natural History, 38-39.
[12] Romance Writers of America offer the following definition of the romance novel on their website: "Two basic elements comprise every romance novel: a central love story and an emotionally satisfying and optimistic ending." ["About the Romance Genre," Romance Writers of America, https://www.rwa.org/p/cm/ld/fid=578 (accessed February 16, 2017).] I was initially directed to this definition through Maya Rodale's use of it in Dangerous Books for Girls: The Bad Reputation of Romance Novels Explained (2015).
[13] The term "happy ending," "Happily Ever After" or "H.E.A.," and "Happy For Now" or "H.F.N." are used within the following sources: Sarah Wendell and Candy Tan, Beyond Heaving Bosoms: The Smart Bitches' Guide to Romance Novels (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2009), 11; Laurie Kahn, Love Between the Covers, Documentary, The Orchard, 2016; "Happily Ever Afters vs. Tragic Endings," Love Between the Covers, http://www.lovebetweenthecovers.com/hea-and-tragic-endings/ (accessed April 9, 2017); William Gleason, "Why 'happily ever after'?" Interview, The Popular Romance Project: Rethinking Love and Romance, February 7, 2013, http://popularromanceproject.org/why-hea/ (accessed April 9, 2017).
[14] Jennifer McKnight-Trontz, The Look of Love: The Art of the Romance Novel (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2001), 12.
[15] McKnight-Trontz, The Look of Love, 16.
[16] McKnight-Trontz, The Look of Love, 20.
[17] Ibid.

This development lead to the most well-known trope of the romance novel cover - the "clinch" pose. This pose is featured in the cover art of each of the novels under investigation within my thesis. As McKnight-Trontz explains:

> "While sentimentality and innuendo had once been an integral part of romance cover art, the new formula consisted of a bare-chested hero forcing a long-haired heroine into a steamy embrace. Termed 'the clinch,' this type of rapturous embrace dominated future romance covers."[18]

McKnight-Trontz outlines how cover art became the purview of "marketing departments - and not illustrators and art directors" as romance novels became more successful.[19] This changed the function of the cover: "For the most part, sex equaled sales, so conveying some idea of a book's story line quickly became less important than advertising some form of distilled passion [...]."[20] This created the outward form of the romance novel with which popular culture is most familiar today:

> "More than any other gimmick, however, it was the strapping male model with the 'bodice-ripping' tendencies that effected the greatest change in the art of the romance novels. In the 1980s, cover model Fabio became a worldwide celebrity [...]."[21]

The romance novel male model as celebrity and the "clinch" pose are the two most quintessential identifiers of romance novel cover art today, though romance novel cover art has continued to evolve and formulate different trends.[22] Within the scope of this project, the cover art that will be subject to art analysis is within the time period of the late eighties to the mid-nineties of the twentieth century.

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[18] McKnight-Trontz, The Look of Love, 24.
[19] McKnight-Trontz, The Look of Love, 30.
[20] Ibid.
[21] Ibid.
[22] See "Chapter Phallus: The Covers and the Reasons to Snark Them" for a discussion of different romance novel cover trends in Sarah Wendell and Candy Tan's Beyond Heaving Bosoms: The Smart Bitches' Guide to Romance Novels (2009), and see "What We Talk About When We Talk About Fabio" for a discussion of Fabio's celebrity in relation to romance novels in Maya Rodale's Dangerous Books for Girls: The Bad Reputation of Romance Novels Explained (2015).

The process for making a romance novel cover has shifted as the industry has changed, especially with the advent of electronic publishing, to include the use of stock images and photography.[23] The traditional method of creating romance novel covers will be discussed here. Since Dorchester Publishing, the publisher for the three Cassie Edwards' novels under discussion, is now closed, it is not possible to uncover the exact method used in that publishing house.[24] However, after investigation it appears that publishing houses follow a fairly similar process to create romance novel cover art, so this thesis will operate under the assumption that Dorchester Publishing also followed similar parameters. The process involves a discussion with the author first, where basic story elements come into play.[25] Next, the art director works to create potential concepts, keeping the sales and marketing of the book in mind - especially if the author's books follow a typical aesthetic.[26] Then, a cover artist is hired. Sarah Wendell and Candy Tan, in *Beyond Heaving Bosoms: The Smart Bitches' Guide to Romance Novels*, interview Jon Paul, a well-known romance novel cover artist. [27] In the interview Paul outlines how the process would work once he became involved:

> "Painting a cover, according to Paul, is a multistep process, one of which the artist himself is largely in control. After being hired by the art director at a publishing house, the artist chooses the models, develops the poses, hires the photographers,

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[23] Sarah Wendell and Candy Tan, Beyond Heaving Bosoms: The Smart Bitches' Guide to Romance Novels (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2009), 181-85; Ryan Joe, "Anatomy of a Cover: Romance Novels 2015-2016," Publishers Weekly, November 13, 2015, http://ow.ly/rCfV307aPLd (accessed December 15, 2016); Ryan Joe, "Body of Work: Romance Novels 2015-1016," Publishers Weekly, November 12, 2015, http://ow.ly/G2gz307aPVA (accessed December 15, 2016); Gillian Laub, "TIME goes behind the scenes of a romance novel cover shoot," TIME, video, http://ow.ly/lXe8307aQ4z (accessed December 15, 2016); Jeremy Mikula, "The Art of the Romance Novel Cover," Chicago Tribune, December 24, 2015, http://ow.ly/hde7307aQhI (accessed December 15, 2016).

[24] "Dorchester Publishing Goes Dark," RT Book Reviews, March 16, 2012, http://ow.ly/ZB9K307aQVs (accessed November 8, 2016).

[25] Joe, "Anatomy of a Cover"; Holly Jacobs, "B(u)y the Cover," Harlequin, http://www.harlequin.com/articlepage.html?articleId=1406&chapter=0 (date of last access 19 Nov 2015).

[26] Ibid.

[27] "Jon Paul, who along with Pino and John Ennis form the trifecta of romance cover art, is among the most prolific romance-cover artists currently working in the field today." (Wendell and Tan, Beyond Heaving Bosoms, 183.)

> arranges the costumes, and then, using the basic photography, creates the full-colour illustration."[28]

The above outlined process is the method upon which this investigation bases its premise of the production of the cover art of *Savage Dream* (1990), *Savage Persuasion* (1991), and *Savage Mists* (1992).

Captivity Narratives - Literary and Artistic Depictions

There is a connection between captivity narratives and the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre. This connection is both literary and artistic.[29] The captivity narrative is defined by Kathryn Zabelle Derounian-Stodola in *Women's Indian Captivity Narratives* (1998) as "a discrete American literary form that involves accounts of non-Indians captured by Indians in North America."[30] Derounian-Stodola further specifies that captivity narratives feature: "the capture of an individual or several family members rather than larger groupings, and its plot is most commonly resolved with the captive's escape, ransom, transculturation, or death."[31] In "Borderlands of Desire: Captivity, Romance, and the Revolutionary Power of Love," Robin Harders links captivity narratives to the popularity of the kidnapping plotline in popular romance novels, including the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre.[32] This romance novel genre primarily features Indigenous men capturing white women, with the plot ending in the "transculturation" of the white women - a white woman ends up married to the Indigenous hero, and taking on aspects of the Indigenous man's culture while living in his community. However,

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[28] Wendell and Tan, Beyond Heaving Bosoms, 184.
[29] S. Elizabeth Bird discusses the link between nineteenth-century captivity narratives in art and literature and the sexualisation of Indigenous men in "Savage Desires: The Gendered Construction of the American Indian in Popular Media." (66-70, 2001)
[30] Kathryn Zabelle Derounian-Stodola, "Introduction," Women's Indian Captivity Narratives (New York: Penguin Books, 1998), xi.
[31] Derounian-Stodola, "Introduction," xi.
[32] Robin Harders, "Borderlands of Desire: Captivity, Romance, and the Revolutionary Power of Love," New Approaches to Popular Romance Fiction: Critical Essays, Sarah S.G. Frantz and Eric Murphy Selinger, eds., Kindle edition, Jefferson: McFarland & Company, 2012.

the "transculturation" often works both ways - in which the Indigenous male will take on certain aspects of the white woman's culture as well.[33]

Captivity narratives were also depicted in nineteenth-century "high art."[34] For the purposes of this investigation, depictions of captivity narratives in nineteenth-century art have been divided into two categories - violent abduction/death and the romanticized captive. Images of or inspired by captivity narratives generally fall into these two categories. The images of violent abduction/death with which this thesis will concern itself are John Vanderlyn's *The Murder of Jane McCrea* (1804), Charles Ferdinand Wimar's *The Abduction of Daniel Boone's Daughter by the Indians* (1853), and Wimar's *The Abduction of Boone's Daughter by the Indians* (1855-56). The images of the romanticized captive with which this thesis will concern itself are Erastus Dow Palmer's *The White Captive* (1857-58, carved 1858-59), Joseph Mozier's *The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish* (1857-58), and Chauncey Bradley Ives' *The Willing Captive* (modeled ca. 1862-68, carved 1871).

In "The White Woman and the Native Male Body in Vanderlyn's *Death of Jane McCrea*," Robert Sheardy links the depiction of violent abduction/death to the time period of settler colonialism within which the painting was produced:

> "[C]aptivity literature played an important role in shaping American mythology and in casting the archetypal model of the native American common in popular literature and art today. This best-selling genre became a tool of the doctrine of Manifest Destiny, by elevating to notoriety a few innocent victims of the Course of Empire. [...] Of all the accounts of intercultural contacts between Anglo-Americans and natives, whether benign or otherwise, and of all the major paintings of natives and whites together, Vanderlyn's is the first to portray violence between them - interracial

[33] S. Elizabeth Bird, in "Savage Desires: The Gendered Construction of the American Indian in Popular Media," (2001) notes that "The [Indigenous] hero is frequently seen as the voice of progress, who realizes change is coming." (75)

[34] This thesis defines "high" art as art forms which were subject to academies, such as drawing, painting, and sculpture.

> violence *and* inter-gender violence - exploiting the vulnerability of women as a means of identifying that violence."[35]

Sheardy links Vanderlyn's painting to the justification of the settler colonial project through images designed to facilitate the policy of "Manifest Destiny" and therefore make white settlers into the "true" inhabitants of the land.[36]

Charmaine A. Nelson, in *The Color of Stone: Sculpting the Black Female Subject in Nineteenth-Century America* (2007), outlines the function of the romanticized captive through her discussion of Ives' sculpture, *The Willing Captive*:

> "The standing figure of the young white woman, her body marked with signs of 'Indian-ness,' clings to her Native husband and moves away from the beseeching figure of the older kneeling female. Symbolically in between her Native husband and the maternal white woman, representing 'primitivism,' and 'civilization,' respectively, she has made her choice to reside in an Other culture. All three of these sculptures depended on narratives that situated the white female body as the liminal body perched between white civilization and Native primitiveness. If Native penetration and corruption of white culture was effected, it was literally and sexually to be performed through the white female body."[37]

The romanticized captive works to perform, as Nelson identifies, both the titillation of the white viewer, as well as the fears of the settler colonial project. The romanticized captive also relies on tropes of the "Noble Savage."[38]

Parameters of the Investigation of "American Indian Historical Romance" Cover Art

The focus of my investigation is on the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre. This genre encompasses historical romances which feature an Indigenous person as one of the

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[35] Robert Sheardy, "The White Woman and the Native Male Body in Vanderlyn's *Death of Jane McCrea*," The Journal of American Culture, vol. 22, no. 1 (1999), 96-97.

[36] Sheardy, "The White Woman and the Native Male Body," 96-97; Deloria, Playing Indian, 20.

[37] Nelson is referring to the following three sculptures: Louise Lander's Virginia Dare (1859), Joseph Mozier's The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish (1859), and Chauncey B. Ives' The Willing Captive (1868). [Charmaine A. Nelson, "White Slaves and Black Masters: Appropriation and Disavowal in Hiram Powers's *Greek Slave*," The Color of Stone: Sculpting the Black Female Subject in Nineteenth-Century America (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 100-02.]

[38] Peter van Lent, "'Her Beautiful Savage': The Current Sexual Image of the Native American Male," Dressing in Feathers: The Construction of the Indian in American Popular Culture, ed. S. Elizabeth Bird (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996), 211-12.

romantic leads. The pairing is most often between an Indigenous man and a white woman, and the typical setting is in the Western United States, although there are stories which take place in other settings as well. For my investigation, I have decided to focus on one specific author who is prolific and successful in the genre, Cassie Edwards. I will focus on her *Savage Secrets* series, which was published between 1987 and 1995.[39] I will be focusing on three novels within this series based on their inclusion of captivity narrative plot lines: *Savage Dream* (1990), *Savage Persuasion* (1991), and *Savage Mists* (1992).

The time period of production of the covers and novels is in the late eighties to mid-nineties. While further scholarship needs to be completed to determine the first romance novel within this genre, the major proliferation of this type of popular romance novel appears to begin in the 1980s.[40] Though this needs to be subject to further investigation, I would like to suggest that there is a link between the rise of the American Indian Movement in the United States in the late 1960's,[41] the use of the "Indian" as an image within the "counterculture,"[42] as Philip J. Deloria discusses in the last chapter of *Playing Indian* (1998), and the rise of this genre of romance novel. This genre could be read as a reaction by white settler colonialists to the increased activism of Indigenous people by attempting to re-impose the "Vanishing Indian"

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[39] "Cassie Edwards," Fantastic Fiction, http://www.fantasticfiction.co.uk/e/cassie-edwards/ (accessed January 15, 2016).

[40] I make this assertion based off of my examination of romance novel authors whose work tends to focus primarily on this genre, such as Madeline Baker, Cassie Edwards, and Catherine Anderson (Anderson focuses on this genre to a lesser extent, but a particular series that she wrote, The Comanche Series (1990-94), was extremely successful therefore she warrants inclusion), who all started writing and publishing these novels in the late eighties and early nineties. ["Madeline Baker," Fantastic Fiction, https://www.fantasticfiction.com/b/madeline-baker/ (accessed February 26, 2017); "Cassie Edwards," Fantastic Fiction; "Bookshelf: *The Comanche Series*," Catherine Anderson, http://www.catherineanderson.com/ comanche.shtml (accessed February 26, 2017).]

[41] Laura Waterman Wittstock and Elaine J. Salinas, "A Brief History of the American Indian Movement," American Indian Movement, https://www.aimovement.org/ggc/history.html (accessed December 15, 2016).

[42] Deloria, Playing Indian, 154.

narrative through a fantasy of historicity, as well as an engagement with the fantasy of the "exotic" and better world provided through the "New Age" narrative.[43]

The author chosen for this investigation is Cassie Edwards. I chose her because she is a prolific writer in this genre. She continues to publish books to this date, however, her latest publication is a reissue of an earlier novel - *White Fire* was released on 28 February 2017, and was originally published in 1997.[44] She does not appear to have new novels forthcoming, but rather reissues.[45] Edwards has published six series that are a part of the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre.[46] The longest of the series is the *Savage* series at 35 books (according to the Fantastic Fiction website).[47] Cassie Edwards was also chosen because of her financial success and critical accolades. While there are no sales figures available to the public for *Savage Dream* (1990), *Savage Persuasion* (1991), and *Savage Mists* (1992), Kensington Publishing states on her author profile that she has sold "more than 10 million copies of over 100 novels."[48] Additionally, in a *Publishers Weekly* article from 20 August 2007, celebrating the

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[43] Deloria, Playing Indian, 64, 154.

[44] "White Fire," Indigo, https://www.chapters.indigo.ca/en-ca/books/white-fire/9781420136722-item.html?ikwsec=Books&ikwidx=0 (accessed December 15, 2016); "White Fire," Goodreads, http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/1742618.White_Fire (accessed April 10, 2017).

[45] At the time of writing, the next two books slated for publication according to the Indigo website and the Kensington Publishing website are *Swift Horse* (September 2017) and *Wild Embrace* (June 2017). *Swift Horse* was originally published in 2005, and *Wild Embrace* was originally published in 1993. ["Results for 'Cassie Edwards'," Indigo, https://www.chapters.indigo.ca/en-ca/books/search/?keywords=cassie%20edwards (accessed April 10, 2017); "Swift Horse," Indigo, https://www.chapters.indigo.ca/en-ca/books/swift-horse/9781420136685-item.html?ikwid=cassie+edwards&ikwsec=Books&ikwidx=0 (accessed April 10, 2017); "Wild Embrace," Indigo, https://www.chapters.indigo.ca/en-ca/books/wild-embrace/9781420136869-item.html?ikwid=cassie+edwards&ikwsec=Books&ikwidx=1 (accessed April 10, 2017); "Cassie Edwards," Kensington Publishing Corp., http://www.kensingtonbooks.com/author.aspx/23543 (accessed December 15, 2016); "Swift Horse (Printed Copy)," Kensington Publishing Corp., http://www.kensingtonbooks.com/book.aspx/35478 (accessed April 10, 2017); "Wild Embrace: The Wild Series #6 (Printed Copy)," Kensington Publishing Corp., http://www.kensingtonbooks.com/book.aspx/35091 (accessed April 10, 2017); "Swift Horse," Goodreads, http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/1839372.Swift_Horse (accessed April 10, 2017); "Wild Embrace (Wild Arizona #3)," Goodreads, http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/602208.Wild_Embrace (accessed April 10, 2017).

[46] "CASSIE EDWARDS SERIES LIST," FictionDB, https://www.fictiondb.com/author/cassie-edwards~series-list~2243.htm (accessed April 10, 2017); "Cassie Edwards," Fantastic Fiction.

[47] "Cassie Edwards," Fantastic Fiction.

[48] "Cassie Edwards," Kensington Publishing Corp.

release of Edwards 100th romance novel, a representative from the now closed Dorchester Publishing stated: "Condon said Edwards's sales have been 'remarkably steady,' with each book in recent years averaging printings between 250,000 and 300,000."[49] She has also won the "*RT Book Reviewers* Lifetime Achievement Award and Reviewer's Choice Award," as stated on the Kensington Publishing website.[50]

Another reason why Edwards was chosen for this investigation is for the stated purpose of her novels within the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre (as outlined on the author page of the Kensington Publishing website): "Cassie is endeavoring to write about every major tribe in America."[51] This goal appears to be within the framework of a type of romance novel ethnography - similar to that of Edward Curtis, except placed in a fictionalized romantic setting (though it is no secret within academic scholarship that Curtis participated in fictionalization in his photographs[52]). Her research is cited on the Kensington Publishing page:

> "Cassie says that she truly loves researching the varied tribes that she writes about. She enjoys discovering interesting customs that she can use in her next book; always making sure the information that she uses is authentic."[53]

This claim to "authenticity" is the final reason why Edwards was chosen for this investigation.[54] Edwards uses her research to make the initial claim, and then later uses heritage as a second claim to authenticity:

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[49] "Edwards Pens 100th Romance," Publishers Weekly, August 20, 2007, https://web.archive.org/web/20080118161050/http://www.publishersweekly.com/article/CA6469940.html?q=cassie+edwards (accessed December 15, 2016).

[50] "Cassie Edwards," Kensington Publishing Corp; S. Elizabeth Bird also mentions Edwards' "Lifetime Achievement Award" in "Savage Desires: The Gendered Construction of the American Indian in Popular Media." (71, 2001)

[51] "Cassie Edwards," Kensington Publishing Corp.

[52] Thomas King, "You're Not the Indian I Had in Mind," The Truth About Stories: A Native Narrative, E-book, (Toronto: House of Anansi Press, 2003), 10-11.

[53] "Cassie Edwards," Kensington Publishing Corp.

[54] See Philip J. Deloria's Playing Indian for a discussion of the concept of "authenticity" in relation to Indigenous identity. (101, 1998)

> "Cassie recently discovered why she has such a[n] endearing love for Native Americans. Her father told her that his grandmother, was a full-blood Cheyenne, which makes Cassie proud to say that she is, in part, Cheyenne, herself."[55]

While the revelation of Edwards' heritage could be true, her claiming of Indigenous heritage is a way to claim authenticity and authority although she is dominantly of white settler ancestry, and appears to have no kinship ties with any Indigenous communities.[56] This is one of the "Moves to Innocence" Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang outline in their seminal article, "Decolonization is not a metaphor" (2012).[57] This "move to innocence" is called "Settler nativism":

> "In this move to innocence, settlers locate or invent a long-lost ancestor who is rumoured to have had 'Indian blood,' and they use this claim to mark themselves blameless in the attempted eradications of Indigenous peoples. [...] Settler nativism, or what Vine Deloria Jr. calls the Indian-grandmother complex, is a settler move to innocence because it is an attempt to deflect a settler identity, while continuing to enjoy settler privilege and occupying stolen land."[58]

In this instance, Edwards' claiming of Indigenous heritage acts as an attempt to move from the position of a white settler colonialist to that of an "authentic" authority on Indigeneity when writing her romantic ethnographic series.[59]

Finally, there is an important matter to examine in regards to Edwards which must not go unmentioned when discussing her work. In 2008, it was revealed through an investigation by *Smart Bitches, Trashy Books: All of the Romance, None of the Bullshit*, a website devoted to romance novels, that Cassie Edwards plagiarized parts of her novels.[60] While initially one of

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[55] "Cassie Edwards," Kensington Publishing Corp.

[56] Dr. Allan Downey introduced me to the concept of kinship during our discussion on September 29, 2016 in my directed reading course with him, Indigenous Identities and Nationhood.

[57] Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, "Decolonization is not a metaphor," Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education, & Society, vol. 1., no. 1 (2012), 10.

[58] Tuck and Yang, "Decolonization is not a metaphor," 10-11.

[59] Ibid.

[60] Candy, "Cassie Edwards Investigatory Extravaganza: The First Post," Smart Bitches, Trashy Books: All of the Romance, None of the Bullshit, January 7, 2008, http://smartbitchestrashybooks.com/2008/01/cassie_edwards_extravaganza/ (accessed January 15, 2016); Felicia R. Lee, "A Romance Novelist is Accused of Copying," The New York Times, January 12, 2008, http://www.nytimes.com/2008/01/12/books/12roma.html (accessed January 15, 2016); Wendell and Tan, Beyond Heaving Bosoms, 200-207.

Edwards' publishers, Signet, pushed back, stating that the sources were under "copyright fair-use doctrine,"[61] later that year after an "extensive review" the publisher dropped Edwards from its company, citing "irreconcilable editorial differences."[62] *Savage Dream* (1990) is one of the books revealed to include plagiarized passages.[63]

Chapters

Chapter One examines the theories which this thesis will build upon. These include Homi K. Bhabha's *The Location of Culture* (1994), Beth Fowkes Tobin's *Picturing Imperial Power: Colonial Subjects in Eighteenth-Century British Painting* (1999), Philip J. Deloria's *Playing Indian* (1998), Peter van Lent's " 'Her Beautiful Savage': The Current Sexual Image of the Native American Male" (1996), S. Elizabeth Bird's "Savage Desires: The Gendered Construction of the American Indian in Popular Media" (2001), Drew Hayden Taylor's "Indian Love Call (minus Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy)" (2008), and Richard Dyer's *White* (1997). I conclude the chapter by presenting my own theory of a performance of appropriation - in which through the process of "grafting" colonial constructions of the "other" onto an "idealized white male body,"[64]

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[61] Lynn Andriani, "Romance Blog Suggests Romance Writer's Plagiarism; Signet Says It's Fair Use," Publishers Weekly, January 9, 2008, https://web.archive.org/web/20080113224710/http://www.publishersweekly.com/article/CA6518522.html (accessed December 15, 2016).

[62] Jane, "Win One for the Reader: Signet and Edwards Parting Ways Over Plagiarism," Dear Author, April 19, 2008, http://dearauthor.com/features/industry-news/win-one-for-the-reader-signet-and-edwards-parting-ways-over-plagiarism/ (accessed January 15, 2016).

[63] There is the potential that plagiarism could be uncovered in Savage Persuasion (1991) and Savage Mists (1992) as well, since the investigation available to the public on the Smart Bitches, Trashy Books website was initiated and conducted by readers, and has not reviewed all of the novels in Edwards' oeuvre. ["Cassie Edwards Novels: Tracking their Similarities to Passages Found in Other Books," Smart Bitches, Trashy Books: All of the Romance, None of the Bullshit, https://smartbitchestrashybooks.files.wordpress.com/2008/01/cassieedwardsrevd.pdf (accessed January 15, 2016).]

[64] The credit for the concept of "grafting" and the phrase "idealized white male bodies" belongs to Dr. Charmaine A. Nelson, my thesis supervisor, who suggested the concept of "grafting" to me in an email on September 21, 2016, stating: "Regarding your own theoretical work, the word 'grafting' (as in skin graft) may be useful to you - it seems to me that what is happening is that so-called exotic aspects of indigenous male culture and racial identity are being grafted onto idealized white male bodies."

the Indigenous male body of the novel's hero is then read as simultaneously "normative" and "other," creating the "Normative/Other" body.

In Chapter Two, I discuss race and the romance novel hero, and how different people of colour have been assessed as historical or contemporary heroes. I examine how settler colonialism has imposed constructions of white masculinity onto Indigenous men, and compare these constructions to Indigenous masculinity. I then delve into an art analysis of the Indigenous male heroes featured on the cover art for each novel: Shadow in *Savage Dream* (1990), Brave Eagle in *Savage Persuasion* (1991), and Iron Cloud in *Savage Mists* (1992).

In Chapter Three, the whiteness of the romance novel industry is subject to discussion. The whiteness of the industry is reflected both in terms of the marketing towards the consumer, who is assumed to be a white heterosexual female, as well as the whiteness of the heroines, in the novels and the cover art. I then discuss the depiction of captivity narratives in nineteenth-century art and demonstrate how these depictions are reflected in the cover art of the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre. I briefly discuss the historical accuracy of the relationships between white women and Indigenous men in the romance novels versus how they would have been viewed during the historical period in which the novels take place. Finally, I move into an art analysis of the white female heroines depicted on the cover art for each novel: Maria Zamora in *Savage Dream* (1990), Brietta Russell in *Savage Persuasion* (1991), and Damita in *Savage Mists* (1992).[65]

This thesis aims to deconstruct what the cover art for the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre presents as visual signifiers of Indigenous masculinity, white femininity, sex,

[65] Damita's last name is never stated in the novel, although her cousin's last name is Jacobs - while this could be Damita's last name as well, I have chosen not to use it as the author does not explicitly use it in reference to the character. [Cassie Edwards, Savage Mists (New York: Leisure Books, 1992), 57.]

and race and how these visual signifiers are being marketed for the consumption and titillation of the assumed white female reader.

Chapter One

The "Normative/Other" Body and the "Pure" Body: Grafting the "Exotic" and the Displacement of Desire

"Her face aflame, her heart still beating in an erratic fashion, Brietta placed her fingertips to her lips, still tasting his kiss there, still dazzled by it. She was afraid to breathe, much less speak. For a moment her world and the Indian's had become one. He had been a man, she a woman, with no difference in skin color affecting how they felt about each other. Even now, as she stared with wonder at his muscled copper back, she knew that he had awakened a desire in her that surely could never die. But how could it have happened? Such a love between them was forbidden! She knew it, and so must he."
- Cassie Edwards, *Savage Persuasion* (1991), 69.

