ABSTRACT

Decolonizing Memory: Erasure and Resurgence of Indigenous History in the Intermountain West

by

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Decolonizing language, memory, and history is crucial to confronting Eurocentric historicism in both the academy and the broader public. This study takes aim at the settlement of the US Intermountain West – where the violent roots of Euro-American settlement have been downplayed in the public historical consciousness through the proliferation of “pioneer heritage.” Beginning with a case study of the place known as Ogden, Utah, early histories of the area are reexamined, analyzing the contexts in which Native peoples are mentioned (or not) in order to understand their presence by the turn of the twentieth century. Next, my focus moves on to critical analysis of historical markers and memorials in northern Utah and southern Idaho. This chapter examines the influence of the Daughters of Utah Pioneers (DUP) and Indigenous nations upon the ways in which the violence of settler colonialism is memorialized in the Intermountain region, highlighting specifically the Bear River Massacre as a case study of the ongoing preservation of memory. Chapter three, illuminated and guided by Indigenous knowledge and histories through an oral interview with Northwestern Band of Shoshone Nation elder and leader, Darren Parry, ultimately highlights the work of the NWB in reclaiming their
history and their connection to the Intermountain West. Primary sources include the published history of Weber County, Utah; published and oral histories from the NWB of Shoshone Nation; an unpublished memoir from the settlement period of Ogden; historic monuments and memorials in physical space via the Historical Marker Database; and an oral interview with Darren Parry.

This thesis compares and contrasts the preservation of history as it pertains to settlers and Indigenous peoples in an attempt to “decolonize” the history of the Intermountain West. This decolonial works seeks to decenter white, pioneer narratives while illuminating and uplifting Indigenous ones. In doing so, I make the case for the benefits of decolonizing memory and public history; namely that providing accessible public history through an Indigenous and decolonial lens – violence and all – is a meaningful way to begin healing and reconciliation with our Indigenous brothers and sisters in addition to providing education for future generations.

(96 pages)
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Decolonizing language, memory, and history is an important step in confronting dominant historical narratives in higher education and the general public. This paper focuses on the settlement of the US Intermountain West – where the violent roots of white settlement have been downplayed in the public historical consciousness through the dominant narrative of “pioneer heritage.” Beginning with a study of Ogden, Utah, early histories of the area are reexamined, analyzing the contexts in which Native peoples are mentioned (or not) in order to understand their presence by the turn of the twentieth century. Next, my focus moves on to analysis of historical markers in northern Utah and southern Idaho. This chapter examines the influence of the Daughters of Utah Pioneers (DUP) and Indigenous nations upon the ways we collectively remember the violence of settlement, and how it is memorialized in the Intermountain region. I highlight the Bear River Massacre as a case study of the ongoing preservation of memory. Chapter three, guided by Indigenous knowledge and histories through an oral interview with Northwestern Band of Shoshone Nation elder and leader, Darren Parry, highlights the work of the NWB in reclaiming their history and their connection to the Intermountain West. Sources include the published history of Weber County, Utah; published and oral histories from the NWB of Shoshone Nation; an unpublished memoir from the settlement period of Ogden; historic monuments and memorials in physical space from the Historical Marker Database; and an oral interview with Darren Parry. This thesis compares and
contrasts the preservation of history as it pertains to settlers and Indigenous peoples in an attempt to “decolonize” the history of the Intermountain West. This work decenters white, pioneer narratives while illuminating and uplifting Indigenous ones. In doing this, I make the case for the benefits of decolonizing memory and public history; that providing accessible public history through an Indigenous and decolonial lens – violence and all – is a meaningful way to begin healing and reconciliation with our Indigenous brothers and sisters in addition to providing education for future generations.
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Introduction

In the decades following World War II, as European colonization became untenable, the process of formal political decolonization began in many African and Asian/South Pacific countries. What this looked like and how long the process took varied from place to place; however, that formal process of political decolonization (i.e. the dissolution of colonial political structures, repatriation of colonial populations, etc.) never took place in North America. The purpose of this research project is to highlight the ongoing process of decolonizing memory in Indian Country. Though the decolonization of memory in the West looks different from that of the formal political process experienced in the Eastern Hemisphere, it is nonetheless critical to understanding the past and present of Native America and the United States. This sort of “informal” decolonization seeks to address “the legacies of historical unresolved grief” by “speaking the hard truths of colonialism and thereby creating spaces for healing and understanding.”\(^1\) Decolonizing language, memory, and history in this way is crucial in confronting Eurocentric historicism – “meant to fit the rough-and-ready methods of colonial rule” – in the academy, which is “a shared problem across geographical boundaries.”\(^2\) This study then takes aim at the United States; particularly the violence and settlement of the US Intermountain West – where the violent roots of Euro-American settlement have been whitewashed and downplayed in the public historical consciousness through what I call “pioneer heritage,” and where the settler colonial project continues to this day.

Starting in the mid-nineteenth century, white settlers – principally, the Latter-day Saints (or Mormons) – began arriving in the region that would later become Utah and Idaho in large

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\(^1\) Amy Lonetree, *Decolonizing Museums: Representing Native America in National and Tribal Museums* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 4-5.

numbers. Though many of these settlers were themselves fleeing the persecution of the US government and Americans in the Midwest, they were no ally to the region’s Indigenous nations (Ute, Shoshone, Bannock, Goshute, and Paiute) whose lands they had selected for their new Zion. Many aspects of the Latter-day Saint colonization of the place we now call Utah are characteristic of settler colonialism of the greater American West: rife with betrayal, violence, and eventually, removal. On the other hand, is there anything particularly unique about Latter-day Saint settlement in the region when compared to US settler colonialism writ-large? How has the history and memory of the settlement of the Intermountain West – and the violence of that process – been preserved, obscured, or rewritten in the decades and generations since? How did pioneer heritage supplant Native histories, specifically and especially in Ogden, Utah? How have Indigenous peoples asserted agency and sovereignty through decolonizing the history of white settlement?

This thesis focuses on the informal process of decolonizing memory and history (though I hesitate using the word “informal” in light of the wealth of decolonial scholarship focused on the Western hemisphere, which I will get to later). First, I argue that the history of the Intermountain West (and the Ogden area specifically) is incomplete, and does a disservice to the historical understanding of this place, in addition to a great injustice to the Shoshone people. Next, I argue that the existing sources informing the region’s history need a thorough revisiting and reinterpretation, and that there exist previously undiscovered primary sources that may help provide a new, more diverse narrative. And finally, I argue that Indigenous people are still here in the Intermountain West, and they are currently taking back the historical narrative of their traditional homelands. This thesis is, therefore, an act of historical recovery for the place I was born and raised – and lands that have been Indigenous homelands since time immemorial.
Beginning with a case study of the place now known as Ogden, Utah, chapter 1 investigates the early interactions between some of the first Euro-American explorers/settlers and the Indigenous Shoshone populations, roughly focused on the 1830s to the 1860s. This introductory chapter explores prominent figures in the area – both settler and Native – as well as correspondence to local leaders, including Brigham Young, in regards to Native presence. I scrutinize early histories of the area, analyzing the contexts in which Native peoples are mentioned (or not) in order to understand their influence and presence by the turn of the twentieth century.

In chapter 2, my focus moves on to a critical analysis of historical markers and memorials in northern Utah and southern Idaho. Additionally, a central focus of this chapter is the influence of the Daughters of Utah Pioneers (DUP) and Indigenous nations upon the ways in which the violence of settler colonialism is memorialized in the Intermountain region, highlighting specifically the Bear River Massacre as a case study of violence, settler colonialism, and the ongoing preservation of memory and history. Ultimately, this chapter highlights the late nineteenth and twentieth century narratives of white settlement, which minimize the role of Indigenous nations through the creation and proliferation of settler memory and pioneer heritage.

Chapter 3 then outlines an alternative history of Ogden; one in opposition to the settler memory and pioneer heritage, illuminated by and guided by Indigenous knowledge and histories through an oral interview with Northwestern Band of Shoshone Nation elder and leader, Darren Parry. Chapter 3 ultimately brings the story up to the modern day, highlighting the work of the Northwestern Band of Shoshone Nation in reclaiming their history and their connection to Ogden and the Intermountain West.
Using as primary sources the published history of Weber County, Utah from the Daughters of Utah Pioneers, published and oral histories from the Northwestern Band of Shoshone Nation, additional primary documents from the Merrill-Cazier Special Collections & Archives, historic monuments and memorials in physical space via the Historical Marker Database, and finally an oral interview with Darren Parry (Shoshone) whose traditional homelands include Ogden, I will compare and contrast the preservation of history as it pertains to settlers and Indigenous peoples in an attempt to “decolonize” the history of Ogden. This decolonial works seeks to decenter white, pioneer narratives while illuminating and uplifting Indigenous ones. In doing so, I will make the case for the benefits of decolonizing memory and public history; namely, that providing accessible public history through an Indigenous and decolonial lens – violence and all – is a meaningful way to begin healing and reconciliation with our Indigenous brothers and sisters in addition to providing education for future generations.

A note on the scope of this project and on terminology. This thesis is not intended to provide a Shoshone history of Ogden or the Intermountain West – a history that is not mine to tell. Rather, this thesis critically reexamines the accepted, settler-dominant histories of the region, providing nuance, critical analysis, and new sources in order to confront the colonial legacies which inform our understanding of the Intermountain West. Quoting Kevin Bruyneel’s *Settler Memory*, “The aim is not to tell a completely different story but to tell the same story differently, to shift this seemingly two-dimensional memory slightly to draw out the three-dimensional (or more) features already embedded in it.”

In regards to terminology, using proper and respectful titles when writing about Native Americans is a small, yet crucial piece of writing “decolonial” work about the United States (and

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the Western Hemisphere writ-large). As such, I avoid using the term “Indian” unless directly quoting or referencing specific sources. While many Indigenous people use the term “Indian” (especially in the American West), I opt for the terms Native, Native American, Indigenous (always capitalized), Indigenous Americans, or specific tribal affiliations when talking about or referencing the first peoples of North America.

Despite the whitewashed and saccharine histories of the Intermountain West and its settlement proliferated by the descendants of settlers, extensive scholarship now views this history through a much more critical lens, exposing and highlighting the violence which led to Indigenous dispossession and white settler expansion. Related yet distinct bodies of scholarship on the history of memory, memorialization of Euro-American settlement, and on the memorialization of Indigenous histories (especially on massacre sites) critically examines the ways in which settler societies have silenced Native-produced histories, relegating them to the peripheries of public memory and history. Additionally, another body of work analyzing the preservation of Native cultures and histories in the public sphere, primarily through museums and other forms of public history, brings much-needed nuance to the ways in which the United States chooses to present its messy genesis. Much of this scholarship now comes from Indigenous scholars themselves, reclaiming agency over their histories and providing a decolonial framework through which students and scholars can more responsibly tell these histories moving forward. Finally, a third body of scholarship focuses intimately on the city we

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now call Ogden, located in northern Utah and the traditional homelands of multiple Northern Shoshone bands – notably a band led by Chief Little Soldier.

A fitting – and perhaps necessary – starting point to the historiography of the intersection between settler colonialism and Indigenous studies is understanding the concept of “settler memory,” an idea expertly explored and outlined by historian Kevin Bruyneel in his recent book *Settler Memory: The Disavowal of Indigeneity and the Politics of Race in the United States*.\(^5\) In this monograph, Bruyneel analyzes the ways in which “a settler society habitually reproduces [their own] memories of Indigenous people’s history,” and the associated physical and political violence, undercutting Indigenous peoples’ agency over their own histories while simultaneously over-valuing the role of settler histories.\(^6\) Bruyneel defines *settler memory* as the ways in which the settler state (the United States, in this case) (re)produces both Indigenous and settler histories while simultaneously undercutting “the political relevance” of the settler colonial project, and “disavowing the presence of Indigenous peoples as contemporary agents and of settler colonialism as a persistent shaping force.”\(^7\) Settler memory also requires assimilating and appropriating Indigenous histories to some degree – evident in place names, sports team mascots, pop culture, etc. – while simultaneously downplaying contemporary contributions, politics, and relevance of Indigenous peoples.\(^8\) Understanding the concept of settler memory is a vital tool for students and scholars working to decolonize their research. It is imperative that the descendants of settlers and colonizers understand their role in decolonizing history and memory, especially in regards to Indigenous studies.