This chapter will examine the theories upon which this thesis is based in order to present my own theoretical concept of constructions of race, gender, and sexuality in the cover art of the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre. The methodology I employed in my inquiry consisted of close readings of various primary sources, including blog posts, news articles, and websites devoted to books/romance novels (due to the vibrant online presence of the popular romance community), the three Cassie Edwards' novels themselves, *Savage Dream* (1990), *Savage Persuasion* (1991), and *Savage Mists* (1992), and a range of historical romance novels (with the addition of a few contemporary romance novels for contrast). The secondary sources I read included fields such as, but not exclusively limited to, Popular Romance Studies, Critical Whiteness Studies, and Indigenous Studies. The theories utilized within this thesis can be grouped into three categories: (1) theories of appropriation, (2) colonial constructs of Indigenous identity, and (3) deconstructing whiteness. These three categories encompass the main concepts which this thesis will examine and build upon. My understanding of theories of appropriation have been derived from Beth Fowkes Tobin's *Picturing Imperial Power: Colonial Subjects in Eighteenth-Century British Painting* (1999) and Homi K. Bhabha's *The Location of Culture* (1994). My understanding of colonial constructs of Indigenous identity draws from Philip J.

Deloria's *Playing Indian* (1998), Peter van Lent's " 'Her Beautiful Savage': The Current Sexual Image of the Native American Male" (1996), S. Elizabeth Bird's "Savage Desires: The Gendered Construction of the American Indian in Popular Media," (2001) and Drew Hayden Taylor's "Indian Love Call (minus Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy)." (2008) My analysis of the deconstruction of whiteness will focus on Richard Dyer's ground-breaking book *White* (1997).

As I have outlined in the Introduction, the popular romance genre I am examining portrays, visually and textually, romantic pairings between Indigenous men and white women. These romances are typically set in the nineteenth century in the western United States. This specific genre of interracial, heterosexual relationships has deep ties in the literary and artistic genre of the Indian Captivity Narrative, which I discuss in greater detail in Chapter Three. The purpose of this chapter is to examine and theorize the Indigenous male heroes within "American Indian Historical Romance" novels, and how these figures simultaneously display Indigeneity (rather, colonial constructs of Indigenous culture read as "authentic" by white female readers[66]) as well as heteronormative masculinity read as white. As such, this chapter will theorize that in the cover art of "American Indian Historical Romance," colonial constructions of Indigenous identity are "grafted"[67] onto "ideal white male bodies"[68] in order to titillate the primarily white female reader with the "exotic," while still signalling the potential for a romantic happy ending.

Theories of Appropriation

This chapter aims to utilize Homi K. Bhabha's theories of appropriation presented in *The Location of Culture* (1994) by utilizing Bhabha's examination of the construction of colonial identities as the framework upon which to deconstruct the visual signifiers of Indigenous

[66] See Thomas King's "Too Heavy to Lift" in The Inconvenient Indian: A Curious Account of Native People in North America (2013), and Philip J. Deloria's Playing Indian (101, 1998) for a discussion about white settler colonial conceptions of "authenticity" in relation to Indigeneity.
[67] Email from Dr. Charmaine A. Nelson, September 21, 2016.
[68] Ibid.

masculinity and white femininity marketed to the assumed white female reader in "American Indian Historical Romance" novel cover art. Bhabha outlines the "process of identification"[69] in his discussion of Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952) - that is, the creation of the "other" in the colonial-settler project. Bhabha identifies three key steps:

> "Three conditions that underlie an understanding of the *process of identification* in the analytic of desire emerge. First: to exist is to be called into being in relation to an otherness, its look or locus. [...] This process is visible in the exchange of looks between native and settler that structures their psychic relation in the paranoid fantasy of boundless possession and its familiar language of reversal [...]. It is always in relation to the place of the Other that colonial desire is articulated [...]."[70]

Bhabha is outlining that the first step in the process of creating the "other" for the colonizer is creating a dichotomy between colonizer versus colonized - us versus them, "normative" to "other." This is done through the colonial gaze, in which the colonized becomes "other" - the colonial gaze does not see the culture and identity of the colonized, but instead frames them with colonial constructions of their own mis-creation of the colonized's culture and identity. Bhabha then identifies the second step in the "process of identification":

> "Second: the very place of identification, caught in the tension of demand and desire, is a space of splitting. [...] It is not the colonialist Self or the colonized Other, but the disturbing distance in-between that constitutes the figure of colonial otherness - the white man's artifice inscribed on the black man's body."[71]

The next step in the process of creating colonial constructions of identity is that in which the colonial construction of identity becomes a separate entity. It is a manifestation of the colonizer's conception of the colonized people which has been placed onto the body of the colonized, which has no true relation to the colonized population's own identity, culture or personhood. The third step in the "process of identification" is:

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[69] Homi K. Bhabha, "Interrogating Identity: Frantz Fanon and the Postcolonial Prerogative," The Location of Culture (London: Routledge, 1994), 63-64.
[70] Bhabha, "Interrogating Identity," 63.
[71] Bhabha, "Interrogating Identity," 63-64.

> "Finally, the question of identification is never the affirmation of a pre-given identity, never a self-fulfilling prophecy - it is always the production of an image of identity and the transformation of the subject in assuming that image. The demand of identification - that is, to be *for* an Other - entails the representation of the subject in the differentiating order of otherness."[72]

Bhabha outlines the last step in the process of creating colonial constructions of identity as the continuous repetition of the colonial gaze and through that gaze, the placement of the image of the "other" onto the colonized body. This process does not reflect the true identity of the colonized person, but rather is the creation of an identity in which their physical body is not read - what Bhabha later terms the "possibility and impossibility of identity, presence through absence."[73] While the colonized person's body is present, their true identity is absent - it has been absented through the gaze of the colonizer, and the colonizer's own constructions of the colonized identity.

Within this thesis, the "other" is the Indigenous male hero within the novel and the colonizer is the white female heroine within the novel. The assumed white female reader, through envisioning herself as the heroine, also becomes the colonizer within the story, as well as within the larger act of consumption. Bhabha's "process of identification" uncovers the how the Indigenous male hero is created within novels of the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre. This theory outlines how the colonial constructs of Indigeneity are read onto the bodies of Indigenous people. This process is key for its creation of "presence through absence,"[74] which is clear within the novels of the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre. While Indigenous characters are the hero or heroine of the novel (though primarily it is Indigenous men and white women who are paired together, as will be discussed in Chapter Two), these novels are in no way an accurate reflection of Indigeneity - in culture, romantic relationships, or society. Rather,

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[72] Bhabha, "Interrogating Identity," 64.
[73] Bhabha, "Interrogating Identity," 75.
[74] Ibid.

these novels depict colonial constructions of the "Indian"[75] - so while Indigenous characters are present in the book, they are colonial configurations of Indigeneity and are therefore absent.[76]

Bhabha argues that the process of creating these colonial constructions of identity, i.e. the "stereotype"[77] is a fetishistic act.[78] Bhabha argues that the "stereotype [as] fetish" has two conflicting sides:

> "The fetish or stereotype gives access to an 'identity' which is predicated as much on mastery and pleasure as it is on anxiety and defence, for it is a form of multiple and contradictory belief in its recognition of difference and disavowal of it. [...] The stereotype, then, as the primary point of subjectification in colonial discourse, for both colonizer and colonized, is the scene of a similar fantasy and defence - the desire for an originality which is again threatened by the differences of race, colour, and culture."[79]

Bhabha argues that the "stereotype," i.e. the colonialist constructions of identity, is a "fetish" because it is an act of power and domination for the colonizer - to name, claim, and create this "other" through a built identity based on the colonial gaze.[80] However, this act of power also creates a dichotomy in which the colonial power is also threatened by that which is "other" - the colonizer is constantly trying to differentiate themselves from this construct, and is scared of the potential of this "other" to shape/change their own colonial identity.[81]

Bhabha's theory of the "stereotype" as a "fetish[istic]" act is an integral theory within this thesis. The novels of the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre are the facilitation of the "captivity narrative" fantasy for the assumed white female reader, in which the "exotic" figure of the Indigenous male hero kidnaps her and ravishes her. This is the ultimate enactment of the

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[75] Thomas King, "Too Heavy to Lift," The Inconvenient Indian: A Curious Account of Native People in North America (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 53-54.
[76] Bhabha, "Interrogating Identity," 75.
[77] Homi K. Bhabha, "The Other Question: Stereotype, Discrimination and the Discourse of Colonialism," The Location of Culture (London: Routledge, 1994), 94.
[78] Bhabha, "The Other Question," 106.
[79] Bhabha, "The Other Question," 107.
[80] Ibid.
[81] Ibid.

"stereotype [as] fetish," as the assumed white female reader is fantasizing about the stereotype of the "Noble Savage"[82] and the "Vanishing Indian,"[83] as will be discussed further in Chapters Two and Three.

Bhabha's concept of "mimicry"[84] illustrates the dichotomy of domination/potential subversion in the "stereotype": "Mimicry is, thus, the sign of a double articulation; a complex strategy of reform, regulation and discipline, which 'appropriates' the Other as it visualizes power."[85] "Mimicry" is the act in which the colonized take on aspects of the colonizer as a part of the colonial project - of course, Bhabha identifies that this strategy of "mimicry" leads to the potential for two things: one, in which the colonized can never fully inhabit the space of the colonizer, despite their "mimicry," as to successfully mimic the colonizer would threaten the colonial project which is based on difference,[86] and two, in which "mimicry" creates the potential for subversion through the performance of "mimicry" - the mockery of colonial constructs of identity.[87] However, as Beth Fowkes Tobin argues, "mimicry" can also be utilised as a strategy in which the colonizer "mimics" colonial constructs of identity. Bhabha's theory of "mimicry" is key to the examination of the covers of the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre, as a theory which I will build upon later on in this chapter, by presenting a fourth mode of the performance of appropriation.

Tobin's *Picturing Imperial Power: Colonial Subjects in Eighteenth-Century British Painting* (1999) discusses two key concepts in which the colonizer mimics the colonized in order

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[82] Peter van Lent, "'Her Beautiful Savage': The Current Sexual Image of the Native American Male," Dressing in Feathers: The Construction of the Indian in American Popular Culture, S. Elizabeth Bird ed. (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996), 211-12.
[83] Philip J. Deloria, Playing Indian (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1998), 64.
[84] Homi K. Bhabha, "Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse," The Location of Culture (London: Routledge, 1994), 85.
[85] Bhabha, "Of Mimicry and Man," 86.
[86] Bhabha identifies this as: "*Almost the same but not white* [...]." (Bhabha, "Of Mimicry and Man," 89.)
[87] "The *menace* of mimicry is its *double* vision which in disclosing the ambivalence of colonial discourse also disrupts its authority." (Bhabha, "Of Mimicry and Man," 88.)

to appropriate and create identity - these concepts are "decontextualization" and "cultural cross-dressing."[88] Tobin's work is integral to my thesis since in the third chapter of her book she examines the "cultural cross-dressing" and appropriation of Indigenous culture through "decontextualization" in "high" art portraits of white men. Tobin argues that "decontextualization" is the process in which the colonizer takes visual significations from the colonized and removes them from their original context - place, or spiritual, political, and cultural meaning - and utilizes them to inhabit an "illusion" of "otherness".[89] Tobin coined the term "cultural cross-dressing" to discuss this performative method of colonial mimicry: "I have borrowed the term cross-dressing from the discourse on gender identity [...] It implies that identity is a matter of performance rather than something that emanates from within our bodies."[90] However, Tobin argues that "the sexual, racial, ethnic, and class positions of the cross-dresser shape the performance so that cross-dressing can subvert or reinscribe the dominant codes or do a little of both."[91] "Cultural cross-dressing" is another mode of "mimicry" - in which the act of performance of identity can work both to reinforce colonial constructions of identity of the "other", through the colonial performance of the colonizer as "other," or can work to deconstruct colonial constructs of identity through the performance by the colonized of these constructs in which they subvert the colonial gaze.[92]

The colonial construction of identity can be further specified from the theories of appropriation discussed above to the manner in which the colonial-settler project constructed Indigenous identity as the "Indian." The cover art and text within the "American Indian

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[88] Beth Fowkes Tobin, "Cultural Cross-Dressing in British America: Portraits of British Officers and Mohawk Warriors," Picturing Imperial Power: Colonial Subjects in Eighteenth-Century British Painting (Duke University Press, 1999), 85, 88.
[89] Tobin, "Cultural Cross-Dressing in British America," 85-86.
[90] Tobin, "Cultural Cross-Dressing in British America," 88.
[91] Tobin, "Cultural Cross-Dressing in British America," 90.
[92] Tobin, "Cultural Cross-Dressing in British America," 105.

Historical Romance" novels I will examine in this thesis demonstrate that the colonial construct of the "Indian" is still a desirable construct for the assumed white female settler colonial reader, whose buying power purchases romance novels to approximately 1.08 billion in the United States (in 2013), with historical romance comprising 34% of what romance readers are reading (Romance Writers of America specifies between "print" and "e-books," this statistic refers to "print").[93]

Colonial Constructs of Indigenous Identity

Philip J. Deloria's *Playing Indian* (1998) argues that "Indianness" has been constructed to create an "American" identity for colonial-settlers through the project of "playing Indian":

> "Costume and disguise [...] can have extraordinary transformative qualities. [...] Disguise readily calls the notion of fixed identity into question. At the same time, however, wearing a mask also makes one self-conscious of a real 'me' underneath. This simultaneous experience is both precarious and creative, and it can play a critical role in the way people construct new identities. [...] In each of these historical moments, Americans have returned to the Indian, reinterpreting the intuitive dilemmas surrounding Indianness to meet the circumstances of their times."[94]

"Playing Indian" is the colonial project in which putting on colonial constructions of Indigenous identity and the performance of these stereotypes have been utilized to define "American" identity - that is the creation of white colonial-settlers as "Americans" and the "true" inhabitants of the landscape, rather than colonial interlopers.[95] The concept of "playing Indian" is key for the theory of grafting - in which the idealized white male bodies which inhabit the colonial ideals of masculinity have settler colonial constructs of the "Indian" adhered to their bodies in order to inhabit both identifications simultaneously. Grafting relies on the visual stereotypes created by white settler colonials of the "Indian," using "decontextualized" symbols

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[93] "Romance Statistics," Romance Writers of America, https://www.rwa.org/p/cm/ld/fid=580 (accessed February 24, 2017); "Reader Statistics," Romance Writers of America, https://www.rwa.org/p/cm/ld/fid=582 (accessed February 24, 2017).
[94] Deloria, Playing Indian, 6-7.
[95] Deloria, Playing Indian, 20-22.

to create the white settler colonial conception of the "authentic Indian" - which does not reflect Indigenous identity whatsoever. Similarly, it was through the performance of "Indianness," that colonial-settlers could inhabit the bodies of "Indians" and thus become inhabitants of the land.[96]

Deloria discusses particular moments in which "playing Indian" has been utilized for different national discourses - from the American Revolution, where "Indianness" was used to clearly delineate "Britishness" from "Americanness" to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries where "Indianness" was used to "encounter the authentic amidst the anxiety of urban industrial and postindustrial life."[97] Deloria argues that the ways in which "playing Indian" was used and the "Indian Other" was constructed shifted and was dependent on the cultural, social, and political needs of the colonial-settler project:

> "I have showed how non-Indians constructed Indian Others along two different scales: First, an axis of distance on which Indians could appear anywhere between a remote inhumanity and a mirror reflection of one's Self, and second, an axis of value on which Indians appeared in gradations of positive and negative."[98]

Deloria argues that based on the needs of the settler-colonial project, the "Indian" can be created as different colonial constructions of identity.[99] These forms are most often used with the claim of "authenticity." Deloria argues the falsity of the notion of the "authentic" when it comes to "Indianness":

> "The authentic, as numerous scholars have pointed out, is a culturally constructed category created in opposition to a perceived state of inauthenticity. [...] Because those seeking authenticity have already defined their own state as inauthentic, they easily locate authenticity in the figure of an Other. This Other can be coded in terms of time (nostalgia or archaism), place (the small town), or culture (Indianness)."[100]

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[96] Dr. Allan Downey, Indigenous Identities and Nationhood, Lecture, October 3, 2016.
[97] Deloria, Playing Indian, 7.
[98] Deloria, Playing Indian, 175.
[99] Deloria, Playing Indian, 20.
[100] Deloria, Playing Indian, 101.

The "authentic Indian" is a creation of the colonial gaze - the "other" that has been placed in a fixed perpetual state of "nostalgia" about their "Indianness".[101] Therefore, to be a contemporaneous Indigenous person is to be inherently "inauthentic."[102] "Playing Indian" incorporates the strategies of "cultural cross-dressing" and "mimicry" into the settler colonial project of inhabiting the land through inhabiting "Indian" identity through "disguise" and performance.

Daniel Francis, in *The Imaginary Indian: The Image of the Indian in Canadian Culture* (1992), discusses the colonial construction of Indigenous identity in a Canadian context. However, fundamentally, Deloria would agree with Francis, who argues:

> "Ignoble or noble? From the first encounter, Europeans viewed aboriginal Americans through a screen of their own prejudices and preconceptions. [...] [N]on-Natives in North America have long defined themselves in relation to the Other in the form of the Indian."[103]

Francis and Deloria both argue that the "Indian" is a construction of the colonial gaze rather than a reflection of Indigenous identity, culture, or nationhood. Peter van Lent and S. Elizabeth Bird both begin to break this discussion of the colonial creation of the "Indian" into specific colonial constructions of Indigenous masculinity and femininity, distinctions which are crucial for my own project.[104]

Van Lent's book chapter "'Her Beautiful Savage': The Current Sexual Image of the Native American Male" argues that Indigenous men have been hyper-sexualized within contemporary popular culture. He argues that Indigenous masculinity has been divided into two specific tropes:

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[101] Deloria, Playing Indian, 101.
[102] King, "Too Heavy to Lift," 61-62.
[103] Daniel Francis, "Introduction," The Imaginary Indian: The Image of the Indian in Canadian Culture (Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 1992), 7-8.
[104] Peter van Lent focuses his chapter specifically on the sexualisation of Indigenous men, while S. Elizabeth Bird focuses her article on both Indigenous men and women.

> "Two familiar labels come to mind: those of 'Noble Savage' and 'Fearless Warrior.' [...] On the 'noble' side is a good deal of the residue of Romanticism; according to the typical formula, Native Americans derive their nobility from being close to the primal forces of life, that is, close to nature and the natural state of things.[...] The 'Fearless Warrior' image is a bit more complex. This character type overlaps with the [Noble Savage], but it is less passive, less blissful, and less benign. This archetype is strongly visual."[105]

Van Lent argues that the imaging of Indigenous masculinity consists of two primary tropes - the "noble savage" and the "fearless warrior."[106] Each of these images is sexualized - one as romantic and close to nature, the other as a virile and hyper-masculine warrior.[107]

Van Lent's chapter is key to this thesis because he also looks more broadly at how the image of the Indigenous man was turned into a sexual idol for white consumption in popular culture, and identifies key purveyors of this, one of which is the romance novel - specifically the genre with which this thesis is concerned, the "American Indian Historical Romance." Van Lent identifies numerous facets through which this sexualisation is achieved: "nudity or near-nudity," "sparsity of body hair," "roles of the 'good guys'," "a natural setting," and "the Native male as victim."[108] These facets can be found within the cover art and the plot of the novels studied in this thesis; *Savage Dream* (1990), *Savage Persuasion* (1991), and *Savage Mists* (1992).

In the discussion of a painting of an Indigenous male printed on a greeting card, Van Lent identifies a key point with which this thesis is concerned - the "whitening" of the Indigenous male figure in order to make him a more palatable figure of desire to white female readers:

> "An oil painting by Ozz Franca reproduced on a greeting card printed by the Leanin' Tree Company offers a perfect example of this representation. The subject's long black hair, feathered headband, bare and heavily muscled torso are classic. High cheekbones and oriental eyes give his face an exotic cast, but the elongated nose and face are curiously Caucasian, and this leads us to an important fact. In current popular culture the exoticism of the Native male is always carefully controlled. For

[105] Van Lent, "'Her Beautiful Savage'", 211-12.
[106] Ibid.
[107] Ibid.
[108] Van Lent, "'Her Beautiful Savage'", 217, 219, 222, 224.

> example, most of the heroes of the Indian romance novels are of mixed blood - 'half-breeds'. This convention provides a safety net against several sexual pitfalls. First, it checks the exotic image from being too alien and keeps it well within the bounds of 'tall, dark and handsome.' Second, it also avoids any squeamishness about miscegenation on the part of the reader. Since the hero is half-white, the romantic-sexual bond is not truly interracial and, once again, 'the half-breed's' appearance can be quite comfortably Caucasian."[109]

Van Lent argues that the Indigenous male figure is whitened in popular culture, both visually and textually - visually, through features meant to adhere more closely to white male facial features, and textually, particularly in romance novels, through being a child of an interracial couple, and therefore being both white and Indigenous.[110] This thesis will build upon Van Lent's theory in this chapter by proposing that the male figure on the cover art of the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre is created through the process of grafting, which adheres colonial constructs of the "Indian" onto an idealised white male body in order to create the "Normative/Other" figure. This thesis will also build upon Van Lent's theory in Chapter Three by demonstrating how the "Normative/Other" body is also created through the figure of the white female heroine on the cover of "American Indian Historical Romance" novels.[111]

Bird, in "Savage Desires: The Gendered Construction of the American Indian in Popular Media," builds upon Van Lent's discussion by expanding her analysis to the ways in which Indigenous men and women are visualized in popular culture, and identifying the historical roots of these constructions. Bird argues that Indigenous men are visualized in two different ways - the "Doomed Warrior" and the "Wise Elder."[112] The "Doomed Warrior" trope will be the focus of

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[109] Van Lent, "'Her Beautiful Savage'", 215-17.
[110] Ibid.
[111] Richard Dyer, "The Matter of Whiteness," White (New York: Routledge, 1997), 28; Robert Sheardy, "The White Woman and the Native Male Body in Vanderlyn's *Death of Jane McCrea*," Journal of American Culture vol. 22, no. 1 (1999), 97.
[112] S. Elizabeth Bird, "Savage Desires: The Gendered Construction of the American Indian in Popular Media," Selling the Indian: Commercializing and Appropriating American Indian Cultures, Carter Jones Meyer and Diana Royer, eds. (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2001), 56, 75.

this discussion, as it is primarily the mode in which the figures on the cover art of the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre are visualized, and Bird discusses the romance novel as a specific facet of this visualization.[113] The "Doomed Warrior" is a sexualized trope of Indigenous men in white settler colonial culture:

> "Whereas the African-American male has been stereotyped exclusively as a sexual predator (at least until very recently), an important dimension of the objectification of the Indian male has long been an acknowledgment of his erotic appeal, even if that appeal is forbidden. [...] African-Americans were pure sexual threat, but American Indians, although also often characterized as animal-like, at the same time carried associations of pristine 'first American' purity."[114]

Bird discusses the distinction between the way in which the colonial gaze has sexualized two different races in America based on hierarchies of race created in the nineteenth-century and earlier - this will be discussed in Chapter Two.

The "Doomed Warrior's" appeal lay in his historical inevitable demise, characterized through his "nobility".[115] The colonial construct of Indigenous masculinity created a hyper-masculine being placed in the historical "authentic" past.[116] While the Indigenous male heroes in the cover art of the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre utilize particular tropes of the "Doomed Warrior," such as the historicity of the figure,[117] the hyper-sexualisation of his masculinity,[118] and the visualization of this figure as someone only accessible to white female

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[113] However, to briefly note here, the "Wise Elder" is "in late middle age, gray haired, sombre, and wise. [...] Whereas the young Warrior represents the pathos of a doomed race, the Wise Elder represents the way the wisdom of the lost race can be incorporated peacefully into the modern world." The "Wise Elder" represents the last vestiges of the "Vanishing Indian," someone whose main function is to help the colonizer. (Bird, "Savage Desires," 77.)

[114] Bird, "Savage Desires," 68-69.

[115] Bird, "Savage Desires," 68-70.

[116] "Today, when the Indian man is depicted in his sexual mode, he is most often transferred back to the past, a time of a traditional lifestyle. Almost without exception the Indian romances take place in the nineteenth-century." (Van Lent, "'Her Beautiful Savage'", 219.)

[117] Bird, "Savage Desires," 68-70.

[118] Bird, "Savage Desires," 70-71; Van Lent, "'Her Beautiful Savage'".

desire,[119] it is key to note that the narratives within the novel all conclude in the happy ending central to the popular romance novel, through which the heterosexual couple overcomes any trials which arise from their different races, societies and cultures.[120] However, this narrative ending usually includes both an idyllic return to nature, as well as some indication of the "inevitability" of progress, which plays into the trope of the "Vanishing Indian" or the "doomed" aspect of the "Doomed Warrior." Bird argues that the Indigenous hero "is frequently seen as the voice of progress, who realizes change is coming."[121] The white settler colonial reader can access the fantasy of the "pure" way of life of the Indigenous hero, while being "comforted" by the idea of the hero and his communities eventual "assimilation" through his pairing with the white female heroine. This will be outlined further in Chapter Three.

Bird identifies the roots of the sexualisation of Indigenous men in the form of the "Doomed Warrior" in nineteenth-century visual culture, and notes that "[t]his has continued into contemporary mass culture."[122] This thesis will build upon this analysis in Chapter Three by discussing how specific imaging within nineteenth century artworks depicting captivity narratives helped to shape the cover art of the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre. It is key to note that Bird also recognizes the "whitening" inherent in the sexualisation of Indigenous men key to Van Lent's argument - first, in nineteenth-century images, and then in the figure of the romance novel hero.[123] This thesis will build upon Bird's analysis in Chapter Two.

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[119] "Striking about all these images, whether verbal or visual, is that the representation is always of Indian men either alone, as the object of the white gaze, or in relation to white women. The Indian woman is absent - the very conception of Indian men and women interacting together in some real, cultural world is simply not part of the construction." (Bird, "Savage Desires," 70.)

[120] Drew Hayden Taylor, "Indian Love Call (minus Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy)," Me Sexy: An Exploration of Native Sex and Sexuality, Drew Hayden Taylor, ed. (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 2008), 30.

[121] Bird, "Savage Desires," 75.

[122] Bird, "Savage Desires," 68-70.

[123] "These noble Indians, although attractive and exotic, were highly Europeanized in appearance, indeed often painted and sculpted as classical figures." (Bird, "Savage Desires," 69-70); "In many, possibly the majority, of romance novels, the hero is described as having white blood, which tempers his savagery with a touch of

Drew Hayden Taylor's "Indian Love Call (minus Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy)" presents a brief overview of the history of the depiction of Indigenous sexuality in literary and visual culture. Taylor then focuses specifically on the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre.[124] Taylor notes the fantasy element of these novels for the white female reader, and terms the Indigenous male hero the "über-Indian."[125] He also notes, in the same vein as Van Lent and Bird, the whitening of these "über-Indian" characters:

> "It is on the covers of these stylish and carefully crafted homages to interracial love that the image of the studly male Indian reaches its pinnacle. More often than not, he's got a solid square chin, an aquiline nose, chiselled brow and long, flowing raven-black hair that can tell you the direction of the prairie breeze better then any windsock. So what if these traits are noticeably lacking from most Native men of that era? The broad noses seen in photos of Sitting Bull and Geronimo, both strikingly handsome men, are not celebrated on the covers of *Song of a Warrior* or *Wild Thunder*. And the Aboriginal bodies seen in these fantasies could only come from hours in a personal gym [...]. Objectively, the men on the covers all look like white men with good tans in dim lighting. Yet the reason these books are devoured so rabidly by a faithful audience is that the readers want more than just a love story - they want one encased in exoticism, one involving a distant but still embraceable culture and environment, far removed from their own existence. [...] So, again, the men are Native but look remarkably white. This limits the dimensions of the unknown, providing a touchstone that is more familiar and acceptable. See the contradiction? And if the men are not fully Native, then they are half-breeds and therefore closer to white society. What could be more romantic than the outsider, someone torn between two cultures?"[126]

This thesis fundamentally agrees with Taylor's assessment of the portrayal of Indigenous heroes on the cover art of the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre - that the heroes on these covers are idealized white male figures, created to mimic Indigeneity (rather, the white settler

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civilization. Even if he is full-blood, he is often seen as more rational and realistic than other men of his tribe, who have a tendency to raid, pillage and fight among themselves when not listening to his wise advice. The hero is frequently seen as the voice of progress, who realizes change is coming. In other words, the Indian hero is a wonderful fantasy figure for the white reader - just wild enough to be exciting, while still 'civilized' enough to be acceptable." (Bird, "Savage Desires," 75.)

[124] Taylor, "Indian Love Call," 27.

[125] Taylor, "Indian Love Call," 28.

[126] Taylor, "Indian Love Call," 28-29.

colonial construction of Indigeneity) for the fantasy of the white female reader.[127] However, this thesis will build upon Taylor's analysis by explicating further how this figure is constructed through the process of grafting into the "Normative/Other" figure, and how the dynamic between the white female figure and the Indigenous male hero further shapes the portrayal of the "Normative/Other" figure on the cover art of this popular romance genre.[128]

Deconstructing Whiteness

Richard Dyer's *White* (1997) deconstructs how whiteness is raced to be thought of as "not of a certain race [...] just the human race."[129] Dyer argues that although "whiteness" is a constructed act of racing the body, it is staged in a manner which allows it to be considered "normative" rather than "other." While "Indianness" is a stereotype formed through the construction of visual tropes and identities, "whiteness" is also created through the construction of visual tropes and identities. However, Dyer argues that whiteness does this through, as Bhabha terms it, the "presence through absence" of the "other":[130]

> "There is a specificity to white representation, but it does not reside in a set of stereotypes so much as in narrative structural positions, rhetorical tropes and habits of perception. The same is true of all representation - the taxonomic study of stereotypes was only ever an initial step in the study of non-white representation. However, stereotyping - complex and contradictory though it is [...] does characterise the representation of subordinated social groups and is one of the means by which they are categorised and kept in their place, whereas white people in white culture are given the illusion of their own infinite variety."[131]

Dyer argues that it is not stereotypes, or constructions of the colonial gaze which define whiteness, but rather the positioning of the white body through the stereotyping of the "other" body as well as how whiteness is not discussed as a race in relation to how race is discussed

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[127] Taylor, "Indian Love Call," 28-29.
[128] Dyer, "The Matter of Whiteness," 28; Sheardy, "The White Woman and the Native Male Body," 97.
[129] Dyer, "The Matter of Whiteness," 3.
[130] Bhabha, "Interrogating Identity," 75.
[131] Dyer, "Matter of Whiteness," 12.

regarding people of colour. As Dyer goes on to argue, it is through the creation of the "other" and the dichotomies which the colonial project sets up through this narrative that whiteness defines itself by what it is not:

> "What the work of Morrison, Said, *et al.* suggests is that white discourse implacably reduces the non-white subject to being a function of the white subject, not allowing him/her space, or autonomy, permitting neither the recognition of similarities nor the acceptance of differences except as a means for knowing the white self."[132]

Dyer argues that the colonial gaze creates constructions of identity of the colonized, and utilizes those constructions to create the "other" in order to define white bodies as "normative." The colonial gaze places this identity on the body of the "other" and disavows/disallows their own definition of identity.

Dyer goes on to further explain how this creation of the dichotomy of "normative" and "other" leads to the stringent policing of whiteness through the policing of sexuality:

> "If race is always about bodies, it is also always about the reproduction of those bodies through heterosexuality. [...] The centrality of reproduction to heterosexuality can also be sensed in the extraordinary anxiety surrounding inter-racial sexuality [...]. Inter-racial heterosexuality threatens the power of whiteness because it breaks the legitimation of whiteness with reference to the white body. [...] If races are conceptualised as pure (with concomitant qualities of character, including the capacity to hold sway over other races), then miscegenation threatens that purity."[133]

In the cover art of the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre, the "extraordinary anxiety" in white society over interracial sex Dyer discusses in *White* (1997) is evident in the portrayal of the figure of the white female heroine and the portrayal of the "Normative/Other" male hero. The white female, as a figure who is meant to be "pure," is both "privileged and subordinated," as Dyer notes.[134] She is marginalized through the policing of her sexuality in

[132] Dyer, "Matter of Whiteness," 13.
[133] Dyer, "Matter of Whiteness," 25.
[134] Dyer, "Matter of Whiteness," 29-30.

order for her to remain a figure of "purity" to function as an unproblematic heroine.[135] As will be discussed in greater depth in Chapter Three, in the cover art of the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre, the sexual agency is transferred from the white female figure onto the figure of "Normative/Other" hero.[136] However, she is also privileged, as she is presented as the ideal of femininity, both visually and textually, in comparison to the "other" body, which in the case of these novels, is the Indigenous female body. As Bird notes in her chapter, and which will be studied in greater depth in the conclusion, Indigenous women are rarely created as figures of desire or power in the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre.[137] The white female figure is also privileged through the view of her whiteness as "non-raced"[138] - and through this displacement of sexual desire, she contributes to the hyper-sexualisation of the Indigenous male.[139]

Dyer argues that miscegenation (the colonial term for interracial sex) is seen as a threat to whiteness – especially in the white female and Indigenous male pairings within these novels - because it disrupts the dichotomy of "normative" versus "other".[140] Pairings between white women and Indigenous men or men of color have historically been considered more dangerous to white society than pairings between white men and Indigenous women or women of color. This was because in slavery, as Hilary McD. Beckles notes in "White Women and Slavery in the Caribbean," offspring retained the status of the mother:

> "The linking of white womanhood to the reproduction of freedom meant that the entire ideological fabric of the slave-based civilization was conceived in terms of sex, gender and race. [...] As a result, it became necessary for white males to limit the sexual freedom of white women and at the same time to enforce the sexual

[135] Dyer, "Matter of Whiteness," 29-30.
[136] Dyer, "The Matter of Whiteness," 28; Sheardy, "The White Woman and the Native Male Body," 97.
[137] Bird, "Savage Desires," 73-74.
[138] Dyer, "Matter of Whiteness," 2.
[139] Dyer, "The Matter of Whiteness," 28; Sheardy, "The White Woman and the Native Male Body," 97.
[140] Dyer, "Matter of Whiteness," 25.

> exploitation of black women as a 'normal benefit' of masterhood. In so doing white males valued black women's fertility solely in terms of the reproduction of labour for the plantation enterprise, and placed a premium on white women's maternity for its role in the reproduction of patriarchy."[141]

Therefore, the potential for offspring between white women and men of color became a source of fear for white society, as this would disrupt the idea of the "normative" versus the "other."[142]

It is only through the continuation of hetero-normative reproduction that "whiteness" can continue uninterrupted.[143] If "normative" bodies and "other" bodies reproduce, then the narrative of one group having distinct identities, tropes, and significations that make that group the "human race"[144] is disrupted through the recognition that those qualities are fabricated constructions of race and identity.[145] It is interesting to note, that within each of the three novels studied in this thesis, *Savage Dream* (1990), *Savage Persuasion* (1991), and *Savage Mists* (1992), at the end of the novel, the couple is pregnant, or has already had a child. Within the novels, these children represent the slow "vanishing" of the "Vanishing Indian" to the white female reader - as the product of their Indigenous father and white mother, they represent the future in which they will retain the "noble" aspects of their father's Indigenous community, but will "progress" towards inevitable "assimilation" within their mother's society.[146]

Dyer argues that one way in which whiteness races itself through the notion of "purity," particularly reproductive "purity," is to displace its own sexual desires onto the body of the "other" (much like Bhabha's discussion of the stereotype as fetish): "As Sander Gilman (1985)

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[141] Hilary McD. Beckles, "White Women and Slavery in the Caribbean," Caribbean Slavery in the Atlantic World: A Student Reader, Verene Shepherd and Hilary McD. Beckles, eds. (Kingston, Jamaica: Ian Randle, 2000), 661.
[142] Dyer, "Matter of Whiteness," 25. Martha Hodes' White Women, Black Men: Illicit Sex in the Nineteenth-Century South (1997) discusses this within the context of the American South during and after slavery, as does Peter Bardaglio's chapter, "'Shameful Matches': The Regulation of Interracial Sex and Marriage in the South before 1900" in Sex, Love, Race: Crossing Boundaries in North American History (1999).
[143] Dyer, "Matter of Whiteness," 25.
[144] Dyer, "Matter of Whiteness," 3.
[145] Dyer, "Matter of Whiteness," 25.
[146] This facilitates the fantasy of becoming true "Americans" that Philip J. Deloria discusses in Playing Indian (1998).

among others suggests, projection of sexuality on to dark races was a means for whites to represent yet dissociate themselves from their own desires."[147] Through the creation of the dichotomy in which to be white was to be "pure" and to be "other" was to be hyper-sexualized - whiteness holds onto its own position of "purity" while still recognizing its own sexuality, through the construction of the "other." This displacement enables the white woman to remain within the category of the "pure vessel for reproduction" and the white man to "assume the position as the universal signifier for humanity."[148] This is evident in the cover art for the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre, in which the white female figure places the sexual action and agency onto the "Normative/Other" figure meant to represent the Indigenous hero, which will be outlined further in Chapter Three.[149]

Dyer also discusses whiteness as a "colour or *hue*, [...] a category of *skin* colour, [...] [and its] symbolic connotations."[150] Dyer argues that white, as both a skin colour and a colour, is an uneasy category - as both no colour and all colours.[151] This translates into its position as symbolic morality:

> "Though the power value of whiteness resides above all in its instabilities and apparent neutrality, the colour does carry the more explicit symbolic sense of moral and also aesthetic superiority. [...] [Y]et the moral and aesthetic resonance of whiteness can and often has been mobilised in relation to white-skinned people. [...] [T]he particular way in which this superiority is conceived and expressed, with its emphasis on purity, cleanliness, virginity, in short, absence, inflects whiteness once again towards non-particularity, only this time in the sense of non-existence."[152]

The key part of Dyer's argument is his emphasis on whiteness as "absence". Whiteness lays claim to its position of morality through its claim to be not-there - whiteness cannot be the

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[147] Dyer, "Matter of Whiteness," 28.
[148] Dyer, "Matter of Whiteness," 29, 28.
[149] Dyer, "The Matter of Whiteness," 28; Sheardy, "The White Woman and the Native Male Body," 97.
[150] Richard Dyer, "Coloured White, Not Coloured," White (New York: Routledge, 1997), 45-46.
[151] Dyer, "Coloured White, Not Coloured," 46.
[152] Dyer, "Coloured White, Not Coloured," 70.

"other" if it does not exist. It can only be "pure" through its lack of being - if whiteness is "absen[t]," it cannot be named, and is therefore the "normative" race, rather than just another race. Dyer argues that this means: "Whiteness as an ideal can never be attained, not only because white skin can never be hue white, but because ideally white is absence: to be really, absolutely white is to be nothing."[153] The construction of whiteness is an unreal idea - to be the ideal of whiteness is to be completely removed, and cease to exist.[154] Dyer argues that again, this is where the colonial gaze in creating the construction of the "other" comes into play:

> "Through the figure of the non-white person, whites can feel what being, physicality, presence, might be like, while also dissociating themselves from the non-whiteness of such things. [...] The problem, however, is that in doing that they may also remind us of what we really aren't, and moreover that being nothing, having no life, is a condition of whiteness. The purity of whiteness may simply be the absence of being."[155]

The construction of whiteness relies on the colonial gaze to create constructions of the "other" in order to enact and displace their own desires, modes of being, and identities to retain the ideological "purity" of whiteness.[156] By enacting their own conceptions of identity on the "other" body, whiteness can experience these things while refuting them.[157] This conception of whiteness draws on concepts of "mimicry," "cultural cross-dressing," and the "stereotype [as] fetish" - in which whiteness is created through its reflection, appropriation and performance of the colonial constructs of the "other." This is evident in the covers for the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre, in which the "Normative/Other" figure inhabits both the idealised white male and the colonial construction of the "Indian" for the fantasy and consumption of the assumed white female reader.

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[153] Dyer, "Coloured White, Not Coloured," 78.
[154] Ibid.
[155] Dyer, "Coloured White, Not Coloured," 80.
[156] Ibid.
[157] Ibid.

The "Normative/Other" Body: Grafting, Displacement, and "Purity"

The theories of appropriation from Bhabha and Tobin discussed at the beginning of this chapter - "mimicry," "stereotype [as] fetish," "cultural cross-dressing," and "decontextualization," can be identified as three modes of performance. First, "mimicry" is the performance of colonial identity by the colonized.[158] Second, "stereotype [as] fetish" is the placement of colonial constructs of identity upon the body of the colonized by the colonizer.[159] Third, "cultural cross-dressing" and "decontextualization" is the performance of colonial constructs of identity of the "other" by the colonizer.[160] My theoretical concept of the "Normative/Other" male figure will utilize the concept of "stereotype [as] fetish" and the colonial strategies of appropriation of "mimicry," "cultural cross-dressing" and "decontexualization." However, the mode of performance of these theories is where my theory differs from those discussed above. I am proposing a fourth mode of performance - in which the "stereotype [as] fetish" has been utilized and "cultural cross-dressing" and "decontextualization" are occurring, except the body is not the colonizer or the colonized, but inhabits a space in which it is meant to be read as both.

This fourth mode of performance utilizes Deloria's concept of "playing Indian"[161] in the use of a form of "disguise"[162] in "American Indian Historical Romance" cover art - as the male figure in the cover art is meant to be read as both colonizer and colonized (Indigenous and white), this is partly achieved through the colonizer inhabiting "Indianness" through particular colonial visual significations. However, where my theory differs from Deloria's is through the mode of inhabitation. In this cover art we are not dealing with a white male figure that is meant

[158] Bhabha, "Of Mimicry and Man," 86.
[159] Bhabha, "The Other Question," 107.
[160] Tobin, "Cultural Cross-Dressing in British America," 85, 88.
[161] Deloria, Playing Indian, 7.
[162] Deloria, Playing Indian, 6.

to be read as creating a performance of "Indianness" which can then be removed, a form of "disguise," but rather the mode of inhabitation is permanent.[163]

My theoretical concept is a new mode of performance of colonial "mimicry" and appropriation which encodes both the colonizer and the colonized body in one figure - meant to be read as both "normative" and "other." This figure takes form in the male figure on "American Indian Historical Romance" cover art. On the cover art for this specific genre of romance novel, this mode of performance is created because the male figure has undergone a process of grafting, in which visual signifiers of the "exotic," which have been put through the process of "decontextualization," and are placed onto an idealized white male body. This dual figure is meant to be read in two ways in order to facilitate both the desire of the presumed white female reader, as well as the happy ending trope of the romance novel. First, this male figure has to be read as the hyper-masculine "exotic other" - the "stereotype [as] fetish," in which the visual signifiers used to create the image of the "exotic" facilitates and is representative of colonial desires.[164] The male figure must be read as the "other" through these signs to quickly visually signify to a potential consumer - the assumed white female reader - the identity of the hero of the romance novel, as well as the expected love story which can be found within its pages. The reading of the "other" titillates the potential consumer through the potential for interracial sex in the story, and thus the reader's access, through fantasy, to the "forbidden" body of the hero, as Taylor identifies in his chapter, "Indian Love Call." (2008)[165]

Second, the male figure has to be read as an idealized white male body, or the "normative" body, to signal to the reader the potential for the happy ending which is intrinsic to

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[163] Deloria, Playing Indian, 6.
[164] Bhabha, "The Other Question," 107.
[165] "It's also an opportunity to experience forbidden love, a culturally unallowable tryst." (Taylor, "Indian Love Call," 29.)

the structure of the romance novel. As Van Lent, Bird, and Taylor have all identified in their respective works, this places the "exotic" within the realm of safety.[166] To create the male hero on the cover art for the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre, the male figure must undergo the process of grafting the "exotic" onto the idealized white male body in order to create the "Normative/Other" body.

In their respective analyses, Van Lent, Bird, and Taylor all identify the key component of the Indigenous male hero of the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre - that he is being whitened, visually and textually, to make him a more palatable and acceptable hero for the white female reader.[167] While I agree with these respective scholarly assessments of the reason why the Indigenous male heroes in this popular romance genre are being "whitened," I would like to note key differences between our theories as to how this is being done, and build upon the work of the scholars above. Van Lent and Bird both identify the Indigenous male hero as being an Indigenous figure who has been given "Caucasian" or "European" features.[168] Taylor argues that "the men on the covers all look like white men with good tans in dim lighting"[169] - namely, that the figure on these historical romance novel covers is a white male who has been "exoticized." I agree with Taylor's assessment, and I would like to build upon it by arguing that the male figure on the cover art of this genre is an idealized white male who has settler colonial visual signifiers of the "Indian" grafted onto his figure in order to create the "Normative/Other" body. Once this process is complete, the "Normative/Other" figure inhabits both positions of the "ideal white male hero" and the "exotic Indigenous hero" simultaneously, and is read as such by the white female consumer. In Chapter Three, I will also go a step further than Van Lent, Bird, and Taylor

[166] Van Lent, "'Her Beautiful Savage'", 216-17; Bird, "Savage Desires," 75; Taylor, "Indian Love Call," 29.
[167] Ibid.
[168] Van Lent, "'Her Beautiful Savage'", 216-17; Bird, "Savage Desires," 69-70.
[169] Taylor, "Indian Love Call," 28.

by analyzing how the white female figure on the cover art of the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre facilitates the creation and inhabitation of the "Normative/Other" figure.[170] The treatment of the "Normative/Other" body textually will be discussed in Chapter Two.

My theory will utilize Dyer's conception of whiteness as "absence" and displacement in the female figure of the couple in the "American Indian Historical Romance" cover art.[171] As Dyer theorizes, the white female figure displaces the sexual desire between the couple onto the male figure through grafting of visual signifiers of the "exotic".[172] As will be explicated further in Chapter Three, the sexual action within the cover is being placed upon the Indigenous male figure, with the white female figure as the body upon whom this is being enacted[173] - this echoes the story inside the novels, in which the white female heroine falling in love and into a sexual relationship with the Indigenous male hero is depicted as being out of her control.[174] The front cover shows the white female figure as having the potential to enact this sexual relationship and to be a sexual being, but she is resisting - she *cannot help* but succumb to the power of the sexual desire of the Indigenous male figure. This displacement allows her to retain her "pure" and "chaste" figure with the potential for reproduction, as she is not the one initiating the sexual relationship.[175]

The relationship between the couple on the cover art is therefore one of "Pure" body and "Normative/Other" body. The relationship between these two bodies creates a performance in which the consumer - the assumed white female reader - is reading/living vicariously both the

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[170] Dyer, "The Matter of Whiteness," 28; Sheardy, "The White Woman and the Native Male Body," 97.
[171] Ibid.
[172] Dyer, "Matter of Whiteness," 28.
[173] Dyer, "The Matter of Whiteness," 28; Sheardy, "The White Woman and the Native Male Body," 97.
[174] Sarah Wendell and Candy Tan discuss the idea of the being unable to help but fall in love through the sections "The Magic Hoo Hoo" in "Chapter Corset: An In-Depth Investigation of the Romance Heroine, Emphasis, Obviously, on 'Depth'" (45-48) and "The Hero's Wang of Might Lovin'" in "Chapter Codpiece: The Romance Hero." (83-87) in Beyond Heaving Bosoms: The Smart Bitches' Guide to Romance Novels. (2009)
[175] Dyer, "Matter of Whiteness," 25.

potential for the titillation of the "other" body with the "Pure" female body, is who posed as a "vessel"[176] ready for the desire of the "exotic" which has been grafted onto the "Normative" male body. This "Normative" body signals the happy ending for the "Pure" body, which results in a happy marriage, without the potential troubles of the true "other" - racism, societal pushback, and the interruption of the "pure" reproductive narrative.[177] This creates a relationship of shifting identifications and power relations between the "Pure" and the "Normative/Other" body in the classic "clinch"[178] pose in the cover art for the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre, which is created through the process of grafting and displacement.[179]

Theories of appropriation, colonial constructs of Indigenous identity, and deconstructing whiteness are the theoretical concepts which this thesis is utilizing and building upon. A new mode of performance of the colonial constructs of identity is one in which the performance of colonizer and colonized occur on the same body. This is created through the process of grafting and displacement[180] to form the "Normative/Other" body in relation to the "Pure" body in the cover art of the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre. This allows the presumed white female reader to access the "exotic," as well as the integral happy ending.

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[176] Dyer, "Matter of Whiteness," 29.
[177] Van Lent, "'Her Beautiful Savage'", 216-17; Dyer, "Matter of Whiteness," 25.
[178] Jennifer McKnight-Trontz, The Look of Love: The Art of the Romance Novel (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2001), 24.
[179] Dyer, "The Matter of Whiteness," 28; Dyer, "Coloured White, Not Coloured," 80; Sheardy, "The White Woman and the Native Male Body," 97.
[180] Dyer, "The Matter of Whiteness," 28; Dyer, "Coloured White, Not Coloured," 80; Sheardy, "The White Woman and the Native Male Body," 97.

Chapter Two

The "Normative/Other" Body: Grafting Settler Colonial Constructs of Indigenous Masculinity

"Never would she have thought that an Indian could be so handsome. Tall and robust, this man was a perfect human figure, his features regular, his forehead and brow suggesting heroism and bravery. His eyes were fathomless, the pupils midnight black, and his nose was aquiline. He seemed dignified and proud, and most certainly unwavering beneath her glare!"
- Cassie Edwards, *Savage Persuasion* (1991), 56.

As discussed in the Introduction, the "American Indian Historical Romance" is a genre of romance novels which is set in the past and the hero or heroine of the plot is an Indigenous person. While there are exceptions, the majority of the romantic pairings within this genre are between an Indigenous man and a white woman. This narrative is typically set in the early nineteenth century in the Western United States. An extremely common trope found within this genre is that of captivity - most often with the white heroine being captured by the Indigenous hero, typically as some form of revenge. This chapter will examine how the cover art for this genre has created and marketed the "exoticness" of the Indigenous male body for the titillation of the assumed white female heterosexual reader. Cassie Edwards' *Savage Dream* (1990), *Savage Persuasion* (1991), and *Savage Mists* (1992) will be analysed as specific examples.

The discussion will begin by examining how the Indigenous male body was specifically racialized versus other men of colour in the nineteenth century, and how this has shaped strategies of marketing the romance novel to facilitate white female desire. I will then move into a brief examination of Indigenous masculinity, colonial constructions of Indigenous masculinity, and how this is reflected in the romance novel plot and cover art of the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre. Finally, the theory outlined in Chapter One of the fourth mode of colonial mimicry and appropriation - the "Normative/Other" body - will be analysed in relation to the cover art of the three novels listed above. This chapter will demonstrate how the

"Normative/Other" body is created through the process of "grafting"[181] "exotic[ized]"[182] and "decontextualized"[183] colonial tropes of Indigenous identity onto an "idealized white male body"[184] in order to signal both the titillation of the "exotic" and the potential for a romantic happy ending to the assumed white female reader.

Race and the Romance Novel: Historical versus Contemporary Heroes

The historical romance novel has typical pairings which feature prominently in the genre - these pairings are most commonly a white man and a white woman. Pairings which can also be found within the historical romance genre include an Indigenous man and a white woman, and a Middle Eastern man and a white woman.[185] Other pairings are noticeably harder to find within mainstream historical romance novels. Largely due to the work of romance author Beverly Jenkins, there are historical romance novels featuring black men and women as the hero and heroine. But apart from Jenkins' work, they are few and far between. As Alyssa Cole notes in "History in Color: A Black American Romance Roundtable," that while thanks to the advent of self-publishing, there are a growing number of writers pushing to change the extremely white

[181] Email from Dr. Charmaine A. Nelson, September 21, 2016.
[182] Ibid.
[183] As discussed in Chapter One, Tobin utilizes the idea of "decontextualization" when deconstructing the painting *Sir John Caldwell* (c. 1780), a portrait of a soldier in the British army who was stationed in the United States. (84) In this portrait, Sir John Caldwell is wearing numerous items from different Indigenous nations that Tobin states are "likely, gifts his uncle received while assigned the duties of negotiator with the various bands of Algonquians and Great Lakes Indians." (84) Tobin notes that these items are used as "a pastiche" and through this "divorcing [...] from their original owners," the items have been "decontextualized." (85) Tobin argues that "separating the items from those who created and wore them has the effect of reducing their power to signify [...]. What Caldwell achieves with this pastiche of decontextualized objects is an illusion of Indianness, but it is an Indianness rendered powerless by its incoherence. Caldwell, meanwhile, is made more powerful by his manipulation of the Indian artifacts." (85) [Beth Fawkes Tobin, "Cultural Cross-Dressing in British America: Portraits of British Officers and Mohawk Warriors," Picturing Imperial Power: Colonial Subjects in Eighteenth-Century British Painting (Duke University Press, 1999), 85.]
[184] Email from Dr. Charmaine A. Nelson, September 21, 2016.
[185] Hsu-Ming Teo has produced a significant work of scholarship discussing orientalism in the popular romance genre: Desert Passions: Orientalism and Romance Novels (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2012). Robin Harders discusses romance novels which feature pairings between Middle Eastern men and white women in "Borderlands of Desire: Captivity, Romance and the Revolutionary Power of Love." (2012)

landscape of the romance novel genre, traditional publishing houses have yet to change.[186] The pairing of black men and white women, or black women and white men, is largely relegated to contemporary romance. The opposite is true for interracial couples between Indigenous men/women and white men/women - these pairs are far more often relegated to historical novels, and are overwhelmingly between an Indigenous man and a white woman.[187] It is important to consider the following questions before delving into a deeper analysis of the cover art of the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre: What makes the Indigenous hero primarily historical? What about the historical Indigenous hero facilitates desire and titillation for the assumed white female consumer? Why is the black hero only allowed to be a contemporary hero for the assumed white female consumer?