\(^{6}\) Bruyneel, *Settler Memory*, xiii.
\(^{7}\) Bruyneel, *Settler Memory*, xiii.
\(^{8}\) Bruyneel, *Settler Memory*, xiii-xiv.
While the concept of “settler memory” may be a recent articulation of the ways in which our society remembers the history of US settler colonialism, a deep well of historical scholarship about the US Civil War and its legacies provide important context about the struggles of memory, memorialization, and monumentation. W. Fitzhugh Brundage argues that in order to understand the significance of the struggle over memory and history in contemporary society, “we should pay attention to the history that southerners have valued, the elements of their past they have chosen to remember and forget, the ways that they have disseminated their past, and the uses to which their memories have been put.”9 This framework proves valuable when looking at the US West, too. Scholars of the region ought to pay attention to the histories that residents of the US West value (in the case of this thesis, pioneer heritage), what they remember or forget (their pioneer ancestors’ treks across the Plains vs. the violent reality of settlement), and how those memories have been used over time (proliferation of settler memory to the detriment of Indigenous history in the region). Additionally, Brundage highlights the concept of “historical memory,” which “transmits selective knowledge about the past,” a process as clearly at work in the Intermountain West as it is in the US South; where pioneer heritage fills the role of Southern or Confederate heritage, and where Indigenous narratives of history are suppressed in the same manner as Black ones.10

Any study of the history of memory would be incomplete without understanding the ways in which those memories are historicized through monuments and memorials. In her book about memorials in the US West, Jennifer K. Ladino argues that “nearly every landscape in the

10 Brundage, Southern Past, 4.
West bears witness to, and contains physical traces of, historical conflict,”¹¹ which makes the West a conducive environment to memorialization. Ladino goes on to distinguish between memorials and monuments (as the two terms are often used interchangeably), claiming that memorials “tend to mark sites of grief or trauma,” and are meant to “recognize a messier past.” Monuments, on the other hand, often “refer to built structures… which tend to (but don’t always) celebrate dominant national narratives and reinscribe official histories.”¹² Especially in the West, the environment and human histories exist hand-in-hand, where “memorials have the potential to remind us of environmental losses in conjunction with traumatic human histories.”¹³ Memorials in the West, then, have the potential to confront the violent, traumatic history of settler colonialism in meaningful and constructive ways, especially when the descendants of those histories are allowed to tell their stories. Additionally, Ladino coins a useful term, affective dissonance, which she uses to interpret the manifold set of complex emotions visitors might feel at memory sites.¹⁴ Ladino’s Memorials Matter is an excellent overview of the intersections between people, violence, and the environment and the ways in which we memorialize historical trauma.

Following an era of activism in the 1960s, which also saw a “first wave” of Indigenous resistance scholarship from the great minds of Vine Deloria, Jr. and Leslie Marmon Silko, Indigenous scholars have continued to assert agency within the academy over the last several decades with increasing fervor. With this ongoing reclamation of knowledge and histories, many

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¹² Ladino, Memorials, xiii.
¹³ Ladino, Memorials, 254.
of the traditional historical narratives – especially those at the intersections of Manifest Destiny and Indigenous histories – have been critically reexamined and rewritten through Indigenous, decolonial lenses. As a result of this proliferation of Indigenous scholarship, Indigenous histories are no longer “a narrow subfield of US history… Rather, Indigenous peoples are central subjects of modern world history,” argues Lakota historian Nick Estes in his monograph *Our History is the Future*.\(^\text{15}\) Other Indigenous scholars focus on the ways in which colonization never really ended, and is instead an ongoing process. In their discussion of Indigenous resistance to ongoing colonization, Jeff Corntassel and Taiaiake Alfred assert that “contemporary settlers follow the mandate provided for them by their imperial forefathers’ colonial legacy… by trying to eradicate their [Indigenous peoples’] existence as peoples through the erasure of the histories and geographies that provide the foundation for Indigenous cultural identities and sense of self.”\(^\text{16}\) In other words, settler memory rides on the coattails of those who came before; those who had influence and power in the academy and deliberately belittled or often erased Indigenous points of view from history as well as from the land in order to justify and make appropriate the violence serving as the foundation of the United States. The emergence of critical Indigenous scholarship in the latter half of the twentieth century, and its explosion in the first decades of the twenty-first, directly confronts settler memory in the academy and beyond by highlighting the importance of Indigenous histories to the story of the United States.

The silencing and erasure of Indigenous histories and cultures have framed the lands we now call the United States of America as “an empty land devoid of humanity and history, where


contemporary Indigenous peoples’ links to ancestors and lands are suspicious or nonexistent.”\textsuperscript{17} It is precisely these erroneous, though deeply embedded, histories that are found in monuments and memorials across the US West, many of which are in need of a thorough reinterpretation and beg for Indigenous input. Paulette F.C. Steeves provides an important and invaluable framework through which scholars studying the Western Hemisphere can begin unlearning many of the colonial frameworks put in place by those who came before. In service of this framework, Steeves asserts that “settler populations need the tools and information to challenge what they have been taught about Indigenous histories, to unsettle their views of the past, and to inform their worldviews of the present.”\textsuperscript{18} Settler populations, even the most well-intentioned, need access to Indigenous histories and scholarship – through both academic and mainstream sources – in order to confront the harmful legacies of settler colonialism which still influence the academic fields of history, anthropology, and archaeology in addition to the public historical consciousness. If we as scholars and historians wish to advance the field to a place which genuinely values the histories and voices of historically silenced populations, we also have an imposing task: to address the “Western Eurocentric stories of the Indigenous past, which are often based in conjecture, and a history of normalized embedded violence within Western knowledge production.”\textsuperscript{19} When the very foundations of our society stand upon the twin legacies of genocide and erasure, the wounds of historical trauma continue festering long after the guns fall silent. All the while, the very systems that allowed and encouraged these violent traditions continue exercising immense power and influence over the historical narratives. Indeed, in her

\textsuperscript{17} Paulette F.C. Steeves, \textit{The Indigenous Paleolithic of the Western Hemisphere} (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2021), xix.
\textsuperscript{18} Steeves, \textit{The Indigenous Paleolithic}, xxiii.
\textsuperscript{19} Steeves, \textit{The Indigenous Paleolithic}, xxiii.
provocative study of North American archeology and Indigenous traditions, Steeves questions the very foundations on which the ancient history of this hemisphere is understood.

Many of the sites Steeves interrogates are located in the North American West. As such, we may ask: Is settler colonialism in the US West different from the earlier process throughout North America? In some ways, certainly. Euro-American settlement in North America included a diverse cast of European colonial powers from the sixteenth century on. Take, for example, the case of Dighton Rock in Massachusetts, where a dizzying array of interpretations over the centuries encompasses Portuguese explorers, Norse Vikings, and even the Lost Tribes of Israel.20 The US West, on the other hand, is a history of Spanish settlement in the Southwest and up the California coast. Much of the Interior West remained Indian Country until the mid-nineteenth century, and the history of that settlement, while not crystal clear, is perhaps less muddy than the East. However, despite the differences, the similarities are more numerous, and certainly more important in the ways they pertain to the history of the memory of settler colonialism. Western intellectuals’ continual – at times obsessive – appropriation of Native artifacts, highlighted by the example of Dighton Rock (though also manifested in universities across the United States which hold the remains of over 116,000 Indigenous Americans), “illuminates the much larger and more consequential story of how a colonizing society… has defined Indigenous people.”21 This appropriation of artifacts has “served to disenfranchise Native Americans from their past, and in the process from their lands, while at the same time advancing northern Europeans as the rightful

In other words, the ongoing colonial project of the United States, from sea to shining sea, includes the erasure of Native histories in order to prop up and justify Euro-American supremacy.

Narrowing the focus even further – to Utah – allows us to look closely at the role of settler colonialism in the erasure of Indigenous histories in the Great Basin and Intermountain West. The domineering presence of the LDS Church and its emphasis on its own history (which also inflates the role of “pioneer heritage”) makes Utah an interesting case-study where “so many historians have filtered out non-Mormons and native peoples” in order to preserve a rose-colored picture of the state’s violent genesis. As an historian of settler memory, Jared Farmer argues that “the establishment of the Mormon homeland in Utah occurred in tandem with the diminishment of native peoples and places,” illustrated by the collective erasure of Indigenous Ute people from “lake people and fish eaters” to “mountain people” – from the Ute people’s timeless connection to Utah Lake, into the colonial fantasy of the Utes as the people of Mount Timpanogos, which also serves to erase the seasonal migratory nature of Native peoples.

Farmer goes on to explain the ways in which “collective memory” allows settler societies to “erase or suppress historical knowledge considered discomforting or dangerous,” highlighting how the LDS Church and its members in the twentieth century “mythologized Utah’s pioneer period. Discordant pieces of the past were discarded incidentally or buried deliberately.”

Farmer also highlights the role of Indigenous Americans in the Latter-day Saint canon where Native Americans are the storied “Lamanites,” cursed with dark skin and in need of redemption.

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22 Hunter, Place of Stone, 5.
24 Farmer, On Zion’s Mount, 13-16.
by their fair-skinned brothers before the Second Coming of Christ. Farmer contends that Native peoples embody a paradoxical role in the LDS canon, where Latter-day Saints viewed Indigenous peoples as “destined to save the world,” but unable to “save themselves.”

Regardless of their inclusion in Latter-day Saint scripture, the end result of LDS settler colonialism is all too American; in only eighteen years, the Timpanogos Utes went from a tense yet relatively peaceful coexistence with the Latter-day Saints to starvation and treaty-sanctioned removal from their traditional homelands. Only in recent years has the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints begun meaningfully reckoning with their violent genesis in Utah.

Examining the history of memory in relation to the Latter-day Saints and their eventual settlement of Utah, Kenneth E. Foote contends that the Latter-day Saints “were infused with a sense of historical destiny by the nature of their scriptures,” a seemingly analogous connection to the project of Manifest Destiny and westward expansion common throughout the nineteenth century. Additionally, Foote argues, Latter-day Saint historians smoothed many of the Church’s rough historical edges, embracing the stereotypical Western archetypes of “hearty, frontier pioneers carving a future out of the wilderness,” placing themselves as one among the “many groups that helped to win the West” from its “savage” Indigenous inhabitants. This successful rebranding of Latter-day Saint history from its violent settlement of the Great Basin to archetypical civilizing frontiersmen remains the traditional and socially accepted history of the state, where the Utah History taught in seventh grade classrooms statewide lumps all of pre-

26 Farmer, *Zion’s Mount*, 57.
settler Indigenous history into a single unit (“Prehistory - 1847”), with Native people largely absent after the turn of the twentieth century.30

Looking closer at Utah’s core state standards for social studies, it is clear that the organization responsible for establishing these standards have attempted to at least acknowledge the historical contributions of Utah’s Indigenous populations in recent years. The authors acknowledge that the “recorded history of Utah spans just a few centuries, yet humans have lived in the land now called Utah for thousands of years.” Further, the authors claim that “these tribal nations remain essential and active members of the Utah community.” The standards require students be able to “describe the cultural change and continuity of at least one of Utah’s sovereign nations,” which at the very least begins bringing Utah’s Native peoples into the present.31

Following this first module is “Utah’s Diverse Peoples (1847-1896),” which covers the arrival of non-Latter-day Saint immigrants to the region. In addition to outlining the ways in which Utah’s population evolved in this period, the authors do ask, “How did white settlement effect Native American Indian communities?” Additionally, UT Standard 2.4 states that students “will research multiple perspectives to explain one or more of the… conflicts of this period, including the U.S. Civil War… the Bear River Massacre, the Black Hawk War, or other Federal-Mormon conflicts.” While it is commendable that the authors of these curriculum standards attempt to include Native presence following 1847, they do not continue with or include Native perspectives or points of view outside of the effects of colonization. The only mention of Native Americans after 1896 is in module five, where a guiding question asks, “How should issues be

resolved that involve state, federal, and American Indian lands?” There is clearly room for improvement in Utah’s historical curriculum standards.\textsuperscript{32}

It serves us well to understand how the state’s primary history journal, the \textit{Utah Historical Quarterly}, has treated the region’s Indigenous peoples throughout its tenure. Interestingly, early issues of the \textit{Quarterly} dedicate many pages to the state’s Indigenous peoples. For example, Volume 1, No. 1 of \textit{UHQ} begins with an article titled “Indian Names in Utah Geography,” wherein the author laments “the fact that as far as the map is concerned, the white man has almost expunged the record of the red man’s dominion.”\textsuperscript{33} Though much of the language is outdated and racist in today’s terms, the author thoroughly covers the existing Native placenames, though they mostly cover central and southern Utah, with no references to northern Utah or its Shoshone origins. In fact, the journal’s focus seems to be primarily on Native Americans in the early issues, though the scope is almost exclusively focused on groups from present-day Salt Lake City through the central and southern portions of the state, much to the detriment of Shoshone history in the northern portions.