The construct of race plays a significant role in the discussion of who can act as a figure of desire in the historical romance novel. Stephen Jay Gould, in "American Polygeny and Craniometry before Darwin," (1996) outlines how race was constructed to create specific "hierarchies" of people to justify imperialist/colonialist projects, and how science shaped itself to fit these social views:

> "Appeals to reason or to the nature of the universe have been used throughout history to enshrine existing hierarchies as proper and inevitable. [...] [B]iological determinism [is] the notion that people at the bottom are constructed of intrinsically inferior material [...]."[188]

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[186] Alyssa Cole, "History in Color: A Black American Romance Roundtable," The Toast, April 20, 2015, http://the-toast.net/2015/04/20/a-black-american-historical-romance-roundtable/ (accessed November 22, 2016).
[187] S. Elizabeth Bird, "Savage Desires: The Gendered Construction of the American Indian in Popular Media," Selling the Indian: Commercializing and Appropriating American Indian Cultures, Carter Jones Meyer and Diana Royer, eds. (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2001), 86.
[188] Stephen Jay Gould, "American Polygeny and Craniometry before Darwin," The Mismeasure of Man (New York: W.W. Norton, 1996), 30-31.

Gould notes how the concept of "biological determinism" was created to facilitate the dehumanization of specific races in order to "scientifically" rationalize the colonial project.[189] In "'Two Pairs of Pink Satin Shoes!': Race, Clothing and Identity in the Americas (17th-19th Centuries)," (2001) Rebecca Earle discusses how constructions of race changed between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries:

> "The [nineteenth century] saw a significant shift in scientific understandings of the origins of racial difference, and indeed of the very meaning of race. Enlightenment theories [...] had emphasized that race was the consequence of the effects of climate, food and culture. Skin colour was thus in part a function of culture (including dress) and environment."[190]

Prior to the nineteenth century, race was considered to be something that could be potentially shifted or changed.[191] It was not interpreted as a biological facet of a person, but rather, a cultural or social aspect.[192] In the nineteenth century, this was abandoned in favor of "science".[193] As Earle discusses in her article: "The nineteenth-century abandonment of sumptuary laws thus sheds additional light on the nature of biologized racial theories emphasizing the inherited, inflexible, nature of perceived racial characteristics."[194] Race moved from the social/cultural realm to that which was inherent to the body.[195]

As a result of this "hierarchy" of race, in which Indigenous people were perceived to be closer to whiteness through their biology,[196] S. Elizabeth Bird argues in "Savage Desires: The Gendered Construction of the American Indian in Popular Media," (2001) that this facilitated the potential for Indigenous men to be seen as sexual and romantic partners over black men:

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[189] Gould, "American Polygeny and Craniometry," 31.
[190] Rebecca Earle, "'Two Pairs of Pink Satin Shoes!': Race, Clothing and Identity in The Americas (17th-19th Centuries)," History Workshop Journal, no. 52 (August 2001), 186.
[191] Earle, "'Two Pairs of Pink Satin Shoes!'", 187.
[192] Earle, "'Two Pairs of Pink Satin Shoes!'", 186.
[193] Earle, "'Two Pairs of Pink Satin Shoes!'", 189.
[194] Ibid.
[195] Earle, "'Two Pairs of Pink Satin Shoes!'", 186-89.
[196] Gould, "American Polygeny and Craniometry," 53-54.

"African-Americans were pure sexual threat, but American Indians, although also often characterized as animal-like, at the same time carried associations of pristine 'first American' purity."[197] The racial construction of black men as "threatening" and "hyper-sexual" versus the "pure" Indigenous male, the "Noble Savage,"[198] created a hierarchy of desire in which the Indigenous male is seen as a more accessible romantic partner through his supposed proximity to whiteness.[199] The historical legacy of slavery and the brutal racial injustice directed towards black people also works to remove interracial couples from the historical romance novel genre. The injustices and horrors of slavery, especially the endemic sexual violence, makes the necessary happy ending of the romance novel difficult to achieve when one person within the couple is white and therefore complicit in this system.[200]

Additionally, the horrific nature of slavery makes it impossible for the enslaved black man to inhabit the nineteenth-century conceptions of masculinity reproduced within and central to the plot of the historical romance novel set during this time period. In "'Making a Man of Him': Masculinity and the Black Body in Mid-Nineteenth-Century American Sculpture," (1992) Michael Hatt outlines how enslaved African-Americans were unable to inhabit the position of the masculine through the bonds of slavery:

> "If one word serves to define a norm of masculinity in mid-nineteenth-century America, it is probably 'control'. Whatever else manliness might have been, it always connoted a man's power over himself, [...] and over his environment, both geographical and social. [...] [The black male slave's] lack of control over his

[197] Bird, "Savage Desires," 69.
[198] Peter van Lent, "'Her Beautiful Savage': The Current Sexual Image of the Native American Male," Dressing in Feathers: The Construction of the Indian in American Popular Culture, S. Elizabeth Bird ed. (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996), 211.
[199] Bird, "Savage Desires," 75; Van Lent, "'Her Beautiful Savage'", 216-17.
[200] Hilary McD. Beckles discusses the role white women played in slavery in the Caribbean in "White Women and Slavery in the Caribbean," Caribbean Slavery in the Atlantic World: A Student Reader, eds. Verene Shepherd and Hilary McD. Beckles (Kingston, Jamaica: Ian Randle, 2000).

> circumstances - economic, social, and even sexual - made him a very paradigm of the unmanly."[201]

Hatt emphasizes the importance of "control" to masculinity in the nineteenth century. This "control" is also important within the sphere of the historical romance novel. Sarah Wendell and Candy Tan discuss the relationship between control and the popular romance novel hero (it must be noted that they are not specifically referencing historical romances in their discussion) in *Beyond Heaving Bosoms: The Smart Bitches' Guide to Romance Novels* (2009):

> "The romance novel heroes' attempts at control and domination, in Old Skool romances especially, usually result in antagonism, not happiness - at least, not until the end of the book. Part of the heroic association with control can be explained by the nature of storytelling. Conflict is by far more interesting to read and vicariously experience than quiet contentment. [...] But the other part has its roots in the hypertrophied masculinity exhibited by many romance novel heroes. [...] Romance novel heroes often show how much they care in big, showy gestures, like saving the heroine from certain death [...]."[202]

Wendell and Tan note that a key facet allowing the hero to demonstrate love (and move the plot along) is for him to exert "control" and "masculinity" in order to "sav[e]" the heroine - while Wendell and Tan identify "certain death," this can take any number of different forms, including protecting the heroine from physical or sexual violence.[203] Within the horrors of slavery, it was nearly impossible for the enslaved man to exert power and "control" in order to protect loved ones, such as romantic partners, from physical and sexual violence. The enslaved man therefore would be unable to fully inhabit the role of the hero for his heroine within the historical romance novel - the reality of the punishment for such attempts to exert control to protect a loved one is

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[201] Michael Hatt, " 'Making a Man of Him': Masculinity and the Black Body in Mid-Nineteenth-Century American Sculpture," Oxford Art Journal vol. 15 no. 1 (1992), 21.

[202] Sarah Wendell and Candy Tan, Beyond Heaving Bosoms: The Smart Bitches' Guide to Romance Novels (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2009), 73-74.

[203] It is key to note that Wendell and Tan outline varied types of heroes in the romance novel in "Chapter Codpiece: The Romance Hero" in Beyond Heaving Bosoms: The Smart Bitches' Guide to Romance Novels (2009), some of whom do not fit within the discussion above.

too horrific to facilitate the guaranteed happy ending.[204] Contemporary interracial romance novels can more easily achieve the desired happy ending, therefore black men are largely relegated to the space of the contemporary hero.[205]

The Indigenous hero, however, when paired with a white heroine, is primarily a historical figure. Bird outlines why the Indigenous hero is an acceptable figure to facilitate the desire of the assumed white female consumer of the romance novel:

> "In many, possibly the majority, of romance novels, the hero is described as having white blood, which tempers his savagery with a touch of civilization. [...] The hero is frequently seen as the voice of progress, who realizes change is coming. In other words, the Indian hero is a wonderful fantasy figure for the white reader - just wild enough to be exciting, while still 'civilized' enough to be acceptable."[206]

Bird states here that the Indigenous hero is close enough to the whiteness of the racial hierarchy to be a non-threatening figure, yet he still allows the assumed white female reader to access the titillation of the "exotic."[207] Through this figure, the assumed white female reader can also access the idea of being truly "native" - through the fantasy of the sexual coupling with an Indigenous

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[204] Punishments were of an insane and inhuman nature which included acts of brutal physical violence and the "sadistic punishments" Trevor Burnard briefly discusses in "The Sexual Life of an Eighteenth-Century Jamaican Overseer." (166-67) In "Physical Abuse," William Dusinberre discusses how, sometimes, death was the result of such punishment, or, chillingly, was its intention. (88, 91) He also relays that punishment could also take the form of the act of sale. (93) [William Dusinberre, "Physical Abuse," Strategies For Survival: Recollections of Bondage in Antebellum Virginia (Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 2009); Trevor Burnard, "The Sexual Life of an Eighteenth-Century Jamaican Slave Overseer," Sex and Sexuality in Early America, Merril D. Smith ed. (New York: New York University Press, 1998)]

[205] It is important to note however, that to the best of my knowledge, authors who write historical romance novels featuring black heroes and heroines, such as Alyssa Cole, as she discusses in "History in Color: A Black American Romance Roundtable," and Beverly Jenkins, as she discusses in "Talking Black History and Love Stories With Romance Writing Pioneer Beverly Jenkins," (2016) focus on histories of people in colour in the United States outside of, or peripherally surrounding slavery. In the roundtable discussion in "History in Color," Kianna Alexander states: "I've found that both readers and industry members, like agents or editors, have formed these immovable assumptions about what African American historical books have to be about. The first thing they mention is slavery - as if that's all Black people have ever done. It boggles my mind that people don't seem to know there is more to our history than slavery." [Cole, "History in Color"; Kelly Faircloth, "Talking Black History and Love Stories With Romance Writing Pioneer Beverly Jenkins." Pictorial, January 26, 2016, http://pictorial.jezebel.com/talking-black-history-and-love-stories-with-romance-wri-1755218569 (accessed April 12, 2017).]

[206] Bird, "Savage Desires," 75.

[207] Ibid.

man, the assumed white female reader can move from being settler to "native" herself.[208] Peter van Lent, in "'Her Beautiful Savage': The Current Sexual Image of the Native American Male" (1996) notes that there is a particular time period in which the majority of the "American Indian Historical Romance" novels take place: "Almost without exception the Indian romances take place in the nineteenth century."[209] This particular time period, as Drew Hayden Taylor notes in "Indian Love Call (minus Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy)" (2008), allows the reader to access historical fantasy without acknowledging the effects of settler colonialism on Indigenous nations: "I have yet to come across a historical romance that takes place on a reserve during the Depression."[210] This is why Indigenous heroes paired with white heroines are largely set in the historical romance genre - the contemporary romance novel would disrupt the idea of the "vanishing Indian"[211] and the potential for the assumed white female reader to become "native" through this romantic pairing,[212] as well as force the white female reader to acknowledge the legacy of white settler colonialism.

Settler Colonial Constructions of Indigenous Masculinity

When discussing the image of the Indigenous hero on the cover art of the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre, there are three components to consider: contemporary visualizations of historical Indigenous masculinity, colonial constructions of Indigenous masculinity, and Indigenous masculinity. Indigenous masculinity is masculinity that is defined and shaped through its relationship with others - Leah Sneider, in "Complementary

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[208] This concept draws on aspects of Philip J. Deloria's Playing Indian (1998), as well as Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang's discussion of the "settler adoption fantasy" in their seminal article "Decolonization is not a metaphor." (2012)

[209] Van Lent, "'Her Beautiful Savage'", 219.

[210] Drew Hayden Taylor, "Indian Love Call (minus Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy)," Me Sexy: An Exploration of Native Sex and Sexuality, Drew Hayden Taylor, ed. (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 2008), 29.

[211] Philip J. Deloria, Playing Indian (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1998), 20.

[212] Deloria, Playing Indian; Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, "Decolonization is not a metaphor," Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society vol. 1, no. 1 (2012), 13-17.

Relationships: A Review of Indigenous Gender Studies," (2015) defines Indigenous masculinity through the concept of "complementarity":

> "Complementarity summarizes concepts of responsibility and relationship in the maintenance of social or communal balance and comprises the overarching ideology behind actions or performances reflecting responsible, reciprocal, and respectful relationships. [...] Complementarity does not enforce strict binaries but, rather, recognizes specifically delineated gender-based communal responsibilities; as long as individuals contribute to the community, their sex in relation to or as classified by their gender is ultimately irrelevant."[213]

This concept is the understanding that gender roles in Indigenous nations are not based on the idea of individualism and equality, but rather each person contributing through specific roles to create a cohesive community, in which all genders are equitable.[214]

Scott L. Morgensen, in "Cutting to the Roots of Colonial Masculinity," (2015) identifies how settler colonialism worked to destroy "complementarity" in Indigenous nations: "Indigenous scholars show that when Europeans encountered the complementarity of Indigenous women's and men's authority and leadership, they perceived it as a barrier or threat to imposing heteropatriarchal rule [...]."[215] Morgensen argues that this construction of Indigenous "complementarity" as "immoral" by settler colonists worked to provide a "moral" reason for the colonial project - i.e., the stealing of Indigenous lands and the atrocities inflicted upon them - as well as to secure their own masculinity in comparison.[216]

Mark Rifkin, in *When Did Indians Become Straight?* (2011), outlines how the destruction of "complementarity" and Indigenous community networks has been a specifically hetero-

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[213] Leah Sneider, "Complementary Relationships: A Review of Indigenous Gender Studies," Indigenous Men and Masculinities: Legacies, Identities, Regeneration (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2015), 63-64.
[214] Mary Ellen Turpel, "Patriarchy and Paternalism: The Legacy of the Canadian State for First Nations Women," Canadian Journal of Women and the Law, vol. 6, no. 1 (1993), 179-80; Sneider, "Complementary Relationships," 63-64.
[215] Scott L. Morgensen, "Cutting to the Roots of Colonial Masculinity," Indigenous Men and Masculinities: Legacies, Identities, Regeneration (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2015), 42.
[216] Ibid.

normative project: "U.S. imperialism against native peoples over the past two centuries can be understood as an effort to make them 'straight' - to insert indigenous peoples into Anglo-American conceptions of family, home, desire, and personal identity."[217] Rifkin's book outlines how kinship networks were disrupted and dismantled to be displaced by heteropatriarchal concepts of the family - i.e. the man as the head of the household and provider, the woman as subject to her husband, and the erasure of queer identities.[218] This conception of the family is predicated on a sense of individualism (economic and social) rather than the larger community network of Indigenous nations.[219]

Peter van Lent, in "'Her Beautiful Savage'", (1996) briefly outlines how contemporary images of Indigenous masculinity have evolved into two specific tropes:

> "The current images of the Native American male as sexy has grown out of earlier archetypes. [...] In past centuries, the vision of violent sexuality was pretty standard treatment of Native men in popular genres such as the Indian captivity narratives. Today, however, Native American men are most often portrayed as sexual in 'good' ways. Two familiar labels come to mind: those of 'Nobel Savage' and 'Fearless Warrior.'"[220]

As Van Lent has identified above, these two tropes were commonly found in the captivity narrative, the literary precursor to the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre. This romance novel genre relies on both of these images in both text and cover art. In each of these tropes, the settler colonial project of forming Indigenous gender relations and kinship networks into heteropatriarchal units is continued. This is prominent throughout the plotlines of historical romance novels which feature Indigenous men and white female pairings - the Indigenous male is represented first as a hyper-masculine "Fearless Warrior," often coming to steal away the

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[217] Mark Rifkin, When Did Indians Become Straight?: Kinship, the History of Sexuality, and Native Sovereignty (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 8.
[218] Ibid.
[219] Ibid.
[220] Van Lent, "'Her Beautiful Savage'", 211.

white woman. She fears being ravished by this sexual threat, and then slowly the white woman comes to see the Indigenous male as the "Noble Savage." She realises he will not harm her, he shows her his way of life, and she becomes enamoured of his "purer" or more "natural" lifestyle.[221] As Bird notes in "Savage Desires," Indigenous women typically do not occupy the role of the central figure of desire, i.e. the heroine, or positions of power in this genre of romance novels.[222] Indigenous people that do not define themselves as hetereonormative, or do not identify with the gender dichotomy of male/female are rarely featured within the plot at all.

A plot point that seems to frequently recur within "American Indian Historical Romance" novels is one in which the white woman makes an especial point to her Indigenous male potential romantic partner that she will not accept a polygamous marriage. This becomes a point of contention between the two, until finally, the Indigenous hero gives in and declares that she is the only woman he will ever want.[223] This plot line is of special significance because it directly links to the continued colonization of Indigenous kinship networks in the form of the romance novel plot point. Rifkin argues that polygamy was viewed as a mode of "immorality" in Indigenous sexuality, rather than a facet of Indigenous kinship, and explains how this was used to create the heteropatriarchal family model as "normative" and the Indigenous kinship model as "other":

> "Normative sexuality, as that bundle of discourses and statuses emerged in the late nineteenth century, then, has multiple facets, opening the possibility of playing them against each other. Put another way, aspects of the dominant ideal could be cited in order to make a claim for normality, to characterize a people or practice as nonpathological due to conformity to (enough of) the conditions of civilization. [...] Polygamy most certainly belonged to that category."[224]

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[221] Van Lent, "'Her Beautiful Savage'", 211-12.
[222] Bird, "Savage Desires," 73-74.
[223] One example of a novel that features this plot point is Catherine Anderson's Comanche Moon. (329, 2008)
[224] Rifkin, When Did Indians Become Straight?, 164-65.

In the "American Indian Historical Romance" novel, the hero is envisioned through the heteropatriarchal lens of masculinity - in which he is a hyper-masculine figure, and he is moved through the love of the white female heroine into a love most closely resembling that of the heteronormative family unit, and away from Indigenous kinship networks.

The "Normative/Other" Body

As discussed in Chapter One, the male figure on the cover art of the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre inhabits a fourth mode of the performance of colonial "mimicry" and appropriation - the "Normative/Other" body, in which the idealized white male body and the exoticized colonial signifiers of "Indian" identity inhabit the same person, and are meant to be read as simultaneous by the assumed white female reader. The creation of the "Normative/Other" body occurs through the process of grafting - in which the "decontextualized"[225] and "fetishized"[226] colonial constructs of Indigenous identity and masculinity are incorporated onto an idealized white male body. To help identify how the assumed white female reader reads the "Normative" and the "other" in the male figure of "American Indian Historical Romance" cover art, this chapter will first examine cover art featuring historical romance novel pairings between a white man and a white woman.

As will be evidenced in the following examples, the specific body type and facial features of the white male figure on historical romance novel cover art remain the same throughout the majority of pairings - the only shifting feature is the surrounding landscape, changes in clothing, hair colour, and slight variations in skin tone. Each white male has an extremely muscular body, with a defined chest and broad shoulders, a long straight nose, and a defined jaw. The following examples of white men and white women romance novel pairings are from books written by

[225] Tobin, "Cultural Cross-Dressing," 85.
[226] Homi K. Bhabha, "The Other Question: Stereotype, Discrimination and the Discourse of Colonialism," The Location of Culture (London: Routledge, 1994), 106.

Cassie Edwards, published around the same time period as the three books discussed in this chapter; the late twentieth-century. *Secrets of My Heart* (1983) **(Fig. 1)**, *Silken Rapture* (1983) **(Fig. 2)**, *Elusive Ecstasy* (1984) **(Fig. 3)**, *Passion's Web* (1984) **(Fig. 4)**, and *Beloved Embrace* (1987) **(Fig. 5)** all feature pairings between white men and white women.[227] As discussed above, on each of these covers the white male hero's body is extremely defined and muscular. His shoulders are broad, and prominently featured, with some covers also showing the white male hero's defined chest muscles. While a muscular body, straight nose and defined jaw are certainly not physical features that are exclusively white, the overwhelming majority of historical romance novel covers featuring white male figures have inhabited this particular imaging of an idealized male body to read as white to the assumed white female reader.

While this will be discussed more extensively in the analysis of each cover of *Savage Dream* (1990), *Savage Persuasion* (1991), and *Savage Mists* (1992), it will be helpful here to quickly outline what is typically grafted on to the idealized white male body in the process of creating the "Normative/Other" body of the "American Indian Historical Romance" novel. The figure is identified by his long hair,[228] which as evidenced by the short hair in the romance novel covers examined above, is typically used to convey the "exoticism" or "otherness" of a figure. For example, historical romance novel cover art for stories featuring Scottish Highlanders, who also frequently involve stories with kidnapping as a plotline, also typically have a long-haired hero. There is often also some sort of object placed in the male figure's hair to further differentiate that the "other" whom this figure is meant to be representing is Indigenous, typically a feather or headband.[229] The Indigenous male figure also features far less clothing[230] - typically

[227] I found these books using the following resource: "Cassie Edwards: Book List," FictionDB, https://www.fictiondb.com/author/cassie-edwards~2243.htm (accessed February 27, 2017).
[228] Taylor, "Indian Love Call," 28; Van Lent, "'Her Beautiful Savage'", 214-15.
[229] Van Lent, "'Her Beautiful Savage'", 215.

a loincloth or a type of pant that is beige coloured, meant to indicate some type of animal hide. Van Lent notes the use of "nudity or near-nudity" and "the sparsity of body hair" as two of the modes of sexualizing Indigenous men within popular culture, as is clearly the case in the covers of the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre.[231] Van Lent also discusses the use of "sexiness [of] situation" as another mode of sexualizing Indigenous men within popular culture: "Given the romantic preference for historical characterizations, it is appropriate that the Native male is most often found in a natural setting where he leads a traditional life and has ready access to Indian culture."[232] In the cover art for the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre, this is evident through the placement of the "Normative/Other" figure in a natural landscape setting.

Shadow in *Savage Dream* (1990)

The Indigenous male hero in Cassie Edwards' *Savage Dream* (1990) is Shadow, who is described as a "Navaho Indian chief."[233] The action in the story begins when Shadow decides to kidnap the heroine, Maria Zamora, in revenge for her father capturing and enslaving people from Shadow's community. The first textual description the reader receives of Shadow is from Maria's perspective when Shadow leaves her father's study and she sees him for the first time:

> "When she saw Shadow standing there, she became weak all over. As he stared down at her from his powerful six-foot frame, her breath was momentarily stolen; she found herself mesmerized by his dark, fathomless eyes, his strongly sculpted face, and the somehow seductive curve of his brooding hard-pressed lips and set jaw. In her dreams she had envisioned a moment when they might meet, but she had never imagined that it would be so totally disarming! In reality, he was even more handsome, with his smooth bronze skin and striking Indian features. He was breathtakingly, ruggedly handsome, his sleek black hair worn long and loose over his broad shoulders, a folded bright red handkerchief tied around his brow. [...] He wore a buckskin shirt, deerskin breeches, and moccasins that were adorned with silver buttons."[234]

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[230] Van Lent, "'Her Beautiful Savage'", 217.
[231] Ibid.
[232] Van Lent, "'Her Beautiful Savage'", 222.
[233] Cassie Edwards, Savage Dream (New York: Love Spell, 1997), 1.
[234] Edwards, Savage Dream, 6-7.

The key phrases with which Edwards has chosen to identity Shadow is by his "smooth bronze skin" and his "striking Indian features." Edwards also uses the word "brooding" in relation to his lips - all three of these phrases citing the "exoticness" of Shadow's indigeneity. The word "brooding" is a reference to the idea of the stoic Indigenous male, [235] and his "bronze skin" the first mode of citing his racial difference from Maria, through skin tone.[236] Shadow is an Indigenous male figure of authority, the "Fearless Warrior" archetype outlined by Van Lent through his position as chief, and his decision to enact revenge through capture.[237]

In the second edition of the cover of *Savage Dream* (1990)[238] **(Fig. 6)**, the visual depiction of Shadow adheres relatively closely to the clothing description of the character in the text - the figure has the red bandana wrapped around his head, and he is wearing tan coloured pants which could potentially be the "deerskin breeches" referred to in the text. His face is that of the idealized white male figure, with the long straight nose and defined jaw, what Taylor identifies in "Indian Love Call," (the "solid square chin, [...] aquiline nose, [and] chiselled brow") to be the predominant characteristics of the whitening of the Indigenous male hero on the cover art of this genre.[239] The colonial constructions of Indigeneity grafted onto his body are his long, straight black hair,[240] the removal of his shirt,[241] and the addition of fringe to the pants he is wearing. The cover artist has also placed a blanket on the ground behind him with a pattern meant to resemble a Navajo design. The "decontextualization" of the design of the blanket and

[235] Bird discusses the stereotype of stoicism and its roots in colonial anthropology and ethnography in "Savage Desires." (64)
[236] Van Lent, "'Her Beautiful Savage'", 214.
[237] Van Lent, "'Her Beautiful Savage'", 212.
[238] The first edition of Savage Dream (1990) was published in May 1990 from Jove. I have been unable to recover the cover art for this edition. ["SAVAGE DREAM -- CASSIE EDWARDS," FictionDB, https://www.fictiondb.com/author/cassie-edwards~savage-dream~12782~b.htm (accessed February 27, 2017).]
[239] Taylor, "Indian Love Call," 28.
[240] Taylor also identifies this as a characteristic of the Indigenous male hero on the cover art of this popular romance genre: "More often than not, he's got [...] long, flowing raven-black hair." (Taylor, "Indian Love Call," 28.)
[241] Van Lent, "'Her Beautiful Savage'", 217.

the fringe on the pants, removed from the correct context and particular meaning, work to exoticize and act as a symbol of the "Indianness" of the male figure.[242] Through this process of grafting these particular colonial constructs of Indigeneity onto an idealized white male body, the cover art has marketed the titillation of the "exotic" Indigenous male body, while simultaneously allowing the reader to access the fantasy of the happy ending through the white male body - the "Normative/Other" body.

On the third edition of the cover for *Savage Dream* (1990) **(Fig. 7)**, this same process is followed in the creation of the "Normative/Other" body and is heightened with the further edition of a collage of visual symbols meant to signify Indigeneity. On this cover, the idealized white male body is featured, this time with a lighter skin tone and brown hair rather than black hair. The facial features are also of the idealized white male found on Edwards' other romance novels - the long, straight nose and the strong jaw.[243] The male figure on this cover has had the visual colonial trope of a headband with a feather grafted onto the idealized white male body to signify his "otherness" or his "exoticism."[244] He is also again left shirtless on this cover, despite the textual description of him wearing a "buckskin shirt" the first time Maria meets him.[245] The "Normative/Other" body is also created through the contextualization within which the body is placed - namely the collage and framing of the rest of the cover. The close-up of the cover is framed by a pattern of graphic symbols, which is reflected in a long strip on the right side of the book that also features a pattern of graphic symbols. The background features a long beaded belt with fringe and a beaded bag, each with a graphic design. The "S" in the title is also engraved

[242] Tobin, "Cultural Cross-Dressing," 85.
[243] Taylor, "Indian Love Call," 28.
[244] Van Lent, "'Her Beautiful Savage'", 215.
[245] Van Lent, "'Her Beautiful Savage'", 217.

with a pattern of graphic symbols. All of these "decontextualized" symbols are meant to signify the "other" of the "Normative/Other" body of the male figure on the front of the cover.[246]

The final edition of *Savage Dream* was published by Thorndike Press in December 2003 as a large print book **(Fig. 8)**. This cover is a significant departure from the other two covers through its removal of the couple in the classic "clinch"[247] pose from the front of the novel. As the most recent publication of the novel, through the shifting trends in the covers of romance novels, the cover has become more abstract rather than figurative.[248] As a result, the figure represented does not fit the norm of the "Normative/Other" body. However, the figure that has been chosen to market the novel to the assumed white female reader is that of the Indigenous male - this figure is an abstraction of the epitome of Van Lent's "Fearless Warrior": "Media presentations have conditioned us to picture a young male on a horse, his bare chest streaked with war paint, wearing a full-feathered warbonnet [...]."[249] In this image, the male figure is sitting on a horse, with two feathers rising from his head - though the image does not show war paint, the cover is indicating this particular image to facilitate the fantasy of the "Fearless Warrior" to the assumed white female reader.[250]

Brave Eagle in *Savage Persuasion* (1991)

In *Savage Persuasion* (1991), the Indigenous male hero is Brave Eagle, a Cherokee man who becomes chief of his community over the course of the novel. The reader first encounters him as a young boy in the prologue of the novel, but the first time the reader receives a textual

[246] Tobin, "Cultural Cross-Dressing," 85.
[247] Jennifer McKnight-Trontz, The Look of Love: The Art of the Romance Novel (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2001), 24.
[248] Wendell and Tan, Beyond Heaving Bosoms, 175-78.
[249] Van Lent, "'Her Beautiful Savage'", 212.
[250] Ibid.

description of Brave Eagle is when he finds Brietta lost in the woods after the cabin she was living in was attacked:

> " 'If you are a friend, then let me pass by you and go on my way,' Brietta said, finding herself puzzling over her reaction to him. Never had she been so close to an Indian. Never would she have thought that an Indian could be so handsome. Tall and robust, this man was a perfect human figure, his features regular, his forehead and brow suggesting heroism and bravery. His eyes were fathomless, the pupils midnight black, and his nose was aquiline. He seemed dignified and proud, and most certainly unwavering beneath her glare! Her gaze lowered, and she blushed when she saw the scantiness of his attire. If the wind blew even slightly and lifted the flaps of his breechclout, he would surely be the same as naked!"[251]

In this description, Edwards is utilizing the trope of the "Noble Savage" in her textual imaging of Brave Eagle. Van Lent describes the trope of the "Noble Savage" as featuring "a good deal of the residue of Romanticism; according to the typical formula, Native Americans derive their nobility from being [...] close to nature and the natural state of things."[252] Edwards achieves this through her description of him as "perfect human figure," "dignified and proud" with "his forehead and brow suggesting heroism and bravery." These three concepts link him to the idea of the "pure" figure who is uncorrupted through his proximity to nature. Edwards also achieves this by having Brave Eagle appear almost naked in his first encounter with Brietta - he is literally almost in his natural state - demonstrating Van Lent's identification of "nudity or near-nudity" as a mode of sexualisation.[253]

It is also key to note the use of particular words by the author to denote whiteness - "his features regular" and "his nose was aquiline." To what standards is Edwards linking Brave Eagle's "regular features"? As this is being voiced by Brietta, a white female character, Brave Eagle's "regular features" and "aquiline nose" are being used to reference ideal white male facial

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[251] Cassie Edwards, Savage Persuasion (New York: Leisure Books, 1991), 56.
[252] Van Lent, "'Her Beautiful Savage'", 211.
[253] Van Lent "'Her Beautiful Savage'", 217-18.

features, as Taylor identifies in "Indian Love Call." (2008)[254] In this textual description, though Brave Eagle is not the "mixed blood hero" Van Lent identifies as inhabiting the space of "provid[ing] a safety net against several sexual pitfalls," the author is utilizing these key words to signal to the assumed white female reader that Brietta finds Brave Eagle attractive through his closeness to the standards of ideal white male beauty, while still accessing the "exotic" through the "Noble Savage" trope.[255]

The cover for *Savage Persuasion* (1991) **(Fig. 9)** has two facets to it - the outside cover and the inside cover. I will discuss each one separately. The outside cover features a close-up of the couple, and cuts away to reveal an eagle in the scene of the cover behind. The front cover also cuts away to reveal the right-hand side frame of the scene behind which, much like the cover of *Savage Dream* (1990), features a pattern of graphic symbols. The close-up of the couple is framed by a circle with two lines connecting to the circle by a turquoise half-circle on either side, and has long strands coming off of the end of the circle on the left-hand side of the cover. The front cover features a myriad of images that are "decontexualized" from their original meanings and are meant to represent "Indianness" through their reference to colonial constructions of Indigenous visual cultural identity.[256] The circle framing the couple can be interpreted either as a visual signifier of beaded jewelry associated with Indigenous artisans, or potentially as a dreamcatcher. The specific reveal of the pattern down the side connects this book with the others in the *Savage Secrets* series, as all of the books feature this distinct pattern down the side, an assumed marketing tool meant to connect them to one another, as well as further emphasize the

[254] Taylor, "Indian Love Call," 28.
[255] Van Lent, "'Her Beautiful Savage'", 216-17; Taylor, "Indian Love Call," 28; Bird, "Savage Desires," 75.
[256] Tobin, "Cultural Cross-Dressing," 85.

"exotic" hero promised within the novel's pages.[257] The reveal of the eagle works to connect the story to the cover (as the vision of an eagle plays an important role in the prologue to the story), symbolize the name of the hero, and emphasize his connection to nature. The visual signifiers found on the front cover work to emphasize the "other" within the "Normative/Other" body to market the titillation of the "exotic" to the presumed white female reader, and to image the particular colonial construction of "Indianness" which they will find within the novel.

The inside cover features a full body scene of the couple, with a landscape in the background. The male figure features the idealized white male body, with a muscular chest and broad shoulders. His features have the same straight nose and strong jaw as in the romance novel covers discussed earlier.[258] This creates the "Normative" part of the "Normative/Other" body, which signals the potential for the happy ending of the romance novel to the assumed white female reader. The grafting of the "other" occurs in this instance through the long black hair of the male figure, the loincloth he is wearing, and the surrounding landscape in which he has been placed.[259] The surrounding landscape includes an eagle flying in the back left corner of the image, and a bank of rocks in the background. The middle of the painting has a body of water with a canoe resting in it - the canoe is decorated with graphic symbols. In the foreground, the couple are kneeling on grass, with flowers sporadically spread around them. The landscape itself works to signal the figure as the "Noble Savage," someone who is themselves a part of the landscape.[260] The canoe works solely to exoticize the male figure, and to emphasize the "other" of the "Normative/Other" body. There is no canoeing involved in the story, and horses are the

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[257] "Savage Secrets series," Goodreads, https://www.goodreads.com/series/74713-savage-secrets (accessed November 24, 2016); Holly Jacobs, "B(u)y the Cover," Harlequin, http://www.harlequin.com/articlepage.html?articleId=1406&ch apter=0 (date of last access 19 Nov 2015); Tobin, "Cultural Cross-Dressing," 85.
[258] Taylor, "Indian Love Call," 28.
[259] Van Lent, "'Her Beautiful Savage'", 217, 222; Taylor, "Indian Love Call," 28.
[260] Van Lent, "'Her Beautiful Savage'", 211.

primary means of transportation within the plot. The canoe's primary purpose, especially with the symbols painted on the side, is to indicate to the potential consumer, through the trope of a colonial construction of Indigenous identity, that the male hero is an "Indian" and therefore "exotic" and "other".[261] The eagle, while it does feature as an important part of the story, also works in a similar manner in emphasizing the relation of the figure to the landscape and to nature, and the positioning of the figure as the "Noble Savage."[262]

Iron Cloud in *Savage Mists* (1992)

In *Savage Mists* (1992), Iron Cloud is the hero of the novel, and chief of his Omaha community. At the beginning of the novel, the reader initially receives an authorial description of Iron Cloud (rather than a description from the heroine, as is the case in the other two novels). Iron Cloud is arguing with the Indian agent over injustices enacted upon his community when the reader is first introduced to him - the Indian agent is the heroine's cousin, and when Iron Cloud sees her, he later decides to get revenge by kidnapping her. It is right before Iron Cloud and the heroine's first meeting that the reader receives the author's description of his physical appearance:

> "Chief Iron Cloud stood tall and wide-shouldered over the desk. His hands were doubled into tight fists at his sides and his midnight-black eyes flashed angrily down at Jonathan Jacobs [...]. His body sheathed in fringed buckskin, his shoulder-length black hair sleeked down with bear grease and held back from his handsome copper face with a beaded headband, Iron Cloud had come to speak for his people [...]."[263]

In this description, Edwards is visualizing the trope of the "Fearless Warrior" for the reader - he is the "courageous defender" of his people.[264] It is key to note the similarities in the textual descriptions for all three heroes in Edwards' *Savage Dream* (1990), *Savage Persuasion* (1991),

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[261] Thomas King, "Too Heavy to Lift," The Inconvenient Indian: A Curious Account of Native People in North America (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 53-55.
[262] Van Lent, "'Her Beautiful Savage'", 211, 222.
[263] Cassie Edwards, Savage Mists (New York: Leisure Books, 1992), 11-12.
[264] Van Lent, "'Her Beautiful Savage'", 212.

and *Savage Mists* (1992) - each one has "dark" or "black" eyes, and in *Savage Dream* (1990) and *Savage Mists* (1992), the heroes skin is described as "bronze" and "copper" respectively, and both are described as having long black hair that is "sleek" and held back with some form of headband.

As with *Savage Persuasion* (1991), *Savage Mists* (1992) has both an outside and an inside cover which will be subject to analysis **(Fig. 10)**. The outside cover features a close-up of the couple. A large circle encloses the close-up, with a geometric pattern on the outer edge of the circle echoing the pattern on the right-hand side of the novel. The background of the front cover is a washed-out version of the landscape on the inside cover. The geometric pattern on the right-hand side and along the outside of the circle used to frame the couple are both "decontextualized" patterns meant to create an idea of "Indianness" with which to frame the front cover of the novel, to further indicate the "other" of the "Normative/Other" body for the assumed white female reader.[265] The landscape in the background of the front cover is also another way to indicate the "other" to the assumed white female consumer through the visual equation of the Indigenous figure as a part of the landscape, reflecting the trope of the "Noble Savage."[266]

The inside front cover features the "Normative/Other" body as the hero of the novel. The figure has the muscular, idealized white male body, with the straight nose and strong jaw facial features of the idealized white male figure in romance novel cover art - creating the "Normative" aspect of the figure.[267] The "other" aspect of the figure is grafted on through his long black hair, his lack of clothing, and the background in which he is surrounded.[268] Despite the text's

[265] Tobin, "Cultural Cross-Dressing," 85.
[266] Van Lent, "'Her Beautiful Savage'", 211, 222.
[267] Taylor, "Indian Love Call," 28.
[268] Van Lent, "'Her Beautiful Savage'", 217, 222; Taylor, "Indian Love Call," 28.

description of Iron Cloud as wearing "fringed buckskin," in this image he is shirtless and appears to be wearing only a fringed loincloth. The removal of his clothing works to facilitate the fantasy of the "exotic."[269] The landscape which surrounds the male figure also works to create the "other" of the "Normative/Other" body.[270] The background of the painting features a waterfall, and in the foreground of the painting, there are large flowers. A dove hovers near Iron Cloud's left shoulder. Similar to the outside cover, the surrounding landscape works to facilitate the figure as the "Noble Savage" through the depiction of this figure as one with, and one within, nature.[271] There is no moment involving a dove within the storyline of the novel, so the dove in the landscape works to further emphasize the male figure's place as being close to, and in community with, nature.[272]

The male figure on the cover art of the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre occupies a fourth mode of the performance of colonial "mimicry" and appropriation - the "Normative/Other" body, in which the figure is meant to be read as both an idealized white male body and the "exotic" Indigenous "other" male body. This markets both the titillation of the "exotic" and the happy ending intrinsic to the structure of the romance novel to the assumed white female consumer, as evidenced in the covers of Cassie Edwards' *Savage Dream* (1990), *Savage Persuasion* (1991) and *Savage Mists* (1992).

[269] Van Lent, "'Her Beautiful Savage'", 217.
[270] Van Lent, "'Her Beautiful Savage'", 222.
[271] Van Lent, "'Her Beautiful Savage'", 211, 222.
[272] Ibid.

Chapter Three

Whiteness, Femininity and Romance Novel Cover Art: Visual Tropes of "Purity" and the Other-ing of Desire

"Brave Eagle was catapulted back to the time when he had caught sight of a woman outside the cabin where this Ray Russell had lived. [...] [H]e had lost sight of his true reason for being there when he had seen a vision of loveliness working in the garden, close by. With white skin that made the snows of winter blush in comparison, the woman had been tall and slender, her every movement marked by a becoming grace and dignity."
- Cassie Edwards, *Savage Persuasion* (1991), 43.

In 2013, the romance industry produced an estimated $1.08 billion in sales.[273] The face of the consumer of this booming economic market is overwhelmingly female. According to the Romance Writers of America (RWA) "Romance Reader Statistics," the majority of popular romance novels are purchased by women - 82% to be exact.[274] While the RWA generates statistics on the geographic location of their readers, noting that "[r]omance book buyers are highly represented in the South," it does not attempt to delve into the racial identity of its readers.[275] However, as Sarah Wendell and Candy Tan note in *Beyond Heaving Bosoms: The Smart Bitches' Guide to Romance Novels* (2009), the assumed romance reader is white - and marketing is heavily directed towards the desires of the white female reader:

> "One of the complaints that most often faces historical romance is that it's very white, very British, and very classist. [...] The segregation isn't unique to romance, but we must be honest. The face of romance is overwhelmingly white. [...] Romance is pretty homogenous. Historicals are usually about white characters, though there are notable exceptions, and notable exceptions of great quality in terms of writing. Contemporaries are a touch more diverse in terms of the overall number that feature minority characters [...]. Currently on the market are several lines specifically targeted toward minority readers - a systematic marketing of "otherness" that makes

[273] "Romance Industry Statistics," Romance Writers of America, https://www.rwa.org/p/cm/ld/fid=580 (accessed November 16, 2016).
[274] "Romance Reader Statistics," Romance Writers of America, https://www.rwa.org/p/cm/ld/fid=582 (accessed November 16, 2016).
[275] "Romance Reader Statistics."

> many an author and reader of romance see red. [...] The debate of racism in romance is a large one, and it's unresolved."[276]

The whiteness of popular romance is what this chapter proposes to examine, specifically through an analysis of the white female heroines, the figures on the covers of Cassie Edward's *Savage Dream* (1990), *Savage Mists* (1991) and *Savage Persuasion* (1992). This chapter will examine how the white female figure is utilized to create constructions of whiteness and femininity, and how these constructions are imaged into visual tropes designed to market the pairing of the "exotic" hero and the white heroine to the assumed white female reader.

Indian Captivity Narratives in Nineteenth-Century Art

The literary genre of the Indian captivity narrative can be found within nineteenth-century artworks which chose to represent specific moments of particularly well-known captivity narratives.[277] These artworks which depict captivity narratives have been generally categorized into two main representations for the purpose of this thesis - violent abduction/death or the romanticized captive. In depictions of violent abduction/death, this chapter will examine John Vanderlyn's *The Murder of Jane McCrea* (1804) **(Fig. 11)**, Charles Ferdinand Wimar's *The Abduction of Daniel Boone's Daughter by the Indians* (1853) **(Fig. 12)**, and Wimar's *The Abduction of Boone's Daughter by the Indians* (1855-56) **(Fig. 13)** as particular examples.

In Vanderlyn's painting and Wimar's two paintings, the poses in which the female figures have been placed are all those of submission to their captors or killers. As Robert Sheardy notes, in "The White Woman and the Native Male Body in Vanderlyn's *Death of Jane McCrea*," (1999)

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[276] Sarah Wendell and Candy Tan, Beyond Heaving Bosoms: The Smart Bitches Guide to Romance Novels (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2009), 190-91.

[277] S. Elizabeth Bird discusses the link between nineteenth-century captivity narratives in art and literature and the sexualisation of Indigenous men in "Savage Desires: The Gendered Construction of the American Indian in Popular Media." (56-70)

the figure of Jane McCrea is depicted as "passive/submissive"[278] in relation to the two Indigenous male figures in the painting. In Wimar's *The Abduction of Daniel Boone's Daughter by the Indians*, the white female figure is kneeling, her hands in potential prayer or supplication to her captors, and in Wimar's *Abduction of Boone's Daughter*, the white female figure is kneeling in the center of the raft, her hands together at the wrists. These two poses are also that of the "passive/submissive" body. It is important to note that Vanderlyn's painting emphasizes the white female figure's imminent death through the two Indigenous figures, while Wimar's paintings show the white female figure in the process of being abducted. Vanderlyn is portraying overt physical violence in the form of scalping, while Wimar's paintings work to make the viewer fear for what will happen to the white female figure after the abduction is over, such as the possibility of sexual assault.[279] This depiction of the dynamics of power, in which the white woman is in the pose of the "passive/submissive" is also reflected in the poses of the couples in *Savage Dream* (1990), *Savage Persuasion* (1991) and *Savage Mists* (1992).

Another facet of these paintings which can be found in the above romance novel covers is the extreme whiteness and paleness of the female figures in Vanderlyn and Wimar's respective paintings. Sheardy argues in his discussion of Vanderlyn's *The Murder of Jane McCrea* (1804) that it is "Jane's whiteness, and her apparent silence, [which] marks her as vulnerable, powerless in comparison to the ruddy and solid complexion of her two attackers."[280] In "Visceral Culture: Blushing and the Legibility of Whiteness in Eighteenth-Century British Portraiture," (2004)

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[278] Robert Sheardy, "The White Woman and the Native Male Body in Vanderlyn's *Death of Jane McCrea*," Journal of American Culture vol. 22, no. 1 (1999), 97.
[279] Charmaine A. Nelson, "White Slaves and Black Masters: Appropriation and Disavowal in Hiram Powers's *Greek Slave*," The Color of Stone: Sculpting the Black Female Subject in Nineteenth-Century America (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 100-02.
[280] Sheardy, "The White Woman and the Native Male Body," 97.

Angela Rosenthal discusses how blushing was used to construct and gender whiteness in British portraits:

> "[T]he blush as the visual sign of whiteness emerges as a response to the probing 'colonizing' gaze of the heterosexual man. [...] In the case of the paintings of female sitters in which their skin seems drained of colour while their cheeks burn with excessive red, the implied normativity of heterosexual intersubjectivity also reflects an active racialization of the woman. I would suggest that the blush as the sign of whiteness is being 'looked at' women. [...] If whiteness can be looked at someone, then the instability that surrounds whiteness is, moreover, displaced, by means of the blush, onto the most vulnerable of bodies, the youthful female and typically - as in the case of Pygmalion - virginal body, whose vulnerability must be protected from the intrusion of foreign others. For imagery stressing the blushing white cheeks of female participants not only becomes the focus of the performed *ars erotica* but also expresses, I would like to insist, an anxiety about purity, specifically racial purity."[281]

Thus, Rosenthal argues that the blush works in two ways - to signify femininity and purity, as well as sexual desire and the potential for heterosexual reproduction - specifically, the assumption of a white heterosexual reproduction.[282] Paleness as an ideal form of female beauty is a racist construct which works to equate whiteness with morality.[283] Blushing is used in conjunction with extreme paleness on the cover art of "American Indian Historical Romance" novels. These novels also utilize the extreme whiteness of the female figures and "passive/submissive"[284] configurations found within nineteenth-century artworks which depict captivity narratives.

Examples of the romanticized captive are also utilized by cover art of this popular romance genre. The use of visual tropes of the romanticized captive in "American Indian Historical Romance" cover art has historical roots in nineteenth-century artworks. Three such examples are Erastus Dow Palmer's *The White Captive* (1857-58, carved 1858-59) **(Fig. 14)**,

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[281] Angela Rosenthal, "*Visceral* Culture: Blushing and the Legibility of Whiteness in Eighteenth-Century British Portraiture," Art History vol. 27, no. 4 (2004), 582.
[282] Rosenthal, "*Visceral* Culture," 567-8, 582.
[283] Rosenthal, "*Visceral* Culture," 575-76.
[284] Sheardy, "The White Woman and the Native Male Body," 97.

Joseph Mozier's *The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish* (1857-58) **(Fig. 15)** and Chauncey Bradley Ives' *The Willing Captive* (modeled ca. 1862-68, carved 1871) **(Fig. 16)**. In "White Slaves and Black Masters: Appropriation and Disavowal in Hiram Powers's *Greek Slave*," (2007) Charmaine A. Nelson's analysis of Ives' *The Willing Captive* discusses the primary narrative utilized by sculptors depicting Indigenous captivity narratives:

> "All three of these sculptures depended on narratives that situated the white female body as the liminal body perched between white civilization and Native primitiveness. If Native penetration and corruption of white culture was effected, it was literally and sexually to be performed through the white female body."[285]

Within each of these three sculptures, the white female body exists under the immediate threat of the potential "corruption" of her "purity" through sexual contact with the Indigenous "other."[286] This pattern is also reflected in the romance novel cover art of the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre through the titillation of the assumed white female consumer by the potential sexual desire of the interracial couple.

Text versus History: Relationships between White Women and Indigenous Men

In *Savage Dream* (1990), *Savage Persuasion* (1991), and *Savage Mists* (1992), there are common thematic tropes which outline the relationships between the hero and heroine in each novel. Each novel begins with the hero kidnapping or capturing the heroine. In *Savage Dream* (1990) and *Savage Mists* (1992) the hero kidnaps the heroine for revenge against a colonial force (in each novel this colonial force/power is represented in a white male figure related to the heroine).[287] The couple then falls in love against their respective wills. *Savage Persuasion* (1991)

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[285] Nelson is also referring to two other sculptures in this quote: *Virginia Dare* (1859) by Louisa Lander and *The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish* (1859) by Joseph Mozier. (Nelson, "White Slaves and Black Masters," 100-02.)

[286] Nelson, "White Slaves and Black Masters," 100-02.

[287] In "'Her Beautiful Savage': The Current Sexual Image of the Native American Male," Peter van Lent notes that in this genre of romance novel, "the white males are often drunkards and dirty, whereas the Native men are close to the healthful, healing powers of nature," which is one of the modes of sexualising the Indigenous man in popular culture, which he terms "sexiness of character." (219, 218)

differs slightly from the other two novels, in that the hero, Brave Eagle, captures the heroine to help her when her home is destroyed and she is lost in the wilderness. As Brave Eagle saw Brietta from afar before he captured her, he does not fall in love against his will, but Brietta falls in love against her will. There is also still a colonial force represented in the figure of a white male in *Savage Persuasion* (1991) - Brietta's evil uncles, and white slave traders. Each novel concludes with the hero and heroine living together in a setting which has been slightly modified in some way from the hero's previous lifestyle, though the couple still lives in the "wilderness" and is a part of the hero's Indigenous community. The hero in each novel either begins as the chief, or is the chief by the end of the novel.

In each novel, the heroine becomes a part of the Indigenous community of her partner, however, she also retains, in some way, her own "whiteness." In *Savage Dream* (1990), Maria comes up with a business plan for the Navaho people to make money by selling weavings of a special cloth from Spain,[288] and at the end of the novel, her home with Shadow includes numerous domestic items from her life before.[289] In *Savage Persuasion* (1991), Brietta and Brave Eagle, who is now the chief, live with his community, however Brietta and her twin sister each have their own separate cabins rather than the "wigwams" of the rest of the Cherokee community.[290] In *Savage Mists* (1992), near the end of the novel, Damita helps to convince Iron Cloud to move his people back to the reservation from which he had initially taken them to escape the clutches of an evil Indian agent (her cousin), since the new Indian agent that has been

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[288] Cassie Edwards, Savage Dream (New York: Love Spell, 1997), 197-203.

[289] These items include: "A beautiful gold vase here, a gilt-edged mirror there, and gold candle holders with long white tapers," and a "small table." (Edwards, Savage Dream, 309-10.)

[290] Brietta's twin sister, Rachel is a secondary heroine within the story - though she is not the main character, she is also kidnapped (by two different Indigenous male characters at different times) and eventually ends up receiving her own happy ending in the story, and is married with a child to one of her captors, Running Wolf, who is a member of Brave Eagle's community. [Cassie Edwards, Savage Persuasion (New York: Leisure Books, 1991), 415-16.]

put in place is his friend.[291] In each of these novels, the conclusion seems to indicate a type of idyllic return to nature for the white heroine, with an indication of the inevitability of "progress" in the future that awaits them.[292] Each couple is either pregnant or already have children by the end of the novel.

In "The Eastmans and the Luhans: Interracial Marriage between White Women and Native American Men, 1875-1935," (2002) Margaret D. Jacobs outlines how the societal viewpoint of marriages between Indigenous men and white women shifted in the late nineteenth century. Jacobs argues that interracial marriages, particularly between white women and men of colour were never accepted by American society and were actively prevented from happening through legislation: "[T]hree colonies and fourteen states prohibited marriages between whites and Indians."[293] However, Jacobs discusses a movement in the late nineteenth century, though never widespread, in which pairings between Indigenous men and white women were encouraged. Specifically, she discusses the influence of abolitionist Lydia Maria Child's views on this movement:

> "By the second half of the nineteenth century, Child's belief that white women might civilize Indian men through marriage had gained greater currency. [...] To some reformers, adopting Child's view, interracial marriage between white women and Native American men offered a 'natural' way of assimilating Native Americans."[294]

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[291] Cassie Edwards, Savage Mists (New York: Leisure Books, 1992), 422.

[292] In "Savage Desires: The Gendered Construction of the American Indian in Popular Media," S. Elizabeth Bird argues that the "doomed warrior" trope of the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre is a figure "who realizes change is coming." (75)

[293] Margaret D. Jacobs, "The Eastmans and the Luhans: Interracial Marriage between White Women and Native American Men, 1875-1935," Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies vol. 23, no. 3 (2002), 32. Marriages and relationships between interracial couples were also prevented through or met with extreme mob violence, particularly in the form of lynchings directed against black men in relationships with white women, as Martha Hodes discusses in her chapter "Murder: Black Men, White Women, and Lynching" in White Women, Black Men: Illicit Sex in the 19th-Century South (1997).

[294] Jacobs, "The Eastmans and the Luhans," 34-35.