Continuing our look at the \textit{Utah Historical Quarterly}, much of the publication’s treatment of Native peoples through the first half of the twentieth century comes from authors lamenting a “dying race,” or “Indian stories” from the journals and memoirs of the region’s early Latter-day Saint pioneers. \textit{UHQ}’s entrance into the latter-half of the twentieth century begins with the publication of Escalante’s attempted journey to California, and his contact with the Timpanogos Utes and other Natives along the way.\textsuperscript{34} Through the 1950s, the \textit{UHQ} published articles about the pioneers, the different immigrant trails that traversed the state as Manifest

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{32} Ibid.
\end{flushleft}
Destiny made its way to the Pacific coast. There are journals of pioneers past and several Mormon histories from Utah to New York. In the entire decade, a single article is dedicated explicitly to Utah’s Native peoples – “Royal Blood of the Utes” – a strange breakdown of Chief Wakara’s bloodline.35

In 1971, UHQ dedicated issue number 2 of the year to “the history of the aboriginal peoples who once ranged over the wide sweep of rough country from Great Salt Lake to Colorado’s Western Slope and from the Uinta Mountains to the Grand Canyon.” This is the first time the publication included Native voices in its histories of Native peoples, utilizing oral histories of living Indigenous peoples in the essays.36 Unfortunately, the issue reinforces some harmful stereotypes, telling readers in the introduction that “the Indians of the central Rockies and the Great Basin were forced to accept the domination of superior power,” and that “they were notably slow to accept the cultural domination of the conquerors.”37 Otherwise, this issue is an interesting development in the publication’s treatment of Indigenous peoples, though sheds little light on the groups that would become the Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation, and provides much focus on the Utes and other Southern and Western tribes. The following years (decades, really) of UHQ’s publication sees very few explicit histories of the state’s Indigenous populations, with the rare exceptions of analyses of early settlement or the early wars with Ute bands (Walker’s War or the Black Hawk War). In 1995, UHQ published an article about the Shoshone adaptation to white settlement of the Cache Valley, shining a much-needed light on the peoples and region visited in this thesis.38 The latter-half of the 1990s through the first decades

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36 C. Gregory Crampton, “Indian Country,” Utah Historical Quarterly, 39, no. 2 (Spring 1971), 90.
37 Ibid, 93.
of the twenty-first century see the UHQ embrace the New Western History and cover the state’s Indigenous populations more regularly and in a much better light.

Finally, and perhaps most important to this historiography in regards to the legacy of settler colonialism in Utah, are the voices of Utah’s Indigenous communities, who came together at the turn of the millennium to produce *A History of Utah’s American Indians*, a collection of six Tribal histories from the state’s Indigenous groups. In the text’s introduction, Forrest S. Cuch (Ute) argues that “the histories of Utah’s American Indian tribes have not been considered a viable and integral part of the history of the state of Utah,” where “until this time, Indian history has been written by the conqueror, with little or no regard for those conquered.”39 This complex and diverse collection of Indigenous histories provides “a rare look into American Indian history… one that has been ignored because it is unwritten and is based on oral tradition.”40 This collection of histories – written by tribal members themselves – serves to confront the historical erasure their communities have experienced since the days of settlement. Additionally, the volume gives Utah’s Indigenous tribes sovereignty over their cultures and histories in ways the academy has not for decades.

Public history displays and installments provide one of the most accessible and powerful ways for both Indigenous groups and non-Native scholars to address the violence of settlement. As such, an important facet of the history of settler colonialism in the West is the ways in which the legacies of settler colonialism have been preserved in physical space. Perhaps the most well-known display of explicitly violent settler colonialism in the region occurred in 1863 with the Bear River Massacre, where more than 400 Shoshone men, women, and children were murdered

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40 Ibid.
by Union forces while at their winter encampment along the Bear River near the present-day Utah-Idaho border. Written from his perspective as a Shoshone leader and descendent of massacre survivors, Darren Parry argues in his history of the event that this was “the largest massacre of Native Americans by federal troops in the history of the United States,” which “changed how the US Army dealt with other Native American tribes in the future.” The site of the Bear River Massacre is currently enshrined as a memorial by numerous organizations: the Idaho Department of Transportation, the Daughters of Utah Pioneers, and the Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation, to name a few.

In a separate incident perhaps inspired by events at Bear River, more than 200 Cheyenne and Arapaho people were murdered by US troops at Sand Creek in eastern Colorado. Ari Kelman examines the struggles over the meaning and memory of the event in the decades that followed. Kelman argues that current events and contemporary politics bleed into and affect the ways in which memory of these places and events are memorialized in physical space. In an observation of American memorials related to Indigenous nations, Kelman contends that these typically serve as “benchmarks for national progress,” where they “often prop up frontier mythologies, celebrating, with imperialist rhetoric, the conquest of the American West and the dispossession of its indigenous inhabitants.” The Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site – under the administration of the US National Park Service – is a unique case in the memorialization of Native American massacre sites, where the descendants of the victims and survivors of Sand Creek asserted influence over the way the memorial would be presented and managed in cooperation with the National Park Service. Kelman’s history of the memory of the

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42 Kelman, Massacre, 3.
43 Kelman, Massacre, 5.
Sand Creek Massacre showcases how memorializations of America’s troubled past can be done responsibly – illustrated by the Indigenous voices and living memories historically silenced by the imperial victors.

In reviewing the literature associated with settler memory, memorialization in the US West, the Latter-day Saint settlement of Utah, and memorialization of explicitly violent massacres of Native groups, I hope to highlight the need to decolonize histories of settlement. In confronting the dominant pioneer heritage of Ogden, I seek to illuminate the Indigenous history of the region which has been silenced for too long.
Chapter 1: Early Settlement

Strangers have made their way into the fertile valleys that local Shoshone bands have called home seasonally for thousands of years. These strangers, arriving in the early nineteenth century, are not here to settle; rather, these strangers hunt animal furs. At this point in time—1825, to be exact—this lush valley is but a means to an end for these men: before even mid-century, these fur trappers would penetrate “into every nook of this unknown land… [finding] every fertile valley and mountain pass.” This particular area would later be known as Ogden, situated between the Ogden and Weber rivers, a fertile valley nestled at the foot of the picturesque Wasatch Mountain Range. These fur men, notably Peter Skene Ogden and James P. Beckwourth, and their extractive ventures mark the beginning of Ogden history as we know it, paving the way for future encroachment and settlement by white Euro-Americans. The numerous bands of Northwestern Shoshone would have their histories nearly wiped from the map in service of the dominating “pioneer heritage.” The focus on Ogden’s pioneer heritage has whitewashed and downplayed the violent and discriminatory roots of the region’s settlement by white Americans, often reducing Indigenous histories to a mere footnote in the region’s prehistory. Additionally, preserving and elevating only pioneer heritage serves to disconnect us from a wonderfully diverse early Ogden, where settlers and Natives co-existed outside of the big celebrations or horribly violent clashes.

Ogden City is probably best-known as the meeting place of the transcontinental railroad. The written history of Ogden City exists primarily in the form of books and commemorations

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published by amateur historians and local history and heritage organizations. These histories often begin by introducing readers to Miles Goodyear, cited as the first permanent white settler in the area, who after years of exploring and trapping throughout the West, built a cabin on a tract of land along the Weber River in 1845-46. References to Native Americans in this period are generally scattered, almost always written as “Indians,” or “Snakes,” (referring to Shoshones and their relationship with the Snake River) and referred to at different times as the “help,” sometimes a vague threat, and others as “peaceable… not molest[ing] the settlers.” On the whole, most of the existing histories about Ogden City treat the Indigenous Shoshone bands as background characters, never main players in the story, whose long existence and rich history in the region matters little to none in the City’s establishment or growth.

In a directory of Ogden City and Weber County published in 1883, the author-publishers provide an historical overview of Ogden. Calling Ogden City the “capital of Northern Utah,” the author-publishers begin their history of the region with Captain James Brown’s purchase of Miles Goodyear’s settlement in 1848, calling Goodyear an “Indian trader.” This title for Goodyear is one of only two references to Native peoples in this early history – the other being related to public improvements, where $40,000 was invested into “a Spanish wall erected all around the city… for protections against probable attacks by the aborigines.” Again, this wall was never completed as attacks by Indigenous groups never happened here, where apparently “the white citizens found it cheaper to feed than to fight their dusky neighbors.” It is these early

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46 Daughters of Utah Pioneers, *Beneath Ben Lomond’s Peak*, 69.
histories which informed those that came after, especially in the ways they reference – or do not – the Native Shoshone populations present at the time of settlement. This same directory, some seventy pages later when listing Ogden’s fraternal organizations, lists one group who called themselves the “Wasatch Tribe.” This organization had no Indigenous members, although the members’ positions appropriate Indigeneity through titles such as “sachem,” “sagamore,” “Keeper of Wampum,” and a number of chiefs. This present-absence of Native Americans highlights Bruyneel’s settler memory in an Ogden context.47

However, that is not to say that good, inclusive history is not being done here in the Ogden area. The Weber County Heritage Foundation (WCHF) is a shining example of the ways in which local organizations, with the help of everyday citizens, are broadening the scope of local history in very public and accessible ways. Though not part of the written and published literature, it is important to highlight the work of the WCHF does in service to illuminating the Indigenous roots of Ogden and Weber County writ-large through events such as the “Ogden’s Shoshone Campsites Walking Tour,” done in collaboration with Darren Parry (Northwestern Band of Shoshone). Whether it is the work of organizations like the Weber County Heritage Foundation or essays such as this, revisiting history in order to highlight and elevate Indigenous histories as foundational to the world in which we live remains an important endeavor – critical

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in confronting the legacies of Manifest Destiny and other harmful aspects of settler colonial history.\(^48\)

In a serious attempt to avoid writing another “Native history through a settler lens,” this chapter analyzes early settler sources in order to ascertain how these settlers viewed local Indigenous bands. My discussion includes some of the earliest trappers and explorers, particularly the journals of Peter Skene Ogden and James P. Beckwourth, in addition to materials about Miles Goodyear and the sale of Goodyear’s first settlement in Ogden to Latter-day Saint emigrants. Additionally, I consider prominent early settlers and their interactions and relationships with local Shoshone bands and leaders in order to illuminate the roles of these bands in the city’s early history. Finally, analysis of the existing histories and primary sources highlights a potential route for scholars of the area moving forward. My sincere hope is that this analysis paves the way for us to recognize a pattern of historical silencing and erasure of the Indigenous presence in Ogden, which by the end of the nineteenth century was all but complete, and where the histories compiled around this time relegate Native Americans in the region to mere blips in the earliest days; as a vague threat to the brave settlers, troublemakers, or beggars. Ultimately, this chapter provides a foundation upon which we can reflect on the settlement period of Ogden, where in its roots we see the genesis of “pioneer heritage” – a thread which

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flows through the present, apparent in contemporary Pioneer Days celebrations, monuments and memorials, and written histories.

Shoshone People and the Coming of the Whites

In order for us to understand just how deleterious the arrival of Euro-Americans was for local Shoshone bands, we must understand the lifeways these groups maintained before white settlement. This is not my story to tell, and so I lean heavily on the history provided by Mae Timbimboo Parry (Shoshone) and her descendants. Though much is lost due to settlers’ destruction of Indigenous connections to land, culture, and history, much has also been preserved thanks to Indigenous history keepers like Parry, who kept the deep history of the Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation alive and passed it on to her descendants.

According to Parry, the Northwestern Band “have always lived in northern Utah and southeastern Idaho,” while other bands such as the Eastern Shoshone resided primarily in Wyoming.49 The Shoshone were historically a nomadic people, moving seasonally throughout the Great Basin, with a territory including parts of modern-day Nevada, Utah, Idaho, and Wyoming. Unlike the mostly sedentary US populations of today, Shoshone bands traveled widely throughout their territory, gathering foodstuffs as they were in season and moving on before depleting any one resource entirely. A useful example is how Northwestern Shoshone bands often spent the winters camped at Bear River and others near present-day Ogden, where the existence of natural hot springs and other natural defenses against the cold made these areas integral parts of Shoshone homelands.50 Keeping this in mind, we can understand the Ogden

area, though Shoshone territory since time immemorial, never had the same semblance of permanent residency in the way we understand it today, which certainly played a role in why settler populations felt entitled to the land.

Never spending too long in any single place, the Shoshone understood well the carrying capacity of their territory, and Parry lays out in exquisite detail the diverse array of plant and animal resources utilized by the Northwestern Shoshone – each with their own season and geography.\textsuperscript{51} Seeds, nuts, roots and bulbs, supplemented by various animal proteins together provided the Shoshone with year-round sustenance. The Northwest Shoshone (and many other Indigenous groups throughout Turtle Island) lived on the seasonal round, “a form of calendar that shows tribal activities and movement along with seasonal food resources in an annual cycle. Ultimately, seasonal rounds illustrate how all tribal lifeways are inherently connected to their land.”\textsuperscript{52} The “Shoshone people were not wasteful,” Parry says; they “gathered no more than was needed for their use… The Shoshone never killed game for recreation or for the pleasure of killing.”\textsuperscript{53} We can see, therefore, how this delicate balance begins breaking down as increasing numbers of pioneers and settlers, searching for a new life out West, pass through and settle on these lands. Bringing with them vast numbers of livestock, the ever-increasing number of people competed directly with the Shoshone for deer, elk, antelope and other animals for food, while the settlers’ herds of livestock competed directly for the grasses, destroying precious seasonal foods as they grazed. Additionally, even the groups of pioneers simply passing through brought with them in tow hundreds of their herds of livestock and hundreds of covered wagons, trampling and

\textsuperscript{53} Mae Parry, “The Northwestern Shoshone,” 28.
decimating the delicate grassland environments the Shoshone depended on for their livelihoods. By the time of extended permanent settlement in Ogden by American pioneers in the 1840s and 50s, the ecological and lifestyle disturbances had already impacted the Northwestern Shoshone in serious ways, and 1863’s Bear River Massacre signaled the coming end of the traditional lifestyle of the Northwestern Shoshone.

By the mid-1820s, fur trappers from the East (as well as Northwest) found their way into the mountains and valleys we know today as Cache, Box Elder, and Weber counties. The first references to the area that would come to be known as Ogden come from the journals of Peter Skene Ogden (from whom the city gained its namesake) and those of the William Ashley and Jedediah Smith trapping parties. Trapping for the Hudson’s Bay Company, Ogden and his men “crossed the divide at the head of a long valley… and descended into the beautiful mountain basin,” in May of 1825 – “now farther south than British traders had ever been.”

In his own words from May 16th, 1825, Ogden says:

…we began to descend which was far greater than the ascent, the road rocky & Soil gravel which Surprised me, as we found on descending the mountain Covered with white Oak & maple trees[:] rather a Strange Sight as we have Seen no Wood of any kind except Willows for these two months past, after travelling [sic] eight miles we reached a fine valley Covered with Small Streams which appear to discharge themselves in to a river flowing from the N.W.-this Country looks well & by all accounts promises equally So, it does not appear the Americans have Come this Way, so much in our favour.

This is the first time the area which would later become Ogden is mentioned by Euro-Americans. Lacking the grandiose prose often associated with great discoveries, Ogden and his brigade of fur trappers found trapping success in the valley: over the next six days, the company hauled in

319 beavers from the area’s riparian environments. Additionally, it is during this time Ogden “discovers” and names the New River – now known as the Ogden River – where “no whites have ever been… before.” Despite six straight days of journal entries about the area, including details about the weather, the landscape, and the number of beavers trapped each day, Ogden’s journals never mention the presence of any local Native Americans, suggesting that perhaps the Northwestern Shoshone were, at the time, in another region of their homelands and missed the party’s foray into the territory.

In the very same year of Ogden’s ventures into the region, a party of explorers and trappers, which included the famed mountain man James P. Beckwourth and at varying times, Jedediah Smith and William Ashley, wintered near the mouth of “Weaver’s Fork,” now colloquially called the Weber River and very near present-day Ogden City. Through his autobiography, Beckwourth provides an interesting perspective about the area and its Indigenous population. With multiple groups gathering to weather the coming winter together, Beckwourth estimates that the party numbered somewhere between six and seven hundred, with a quarter to a third of them being women and children. Upon returning from a retaliatory horse raid upon Pun-Nak (probably now known as Bannock) Native Americans, Beckwourth and his party came upon

…an encampment of Snake [Shoshone] Indians, to the number of six hundred lodges, comprising about two thousand five hundred warriors… They were perfectly friendly, and we apprehended no danger from their proximity.

Highlighting the seasonality of the Shoshone lifestyle, Beckwourth goes on, “It appears this was their usual resort for spending the winter.” This account perhaps explains the absence of Shoshone from the Ogden party’s accounts the previous spring, and simultaneously reinforces

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the semi-nomadic, non-permanent residency exhibited by the Shoshone people throughout their history.58

In addition to giving us a first-person account of Shoshone presence in our area of interest, and the relationship the Shoshone had with this land as a “winter resort,” James Beckwourth’s autobiographical account of wintering near the site of present-day Ogden is an early example of how the Shoshone people specifically attempted to live in peace with the newcomers. Of the Shoshone, Mae Parry asserts “[T]hey believed that a friendly relationship was possible with the pioneers.”59 Early histories of Native Americans in Utah, such as Milton R. Hunter’s *Utah Indian Stories*, also support the claim that, in these early years, the Shoshone strove for a peaceful relationship with incoming white populations, stating that, “as a rule, the Utah Indians were peaceable and inclined to be friendly toward the whites.” Indeed, Hunter’s history also documents the “first Christmas celebration in Utah,” taking place in December of 1840 (seven years prior to the arrival of Latter-day Saint settlers) on the banks of the Weber River, where a party of trappers, “several families of half-breeds… and fifteen lodges of natives from the Snake tribe” shared a Christmas feast of stewed elk, boiled venison, a number of desserts, and “six gallons of strong coffee.” Unfortunately for researchers, *Utah Indian Stories* was published by a small press and without endnotes, and therefore is nearly impossible to mine for primary sources.60 Nevertheless, histories from both Indigenous and settler points of view corroborate one another about how the Shoshone did not initially see the newcomers as a threat.


and attempted to live peacefully with the settlers, perhaps assuming their stay would be as ephemeral as their own bands’.

Historian Harrison Clifford Dale mentions both the company’s winter encampment near the mouth of the Weber River and the retaliatory horse raid in 1825. However, Dale’s rendition fails to mention the party’s peaceful coexistence with a huge number of Shoshone for the entirety of that winter. Early historians like Dale set a precedent. Despite the value of Beckwourth’s journals as a primary source, detailing some of the earliest written accounts of the Intermountain West (and about the area which became Ogden specifically), the ephemeral community of trappers and Shoshone who peacefully wintered together in 1825 makes no appearance in contemporary histories of the region. Whether intentionally ignoring this peculiar, fleeting form of community, or perhaps not finding it worthy of mention, Dale contributes to an historical silencing of the Northwest Shoshone’s existence in their traditional homelands. When the historical literature creates (or ignores) the holes left by such omissions, it becomes easier for those who come later to write histories that either continue the silencing, or fills the holes with venerations of the mountain men or stories of “Indian savagery.” The effects of which continue to ripple through time, impacting the ways in which we both teach and learn about our localized history and the histories of the Northwestern Shoshone who called this place home long before the mountain men “discovered” it.

Ogden’s First Settlement

Though trappers and mountain men traversed the region through the 1820s and 1830s, their presence was always ephemeral – never permanently settling and always moving on to the

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61 Harrison Clifford Dale, *The Ashley-Smith Explorations and the Discovery of a Central Route to the Pacific, 1822-1829*, with the original journals edited by Harrison Clifford Dale (Glendale: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1941) 161-162.
next stream or rendezvous. Eventually an adventure-bound lone wolf by the name of Miles B. Goodyear would change all of this. Originally from Connecticut, Goodyear came West with a group of missionaries, trappers from the American Fur Company, and three Nez Perce guides in 1836. Through the years of travel, trapping, trade, and trouble in the West, Goodyear felt at home in the valleys of the Intermountain West, and as quite the poet, wrote to his brother back East:

My home’s amid the mountains wild,
The land I fancied from a child,
To climb the cliff or treat the vale,
Where care nor trouble ne’er prevail,
To hung the roe, the stag, the deer,
Or breathe the mountain air so clear,
Or chase the buffalo o’er the plain,
For here I am and here remain.

Before settling at the confluence of the Weber and Ogden rivers, Miles married the daughter of a Ute chief, serving to both solidify peaceable relationships with the region’s equestrian Ute bands, who were known to be more aggressive than Shoshone bands, and also to provide Goodyear with someone to help maintain his lodge. In the sources cited here outlining Miles Goodyear’s time in Ogden, there are only passing references to the Snake Indians (Shoshone), and none directly related to the settlement itself. We read of “Indian helpers,” and Goodyear’s “Indian wife,” but never any interactions between local Shoshone and Goodyear. Considering that through Beckwourth’s experience we know that many bands of Northwestern Shoshone often wintered at the mouth of the Weber River, the absence of the Shoshone from the story of Goodyear’s settlement is curious. Perhaps Goodyear’s marriage to a Ute chief’s daughter – making him kin

63 Kelly and Howe, *Miles Goodyear*, 44. This poem comes from a letter transcribed in the book, where Miles writes to his brother Andrew Goodyear in 1842, only a couple of years before his settlement in the future Ogden.
64 Kelly and Howe, *Miles Goodyear*, 36-37.
with the Utes – made the Shoshone wary of the settlement. It is also possible the Shoshone came and went as usual over the couple of years Goodyear lived in the area, years that may have been uneventful enough for recording. Whether this is a matter of circumstance or historical erasure, we can only guess.

Goodyear’s decision to settle at this confluence as early as 1844, served both economic and aesthetic purposes; ample water in an otherwise arid environment and rich in both timber and game, in addition to the beautiful mountain panorama which surrounds it (as any citizen of or visitor to Ogden can attest). Here Goodyear established his residence, Fort Buenaventura, complete with a couple of log cabins for his family and “Indian helpers,” a stockade and corral with livestock, and gardens on the river bottoms. Not long after its establishment, however, Brigham Young’s Latter-day Saints made their way into the territory, and soon Goodyear’s sole claim in Northwestern Shoshone territory would bloom into full-blown pioneer towns. After the arrival of the Saints into the Salt Lake Valley in 1847, and through the remainder of the summer and autumn, negotiations took place between Captain James Brown and Miles Goodyear regarding the purchase of Goodyear’s Fort Buenaventura and all of its improvements. On November 25, 1847, Miles Goodyear was paid $1950 for the property, its improvements, and most of Goodyear’s livestock. A new era for Ogden had begun.

**Latter-day Saint Settlement: A Well-Worn Narrative**

Miles Goodyear’s taste for solitude was perhaps spoiled by the prospect of Latter-day Saint colonization in the Salt Lake Valley, and following Captain James Brown’s purchase of Fort Buenaventura in the summer of 1847 on behalf of Brigham Young and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, change came quickly to the confluence of the Ogden and Weber

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65 Kelly and Howe, *Miles Goodyear*, 63-64.
66 Kelly and Howe, *Miles Goodyear*, 90.
rivers. Within a matter of months, Brown and others began formally colonizing the area, originally calling it Brown’s Fort, Brown’s Settlement, or Brownsville after the captain who made the purchase. By early 1850, Brigham Young assigned Lorin Farr to oversee the continued settlement in Ogden, who established the first militia, and by the end of the year, over one hundred families called the area home.\(^{67}\) With formal colonization and settlement now happening on a large scale, the sources become far richer in regards to pioneer narratives, which also provide interesting – and often racist – perspectives of local Northwestern Shoshone. As we shall see, through the histories written and compiled from this point forward – most of them heavily influenced by the LDS Church and its heritage groups like the Daughters of Utah Pioneers – the exaltation of “pioneer heritage” becomes commonplace. Newspapers and settler memoirs provide additional context about the early settlement’s relationship with the Northwest Shoshone bands. As a consequence, the histories of the Northwest Shoshone become dimmer; settler colonialism continues its nefarious business of disconnecting Indigenous peoples from their homelands, their cultures, and from our shared history.

Latter-day Saint settlement in Ogden looks much like it does elsewhere: the Saints quickly took to “improving” the land through building dwellings, preparing fields to farm and graze, and importantly in this semi-arid environment, digging irrigation infrastructure. With intentions of creating the divinely guided Zion, the Latter-day Saints brought with them a unique environmental ethic which would make the desert bloom. However, the ideas, tools, animals, and attitudes that would transform the Wasatch Front in a matter of decades, would also destroy the Shoshones’ ability to live in the traditions of their ancestors by the close of the century.\(^{68}\)

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\(^{68}\) For a detailed overview of Latter-day Saint environmental ethics and attitudes, and their impact on the natural environment of the Intermountain West, see: Dan L. Flores, “Zion in Eden: Phases of the Environmental History of
Permanent settlement, expansion, and environmental change brought their own unique forms of violence upon local Shoshone bands which only exacerbated the outright violence that always accompanied white settlement. The Latter-day Saint newcomers brought with them a unique land ethic, where the land itself “could not be ‘owned,’ but it could be occupied temporarily provided the occupant ‘improved’ it… changing the natural order to make it more productive of the things most useful to themselves.”

Latter-day Saint “improvement” destroyed the seasonal traditional plant foodstuffs local Shoshone bands depended on, diverted important water sources, and over-hunted local game populations, effectively impoverishing the Shoshone (as well as the region’s Ute, Paiute, and Goshute bands) of their health and wealth. Traditional lifeways did not become more difficult – they became functionally impossible by the late nineteenth century.