While this movement was still controversial, the focus of marriages between white women and Indigenous men during this time period symbolized the potential for Indigenous assimilation into white settler colonial society.[295]

In the novels, the time periods range from an unspecified early colonial time period in *Savage Dream* (1990), to 1819 in *Savage Persuasion* (1991) and 1871 in *Savage Mists* (1992). The couples in Edwards' respective novels do not employ the active assimilation policy discussed in Jacobs' article, however, at the end of each novel there is a shift in each Indigenous community in which, while the heroine has become more "Indian," the community too has changed to include aspects of "progress" from white settler colonial society.[296]

Maria Zamora in *Savage Dream (1990)*

The heroine of *Savage Dream* (1990) is Maria Zamora, a young Spanish woman who lives with her wealthy parents in New Mexico.[297] Maria, as Edwards writes in the novel, "spent most of her childhood in Valencia, Spain," and was therefore born in Europe, and does not fall under the categorization of being Creole - this is important to note, as it denotes different levels of whiteness which were created based on place of birth, with white colonial settlers born in Europe having higher status than white colonial settlers born in colonies, as Christer Petley discusses in " 'Home' and 'This Country': Britishness and Creole Identity in the Letters of a Transatlantic Slaveholder."[298]

While there are four different print editions of *Savage Dream* (1990), only two will be examined within this chapter. The final print edition was discussed in Chapter Two, since it

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[295] Jacobs, "The Eastmans and the Luhans," 34-35.
[296] S. Elizabeth Bird, "Savage Desires: The Gendered Construction of the American Indian in Popular Media," Selling the Indian: Commercializing and Appropriating American Indian Cultures, Carter Jones Meyer and Diana Royer, eds. (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2001), 75.
[297] Edwards, Savage Dream, 3.
[298] Edwards, Savage Dream, 3; Christer Petley, "'Home' and 'This Country': Britishness and Creole Identity in the Letters of a Transatlantic Slaveholder," Atlantic Studies vol. 6 no. 1 (April 2009), 47.

features only a male figure on the cover. The cover of the second print edition of *Savage Dream*, published in June 1990 by Diamond Books, features Maria Zamora and Shadow, the "Navaho Indian chief" and hero of the novel.[299] There are two textual descriptors of Maria in the first chapter of the book - the first, a part self-reflexive, part authorial description, when Maria is looking in a mirror:

> "Maria's reflection in a large mirror mounted over the fireplace revealed a shapely young woman with dark, flashing eyes and luxuriant waist-length coal-black hair drawn back from her delicate, lovely face with combs encrusted with jewels. She was a five-foot tall, one-hundred-pound whirlwind of energy, who felt imprisoned by her overprotective father."[300]

The second description of Maria is from Shadow's point of view, and occurs when she encounters him closely for the first time, as he is leaving her father's study:

> "She had been a mere child the last time he had seen her, and though she was still only a wisp of a lady, she was now a mature woman, beautiful in every sense of the word. Her eyes were wide and dark, intense enough to completely absorb a man. [...] [A]t this moment there was only Maria and the delicate texture of her skin, her beautiful features, those seductive lips, and her meaningful expression as she returned his steady gaze."[301]

These two descriptive texts offer two points of view - one which is meant to be the authorial and accurate representation of Maria's features, and the second is meant to show the reader the beginning of the attraction between Shadow and Maria.

When compared with the figure of Maria in the June 1990 edition of *Savage Dream* **(Fig. 6)**, the visual and textual descriptions reflect one another largely in the depiction of Maria's long black hair. Otherwise, the figure on the front cover reflects the visual tropes of the romance novel cover, rather than exactly represent the above descriptions. Maria is dressed in a blue dress, which is falling off her shoulder, and one of her legs is visible through the skirt riding up

[299] Edwards, Savage Dream, 1.
[300] Edwards, Savage Dream, 2.
[301] Edwards, Savage Dream, 7-8.

along her left thigh. She is placed slightly below Shadow, kneeling. Her head is turned away, with her eyes closed, and her arm holds onto Shadow's forearm. Her posture is one which works in two ways, indicating both resistance to capture, as well as sexual excitement, submission and invitation. The placement of her body below Shadow's more powerful body works to indicate his power over her, both as an exciting sexual partner, and as her captor. Recall that the story in the novel begins with Shadow's capture of her in retaliation for her father's actions and his intent of making Maria his "love slave."[302]

On the cover of *Savage Dream* (1990), Maria's extremely pale and white skin, with the blush on her cheeks, signals two things to the potential consumer. First, her potential as a sexual being, which is further emphasized through her position in relation to Shadow, the dress which is partially falling from her body, and her voluptuous body. [303] The blush shows her heightened desire for the potential partner in her arms.[304] However, her white and pale skin in combination with the blush also emphasize her whiteness in relation to Shadow, her partner - this extreme paleness and blush plays on the idea of the "purity"[305] and the virginal nature of the white female body, raising the potential for titillation by depicting this "purity" about to be overwhelmed by the "exotic" body of her partner, Shadow.[306] This is also emphasized through the positioning of Shadow over Maria, who is literally looming over her body. This position is meant to be an indication of the possibility that the two figures will soon consummate their relationship - this idea is further supported through the placement of Shadow's left hand on Maria's back, as though he will soon begin to lower her onto the blanket beneath them.

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[302] Edwards, Savage Dream, 39-40.
[303] Rosenthal, "*Visceral* Culture," 582.
[304] Ibid.
[305] Ibid.
[306] Nelson, "White Slaves and Black Masters," 100-02.

The next edition of *Savage Dream* was released in January 1997 with Love Spell, a line of books under Dorchester Publishing.[307] **(Fig. 7)** In this cover, Maria is standing behind Shadow. She has dark hair, and has even paler and whiter skin in this cover, highlighting the blush on her cheeks. Her eyes are closed, and her head rests on Shadow's shoulder, with a more typical romantic love pose than the previous cover, which was more openly sexual, and pointed to the captivity narrative within the story.

In this cover, Maria's blush is even more pronounced. Her blush and posture both indicate her potential as a sexual and romantic partner for Shadow. Maria's blush, as Rosenthal argues, is a pronounced "response [to the] gaze of the heterosexual man" - an involuntary bodily response to desire, that signifies her potential as a reproductive being, and her potential as a sexual partner. [308] The blush as an *involuntary* response is important in order to preserve her "purity" as a white female body - as Dyer notes, "The model for white women is the Virgin Mary, a pure vessel for reproduction who is unsullied by the dark drives that reproduction entails."[309] The white woman must be a pure being, initially at least for her ideal husband/partner, unsullied by (prior, meaning for other men) sexual desires.[310] In this cover, her posture also reflects this - again, Shadow is standing with his body over hers, in the position of strength and dominance.[311]

Brietta Russell in *Savage Persuasion* (1991)

There are two female characters in *Savage Persuasion* (1991), the heroine and her twin sister. Brietta Russell is the main heroine, with her twin sister Rachel acting as a secondary heroine. As in *Savage Dream* (1990), there are two textual descriptors of Brietta in the story - the

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[307] Jim Macdonald, "Whither Dorchester?" Making Light, http://nielsenhayden.com/makinglight/archives/012927.html (accessed November 13, 2016).
[308] Rosenthal, "*Visceral* Culture," 581-83.
[309] Richard Dyer, "The Matter of Whiteness," White (New York: Routledge, 1997), 29.
[310] Dyer, "The Matter of Whiteness," 29.
[311] Sheardy, "The White Woman and the Native Male Body," 97.

first, an authorial description, and the second, a description of Brave Eagle's (the primary hero of the novel) first sighting of Brietta. The authorial description is brief, and includes Brietta with her twin sister:

> "Most of their acquaintances in St. Louis had said that Brietta and her sister were uncommonly beautiful girls. Their faces were framed by dark, natural ringlets that hung down their backs to their waists. Their noses were straight and well-formed, their cheekbones delicate. It had always embarrassed Brietta when someone had commented on her lips - saying they were shaped as though a sculptor had molded them."[312]

Brave Eagle's description arises from him reminiscing about when he saw the heroine from a distance, before they meet in the novel:

> "With white skin that made the snows of winter blush in comparison, the woman had been tall and slender, her every movement marked by a becoming grace and dignity. Her every feature was formed with perfect symmetry, and her face was framed by dark hair that hung free down her back to her waist, not braided like that of Cherokee women. In the brightness of the sunshine he had seen that this woman's eyes were the color of new grass in the spring, a beautiful, mystical shade of green!"[313]

In these two textual descriptions, it is important to note the emphasis which is placed upon Brietta's physical difference from "Cherokee women" - her skin is described as making "the snows of winter blush in comparison," leaving the reader in no doubt that she is white, her hair is styled differently, and her eye colour is described as "mystical."[314] The emphasis on this difference is echoed in the other two novels, and is typically the appeal for both hero and heroine, as well as a detractor. In "Savage Desires: The Gendered Construction of the American Indian in Popular Media," (2001) S. Elizabeth Bird notes that this is a common trope in the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre: "Of course, these romantic Indian or half-Indian heroes are always inexorably drawn to white women."[315]

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[312] Edwards, Savage Persuasion, 20-21.
[313] Edwards, Savage Persuasion, 43.
[314] Ibid.
[315] Bird, "Savage Desires," 73.

From this textual description, the August 1991 cover of *Savage Persuasion* from Leisure Books (Fig. 9) draws upon the dark colour of her hair, as well as her "ringlets", but the prominent feature on the cover is the depiction of Brietta's skin as extremely white and pale. Brietta's pale skin color is emphasized through her position and her dress, which leaves large portions of her skin exposed - particularly her back, with her hair swept to the side, and her entire left leg, where her skirt is being dragged upwards by Brave Eagle. Brietta also has a slight blush visible on her cheeks. Brietta's extremely pale and white skin on the cover creates a contrast to Brave Eagle's complexion. This extreme whiteness and bright blush work to signify both sexuality and "purity," as discussed in the covers for *Savage Dream* (1990).[316] This racial "purity" - that is, her potential for white heterosexual reproduction, is discussed by Dyer as a qualifying aspect of her role as a reproductive being.[317] Her blush, however, signals the bodily response of sexual desire, in contrast to her extremely white skin.[318] This indicates that she is also a sexual being in addition to her "purity" as a white female.[319] This combination of the involuntary blush with extremely white skin creates the signal to the reader of the potential "corruption"[320] of this "purity," and the inability of the white heroine to do anything about this - something which is reflected in all three novels, as the romances are described as being fate, or an outside force, or the heroines fall in love seemingly against their will. Indeed, all three heroines are initially literally taken captive against their wills. The combination of involuntary blush against extremely white skin, places sexual desire and "purity" in contrast.

This is also reflected in the pose between Brietta and Brave Eagle. Both are on their knees, and Brave Eagle looms slightly over Brietta - he is bending her slightly backward, with

[316] Rosenthal, "*Visceral* Culture," 581-83.
[317] Dyer, "The Matter of Whiteness," 25.
[318] Rosenthal, "*Visceral* Culture," 582.
[319] Ibid.
[320] Nelson, "White Slaves and Black Masters," 100.

his arm on her back, and his hand raising her dress up her thigh. Brietta's eyes are closed, and her mouth is touching Brave Eagle's, though they are not yet kissing. She clutches onto his upper arm with one hand. This pose indicates another battle between desire and resistance - Brave Eagle is the figure creating most of the action in the couple, and she is in-between acceptance and resistance.[321] This places the sexual action largely on that of Brave Eagle's body, while Brietta holds the potential for resistance, indicating both her struggle with the potential "corruption" of her "purity" and her sexual desire for the man before her.[322]

Damita in *Savage Mists* (1992)

The heroine of *Savage Mists* (1992) is Damita. In this novel, the hero, Chief Iron Cloud, is the first to provide a textual description of Damita when he sees her at Fort Calhoun:

> "Just as he placed his hand to the knob, the door swung quickly open, and he found the softest blue eyes imaginable gazing up at him, momentarily taking him off guard. The young lady was tall, slim, and fair-skinned, with long golden hair. Though not a breathtakingly beautiful woman, he saw a gentle innocence in her facial features. She was taller than most women Iron Cloud had ever seen, so that his first impression was that she was like a willow tree, and the name White Willow came to him in a heartbeat."[323]

Again, as in the previous two novels, the heroine is identified as having "fair-skin" and it plays a key role in the hero's attraction to her; Iron Cloud even goes so far as to include the word white in the name he immediately gives to Damita.

It is key to note that two of the heroines in the three novels studied have light-colored eyes - Brietta has green eyes, and Damita has blue. Only Maria is described as having "dark, flashing eyes."[324] Drew Hayden Taylor, in "Indian Love Call (minus Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy)," also commented on the eye color of the heroine within this genre: "[T]he women

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[321] Sheardy, "The White Woman and the Native Male Body," 97.
[322] Nelson, "White Slaves and Black Masters," 100.
[323] Edwards, Savage Mists, 15.
[324] Edwards, Savage Dream, 2.

almost always have blue eyes - this seems to be a prerequisite for being kidnapped by Indians."[325] This is another way in which to differentiate the white female heroines desirability through whiteness from that of Indigenous women. Though Maria has brown eyes, they are described as "dark" and "flashing" to make the color distinctive.

In the 1992 publication of *Savage Mists* from Leisure Books **(Fig. 10)**, the visual depiction of Damita generally follows the textual description outlined in the novel - specifically her "long golden hair" and her "fair-skin." As in the visual depictions of the heroines in Edwards' other two novels that are being studied in this thesis, Damita is blushing, the blush pronounced against her extremely pale skin. In this cover, extremely white and pale skin in combination with the blush is again being used to create a dichotomy of "purity" in conjunction with sexuality.[326] Damita's blush signals her desire for Iron Cloud, while her extremely white and pale skin signals her "purity" and virginity and the potential "corruption" of this "purity" by her potential sexual partner, Iron Cloud.[327] This combination of "purity" and sexual desire is also reflected in the pose between Iron Cloud and Damita.

Although slightly less overtly sexual than the covers of *Savage Dream* (1990) and *Savage Persuasion* (1991), the pose still plays with the in-between theme of domination and power battling with giving in to sexual desire. Iron Cloud is standing over a kneeling Damita (the front of his body pressed to the back of hers) looking down over her, while her head is bent up towards him, his two arms grasping her shoulders. As in the other three covers, Iron Cloud is in the position of power, leaning over Damita and holding her in place. His body is the primary active

[325] Drew Hayden Taylor, "Indian Love Call (minus Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy)," Me Sexy: An Exploration of Native Sex and Sexuality, Drew Hayden Taylor, ed. (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 2008), 30.
[326] Rosenthal, "*Visceral* Culture," 581-83.
[327] Rosenthal, "*Visceral* Culture," 581-83; Nelson, "White Slaves and Black Masters," 100.

body of the two of them, while Damita, kneeling, is the passive body.[328] Occupying the more physically vulnerable position, she holds onto her own dress rather than onto Iron Cloud. This posture indicates the potential romatic/sexual love between the two figures (the exposed skin on both bodies, and her blush), as well Damita's status as a captive (Iron Cloud's hold on Damita, and the positioning of her hands). As discussed earlier, the relationship between the hero and the heroine in each book begins with the capture of the heroine by the hero. This lack of control allows the primary sexual actor in the cover to be Iron Cloud, and Damita preserves her essential "whiteness" - i.e., her "purity" through the displacement of this sexual desire onto her Indigenous male partner.[329] This lack of control is replicated in the pose created on the cover.

Whiteness, "Absence," and Female Sexuality

As discussed in Chapter One, Dyer argues that whiteness is constructed through "absence"[330] - or the idea of "purity, cleanliness, virginity, [...] [which stems from] its instabilities and apparent neutrality."[331] This is particularly mobilised in regards to white female sexuality, out of the concern over heterosexual reproduction.[332] As Dyer argues, as white women are the primary reproductive carriers, their sexuality is policed to conform to the idea of the "pure" body - that is, a body which is uncorrupted by sexual desire, especially sexual desire with another race.[333]

In the covers for Edwards' *Savage Dream* (1990), *Savage Persuasion* (1991), and *Savage Mists* (1992), the depiction of the white female heroine is created to register her body as both "pure" and as a sexual human being. At the beginning of the novel, the white heroine is depicted

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[328] Sheardy, "The White Woman and the Native Male Body," 97.
[329] Dyer, "The Matter of Whiteness," 28.
[330] Richard Dyer, "Coloured White, Not Coloured," White (New York: Routledge, 1997), 70.
[331] Dyer, "Coloured White, Not Coloured," 70.
[332] Dyer, "The Matter of Whiteness," 29.
[333] Ibid.

as being overwhelmed by her desire and only *succumbs* at first to the advances and attractions of the Indigenous hero - later in the novel, she plays a more active role in the sexual relationship. This is created through particular visual tropes which allow the white female heroine to be a passive body and largely displace her desires and active sexuality onto that of her Indigenous male partner.[334] As such, these heroines retain their "purity," and the titillating potential for the assumed white female reader of the "exotic other" as the romantic and sexual partner of the white female heroine (and, in their fantasies, the reader themselves). This displacement maintains the "whiteness" of the female body through the absenting of desire onto the "other" body, as Dyer argues in "The Matter of Whiteness" (1997): "[The] projection of sexuality on to dark races was a means for whites to represent yet dissociate themselves from their own desires."[335] This allows for the facilitation of white desire, while still maintaining the mythos of the "purity" of whiteness, through the creation of the myth of the hypersexual "other" - in the case of the romance novel covers, the Indigenous hero, who is the active sexual body on each cover.[336] The white female heroine retains her virginal and "pure" state, and thus does not transgress the fear of interracial sex[337] - the white female heroine figure toes the line, but does not actively cross it, and is thus still an acceptable lead figure.

The white female heroine figure is still acceptable through her guaranteed happy ending with the "Normative/Other" male hero on the cover - as he is meant to inhabit both the ideal white male body, and the hypersexual "other," this allows the white female heroine to negate the

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[334] Dyer, "The Matter of Whiteness," 28; Dyer, "Coloured White, Not Coloured," 80; Sheardy, "The White Woman and the Native Male Body," 97.
[335] Dyer, "The Matter of Whiteness," 28.
[336] Dyer, "The Matter of Whiteness," 28; Dyer, "Coloured White, Not Coloured," 80; Sheardy, "The White Woman and the Native Male Body," 97.
[337] Peter van Lent, "'Her Beautiful Savage': The Current Sexual Image of the Native American Male," Dressing in Feathers: The Construction of the Indian in American Popular Culture, ed. S. Elizabeth Bird (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996), 217.

threat of the disruption of "purity," as the consumer can access the ideal white male as the heroine's happy ending.[338] Peter van Lent identifies this use of white features as a mode of keeping "the romantic-sexual bond [as] not truly interracial" to the white female reader in " 'Her Beautiful Savage': The Current Sexual Image of the Native American Male."[339] Textually, the threat of interracial sex is negated through the ending of the novel, which features a combination of the promise of disappearance and assimilation - the Indigenous hero and the white female heroine live with his community, in a way of life which is portrayed as idyllic, yet changing through something which the white heroine has contributed.[340]

Visual Tropes and White Female Sexuality

As is evidenced in the discussion of the four covers analyzed in this chapter, there are particular visual tropes which facilitate the creation of the white female body as the "pure" body in relation to the "exotic other" body of the Indigenous male figure in the cover art of the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre. These three main visual tropes are: extremely white and pale skin, blushing, and a pose in which the woman is placed in a lower and more vulnerable position that the man.[341] The female figure has extremely white and pale skin, used to contrast against the Indigenous male figure she is paired with on the cover. The female figure also has a pronounced blush on her cheeks, which is visible through the extreme whiteness of her

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[338] Dyer, "The Matter of Whiteness," 25; Van Lent, "'Her Beautiful Savage'", 216-17.
[339] Ibid.
[340] Bird, "Savage Desires," 75.
[341] It is interesting to note that the pose of the white woman in relation to the Indigenous male hero is something that has been noticed by a critical (assumed) white female consumer of this genre - in a blog post from Romance Novels for Feminists, "Rethinking Columbus Day: Native American Romance," Jackie C. Horne states: "Running a Google search for 'Native American romance' [...] is a bit disheartening. The Goodreads page for Native American romance features books with covers primarily from the bodice-ripping period, with dark-skinned native men hovering menacingly/sexily over light-skinned women with alarmingly low-cut blouses or dresses." [Jackie C. Horne, "Rethinking Columbus Day: Native American Romance," Romance Novels for Feminists, October 15, 2013, http://romancenovelsforfeminists.blogspot.ca/2013/10/rethinking-columbus-day-native-american.html (accessed February 26, 2017).]

skin.[342] Finally, the pose between the white female and the Indigenous male creates the white female as the "passive/submissive" body, as Sheardy terms it in his discussion of Vanderlyn's *The Death of Jane McCrea* (1804), and the Indigenous male as the "active" body - namely, the initiator of the romantic and sexual relationship between the pair.[343]

As was introduced in the beginning of the chapter, the marketing of the romance novel is largely driven by the assumption that the majority of readers are white females.[344] While the majority of romance novel readers are women, as evidenced by the statistics referred to in the introduction of the chapter, there are no available statistics that I have been able to uncover regarding the race of the readers of romance novels.[345] As Wendell and Tan point out in *Beyond Heaving Bosoms*, the cultural assumption of whiteness has driven the marketing of the romance novel.[346] Therefore, the majority of marketing is designed to fulfil and cater to the titillation of white female sexual desire. The cover of the romance novel is largely driven by the desire to have the assumed white female consumer purchase a book - the "clinch" poses, the uniformity of the "Normative/Other" figure, who is an "ideal *white* male"[347] model who has had colonial constructs of the "Indian" "grafted"[348] onto him, the "decontextualization"[349] of Indigenous cultural motifs, and the three visual tropes of extremely white skin, blushing, and a pose of dominance and submission signal to the white female reader the titillation of a story about the "exotic other" and a white female heroine.

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[342] Rosenthal, "*Visceral* Culture," 581-83.
[343] Sheardy, "The White Woman and the Native Male Body," 97.
[344] Wendell and Candy Tan, Beyond Heaving Bosoms, 190-91.
[345] "Romance Reader Statistics."
[346] Wendell and Candy Tan, Beyond Heaving Bosoms, 190-91.
[347] Email from Dr. Charmaine A. Nelson, September 21, 2016.
[348] Ibid.
[349] Beth Fowkes Tobin, "Cultural Cross-Dressing in British America: Portraits of British Officers and Mohawk Warriors," Picturing Imperial Power: Colonial Subjects in Eighteenth-Century British Painting (Duke University Press, 1999), 85.

Conclusion

Critical Voices

The romance novel is a fairly ubiquitous sight within popular culture. Easily identifiable through its cover art, the romance novel shows the potential consumer exactly what can be expected within the plot through particular visual tropes which have come to be associated exclusively with the romance novel - none more so than the "clinch" pose.[350] Romance novel cover art has primarily been the focus of satire rather than any serious scholarly contemplation. However, this ignores what visualizations of race, sex, and gender the mass-market paperback romance novel is offering for consumption to the assumed white female reader. A critical analysis of these images works to destabilize the narratives these images offer.

The nucleus for this thesis began to take shape when I was contemplating what to research and write about in my final paper for Dr. Charmaine A. Nelson's *Critical Whiteness Studies* seminar. From some dusty corner of my brain, I recalled reading a series of books as a teen, the Avon *True Romance* series. The books were designed to introduce teenagers into the world of romance - incorporating the essential elements of the romance novel, but without the sex typically found in romance novels targeted to adults. When I began to research the series, partly as a method of procrastinating, one book in particular caught my attention - *Miranda and the Warrior* (2002) by Elaine Barbieri.[351] I recalled that when I looked at the book for the first time as a teen, I was unsurprised, based on my examination of the cover, that the plot of the

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[350] Jennifer McKnight-Trontz, The Look of Love: The Art of the Romance Novel (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2001), 24.

[351] It is significant to note that the Avon *True Romance* series appears to assume that the majority of their readers will be white female teens - out of twelve books in the series, ten have white female heroines. Of these ten books, nine of the heroines are paired with white males. *Miranda and the Warrior* (2002) is the only novel featuring a mixed race couple. The other two novels in the series feature a black heroine paired with a black hero (both are written by Beverly Jenkins). ["Avon True Romances," Goodreads, http://www.goodreads.com/list/show/17258.Avon_True_Romances, (accessed February 14, 2017).]

novel revolved around the kidnapping of the white teenage heroine, Miranda, by an Indigenous young man. The image was already so enmeshed within my subconscious that I recognized the visual significations provided for me relatively quickly.[352] This realization of the power of the imagery of romance novel cover art pushed me to examine these images that are so often the subject of scorn and satire - first, in the final paper for my seminar, and now as a Master's thesis. The refusal to take seriously these images belies the significant role that they play within popular visual culture, and the narratives of race, sex, and gender that they create and perpetuate.

The cover art of the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre presents a mode of performance of colonial constructions of appropriation in which the Indigenous male hero is "Normative/Other" and the white female heroine is "pure," and displaces her sexuality onto the body of the male hero.[353] This cover art allows the assumed white female consumer to access the titillation of the "exotic" while still recognizing the inclusion of the narrative element of the "betrothal,"[354] referred to as the happy ending in this thesis, through the "grafting"[355] of settler colonial constructions of Indigeneity onto an "idealized white male body."[356] This allows the white female consumer to simultaneously access the "Settler adoption fantas[y]"[357] of Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang's "moves to innocence,"[358] outlined in "Decolonization is not a metaphor," as well as reassure themselves of the historicity of the "Indian" through a story of the "Vanishing

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[352] In the "Preface" to Dangerous Books for Girls: The Bad Reputation of Romance Novels Explained, Maya Rodale relates the power of societal perception in her introduction to romance novels. (2015)
[353] Richard Dyer, "The Matter of Whiteness," White (New York: Routledge, 1997), 28; Richard Dyer, "Coloured White, Not Coloured," White (New York: Routledge, 1997), 80.
[354] Pamela Regis, A Natural History of the Romance Novel (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), 37.
[355] Email from Dr. Charmaine A. Nelson, September 21, 2016.
[356] Ibid.
[357] Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, "Decolonization is not a metaphor," Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education, & Society vol. 1., no. 1 (2012), 13.
[358] Tuck and Yang, "Decolonization is not a metaphor," 3-4.

Indian."[359] The cover art of this genre, particularly from the period of the eighties and nineties, is a perpetuation of the white settler colonial project through the reinforcement of the colonial visual constructions of the "Indian,"[360] and the conflation of white heteropatriarchal masculinity with Indigenous masculinity,[361] as is evident in the reimagining of captivity narratives in the "clinch" pose and the use of landscapes in the cover art of *Savage Dream* (1990), *Savage Persuasion* (1991), and *Savage Mists* (1992).[362]

Captivity Narratives: Nineteenth-Century "High" Art and Twentieth-Century Cover Art

The cover art of the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre is related to nineteenth-century portrayals of captivity narratives in "high" art through depictions of violent abduction/death and the romanticized captive. The two key signifiers within the works showing violent abduction/death [the specific artworks used as examples in this thesis of this visual trope of the captivity narrative are John Vanderlyn's *The Murder of Jane McCrea* (1804), Charles Ferdinand Wimar's *The Abduction of Daniel Boone's Daughter by the Indians* (1853), and Wimar's *The Abduction of Boone's Daughter by the Indians* (1855-56)] are also common in the cover art for the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre. The first is the use of the signifiers of colonial constructs of Indigenous identity in the creation of the "Normative/Other" male figure, just as the artists used colonial constructs of the "Indian" to create Indigenous figures in the artworks.[363] The second is the use of the "passive/submissive" body in the white

[359] Philip J. Deloria, Playing Indian (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1998), 64.
[360] Thomas King, "Too Heavy to Lift," The Inconvenient Indian: A Curious Account of Native People in North America (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 53-54.
[361] This concept is the subject of Mark Rifkin's When Did Indians Become Straight?: Kinship, the History of Sexuality, and Native Sovereignty (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).
[362] Peter van Lent, "'Her Beautiful Savage': The Current Sexual Image of the Native American Male," Dressing in Feathers: The Construction of the Indian in American Popular Culture, ed. S. Elizabeth Bird (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996), 222.
[363] King, "Too Heavy to Lift," 53-54.

female figure.[364] Indigenous figures are the active bodies within this specific genre of nineteenth-century artworks,[365] and this is reflected in the cover art of the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre. The "Normative/Other" body is the body with sexual agency, which is placed above the white female's body, in the role of domination and active agent.[366] The key signifier within images of the romanticized captive [the specific artworks used as examples in this thesis are Erastus Dow Palmer's *The White Captive* (1857-58, carved 1858-59), Joseph Mozier's *The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish* (1857-58), and Chauncey Bradley Ives' *The Willing Captive* (modeled ca. 1862-68, carved 1871)] which is also seen within the cover art for the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre, is the white female body registered as "pure" with the titillation of the potential for this purity to be "corrupted" through interracial sex with the "Normative/Other" male figure.[367] All three of these key visual tropes in nineteenth-century depictions of captivity narratives in "high" art combine to create the "pure" white female body which displaces sexual agency onto her "Normative/Other" male partner in the cover art for the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre.[368]

However, there is a key distinction between the consumption of nineteenth-century "high" art and cover art of the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre. In " 'So Pure and Celestial a Light': Sculpture, Marble, and Whiteness as a Privileged Racial Signifier," Nelson argues that one of the distinctions between "high" art and "low" art in the nineteenth century was how it was consumed by the viewer:

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[364] Robert Sheardy, "The White Woman and the Native Male Body in Vanderlyn's Death of Jane McCrea," Journal of American Culture, vol. 22, no. 1 (1999), 97.
[365] Sheardy, "The White Woman and the Native Male Body," 97.
[366] Dyer, "The Matter of Whiteness," 28; Dyer, "Coloured White, Not Coloured," 80; Sheardy, "The White Woman and the Native Male Body," 97.
[367] Charmaine A. Nelson, "White Slaves and Black Masters: Appropriation and Disavowal in Hiram Powers's *Greek Slave*," The Color of Stone: Sculpting the Black Female Subject in Nineteenth-Century America (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 98.
[368] Nelson, "White Slaves and Black Masters," 100-02; Dyer, "The Matter of Whiteness," 28; Dyer, "Coloured White, Not Coloured," 80; Sheardy, "The White Woman and the Native Male Body," 97.