By 1850, Ogden City had been formally established by the territorial government, and in February of that year, “[I]n accordance with Brigham Young’s Indian policy… the first company of militia in Weber County was organized.” As Indigenous economies depended more and more upon raiding as capitalism and the market economy expanded in the West, and in light of hostilities with Ute bands farther south and east, Brigham Young advised Ogdenites to construct defensive infrastructure and concentrate their populations into towns throughout the 1850s.

During this time, settlers built two forts – Bingham Fort and Mound Fort – and began constructing an earthen wall that would surround the city proper. However, the wall was never completed, nor was it ever “needed against Indian attacks.”

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70 Daughters of Utah Pioneers, *Beneath Ben Lomond’s Peak*, 80.

71 For the raiding economy in the West, see Ned Blackhawk, *Violence Over the Land: Indians and Empires in the Early American West* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006); for Brigham Young’s orders to Ogdenites and the incomplete earthen wall, see Daughters of Utah Pioneers, *Beneath Ben Lomond’s Peak*, 91.
with the region’s Indigenous groups often gets sanitized through his declaration that “It’s cheaper to feed the Indians than to fight them,” the earliest attribution of which I can find is from the 1944 publication of the article “Indian Relations on the Mormon Frontier,” from the *Utah Historical Quarterly*. However, despite the ways in which Latter-day Saint historians and scholars have attempted to soften Young’s rough edges, and despite his own claims of feeding over fighting, in 1850, Brigham Young ordered the extermination of Timpanogos Utes. Additionally, Young’s own sermons, as documented by the LDS Church itself, betray the rosy “friend of Indians” image, where he says, “The Indians are a thieving and murderous people, and they must be taught to respect the property and lives of the white settlers. If they refuse to do so, they must be treated as enemies and punished accordingly.” Young goes on to say, “The Indians are a lazy, filthy, and treacherous people, and it is very difficult to do anything with them. The only way to manage them is to keep them under the strictest discipline, and to make them feel that they are under the control of a superior race.”

Through most of the sources that form the foundation of Ogden history as we know it, the predominant narrative shines bright: all glory to the founding pioneers. To be sure, the struggles faced by the pioneers were daunting, and the hardships those families faced deserves recognition. However, they also contribute to the historical erasure of the Northwestern Shoshone (not to mention erasure of the Ute, Goshute, Paiute, Navajo, and other Shoshone bands displaced by settlement in Utah). Throughout these sources, which inform both the academic and quotidian histories of Ogden, references to the region’s Indigenous populations frequently appear in

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reference to trouble or violence in some capacity. Take, for example, the first reference to Northwestern Shoshone in perhaps the most complete history of Ogden, *Beneath Ben Lomond’s Peak: A History of Weber County 1824-1900*, compiled by the Daughters of Utah Pioneers, eighty pages into the text: “Two enemies that the early cattle men of Weber County had to contend with were wolves and Indians,” the authors say, “the latter stealing a cow now and then for food… Most of the early settlers took every precaution to prevent open conflict with the red men.”

Far from being the only use of the term “red men,” the authors determine which Indigenous individuals are “good Indians” or dangerous ones.

This serves to belittle – knowingly or not – the immense paradigm shift experienced by the Shoshone people during the early settlement period. As important as the histories themselves is the historical context in which these histories were written. The Daughters of Utah Pioneers was founded in 1901, and their history of Weber County was originally published in 1944. The Latter-day Saint women of this time, having been separated from their pioneer ancestors by two or three generations at this point, began compiling their ancestors’ histories for future generations’ use. In doing so, they laid the foundation of early Utah history. From their position, and informed by their ancestors, these women also laid the foundation for the region’s Native peoples to be seen as dangerous threats or “thieving beggars,” having no context that these people were quite literally starving to death as a result of their pioneer ancestors’ settlement. In order to confront the historical bias which paints our knowledge of early Ogden and the roles of both the pioneers and Indigenous peoples, we must instead seek out new primary sources and read them against the grain.

The Bear River Massacre and the Treaty of Box Elder

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75 Daughters of Utah Pioneers, *Beneath Ben Lomond’s Peak*, 80.
76 See Daughters of Utah Pioneers, *Beneath Ben Lomond’s Peak*, 80-83.
The massacre that took place that day has long been forgotten by most. I hope a new generation of people will have a desire to listen and to learn, not for vengeance, but because those who died sacrificed so much [to] speak to us from the dust, and we must listen.

– Darren Parry, *The Bear River Massacre: A Shoshone History*

On the frigid morning of January 29th, 1863, the lives of the Northwestern Shoshone would change forever when US troops under the command of Colonel Patrick Edward Connor descended on the winter camp of the *so-so-go* (those who travel on foot) Shoshone headed by their chiefs, Sagwitch, Sanpitch, and Bear Hunter. The winter camp, meant to provide the Shoshone with “a time to reflect, renew friendships with loved ones, and rest from all cares,” was soon the site of immense loss.77 Responding to calls from the white settlers about the Shoshone stealing livestock, Colonel Patrick E. Connor and his men -- eager for action as the Civil War raged in the East -- gave no time for diplomacy nor did they show any sense of mercy to the Shoshone people camped on the banks of the Bear River. Patrick and his men were unrelenting in their hours-long attack, indiscriminately killing men, women, and children and torturing one of the Shoshone chiefs, Bear Hunter. When the dust and smoke finally settled, anywhere between 200-500 Shoshone men, women, children, and elders had their lives taken in what Darren Parry, descendant of massacre survivors, calls “the largest massacre of Native Americans in the history of the United States.”78

78 Parry, *The Bear River Massacre*, 7. This disparity in mortality figures (between 200-500 depending on the source) illuminates much about the state of Indigenous histories in the Intermountain West. In terms of sheer loss of life, the massacre at Bear River surpasses not only every purported massacre of pioneers and settlers in the West but also other massacres of Indigenous peoples better known to the public, such as the massacres of Cheyenne and Arapaho at Sand Creek or Lakota people at Wounded Knee. In the end, the number of people killed is not the point in and of itself; however, it is telling that reliable figures are elusive, especially when compared to events such as the Mountain Meadows Massacre, where we know precisely the number of pioneers killed.
The winter campgrounds on the banks of the Bear River provided friends, family, and warmth to the numerous Shoshone bands who made their way here annually. Many who made up the Shoshone bands following the Chiefs Pocatello and Washakie left the winter campgrounds following the Warm Dance ceremony (a traditional ceremony meant to drive out the winter cold and usher in the coming spring). Following several violent incidents involving Shoshone and settlers, some members of the Northwestern bands left the area as well, either having been warned by friendly settlers or having a vision of the coming carnage. However, most of those following Bear Hunter and Sagwitch, the bands we know today as the Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation, stayed, and the immense loss changed the trajectory of the band forever. There are no words with which I could do the story of this massacre justice, and therefore I defer to the words of Darren Parry, whose history of the events have been passed down through generations of Shoshone history keepers:

_Without so much as asking the Indians for the guilty party, the Colonel and his men began to fire on the Indians. Arrows were nothing compared to Army rifles. Indian men, women, children, and babies were slaughtered like wild rabbits… The Shoshone people were jumping into the river and trying to escape by swimming across. The blazing white snow was brilliant red with blood. The willow trees that were used for protection were now bent down as if in defeat._

A mere seven months following the horrific events at Bear River, the United States of America entered into treaty negotiations with the Northwestern Bands of Shoshone in July of 1863. Representing the United States was none other than Patrick E. Connor – who led US troops in the massacre against the Shoshone the previous January (who had also been promoted to Brigadier General) – and James Duane Doty, Governor and Superintendent of Indian Affairs in Utah Territory appointed by Abraham Lincoln. Representing the various Shoshone bands was

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79 Parry, _The Bear River Massacre_, 42-43.
80 Parry, _The Bear River Massacre_, 44.
Chief Pocatello as the head negotiator, followed by several other leaders of smaller bands of Shoshone: Toomontso, Sanpitz, Tosowitz, Tahkwetoonah, and Omashee. The articles and terms of the Treaty of Box Elder, signed on July 30, 1863, demanded that “friendly and amicable relations shall be reestablished” between the Northwestern Shoshone and the United States, and that the United States pay the Shoshone a $5,000 annuity in addition “provisions and goods to the amount of two thousand dollars, to relieve their immediate necessities, the said bands having been reduced by the war to a state of utter destitution.” Additionally, the treaty demarcates the lands which would supposedly remain Shoshone Territory as that which “is bounded on the west by Raft river and on the east by the Porteneuf mountains,” an area roughly stretching from modern-day Burley, Idaho in the west to Downey, Idaho in the east.81

Unfortunately (and perhaps unsurprisingly), the Treaty of Box Elder did little to alleviate the needs of the Shoshone people, whose lifeways crumbled under the continued pressure of settler colonialism. On top of the Bear River Massacre, which drastically reduced their numbers, continued encroachment and settlement on the lands that provided their means of living exacerbated their struggles. Government annuities arrived short, late, or not at all, and the never-ending flow of settlers continued settling on the lands set aside for the Shoshone in the Treaty of Box Elder.

By 1868, after a number of councils and treaty negotiations, federal reservations were established for the Shoshone in Wyoming (the Wind River Reservation) and Idaho (the Fort Hall Reservation). Washakie and his followers removed to Wind River, while Pocatello and his removed to Fort Hall. Following the Massacre and treaty negotiations, some members of what became the Northwestern Band scattered and made their way to relatives at either Fort Hall or

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Wind River, while others settled in the small Utah towns of Brigham City and Promontory. However, unlike the Shoshone-Bannock and the Eastern Shoshone (as these bands are called today), the majority of the Northwestern Bands following Little Soldier and Sagwitch never removed to a federal reservation. Those Northwestern Bands who remained in southern Idaho and northern Utah in large part converted to Mormonism by the end of the century, attempting to assimilate into an agricultural lifestyle and remain in the lands of their ancestors.\(^{82}\)

**Towards a New Narrative**

*She can remember the first time she ever saw a cut-out doll. A little Indian girl was playing with her and Charles in the meadows and the little Indian girl picked a blade of broad marsh grass that was about an inch wide and she folded it lengthwise. Then she began tearing it or cutting it with her fingernails and teeth. The children watched her fascinated, wondering what she was trying to do. In just a few moments, she opened the leaf and it was a little boy doll cut-out. It was so cleverly done that they had her go with them to the house and show it to their mother. She also thought it was splendid.*\(^{83}\)

In 1933, Dorothy Amelda Sherner, assisted by her sister Laura Beatrice, recorded the autobiography of their mother, Mary Elizabeth Hutchens (1857-1935). The copy I possess was given out at a family reunion sometime in the 1950s, according to Anna Keogh (a descendent and owner of an impressive personal collection of early Ogden sources). Mary Elizabeth’s stories are those of someone born and raised in the early settlement period of Ogden, and as such, illuminate the day-to-day lives and interactions of both settlers and Native Americans. The record of Mary’s life – a collection of memories so vibrantly alive on their yellowed pages – provides the evidence of a more diverse and complete history of Ogden than the current literature.

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\(^{82}\) Darren Parry, *The Bear River Massacre*, 72-73.

\(^{83}\) Dorothy Amelda Sherner, “MARY ELIZABETH” - *Her Stories*, recorded by her daughter Dorothy Amelda Sherner, assisted by her daughter Laura Beatrice, 1933 (on loan to the author from the personal collection of Anna Keogh), 15.
lets on. As the child of some of Ogden’s earliest settler families, Mary’s experiences and perspectives provide an account of early Ogden, when the Shoshone still lived a seasonal lifestyle and the settlers were still newcomers on the scene.

When read through an intentionally anti-colonial lens, *Her Stories* confronts some of the most routine – and most violent – forms of settler colonialism: erasure of histories, appropriation of cultures, and relegation to the past. Together, these facets of settler colonialism remove diverse Indigenous communities from their lands both physically and spiritually, belittle and tokenize unique cultures into generalized “Indian” tropes, and give the general public the impression that Native peoples are extinct – a noble race, ultimately unable to “civilize” into mainstream American culture. As a result, contemporary histories and sources continue “an environment where Indigenous peoples are not seen as contemporary members of society” and where the “complex tribal nations are not shown the respect they deserve.”

The histories of Ogden, Weber County, and the Intermountain West are no different in this regard – by the second half of the nineteenth century, most sources no longer mention or acknowledge Native peoples outside of a few notable individuals. If the existing histories are taken at face-value – as they have been for decades – you might be convinced that Ogden was devoid of Indigenous peoples; a blank slate of land destined to be settled and cultivated by the progression of Manifest Destiny and its progeny of pioneers. What *Her Stories* provides, then, are the first-person accounts of the Shoshone throughout the second half of the nineteenth century – living their seasonal rounds and very much still present in Ogden and the surrounding region.