> "This movement toward sensual/sexual action as opposed to moral/aesthetic contemplation was deemed one of the characteristics of 'bad' art, 'low' art, or pornography."[369]

The viewer of "high" art was supposed to interact with art in the "correct" manner, treating it as "a work of art with moral merit (spirit)."[370] "Low" art incited a physical response in the viewer, and disavowed the distance which was deemed necessary for the contemplation of "moral" art.[371] As Nelson details in " 'So Pure and Celestial a Light'," this is why specifically white marble was deemed appropriate for nineteenth-century neoclassical sculpture.[372] The consumption of imagings of the captivity narrative have changed dramatically from nineteenth-century "high" art, as the cover art of the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre is predicated on inciting a physical response within the viewer. The cover art aims to eliminate the distance between the object and the viewer to better facilitate the fantasy offered to the consumer.

This close association with the incitement of sexual fantasy plays a role within the reputation of popular romance novels - in which many readers and writers are invoked to feel a sense of shame, or to hide their reading habits from others.[373] In *Dangerous Books for Girls: The Bad Reputation of Romance Novels Explained* (2015), romance writer Maya Rodale discusses two surveys she created for her study: one for people who read romance novels, and one for

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[369] Charmaine A. Nelson, "'So Pure and Celestial a Light': Sculpture, Marble, and Whiteness as a Privileged Racial Signifier," The Color of Stone: Sculpting the Black Female Subject in Nineteenth-Century America (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 66.
[370] Nelson, "'So Pure and Celestial a Light'", 59.
[371] Nelson, "'So Pure and Celestial a Light'", 66.
[372] "The elimination of color, except for whiteness, became a method for purging sensualism from the marble and assuring a morally sound object. It was a means of achieving a level of abstraction of form that denied the specificity of biological detail and human sexuality. But it was also clearly and painfully about colonial ideals of race and racial privilege." (Nelson, "'So Pure and Celestial a Light'", 60-62.)
[373] Maya Rodale, "Proof of Snark: Evidence of Romance's Bad Reputation," Dangerous Books for Girls: The Bad Reputation of Romance Novels Explained (Middletown: Maya Rodale, 2015), 32.

people who do not read romance novels.[374] Her respective surveys came to the following conclusion:

> "If I had any doubt that the romance genre had a bad reputation, the surveys data confirmed it. People who took my survey for nonromance readers and had admittedly not read the genre offered the following descriptions: 'Fluff reading, for not very bright individuals;' 'Formulaic and generally mediocre writing.' [...] Overall survey respondents thought romance readers were less educated and had a lower income than they actually do. Romance readers are well aware of how they and their beloved books are perceived. Eighty-five percent of readers feel that romance novels have a bad reputation and 89 percent also believe that romance readers were looked down upon. Half of readers felt they should keep their romance reading a secret."[375]

Part of the stigma surrounding reading romance novels could stem from the physical fantasy which the cover art is meant to invoke within the reader.[376] This ties directly into Nelson's discussion of "high" versus "low" art in the nineteenth century - in which that which is tied directly to the titillation of the viewer is "low" art.[377] The consumption of imagings within cover art of the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre works to facilitate the fantasy of the consumer, in direct opposition to the imagings from nineteenth-century "high" art, in which the viewer was meant to perform consumption as a purely "aesthetic" or "moral" intellectual exercise.[378] While these two forms of imagings are distinct in time period and modes of consumption, their use of colonial constructions of Indigeneity and the white female body as

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[374] Maya Rodale, "Preface," Dangerous Books for Girls: The Bad Reputation of Romance Novels Explained (Middletown: Maya Rodale, 2015), 9.
[375] Rodale, "Proof of Snark," 32.
[376] For further discussion on this topic please see: Faith Salie, "The Seductive Allure of Romance Novels," CBS News, February 12, 2017, http://www.cbsnews.com/news/the-seductive-allure-of-romance-novels/ (accessed February 14, 2017); Dr. Elizabeth Reid Boyd, "Trashy, Sexist, Downright Dangerous? In Defence of Romantic Fiction," The Guardian, February 14, 2017, https://www.theguardian.com/books/2017/feb/14/trashy-sexist-downright-dangerous-in-defence-of-romantic-fiction (accessed February 14, 2017); Bobbi Dumas, "Don't Hide Your Harlequins: In Defense Of Romance," NPR Books, December 18, 2012, http://www.npr.org/2012/12/18/167451651/dont-hide-your-harlequins-in-defense-of-romance (accessed February 14, 2017); and Sarah Wendell and Candy Tan, "Chapter WTF: Defending the Genre (No, It's Not Chick Porn. Dammit.)," in Beyond Heaving Bosoms: The Smart Bitches' Guide to Romance Novels (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2009), 120-135.
[377] Nelson, "'So Pure and Celestial a Light'", 66.
[378] Ibid.

"pure" and "passive/submissive" links them together in facilitating the colonial project and the visual tropes of the captivity narrative.[379]

Scholarly Reception

Cassie Edwards has received limited scholarly attention. The author has only been briefly examined in a single scholarly publication. The scholarly publication was S. Elizabeth Bird's "Savage Desires: The Gendered Construction of the American Indian in Popular Media," where Bird discusses Edwards' *Savage* series as a particular example of the trope of the captivity narrative within popular culture.[380] Bird also uses Edwards' work within a larger discussion of the "Doomed Warrior" trope.[381] Finally, Bird examines a particular romance novel of Edwards in which the heroine is an Indigenous woman, as this is unusual within the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre.[382] Bird uses Edwards as an example of a specific type of medium (the romance novel) within larger imagings of Indigenous masculinity/femininity in popular culture. Apart from the discussion in Bird's work, Edwards' work has, until now, not been subject to a lengthy scholarly inquiry.[383]

Critical Reception

Critical reception of Cassie Edwards within mainstream publishing and readership at the time of publication of her novels has been generally positive. As was mentioned in the Introduction, in an article from *Publishers Weekly* in celebration of the release of Edwards' 100th

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[379] King, "Too Heavy to Lift," 53-54; Dyer, "Coloured White, Not Coloured," 70; Sheardy, "The White Woman and the Native Male Body," 97.

[380] S. Elizabeth Bird, "Savage Desires: The Gendered Construction of the American Indian in Popular Media," Selling the Indian: Commercializing and Appropriating American Indian Cultures, Carter Jones Meyer and Diana Royer, eds. (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2001), 66.

[381] Bird, "Savage Desires," 71-73.

[382] Bird, "Savage Desires," 86.

[383] Cassie Edwards' novel *Savage Sunrise* (1993) is cited in Peter van Lent's "'Her Beautiful Savage': The Current Sexual Image of the Native American Male," in Dressing in Feathers: The Construction of the Indian in American Popular Culture (1996). However, Van Lent does not ever explicitly name the author or her work within the text. Instead, the novel is named within the endnotes. But Van Lent uses quotes from Edward's novel to support his assertions regarding the portrayal of Indigenous men in popular romance novels.

romance novel, there is a reference to Edwards' sales figures: "Alicia Condon, Dorchester editorial director [...] said Edwards's sales have been 'remarkably steady,' with each book in recent years averaging printings between 250,000 and 300,000."[384] This article was published in 2007, and gives an indication of the extensive span of Edwards' career. The *RT Book Reviews* website, formerly the *Romantic Times* magazine,[385] has reviewed a number of Edwards' novels (unfortunately, not any of the three novels within this thesis project, to the best of my knowledge). [386] The website uses a system of stars to rank novels, and classifies their "RT Ratings Guide" as the following:

> "5 GOLD: Phenomenal. In a class by itself.
> 4 1/2: TOP PICK. Fantastic. A keeper.
> 4: Compelling. A page-turner.
> 3: Enjoyable. A pleasant read.
> 2: Problematic. May struggle to finish.
> 1: Severely Flawed. Pass on this one." [387]

The selection of books by Edwards' reviewed on the website receive an average of three stars per book[388] out of 55 total reviewed.[389] Here are some excerpts from reviews for novels from her *Savage* series,[390] ranging from 2006 to 2008[391] (all of these reviews have been completed by Kathe Robin):

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[384] "Edwards Pens 100th Romance," Publishers Weekly, August 20, 2007, https://web.archive.org/web/20080118161050/http://www.publishersweekly.com/article/CA6469940.html?q=cassie+edwards (accessed December 15, 2016).
[385] "RT Magazine (Romantic Times) sadly no more paper issue, digital only," K Boards, June 20, 2016, Discussion board, https://www.kboards.com/index.php?topic=237867.0 (accessed December 15, 2016).
[386] "Cassie Edwards," RT Book Reviews, https://www.rtbookreviews.com/author/cassie-edwards (accessed December 15, 2016).
[387] "RT Ratings Guide," RT Book Reviews, https://www.rtbookreviews.com/book-review (accessed February 14, 2017).
[388] Five novels received four stars, 37 received three stars, and 13 received two stars. No novels received above four stars. ("Cassie Edwards," RT Book Reviews.)
[389] This total was counted on February 14, 2017, and could change if more novels by Edwards are reviewed.
[390] "Cassie Edwards," Fantastic Fiction, http://www.fantasticfiction.co.uk/e/cassie-edwards/ (accessed January 15, 2016).
[391] Ibid.

> "Continuing her popular Savage series, Edwards relies on her tried-and-true formula: a white woman alone in a strange new land, rescued/captured by a noble savage and pursued and/or persecuted by vile white men. This foolproof recipe feeds fans a comfort read filled with strong characters and Indian lore."[392]
>
> "Dubbed the 'premier writer of Indian romance,' Edwards gives fans a comfort read with traditional characters, a lovely heroine, a strong hero and a ruthless villain."[393]
>
> "Edwards continues her Savage series with a lovingly crafted story of the proud Dakota. As always, she portrays the supposed 'savage' as far more civilized, compassionate and kind than his white counterparts. Her message is clear, and her fans will be contented by yet another tale of the noble savage."[394]
>
> "Few authors have so consistently captivated Native American romance readers as Edwards."[395]
>
> "Edwards consistently draws readers into a story of dual cultures and the plight of Native Americans, adding colourful details of her characters' lives. As one of the few remaining writers of Native American romance, she is a powerful voice for the people and delivers a tried-and-true plot that never fails to satisfy her large fan base."[396]

All of these reviews emphasize Edwards' distinction in the genre, as well as the model for her heroes, the "Noble Savage." An important point regarding the excerpts of these reviews is the critic's use of the term "Noble Savage" - she does not place this term in quotation marks, and does not appear to recognize the concept of the "Noble Savage" as being a problematic historical colonial construct.[397] Rather, Robin appears to consider Edwards' Indigenous male heroes as "favourable" depictions of Indigenous men.

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[392] Kathe Robin, "Savage Abandon," RT Book Reviews, https://www.rtbookreviews.com/book-review/savage-abandon (accessed December 15, 2016).
[393] Kathe Robin, "Savage Flames," RT Book Reviews, https://www.rtbookreviews.com/book-review/savage-flames (accessed December 15, 2016).
[394] Kathe Robin, "Savage Intrigue," RT Book Reviews, https://www.rtbookreviews.com/book-review/savage-intrigue (accessed December 15, 2016).
[395] Kathe Robin, "Savage Tempest," RT Book Reviews, https://www.rtbookreviews.com/book-review/savage-tempest (accessed December 15, 2016).
[396] Kathe Robin, "Savage Arrow," RT Book Reviews, https://www.rtbookreviews.com/book-review/savage-arrow (accessed December 15, 2016).
[397] Daniel Francis, "Introduction," in The Imaginary Indian: The Image of the Indian In Canadian Culture (Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 1992), 7-8.

This is troubling because of the storylines which typically play out within Edwards novels, particularly the three examined in this thesis: *Savage Dream* (1990), *Savage Persuasion* (1991), and *Savage Mists* (1992). These storylines utilize tropes of the "Vanishing Indian," creating a romanticized portrait of Indigenous life that is being encroached upon by white settlers.[398] These storylines historicize Indigenous people, placing them as a "relic" of the past.[399] These heroes are being interpreted in a positive light, rather than critically as white settler colonial fantasies of Indigenous masculinity.

Disturbingly, the critic even cites the author as a "powerful voice for the people."[400] The positioning of a white author (who lays claim to Indigenous heritage, as was noted in the Introduction) as a speaker on behalf of Indigenous people is highly problematic - not only for the universality of the claim of "the people," as Indigenous people in North America comprise a vast number of differing nations, with their own traditions, culture, languages, and communities, but also for the almost total lack of clarity regarding how this author can lay claim to any type of authority to speak about/for Indigenous people and their communities. Though Edwards has been cited as conducting extensive research, there is no evidence provided about where or how she gathers her information - only that she "mak[es] sure the information that she uses is authentic."[401] Does the author have ties within each community that she writes about? Has she spoken to figures of authority, such as elders, within each of these communities? Has she relied on ethnographic resources from white scholars, which are often problematic themselves and can feature misinformation/misinterpretations of Indigenous culture?

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[398] Deloria, Playing Indian, 64.
[399] Ibid.
[400] Robin, "Savage Arrow."
[401] "Cassie Edwards," Kensington Publishing Corp., http://www.kensingtonbooks.com/author.aspx/23543 (accessed December 15, 2016).

Finally, the use of the term "comfort read" in two of the reviews presented must be examined. The trope of the "Noble Savage" Indigenous male hero kidnapping the white woman is a ubiquitous plot line within popular romance novels of the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre. Why is this particular pairing one which can act as a "comfort[able] read"? What types of "comfortable" fantasies does it facilitate for the assumed white female reader? How does it echo constructs of Indigeneity and Indigenous masculinity throughout popular culture and historical visual culture?

This genre simultaneously facilitates access to the "exotic" hypersexualization of Indigenous men,[402] while also affirming the "historicity" of Indigenous people through stories which portray them as "Vanishing Indians."[403] This allows the white reader the sexual fantasy without the acknowledgment of contemporary Indigenous people, which would mean an ultimate acknowledgment of the white reader's settler status and their historical complicity in the atrocities enacted against Indigenous peoples. A critical reception makes evident Edwards' depiction of Indigeneity as a colonial construction of the "Indian" through the emphasis on the "historicity" of Indigenous people and the "Noble Savage" mythos.

However, not all reviews of Edwards' work are positive. In an article published on September 7, 2013 on the *Indian Country Media Network* website, "10 Steamy, Fantastically Ridiculous Romance Novels Starring 'Savages'," Edwards is taken to task:

> "Those who enjoy romance novels say they are a distraction, an escape from the real world. Mindless entertainment - no better or worse, perhaps, than watching sports or playing video games. But mindless fun isn't the same thing as harmless fun - particularly when you're mindlessly hammering away at the same stereotype. Of those at-least 82 books about ripped Indian men sweeping overwhelmed white women off their feet, at least 52 of them start with the word 'Savage.' That was kind

[402] See Peter van Lent's "'Her Beautiful Savage': The Current Sexual Image of the Native American Male," Dressing in Feathers: The Construction of the Indian in American Popular Culture, S. Elizabeth Bird, ed. (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996).
[403] Deloria, Playing Indian, 64.

> of Edwards' thing: Books about Indian men and white ladies entitled *Savage* _____. Does this strike anyone else as incredibly - *savagely* - wrong?"[404]

This article presents an alternative view point from the assumed white female reader, the perspective of an Indigenous media outlet.[405] It showcases the contemporary pushback to the construction of Indigenous identity in the form of the captivity narrative as popular romance novel and the accompanying cover art.

Insidious Images for Mass Consumption

The largely uncritical and positive consumption of the imagings presented by cover art of the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre is troubling. Huge sales of popular romance novels point to the extensive sway which these visualizations of love, sex, femininity, masculinity, and race hold within popular visual culture.[406] The relative dearth of scholarship on romance novel cover art, particularly that which aims to market "exotic" racial identities to an assumed white readership, underestimates how the uncritical consumption of such material facilitates and supports the white settler colonial project and the centering of whiteness as "normative" to the "exotic" body of the "other."[407]

The covers of Cassie Edwards *Savage Dream* (1990), *Savage Persuasion* (1991) and *Savage Mists* (1992) are insidious for a number of reasons. First, the perpetuation of the white settler colonial constructs of the "Indian."[408] The images used to visualize Indigeneity on the covers reflect the white settler colonial idea of the "Authentic Indian," which is to place the

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[404] "10 Steamy, Fantastically Ridiculous Romance Novels Starring 'Savages,'" Indian Country Media Network, September 7, 2013, https://indiancountrymedianetwork.com/culture/arts-entertainment/10-steamy-fantastically-ridiculous-romance-novels-starring-savages/ (accessed January 15, 2016).
[405] The article cited was written by "ICMN Staff" from the Indian Country Media Network.
[406] "Romance Statistics," Romance Writers of America, https://www.rwa.org/p/cm/ld/fid=580 (accessed November 16, 2016).
[407] Dyer, "The Matter of Whiteness," 1-3.
[408] King, "Too Heavy to Lift," 53-54.

"Indian" squarely within the past.[409] The images on these covers attempt to erase the contemporary Indigeneity that confronts the falsity of the "Vanishing Indian" trope, which is heavily relied upon to facilitate the sexual fantasy for white females offered up within the novels.[410]

Second, the cover art of this genre enacts the simultaneous creation and disavowal of the sexualisation of the Indigenous male body. The "Normative/Other" body inhabits two bodies - that of the "exotic," in which the Indigenous male body is created as "Indian" to facilitate the sexual fantasy of the assumed white female reader - this creates the Indigenous male body as a purely sexual object for the consumption of the assumed white female reader, and perpetuates colonial narratives which erase Indigenous masculinity.[411] The figure on the cover art of this genre also fully inhabits the "Normative" body - that of the idealized white male. This works as a disavowal of the Indigenous male body, as it actively works to "whiten" an Indigenous male hero through the portrayal of an idealized white male body that is similar to the white male figure found on other romance novel covers.[412] This visualizes the idea to the assumed white female reader that to look "white" is to be the ideal male.

Third, the cover art of this genre erases Indigenous women and Indigenous femininity. As the novels within this genre largely feature pairings between Indigenous men and white women, the cover art for this genre reflects that pairing - and both textually and visually, white women are placed as the central ideal sexual partners for Indigenous men.[413] The female heroine's white

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[409] King, "Too Heavy to Lift," 53-54.
[410] Deloria, Playing Indian, 64.
[411] Scott L. Morgensen, "Cutting to the Roots of Colonial Masculinity," Indigenous Men and Masculinities: Legacies, Identities, Regeneration (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2015), 45.
[412] Van Lent, "'Her Beautiful Savage'", 216-17; Bird, "Savage Desires," 75; Drew Hayden Taylor, "Indian Love Call (minus Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy)," Me Sexy: An Exploration of Native Sex and Sexuality, Drew Hayden Taylor, ed. (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 2008), 29.
[413] Bird, "Savage Desires," 89.

skin was one of the first things noticed by the Indigenous male hero in the text of *Savage Dream* (1990), *Savage Persuasion* (1991), and *Savage Mists* (1992). It is this clear indicator of racial difference which attracts the Indigenous hero to the white heroine - "the delicate texture of her skin" in *Savage Dream* (1990),[414] the "white skin that made the snows of winter blush in comparison" in *Savage Persuasion* (1991),[415] and the "fair-skinned" woman renamed "White Willow" by the Indigenous hero in *Savage Mists* (1992).[416] This visual and textual emphasis on the extreme whiteness of the heroine's skin as being the key to the visual attraction of the Indigenous male hero erases Indigenous women from the narrative, and again works to make whiteness the "ideal" sexual partner/body.[417]

The Absent Body: Indigenous Women and the "American Indian Historical Romance" Genre

It is important to state that there is one group which has not yet received critical analysis in this thesis - Indigenous women. Within the scope of this scholarly investigation, my primary focus was on the visual tropes of cover art of the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre which featured pairings between Indigenous men and white women, and I did not have room to adequately discuss romance novels of this genre which feature Indigenous women as the heroine. It is important to note, however, that there are significantly fewer novels where this is the case - white women make up the majority of the heroines in this genre.[418] This selective erasure of Indigenous women as romantic, desirable and loving sexual partners in the cover art and the text

[414] Cassie Edwards, Savage Dream (New York: Love Spell, 1997), 7.
[415] Cassie Edwards, Savage Persuasion (New York: Leisure Books, 1991), 43.
[416] Cassie Edwards, Savage Mists (New York: Leisure Books, 1992), 15.
[417] Bird, "Savage Desires," 73.
[418] Bird, "Savage Desires," 86.

of "American Indian Historical Romance" novels is significant.[419] This creates a third figure in the cover art of this genre - the absent body of the Indigenous woman.

There is significant scholarship which needs to be done discussing the presence and role of Indigenous women in "American Indian Historical Romance" novels, and their roles as either minor characters in stories with white heroines, or as the heroines themselves. It is also important to ask who is inhabiting the role of the hero in novels which feature Indigenous women as the heroine - it is a white man? Or is it an Indigenous man? Does it vary, or is one race favoured as the partner for the Indigenous heroine? An especially rich area of scholarship would be to examine the visual imagings used in the covers of romance novels which feature Indigenous heroines, and to compare them with those which feature Indigenous heroes. One of the few scholars to have examined Indigenous women in the popular romance novel is S. Elizabeth Bird, in "Savage Desires: The Gendered Construction of the American Indian in Popular Media":

> "Of course, these romantic Indian or half-Indian heroes are always inexorably drawn to white women.[...] Indian women are presented as Squaws, who put up with the fact that once their men have laid eyes on a white woman, their own women lose all their appeal. [...] In some of these books, 'squaws' will put up with drudgery and abuse from their men, accepting the need to 'service' any man who wants them, while the proud white captive refuses to submit. [...] Indian heroines in romances are rare, partly because they would not fit easily into the captivity structure - the power relations between a white male captive and an Indian female captor would be too uncomfortable. [...] With a few exceptions, however, the romance with an Indian heroine has not been widespread or popular, undoubtedly because targeted readers are white women."[420]

Bird argues that Indigenous women within romance novels which feature white heroines are largely relegated to the role of providing contrast for both the reader and the hero - of desirability, as well as "cultural" differences. These cultural differences rely on the creation of the Indigenous woman as "other" and utilizing colonial constructs of Indigeneity, Indigenous

[419] Bird, "Savage Desires," 73-74, 86.
[420] Ibid.

community and Indigenous culture. Bird's most significant point regarding the relative dearth of romance novels featuring Indigenous women as the heroine is that "targeted readers are white women" - the Indigenous heroine disrupts the sexual fantasy of access to the Indigenous male body. [421]

In the three novels examined in this thesis, two feature Indigenous women as characters with secondary storylines, *Savage Dream* (1990) and *Savage Mists* (1992). In *Savage Persuasion* (1991), there is no secondary Indigenous female character. However, it is important to note that Brave Eagle had a first wife, an Indigenous woman, Snow Dove, who passed away and with whom he has a five-year old son.[422] He is described as "shun[ning] even the mention of women" until he sees Brietta and desires her.[423] This storyline reinforces whiteness as being the ideal of female beauty through the implication that the only thing able to compel Brave Eagle to move on from his grief is a woman who is so desirable through her whiteness that he cannot stop himself from yearning for her. This reflects Bird's argument that "romantic Indian or half-Indian heroes are always inexorably drawn to white women."[424]

In *Savage Dream* (1990), Pleasant Voice inhabits the role of the white heroine's friend and introduction into Indigenous culture after the heroine's kidnapping. Pleasant Voice is twenty years old, and is described as "delicate and fragile [...] [H]er copper face displayed large, dark, slanted eyes, her nose slightly curved and her lips were full."[425] It is important to note that when the reader first meets Pleasant Voice, who is positioned as the white female character's best

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[421] Bird, "Savage Desires," 86.
[422] Edwards, Savage Persuasion, 55.
[423] Edwards, Savage Persuasion, 44-45, 55.
[424] "Though the white woman's eyes were filled with fear, Brave Eagle *could not help* admiring her beauty. [...] Since the death of his beloved Snow Dove, he had not allowed himself to see anything special in any woman. [...] But he could not deny his cravings for a woman any longer. *And not just any woman*." (Edwards, Savage Persuasion, 55.) (Italics my own.); Bird, "Savage Desires," 73.
[425] Edwards, Savage Dream, 12.

friend (and is even described as her "only friend" by Maria), she is an Indigenous slave owned by Maria's father.[426] Within the story, Pleasant Voice eventually escapes slavery to be with her people again, but it is key to mention the extremely problematic nature of positioning an Indigenous slave as the best friend of the white female daughter of her owner.[427]

In *Savage Mists* (1992), Girl Who Laughs inhabits a similar role to Pleasant Voice, as friend and instructor. Girl Who Laughs is not given a specific age, but within the context of the story the reader would assume she is of a similar age to the main characters. She is described as beautiful in the text by Damita, who refers to her "lovely copper face," and by Brian, a white man, who describes her as "not only mystically beautiful, but also sweet [...]."[428] In both of these novels, Pleasant Voice and Girl Who Laughs each carry secondary storylines where they are conflicted over moving on from one partner to a new partner. In the case of Pleasant Voice, both of her potential suitors are still living and are Indigenous men, while Girl Who Laughs is a widow and is considering moving on with a white man (the character Brian).[429] This is important because the main white female characters are virgins, and the only possible partner they are portrayed as having is the Indigenous hero. Pleasant Voice is also a virgin, but is conflicted between two potential partners.[430]

In each of these novels, there is also a third Indigenous female character. In *Savage Dream* (1990), it is Morning Flower, and in *Savage Mists* (1992), it is Star Shining. These two female characters are portrayed as more sexual. Morning Flower taunts soldiers by lifting up her skirt, and is later banished from her village as a result (as she revealed the location of their

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[426] Edwards, Savage Dream, 10-11.
[427] Edwards, Savage Dream, 47.
[428] Edwards, Savage Mists, 367, 373.
[429] Edwards, Savage Dream, 223-25; Edwards, Savage Mists, 379-83.
[430] Edwards, Savage Dream, 46.

hidden encampment by doing so).[431] Star Shining flirts with two secondary male characters in the novel - Lean Elk, an Indigenous teen who is Girl Who Laughs' son, and Timothy, a white teen who is Damita's brother - although her behaviour is later defended as being normal by the male hero to the female heroine, who complains of her actions.[432] At the end of the novel, Star Shining is pregnant and has been disowned by her parents.[433] However, the father of her baby is Timothy, and when Damita discovers this, she quickly pairs the two together at the end of the novel as a love match.[434]

In these two novels, Edwards has created a trifecta of characters who inhabit various degrees of sexuality - the white female occupies the position of "good" sexuality, as a virgin whose only love will be the Indigenous male hero, and therefore will only have one partner; the Indigenous female "best friend" who teaches the white female about Indigenous culture and is more sexual because she has had past relationships (however she only has one partner at a time and therefore still inhabits the realm of "good" sexuality); and the Indigenous female who inhabits the realm of "bad" sexuality through her overtly sexual behaviour, for which she is punished within the story.