An entry simply titled, “THE COYOTES,” fewer than eight sentences long, shows us that bands of Shoshone continued living seasonally in Ogden through Mary’s childhood (the late

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1850s through the 1860s): “No night passed in the fall and winter but what one could hear the coyotes howl in the night, and after the Indians left their camping grounds and had moved away, the coyotes came in droves [emphasis my own].” 85 Another entry, telling the memory of Mary and her siblings making a 4-mile trek in an intense thunderstorm to tell their grandparents of their new baby brother, shows us that without a doubt, some bands of Shoshone camped in Ogden through the winter of 1864-65. Mary Elizabeth goes on to recall how her and her siblings frequently slept outside on the roof of their shed in the summer months, counting the stars and “quietly watching the Indians at their camp fires singing or dancing their many ceremonial dances – some so fierce it made them shiver and others so majestic and solemn that it made one want to weep.” 86

Interactions between Natives and settlers were not uncommon. Mary and her sister traded riddles with the little Native girls who came around to play, and after the Native girls taught them a traditional stick-hopping game, Mary and her sister taught them “Ring Around the Rosie.” The children of settlers and the children of Natives frequently played together, even teaching one another games from their own cultures. In an otherwise mundane account of one of Mary’s favorite childhood snacks – fried cakes – she tells us how “Indian Jack was out by the choping [sic] block talking to their father. He [their father] came in the house… and took three and said he was going to give them to Jack.” This same “Indian Jack” taught Mary’s father how to make lariats from cow hides. There were no buffalo in the valley, “but the Indians brought him [Mary’s father] chunks of buffalo each time they killed any on a hunt.” Mary’s father, who was known to raise and break oxen, “fattened up Buck [a family ox who had become too old to work] with corn and shorts and other food and when he was nice and fat, Buck was given to the

85 Dorothy Amelda Sherner, “MARY ELIZABETH,” 18.
86 Dorothy Amelda Sherner, “MARY ELIZABETH,” 20, 78.
Indians to be butchered.” Despite the introduction and steady expansion of capitalism in the region – later dominated by the federal government – it appears there existed a flourishing trade-based market or barter economy between the Native and settler populations in Ogden’s early days.87

In perhaps the most interesting – and consequential – of Mary’s accounts of Natives and settlers interacting, Mary describes a time her mother became gravely ill. Bedridden and barely eating, Mary’s mother had been visited by a local doctor who had served in the Franco-Prussian war, though she was unable to help Mary’s mother. Mary goes on to describe how “the Indian women used to come into the room and talk to her, bringing her choice bits of food, such as dried venison, service berries, etc.” Finally, one day “the medicine man came, bringing a beaver he had killed.” This medicine man told Mary’s father that he could cure Mary’s mother if his directions were followed.

*From the dead beaver he took the castors [anal glands] – the one like a bunch of twisted bark. This he put in a bottle of whiskey which her father obtained from a neighbor, and the Indian instructed Mr. Hutchens to give his wife a teaspoon at intervals. It was hard to persuade Mary’s mother to try the remedy, but finally she consented and it wasn’t long before she had fully recovered.*

This account is especially striking in terms of the known history of Ogden. Indigenous women knew that Mary’s mother was sick, and dropped by their house frequently to visit and provide sustenance. A medicine man, who no doubt heard of the case through the women, went out of his way to harvest a beaver and provide this settler family with life-saving medicine. There is nothing like this account in the existing written histories of the area that illuminate so richly the ways these two historically-opposed groups not only lived in close proximity, but even helped one another.

The recollections of Mary Elizabeth’s upbringing in early Ogden also provide an account of the natural environment of the valley before widespread industrialization, a unique and undervalued perspective absent in the current source materials. Through her memories, we can imagine “the land covered with prairie chickens just after the wheat fields had been cut,” a species of sage grouse nearly extinct today, and certainly not found in Ogden. We can imagine how the “wild sheep were thick in the mountains,” where only a herd or two exist today. The meadows which have long disappeared “were full of wild duck and geese,” and “the Weber and Ogden rivers were full of trout” – before the introduction of game fish which fill the rivers today. Eagles frequently nested in the great old cottonwoods that grew in the valley. Despite the over-trapping of the region earlier in the century, mink were still seen throughout the valley. Where today sits Romrell and 5th Street Ball Parks (built upon a Shoshone burial mound), the attraction was once “the great variety of wild flowers which bloomed there.” Sand, ant, and sego lilies abound; paint brush, sleigh bell, snowball, sweet william, wild onion, bluebell, harebell, forget-me-nots, prickly pear, lady-finger, geranium, pansies, johnny-jump-ups, buttercups, and violets decorated this Indigenous resting place, at the base of which grew wild currant, “squawberry,” hawthorne, and wild roses. These accounts show us not only the way things once were, but how bountiful the land was, and how the Northwestern Shoshone lived with and on these lands for generations.88

This collection of stories is significant in that it shows us a first-person account of growing up in early Ogden, in a time when bands of the Northwestern Shoshone lived with and among the new settlers. Accounts such as this do not make their appearances in the existing histories of Ogden. Her Stories therefore shines a bright light upon the everyday life of both

88 Dorothy Amelda Sherner, MARY ELIZABETH, 22, 24, 50.
settlers and Shoshone, enriching the history beyond the common binary between the “sturdy, resolute empire builders” and the “passionately hostile” Natives often found in the literature.\textsuperscript{89} Despite being Northwest Shoshone homelands for countless generations and maintaining a strong presence in the area through the early settlement period, continued settlement and land theft – combined with the devastating effects of the Bear River Massacre – resulted in a severely diminished Native presence in Ogden. This gaping historical void left by settler colonialism was promptly filled with the legacy of pioneer heritage. It is clear that historians of Ogden, Weber County, Utah, and even the Intermountain West need to reexamine the source materials which have informed the region’s histories from settlement to the current day. In addition to reexamining the sources which have informed our understanding of Ogden history for decades, as historians contributing to a paradigm shift in historical research, we must also identify and analyze new sources through a decolonial lens. In doing these things, we confront the historical legacy of silencing and erasing the voices of our Indigenous relatives, whose histories are intertwined with the land we call home, which – hopefully – results in a paradigm shift in the ways we view, teach, and learn about our messy, intertwined histories.

\textsuperscript{89} See: Daughters of Utah Pioneers, \textit{Beneath Ben Lomond’s Peak}, xiii (foreword), 81, 87.
Chapter 2: 
Settler Colonialism and Historic Monuments & Memorials

Monuments and memorials to the history of the US West often play off of both the unique cultural identity of Westerners and the diversity – and often monumental nature – of the landscape itself. This chapter relies heavily on the theoretical framework outlined by Jennifer K. Ladino in her excellent analysis of monuments and memorials managed by the National Park Service in the US West, *Memorials Matter: Emotion, Environment, and Public Memory at American Historical Sites*, as well as the history of memory as outlined and illustrated by Ari Kelman in his powerful work *A Misplaced Massacre: Struggling Over the Memory of Sand Creek*. These authors highlight the intersections of public memory, the legacies of imperial violence, and Indigenous sovereignty in the twenty-first century. Though I referenced Ladino’s useful differentiation between monuments and memorials in the introduction of this thesis, I believe the distinction bears repetition in the context of this chapter and its focus on sites of public history and memory. Once again, monuments “refer to built structures on a grand scale… which tend to… celebrate dominant national narratives and reinscribe official histories,” while memorials “recognize a messier past,” often giving historically marginalized populations interpretive control over uglier moments in the nation’s past.\(^90\) This distinction is important when looking at historical markers in the Intermountain West, where the vast majority are considered *monuments* to the region’s pioneer heritage, and where very few might be considered *memorials* confronting a violent, colonial genesis.

There exists no extensive scholarship on memory history and/or settler memory in the Intermountain West or Great Basin regions, the reasons for which are multifaceted and quite

murky. For starters, the region’s harsh, delicate arid environment encouraged more decentralized tribal structures and low population densities for much of any given year so as not to deplete any one place of precious food and water resources. When we begin adding the pressures of settlement – sustained sedentary populations, livestock grazing/watering, disease and genocidal violence – Native populations begin diminishing at an astonishing rate (populations which were likely already negatively impacted by disease and warfare by the time the pioneers began settling). Additionally, due to the sheer speed at which Euro-American settlement happened in the Great Basin/Intermountain region (permanent settlement began in 1847 and by many accounts is relatively complete by the 1870s), the region’s settler memory is comparatively young. In all reality, there has only been a couple of generations since the arrival and settlement of the pioneers, and the descendants of those pioneers (namely the Daughters of Utah Pioneers) used the journals and memoirs of their ancestors to craft the historical narratives which still reign supreme today. The combination of these factors begs the question: Was it easier to silence Indigenous people and their histories in the Great Basin/Intermountain West?

Despite occurring less than a year apart, there exists a vast imbalance of scholarship – and national recognition – between the Bear River and Sand Creek massacres. While the Sand Creek Massacre has been covered in numerous scholarly works, and has been incorporated into the National Parks System as a National Historic Site, the Bear River Massacre remains mired in obscurity, even among residents of the Intermountain West where the tragedy took place, despite being listed as a National Historic Landmark. And despite the significant historical similarities between the two (especially the wanton killing of men, women, children, and elders by federal forces during the Civil War), there exist next to no comparative literature. The only exception I have found, is a dissertation submitted in 2017, titled “The Cultural Specificity of Memory and
Commemoration: The Bear River Massacre (1863) and the Sand Creek Massacre (1864),” written by Susannah Hopson. This dissertation addresses the imbalanced historiography between the two massacres, arguing that “memory and commemoration at the two massacre sites [are] culturally specific and demonstrate that different Euro-American and Native cultural memories are not easily transportable across disparate ethnic boundaries.”91 Much like this chapter, Hopson’s dissertation focuses on public memory and its effects on how we remember the violence of the settlement of the West. However, while Hopson visited the Shoshone-Bannock reservation at Fort Hall, Idaho, the author failed to include the voices of the Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation and the descendents of Massacre survivor Chief Sagwitch – an oversight my project fills in.

Finally, with an understanding of the historiographical imbalance between the Bear River and Sand Creek massacres, future scholars of the Bear River Massacre especially might focus on the heretofore undiscovered military connections between the two (if any), and placing them both explicitly in the Civil and Indian Wars (as Kelman does for Sand Creek).

**Pioneer Heritage on Display**

The state we now call Utah is known around the world for two things: as an outdoor adventure Mecca – home to five of America’s National Parks – and as the homebase of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) – colloquially known as the Mormons. In Utah, the LDS Church wields immense social power as “the main architect of collective memory” in the state, as historian Jared Farmer so aptly observes.92 One of the state’s foremost

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curators of history – and therefore the managers of many of the state’s historical monuments and memorials – the Daughters of Utah Pioneers (DUP), is “dedicated to honoring the names and achievements of the men, women, and children who founded Utah,” with a primary focus on those who arrived or were born in the territory (or died on their journey to it) before May 10, 1869 – the date marking the completion of the transcontinental railroad in Promontory, Utah.93 The organization maintains no fewer than 341 historical markers in Utah alone (most erected and dedicated between 1930 and 1965) with more in the surrounding states.94 Through the dedication and maintenance of these markers and monuments, the Daughters of Utah Pioneers are one of the primary architects of the glorification of pioneer heritage in Utah generally and Ogden specifically.

The establishment of the Daughters of Utah Pioneers in the early twentieth century coincides with both the Latter-day Saint mission to connect to a broader American identity and to preserve the histories and experiences of the aging pioneer generation (very similar to – if not inspired by – organizations like the Daughters of the Confederacy in the US South around the same time). The DUP tirelessly preserved their ancestors’ experiences of migration and settlement, and – intentionally or not – built the historical foundation upon which Utah history was built; a foundation whose legacies echo throughout the region to this day.

This chapter will therefore focus on the ways in which the settlement period has been preserved through both memorializations and monumentalizations, both to pioneers and Native Americans, and the ways in which the vast majority of these markers serve to elevate and valorize the region’s pioneer heritage above all else. Analysis in this chapter will extend from

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Ogden to the rest of Utah, and into southern Idaho, illuminating a common narrative which serves to elevate pioneer histories and belittle Indigenous ones. Additionally, this chapter highlights the ways in which this narrative has begun to shift with the input of the Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation and the rededication of a number of monuments and memorials.

In an interesting collection of primary sources published by the Daughters of Utah Pioneers, *Beneath Ben Lomond’s Peak: A History of Weber County 1824-1900*, the history of Ogden -- from the settler point of view -- is outlined in detail; the book runs over 600 pages. In the book’s account of the “first trouble with Indians,” the authors claim that “two enemies that the early cattlemen of Weber County had to contend with were wolves and Indians,” but that “most of the early settlers took every precaution to prevent open conflict with the red men…” Racist and antiquated language aside, this account is notable for its vilification of Indigenous peoples as enemies and its defense of colonizers as preventers of violence – long before any account of fighting or conflict is even mentioned.

Continuing in the tradition of westward expansion and Manifest Destiny, fear of conflict with Natives inspired early Ogdenites to construct defensive walls and forts throughout the Valley. Though many of these public works no longer exist, the Daughters of Utah Pioneers have erected and maintained a historical marker near Historic 25th Street and Wall Avenue commemorating the (never completed) construction of a defensive wall (started in 1854) from which the street gets its name. In its description, the DUP claims the wall was “not completed because the Indians became peaceful.” Once again we see the use of passive language in the

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96 Daughters of Utah Pioneers, *Ben Lomond*, 80.
97 Daughters of Utah Pioneers, “Ogden City Wall,” marker no. 416, erected 1981, Ogden, UT. [https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=81035](https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=81035)
memorial – “became peaceful” – which of course erases the role of early colonizers in the violent displacement of Indigenous nations. Additionally, there are no accounts of Shoshone hostility in the area – their absence in the region may have been a response to growing Ute restlessness further south, where violent clashes between Natives and settlers resulted in the Blackhawk War. The history of Ogden City’s settlement outlined in Beneath Ben Lomond’s Peak mentions Indigenous peoples only a handful of times, usually in relation to conflict or the perceived threat of conflict.

In the nearby settlement of North Ogden City, “an incident happened that caused an Indian uprising and nearly brought about the massacre of the citizens of North Ogden,” according to the DUP. The authors state, “A large Indian desired a grist, and refused to wait his turn… An argument ensued and the miller hit the native. Almost immediately an uprising was the result.”

Without additional context or sources, we have only this single narrative on which to understand this altercation. This incident – the only explicit mention of Indigenous peoples in their history of North Ogden – is but a paragraph long. With the subtitle “Indian Threat,” the single paragraph describes the Native people “in gaudy war paint, giving vent to the most hideous yells,” where “only with the greatest of effort and persuasion” was peace restored.

Again, despite being the homelands of Shoshone and Ute peoples for generations, these nations are warranted only a single paragraph where they are labeled a threat and described as gaudy. Indigenous presence and history is all but forgotten in the city of North Ogden.

After the brief mention of Indigenous peoples in North Ogden, the next mention of them comes 18 pages later in the retelling of the settlement of West Weber, several miles west of Ogden. After mentioning that the area was the traditional winter campgrounds of several bands

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98 Daughters of Utah Pioneers, Ben Lomond, 181.
99 Daughters of Utah Pioneers, Ben Lomond, 181.
of Native people, the DUP goes on to claim that “they [Natives] gave the settlers little trouble aside from petty thefts, annoyance from begging and the yapping of their numerous mongrel dogs,” going on to to say that after the area “became somewhat settled, they depended mainly on the whites for a livelihood.” Using words such as “petty,” “begging,” and “depended,” illustrates the condescending and paternalistic attitude towards Indigenous bands that had wintered in the same area for generations. Additionally, this account erases the violence needed in order to settle this place, as well as how this very settlement destroyed Indigenous ways of life – as if this dependency on whites was voluntary. Once again, any lack of nuance about the ways in which pioneer settlement destroyed the Shoshone seasonal round proliferates the dangerous and violent stereotype of Natives as lazy, freeloading beggars – a stereotype that negatively impacts Native peoples to this very day.

In the coda to Beneath Ben Lomond’s Peak’s history of settlement in the Ogden Valley (which includes the settlements mentioned previously), the Daughters of Utah Pioneers mention the “hundreds of Indians” that would pass through the valley in the spring and summer – “a sight not to be forgotten to see a parade of a large tribe of these red men pass through a pioneer village.” The passage goes on to claim “they [Natives] caused little trouble when passing through… Nevertheless the white people felt oftentimes [sic] that their lives were in danger because of the threats made by the savages.” Once again, the racist and antiquated language perhaps tells us more than the passage itself. Throughout Beneath Ben Lomond’s Peak, Indigenous peoples are relegated as mere passers-through and the ever-present “Indian threat,” repeatedly referenced as “red men” and “savages,” and never given a proper, dignified history of

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100 Daughters of Utah Pioneers, Ben Lomond, 199.
101 Daughters of Utah Pioneers, Ben Lomond, 263.
102 Daughters of Utah Pioneers, Ben Lomond, 263-264.
their own throughout the source. Indigenous peoples are merely passive actors in the settlement of Weber County; never is there a mention of how settlers monopolized water sources and land in the area which effectively made the territory uninhabitable for the traditional lifestyles of Indigenous nations. In fact, there are zero historical monuments or memorializations maintained by the DUP in Ogden City proper that are from an Indigenous point of view; there is but a single memorial to the Shoshone – in Harrisville several miles north of Ogden – commemorating Chief Terikee, a Shoshone Chief murdered in 1850. This memorial was rededicated in 2021 in a joint effort by the Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation and the Weber County Heritage Foundation. Additionally, the two groups lobbied the Ogden City municipal government to ceremonially change the name of 2nd Street to “Little Soldier Way.” This is the extent of historic memorialization through a Shoshone lens in or around Ogden.103

Outside of Ogden, this pattern continues even in the broader view of historic memorialization throughout the state. Beginning (or perhaps continuing) with the work of the Daughters of Utah Pioneers and their work in erecting and maintaining historical markers throughout the state, I focus here on the markers that explicitly mention Native Americans. Perhaps unsurprisingly, due to the organization’s explicit focus on settlers, references to Utah’s Indigenous peoples are few and far between. Where Indigenous people are mentioned, as in the DUP historical marker at Richmond Fort – “built for protection against Indians”

103 For image: Plaque dedicated to the memorialization of Shoshone Chief Terikee in Harrisville, Utah. Photo taken by the author.
– they are typically characterized as aggressors to the settlers.\textsuperscript{104} Another DUP historical marker, this one at Cove Fort, labels the site as a “refuge from Indians.”\textsuperscript{105} Indeed, most of the DUP markers for historic forts in Utah are described as being built for “protection or defense against Indians”; monuments at Fort Wall, Salt Creek Fort, Fort Deseret, Fillmore Pioneer Fort, Fort Herriman, English Fort, and Fort Omni all bear this description.\textsuperscript{106} The common theme between many of these historical monuments is the stereotypical branding of Western settlers as heroic frontiersmen, bringing with them civilization into a hostile, primitive environment.

In one monument explicitly related to settler-Native events – the Walker War – the Daughters of Utah Pioneers’ interpretation of events states that after a trade skirmish between a Native man and a settler, “one Indian died,” the settler Colonel “supervised defense,” and the “war cost lives of many Natives, 19 settlers, and the massacre of Captain Gunnison’s military exploring party.”\textsuperscript{107} Historical posturing is evident through the use of passive language (“one Indian died” vs. the active “one Indian was killed”) as well as the exclusion of the actual number of Native people killed in the ensuing events juxtaposed by the exact number of settlers killed and the inclusion of the term “massacre” in reference to the actual military presence. Never is there an explicit mention of the violence perpetrated against Indigenous peoples nor of their long residency of these lands so heroically settled by white Euro-Americans.

\textsuperscript{104} Daughters of Utah Pioneers, “Richmond Fort,” marker no. 15, erected October 1936, Richmond, UT. \url{https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=105497}
\textsuperscript{105} Daughters of Utah Pioneers, “Cove Fort,” marker no. 6, erected August 2, 1935, Cove Fort, UT. \url{https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=75519}
\textsuperscript{107} Daughters of Utah Pioneers, “The Walker War,” marker no. 387, erected 1973, Levan, UT. \url{https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=75456}
Another theme among the Daughters of Utah Pioneers historic monuments are dedications to massacres. Surprisingly (or perhaps unsurprisingly), nearly all of these monuments are dedicated to white settlers who were killed in settler-Native conflicts – a single DUP marker is dedicated to massacres of Indigenous peoples: their marker for the Bear River Massacre in southern Idaho, revised in 2021. Aside from Bear River, the Daughters of Utah Pioneers maintain historical markers dedicated to at least 4 massacres of settlers in Utah – each one paling in comparison to the events at Bear River: the Given Family Massacre, the Salt Creek Canyon Massacre, the Gunnison Massacre, and Indian Massacre. In these monuments, the peaceful settlers are always attacked by hostile Natives with no mention of Native casualties or settler retribution, let alone any sort of context for tension that may have led to these events. For example, the inscription for Indian Massacre reads, “Near this spot on Tuesday, October 17, 1865, Black Hawk, a Ute chief, led his warriors out of Cottonwood Canyon foraging for cattle. They stole the entire Ephraim herd. Settlers who were working in the fields were massacred and lie buried in one grave.” There is no context as to why Black Hawk’s band was “foraging” for cattle (or if that is indeed the reality of the band’s movements that day). However, we do know that Indigenous groups were quite literally starving as these pioneers settled near precious water sources, competed for large game animals, and their grazing livestock destroyed precious seed-bearing grasses used by Native groups for centuries. Without this context, Native groups are painted as inherently violent – a stereotype still affecting Indigenous peoples today.108

The Daughters of Utah Pioneers maintained an historical memorial at the Bear River Massacre site, where hundreds of Shoshone men, women, elders, and children were slain by the US military during the Civil War. The original memorial describes the event as a “battle,” instigated by “Attacks by the Indians on the peaceful inhabitants in this vicinity.” Not only was there no mention of the sheer number of Native casualties, the only reference to the wounded were the “Scores of wounded and frozen soldiers [who] were taken from the battlefield to the Latter-day Saint community of Franklin,” while “Two Indian women and three children found alive after the encounter were given homes in Franklin.” Not until 2021 did the Daughters of Utah Pioneers revisit and rededicate their marker to the Massacre under pressure and guidance from Darren Parry and the Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation. The updated memorial focuses on the Shoshone version of events and begins, “In memory of the estimated 400 men, women and children of the Northwestern Shoshone Nation who were brutally massacred in this vicinity.” The original marker in particular is a great example of how the DUP historically honored a whitewashed history of the West, where Indigenous peoples are aggressors and settlers the victims of colonial violence. However, the rededicated memorial shows how organizations such as the Daughters of Utah Pioneers can move forward in a meaningful way, addressing the atrocities of their forefathers and reconciling with the descendents of the victims upon whom this violence was perpetrated generations ago. Whether the Daughters of Utah Pioneers will continue to revisit and rededicate other misrepresentations of Indigenous peoples, only time will tell.

110 Ibid.
As far as historic markers, monuments, and memorials go, the Bear River Massacre site is unique in the fact that there are multiple markers preserving the history of the site and the event. Even more unique is the fact that the primary marker – overlooking the site of the Shoshone winter camp of 1863 – is owned by the Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation. Their site includes eight separate interpretative plaques which give much more realistic and nuanced accounting of the horrific event, including a brief history of the Shoshone peoples, a detailed map of the site, the oral histories that have been passed down by survivors, and even future hopes and plans for the site. Here we get an idea of what a decolonized historical monument, narrated by Indigenous peoples themselves, can and should be. An excerpt from one of the plaques below relays the Shoshone history of the event:

[U]pon fording the river and seeing the mass of Shoshone, the cavalry opened fire and advanced on the camp. At first they were driven back and several soldiers were killed. Eventually, regrouping and reinforced by the infantry, the soldiers attacked the encampment and what began as a battle quickly became a massacre. The creek bottom where the Shoshone turned for protection, became instead a trap. Many who were not killed outright drowned while trying to escape in the river. The soldiers, better equipped with guns and ammunition, slaughtered the Indians in hand-to-hand combat. According to the Shoshone, Col. Connor never had any intention of negotiating with their people and arrived with the specific intention of attacking the Indians, leaving them no alternative but death and annihilation.112

Again, this is from but one of the eight interpretive markers at the site, all of which document this event through an Indigenous lens; a much more meaningful memorial to those lost that day and a great example of how historical monuments in the West – and surely across North America – should be revisited and reworked.

Like other heritage organizations in the US West – and across the nation – the Daughters of Utah Pioneers have played an outsized role in the way contemporary populations learn about

112 Historical Marker Database, “Attack at Bia Ogoi,” marker no. 5, Preston, ID. 
https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=165797
and interpret that history through these public history installments, and have only recently begun to rectify and modernize the monuments and memorials they maintain. The DUP’s rededicated memorial at Bear River is a small, though meaningful, step in rectifying past wrongs, and serves as a prime example of how white settler historic organizations can and should move forward. It is also apparent that we as a society have a long way to go in decolonizing public history, as the updated memorial at Bear River shows. As important sources for the every-day historian, public historic markers, monuments, and memorials should be tools through which we can view and learn the real histories of settler colonialism – violence and all – with the leadership and guidance of our Indigenous brothers and sisters.