The positioning of Indigenous women within the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre, and these three novels specifically, contributes to the white settler colonial narrative of the sexually-available Indigenous woman.[435] The mass-market consumption of this imaging of Indigenous women is extremely troubling because of its contribution to the ongoing stigmatization and erasure of an already extremely vulnerable population.

Moving Forward

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[431] Edwards, Savage Dream, 116-19.
[432] Edwards, Savage Mists, 403-4, 151, 62, 414.
[433] Edwards, Savage Mists, 434-38.
[434] Edwards, Savage Mists, 438-40.
[435] Bird, "Savage Desires," 90.

There are numerous facets of inquiry left open for further scholarly investigation. The first is a more extensive scholarly study of the tropes of the cover art of the romance novel. How has the cover art for the "American Indian Historical Romance" genre changed through to the present day? How do images of contemporary Indigenous heroes compare and contrast with the Indigenous male heroes on the covers of historical romances? A further investigation into who is allowed to be contemporary, and who is allowed to be a historical hero and heroine within popular romance novels would also be warranted, and is something I was only able to briefly touch upon within the scope of this thesis project. The relationship between contemporary political, cultural, and societal events and trends in the romance novel genre would also be an interesting investigation. An in-depth examination of the subject of race and the popular romance novel is sorely needed - including how many women and men of colour are featured in romance novels published via major publishing houses versus self-published romance novels, and how marketing strategies are shaped for covers which have been geared towards reaching a different audience than the assumed white female reader. The huge profits generated by the sales of popular romance novels, both contemporary and historical, make them important spaces within popular culture of the communication of racial identities - both visually, through cover art, and textually, through the plotlines and stories told within the novels. As I have argued throughout, these communications of racial identity often heavily rely on stereotype, and deserve in-depth scholarly examination. There are numerous available avenues of investigation for scholarly inquiry into this rich and relatively untouched topic of romance novel cover art.

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Plate List

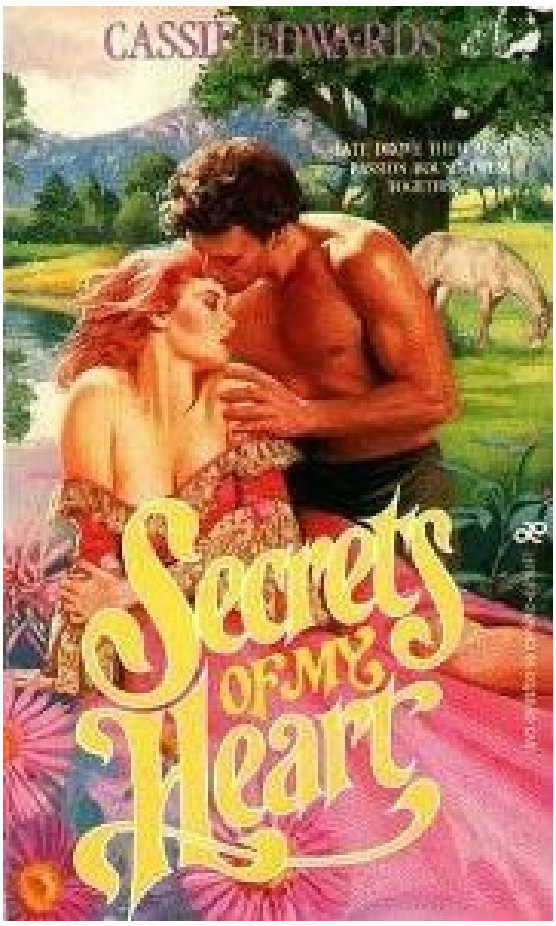

Fig. 1 Leisure Books, Secrets of My Heart (June 1983).
Image of cover retrieved from: "Secrets of my Heart," Goodreads, http://www.goodreads.com /book/show/5198425-secrets-of-my-heart (date of last access: February 27, 2017).

Fig. 2 Zebra, Silken Rapture (March 1983).
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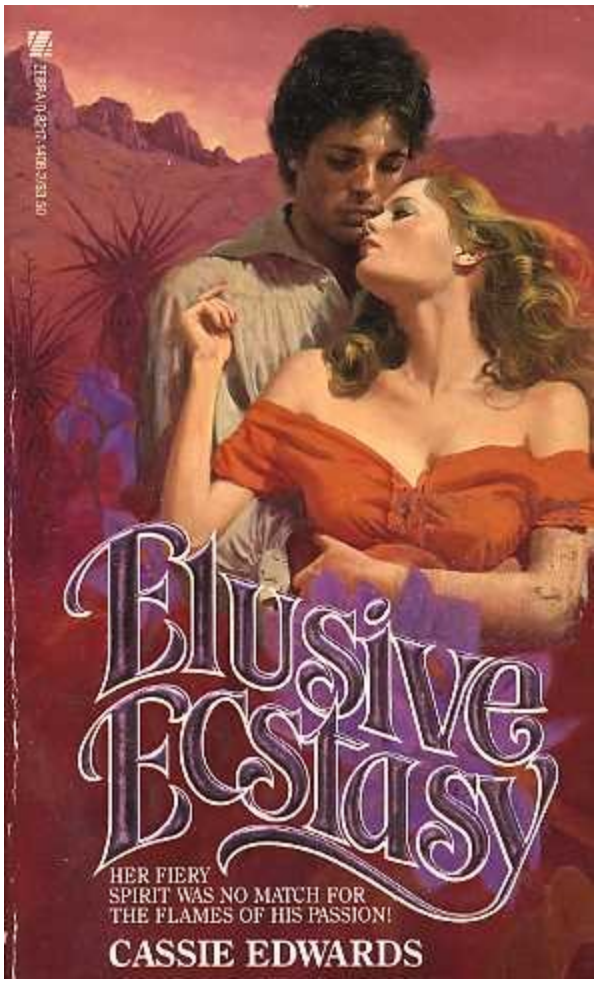

Fig. 3 Zebra, Elusive Ecstasy (July 1984).
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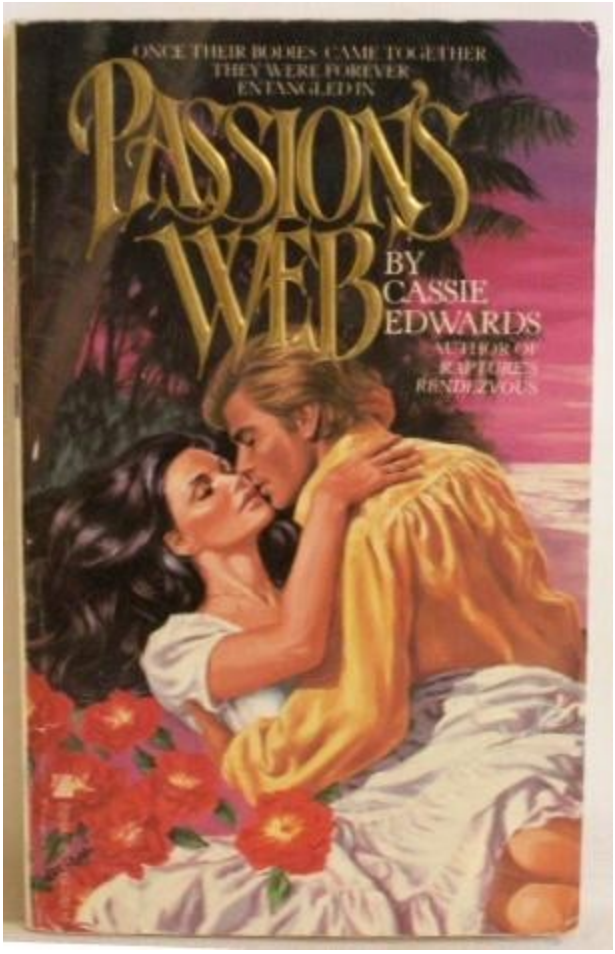

Fig. 4 Zebra, Passion's Web (April 1984).
Image of cover retrieved from: "Passion's Web," AbeBooks, https://www.abebooks.com/servlet/BookDetailsPL?bi=1349828880&searchurl=tn%3Dpassions%2Bweb%26sortby%3D17%26an%3Dcassie%2Bedwards (date of last access: February 27, 2017).

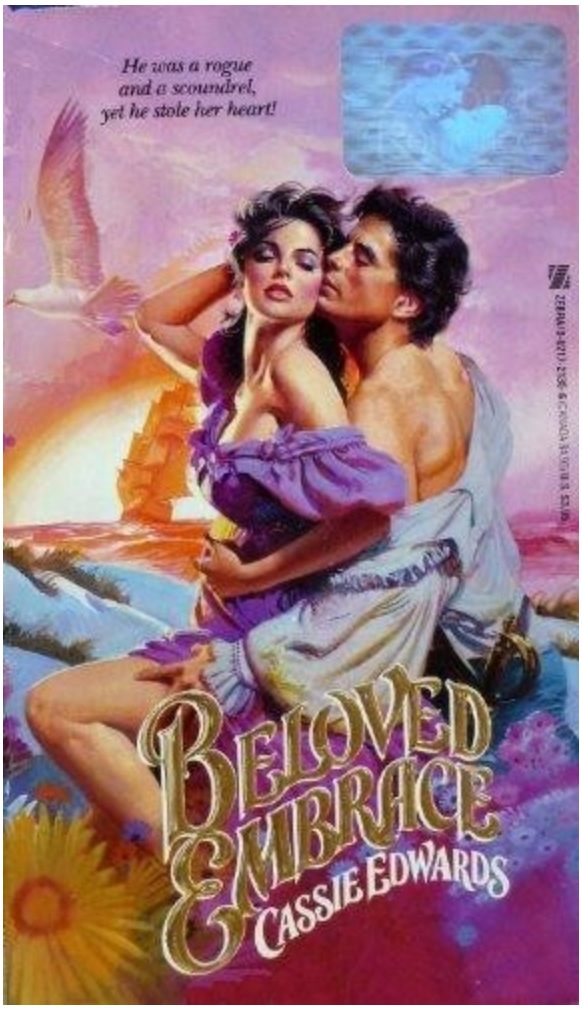

Fig. 5 Zebra, Beloved Embrace (1987).
Image of cover retrieved from: "Beloved Embrace," AbeBooks, https://www.abebooks.com/servlet/BookDetailsPL?bi=20757241237&searchurl=tn%3Dbeloved%2Bembrace%26sortby%3D17%26an%3Dcassie%2Bedwards (date of last access: February 27, 2017).

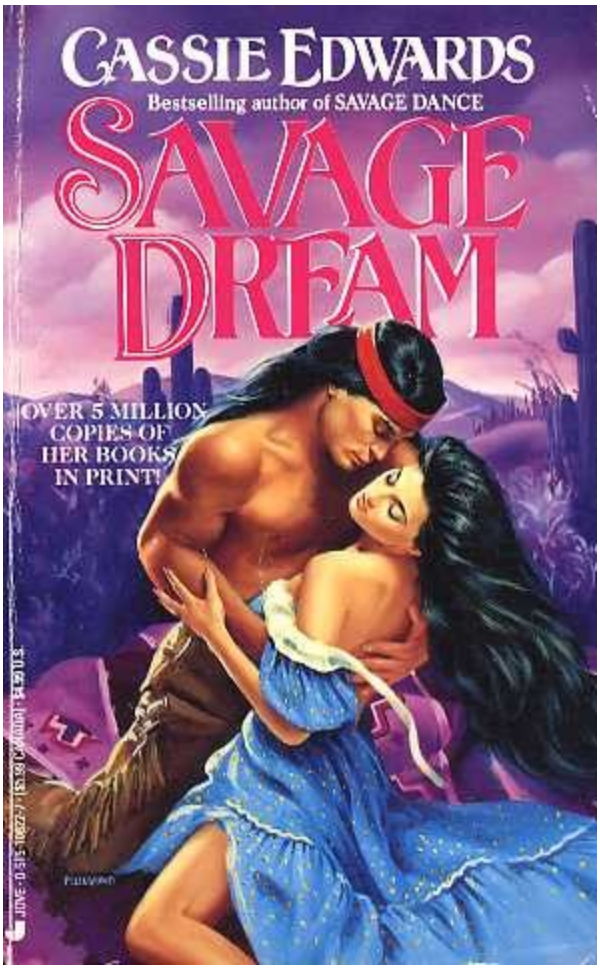

Fig. 6 Diamond Books, Savage Dream (June 1990).
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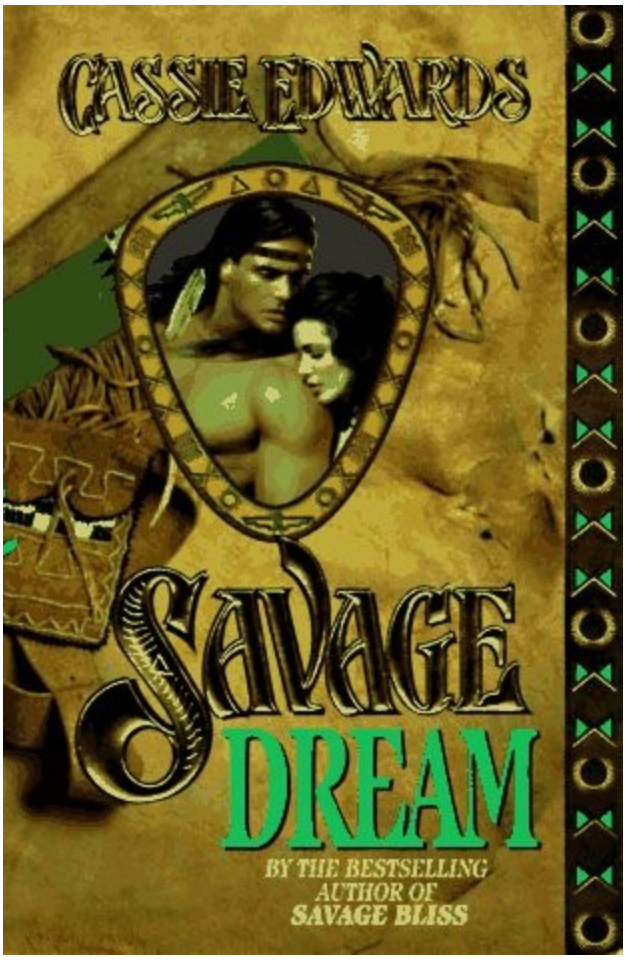

Fig. 7 Love Spell Books, Savage Dream (January 1997).
Image of cover retrieved from: "Savage Dream," Goodreads, http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/179005.Savage_Dream (date of last access: February 27, 2017).

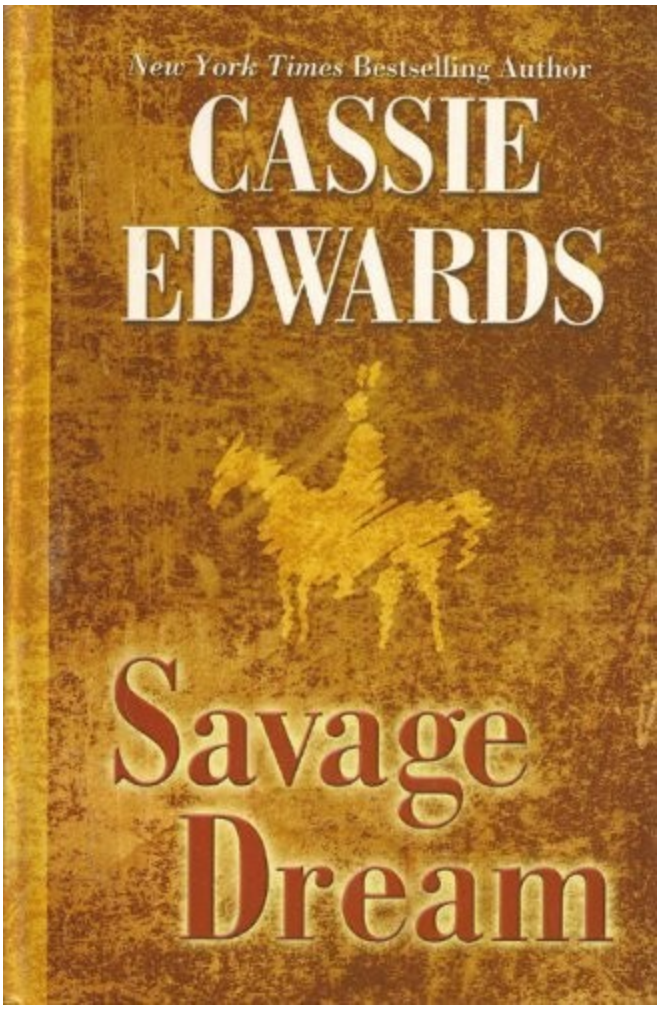

Fig. 8 Thorndike Press, Savage Dream (December 2003).
Image of cover retrieved from: "Savage Dream," Amazon, https://www.amazon.com/Savage-Dream-Cassie-Edwards/dp/0786258810 (date of last access: February 27, 2017).

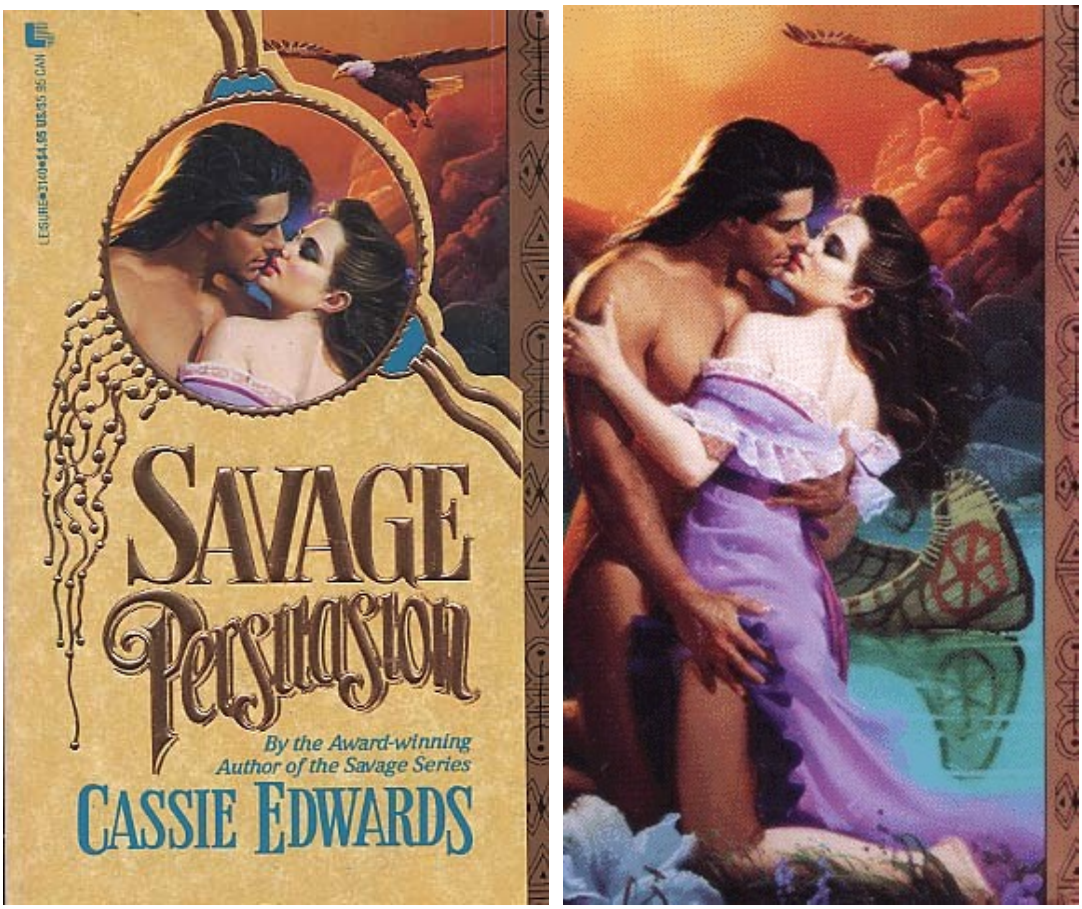

Fig. 9 John Ennis, Leisure Books, Savage Persuasion (August 1991).
Image of outside cover retrieved from: FictionDB, https://www.fictiondb.com/covers/084393543X.jpg (date of last access: February 27, 2017).
Image of inside cover retrieved from: Ursula, "Savage Persuasion," Goodreads, http://www.goodreads.com/photo/work/2275999-savage-persuasion-savage-secrets-8 (date of last access: February 27, 2017).

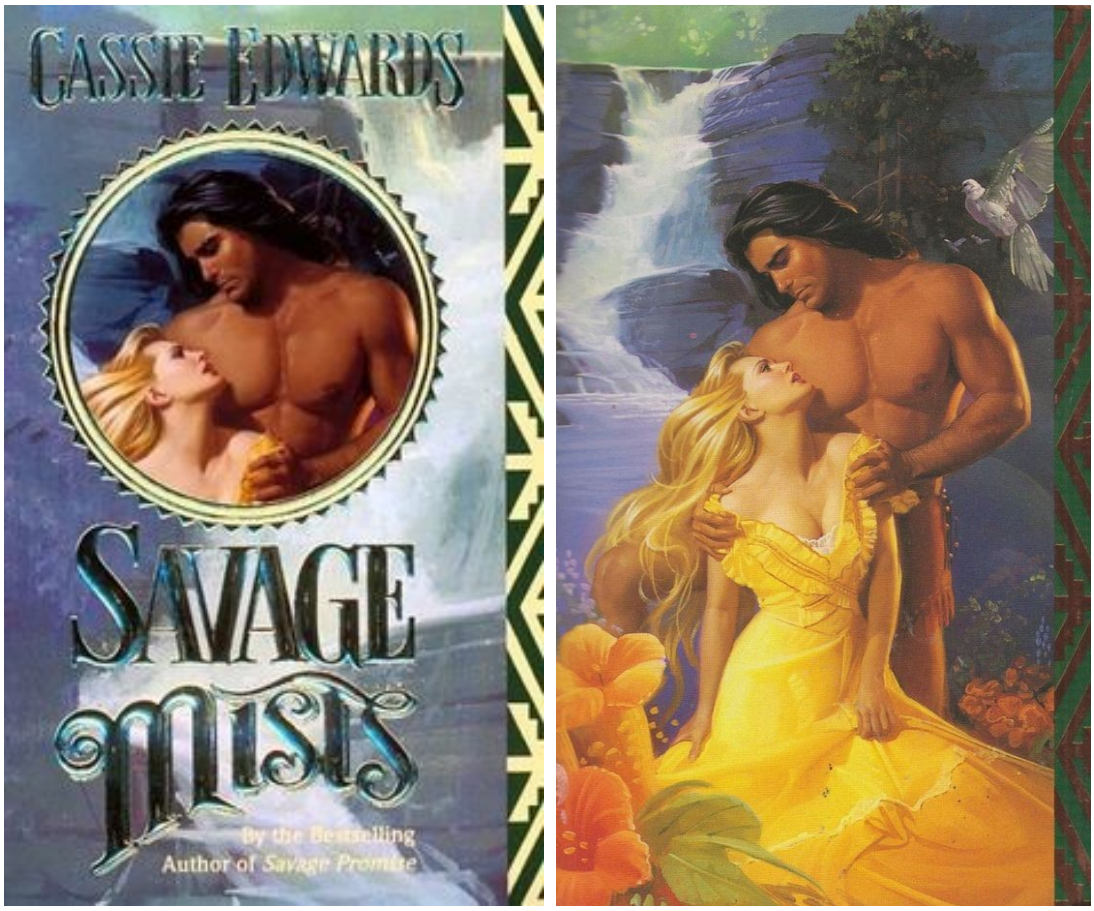

Fig. 10 John Ennis, Leisure Books, Savage Mists (1992).
Image of outside cover retrieved from: "Savage Mists," Amazon, https://www.amazon.com/Savage-Mists-Leisure-Paperback/dp/0843945354 (date of last access: February 27, 2017).
Image of inside cover retrieved from: Inka, "Savage Mists," Goodreads, http://www.goodreads.com/photo/work/161363-savage-mists-savage-secrets-10 (date of last access: February 27, 2017).

Fig. 11 John Vanderlyn, American, 1775-1852, The Murder of Jane McCrea (1804), Oil on canvas, 32 1/2 x 26 1/2 in. (82.6 x 67.4 cm), Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, CT, Purchased by Subscription, 1855.4. Image courtesy of Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art.

Fig. 12 Charles Ferdinand Wimar, The Abduction of Daniel Boone's Daughter by the Indians (1853), Oil on canvas, 40 5/16 x 50 1/4, Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum, St. Louis, U.S.A. Accessed April 14, 2017. http://www.kemperartmuseum.wustl.edu/collection/explore/artwork/1479.

Fig. 13 Carl Wimar (1828-1862), The Abduction of Boone's Daughter by the Indians (1855-56), Oil on canvas, Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, 1965.1. Image courtesy of Amon Carter Museum of American Art.

Fig. 14 Erastus Dow Palmer, The White Captive (1857-58, carved 1858-59), Marble, 65 x 20 1/4 x 17 in, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, U.S.A. Accessed April 14, 2017. http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/94.9.3/.

Fig. 15 Joseph Mozier, The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish (1857-58), Marble, 167.6 x 73 x 59.1 com, 1360 kg (66 x 28 3/4 x 23 1/4 in., 3000 lb.), Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, Conneticut 06520, 1889.5. Image courtesy of Yale University Art Gallery.

Fig. 16 Chauncey Bradley Ives, American (1810-1894), The Willing Captive (modeled ca. 1862-68, carved 1871), Marble, 73 x 64 3/8 x 27 5/8 in. (185.4 x 163.5 x 70.2 cm), Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, VA, Gift of James H. Ricau and Museum purchase, 86.480. Image courtesy of Chrysler Museum of Art.