Chapter 3:

RESURGENCE

Shoshone history in the Intermountain West – and more specifically in the place we now call Ogden City – deserves more than relegation to the region’s “pre-history” section in a textbook. Shoshone history extends back far before the trappers entered the scene in the 1820s (since time immemorial, as the saying goes), and does not end with the Bear River Massacre in 1863. This resilient Native culture and history continues through the rest of the nineteenth century, extends all the way through the twentieth, and is perhaps stronger than ever as we enter the second decade of the twenty-first. Darren Parry, direct descendant of the survivors of the Bear River Massacre, represents the resilience – and resurgence – of Shoshone culture in the Intermountain West. Growing up immersed in Shoshone culture thanks to his grandmother and history keeper and storyteller, Mae Timbimboo Parry, Darren took those teachings and the real world experiences he gained after and has dedicated his life to highlighting his Shoshone culture. In doing so, he also illuminates the ways in which the traditional and accepted history of the
region silences and erases the histories of his own people. This chapter relies on an oral interview I conducted with Darren, and his responses highlight the continuity of Shoshone history through the centuries. Additionally, this chapter shows how the work confronting the hegemony of pioneer heritage today sets the stage for not only a resurgence of Shoshone presence in their traditional homelands, but also makes space for a more honest, inclusive, and reconciliatory relationship between the past and present – Native and settler.

It is important to note that Darren Parry is not a lone voice nor the only Indigenous person working to highlight the reality of the immense violence of settlement in the Intermountain West, nor is he the only member of the Northwestern Band of Shoshone Nation doing so. However, Darren is a massive public figure in local politics, whose words and actions carry immense weight in these spaces. Our interview here highlights many of his contemporary concerns and his tireless efforts in confronting a hostile and often violent historical narrative.

Setting the Scene

On January 5th, 2023, a typically grey and chilly Utah day, I arrive at the Brigham City Public Library equal parts early and anxious. I am here to sit down with and interview Darren Parry, Shoshone elder and former chairman of the Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation, on the lands his very ancestors called home for thousands of years. I am twenty minutes early, and after signing the meeting room reservation agreement, the librarian tells me someone will unlock the room five minutes before my scheduled reservation. I take a seat near the front desk, pull out my laptop, and reread my interview notes for what feels like the thousandth time. At this point, I am not so much reading the notes, but instead attempting to keep my mind focused on anything other than the painfully slow passage of time. Finally, I hear the librarian ask an assistant to unlock Meeting Room 3. Taking this as my queue, I close my laptop, grab my
backpack, and follow the librarian’s assistant to a small room that contains two tables and three chairs. My setup is simple – perhaps laughably so; I open my laptop, still showing my interview notes, and unlock my phone to open up a free voice recorder app I downloaded for the first oral interview I conducted for my undergraduate studies some five years earlier. However, I have just enough time to get things in order when I hear in Darren’s warm, comfortable tone, “Hey Chase, how ya doing?” as he walks into the room.

Young Shoshone

Born March 2, 1960 in Davis County, Utah, Darren’s parents both worked, and so they dropped him off at his grandmother’s house daily. His grandmother, Mae Timbimboo Parry, is a matriarch and leader in her own right. During her life, Mae not only kept her Shoshone people’s cultural practices alive, but almost single-handedly brought the story of the Bear River Massacre to the masses, where she lobbied historical organizations to remember the event not as the “Battle at Bear River,” but as the massacre it was, where more than four hundred of her people’s ancestors lost their lives. She also kept the Northwestern Band’s history, which she passed on to Darren throughout his childhood. Her histories, kept in the oral tradition, have been preserved in works such as *A History of Utah’s American Indians*, and serves as the go-to history of the Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation to this day. Mae Parry’s ability to keep her people’s history alive is itself an act of defying the colonial order and the violence which attempted to – and nearly did – silence those histories completely.

Reminiscing on his childhood and the time he spent with his grandmother Mae, Darren says, “You know, then, it’s just ‘grandmother’s house.’ But looking back on it today, it’s like, what a blessing that was, because of the things I learned, and the things I went through, and the things I was taught. And I was taught the way she was taught, and the way her grandfather was
taught – through storytelling and other ways.” In his time with Mae, Darren learned traditional Shoshone oral histories through his grandmother’s storytelling, in addition to other cultural practices such as harvesting and roasting pine nuts, brain-tanning hides, and beading. “She brought that culture to life in a way that you never get from TV or books or anything else,” Darren says of his grandmother.

Darren says he had a pretty typical childhood in Davis County, though he was always aware and proud of his Shoshone heritage. Darren tells me, “Look, my Shoshone culture was important to me. We would go hunting, me and my [white] buddies, up to the old Indian town site of Washakie in the summer, hunting rabbits. We’d buy these cigars – those Swisher Sweets cigars – we just thought we were cool… We’d go smoke cigars and hunt rabbits! But they knew my culture, they knew it was important to me… they called me Washakie – it was kinda my nickname in high school, after Chief Washakie, and so my friends absolutely knew what culture I was because I was proud of it.” Aside from rabbit hunting and smoking cheap cigars with his friends, Darren knew he wanted to be an educator. He graduated from Clearfield High School, served a mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in England, and attended the University of Utah and Weber State University, where he graduated with a degree in education. “So, you know, I kinda wanted to continue that ‘Western’ way of educating people. But all the while knowing, in the back of my mind, I had been taught a different way.” This “different way,” as Darren puts it, is what guides the Shoshone elder in his endeavors today, whether he is speaking to elementary students, teaching university courses, or lobbying at the Utah State Capitol. This “different way,” is how Darren continues the legacy of keeping his people’s history and connections to their homelands alive.

Sixth-Generation Shoshone Latter-day Saint
Darren is the direct descendent of Sagwitch, one of the Northwestern Band’s Chiefs and massacre survivors, and one of the leaders who guided the members of the Northwest Band into mass conversion to Mormonism in 1873. Sagwitch likely recognized the tides had been permanently shifted by the violence of settlement in Shoshone homelands, where a traditional lifestyle based on the seasonal round and the offerings of Mother Nature could no longer support his people. At the end of the day, conversion to Mormonism offered an avenue of survival for them. Following their conversion to the Church, the Shoshone Latter-day Saints gradually relinquished their traditional hunter-gatherer lifestyle and began embracing sedentary agriculturalism. After a couple of misfires, in 1880 the Church granted the Northwest Band a sort of pseudo-reservation at the Utah-Idaho border, which would be named Washakie after the legendary Shoshone chief of the same name. Here, Sagwitch’s grandson, Moroni Timbimboo, became the first Native American Latter-day Saint bishop. Thus, Darren continues a long line of Shoshone Latter-day Saints, and identifies himself as a “sixth-generation Shoshone Latter-day Saint.” With such deep roots and long history with and in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Darren balances that identity with his Shoshone heritage with grace and honor.113

Far from the stereotypical “Native living in two worlds” metaphor, Darren sits squarely in this world – present in its messy, often ironic, seemingly irreconcilable histories and realities. However, this is not to say Darren is not asking hard questions of his Church – a Church in which he believes his Shoshone people and Indigenous relatives across Turtle Island play an elevated and vital role. “Look, the Book of Mormon is it. If the Book of Mormon’s not a true book and it didn’t come about the way they said it came about, then the Church is a farce,”

Darren says. “But, if the Book of Mormon is true – and all Mormons believe that the Book of Mormon is true – it holds my people in a higher esteem than any other people. It was written to our people, to be brought forth in the Last Days for our people. I think the Saints should be held at a higher standard because of that knowledge – and especially the leadership.” Taking the role of the Lamanites in the Latter-day Saint theology seriously, Darren often feels frustrated with Church leadership and the seemingly dwindling role of Native Americans in the Church.\textsuperscript{114}

For those readers not familiar with Latter-day Saint theology and perhaps confused by Darren’s insistence of the elevated role of Native Americans in that theology, Latter-day Saint scriptures claim that Christ visited the Americas following the Resurrection, appearing before the Nephites (a group of ancient Americans the Church claims descend from Israel). Another group of ancient Americans, the Lamanites, warred with and destroyed the Nephites after the groups fell into apostasy. According to scripture, the Lamanites “were [once] white, and exceedingly fair and delightsome, that they might not be enticing unto my people the Lord God did cause a skin of blackness to come upon them.”\textsuperscript{115} This descriptor, certainly racist by today’s standards, led early Saints to believe the scripture was referring to Native Americans. The scripture then foresees a restoration of the Lamanites due to the gospel of Jesus Christ through the Book of Mormon, and in the Doctrine and Covenants, a crucial piece of Latter-day Saint scripture, the Lamanites are prophesied to “blossom as the rose,” and lead the Americas in the Second Coming of Christ.\textsuperscript{116} It is this role of restoration in the Second Coming that concerns Darren.

He recalls a time when Church leadership called him to the Church offices to talk about the state of Native Americans today – or so he thought. After preparing nearly five pages about

\textsuperscript{114} Parry interview.
\textsuperscript{115} 2 Nephi 5:21 (The Book of Mormon).
\textsuperscript{116} Book of Doctrine and Covenants of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 49:24 (Cincinnati: Printed by the Publishing Committee of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints), 1864.
the state of Native American affairs today – including the good, the bad, and the ugly – Darren was prepared to give an honest, thorough accounting of his people to Church leadership. It turns out the Church leader Darren met with “didn’t wanna know anything.” In Darren’s words: “He didn’t want me to even talk.” Instead of taking the time to listen to Darren make the case for his people today, the Latter-day Saint Elder told him about the LDS Church’s work with the Cherokee Nation in Oklahoma, where the Church was investing seven million dollars into a museum – part of which would be a Family Research Center. “Well, now I know why you’re giving them seven million,” Darren remembers thinking. After realizing the meeting was coming to an end without any real engagement about Native American affairs in Utah, Darren was past the point of frustration. “This is not what I thought it was going to be. I prepared something… what I think is the Church’s responsibility from here going forward, with our people, and I’m gonna leave it with you. If you wanna throw it in the garbage can when I walk out the door, so be it. But I hope you read it,” Darren told him. “I walked out of there so ticked-off.” With a genuine concern for both his Shoshone people and for the LDS Church, Darren does not take lightly the Church feigning concern for the state of Native peoples, who, if scripture is to be believed, should have at the very least proportionate representation in the Church’s leadership positions.117

In that meeting, the Latter-day Saint Elder Darren spoke to perpetuated a non-physical form of colonial violence that most might fail to recognize as such. By not even giving Darren a chance to speak about the things he feels the Church owes Native peoples, that Elder continued a history of silencing Native voices, burying their concerns beneath the “good acts” of the Church in a state hundreds of miles away.

117 Parry interview.
There exists a striking difference in the collective memories of Shoshone Latter-day Saints and the general Latter-day Saint population (Church leadership included). As a sixth-generation Shoshone Latter-day Saint, Darren remembers the promises the early leaders of the LDS Church made to his ancestors in the initial days of white settlement in their territory. He also remembers the role that Native Americans are prophesied to play in the Latter-day Saint canon – a role that Church leadership seem to have forgotten long ago. As of this time, the year 2023, there are zero Native Americans with leadership roles in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the last being Larry Echo Hawk (Pawnee) who was released from Church service in 2018. Certainly a sore spot for Darren, he asks his Church, “For a church that has held these people in such high esteem, and if they are truly the Lamanites, who are going to play a huge role in the Second Coming – according to your doctrine – where’s the Native American leadership in all this?” Darren makes clear that he is not defaming or bashing the Church, just attempting to hold the institution and its leaders responsible for their responsibilities to his people. Ultimately, Darren seeks reconciliation on these matters, regardless of how much the Church itself wants to avoid the issue. Does the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints still believe Native Americans are the storied Lamanites despite modern-day DNA studies? If not, were Church leaders wrong to baptize hundreds – if not thousands – of Shoshone under that pretense? Darren believes prophecy is prophecy – whether Church leadership addresses it or not. “What’s our role going forward? Because according to your book, it’s a huge role going forward. And they’re going to do it with you or without you.”

On Pioneer Heritage

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118 Parry interview.
In addition to what he sees as a shrinking role of Native Americans in Latter-day Saint practices, Darren also takes issue with the ways in which the history of the pioneers and their journeys across the Plains to settle the “Wild West” in the early-to-mid 1800s has been cemented as the primary history of the state we now call Utah. Despite having histories stretching back millennia, school children throughout the state are taught that the Native American history of their home is but a distant, nearly-forgotten, and certainly ancient history. What matters, according to the curriculum, is when the pioneers begin arriving in large numbers, bringing with them progress and civilization – the start of modernity in these lands – and a perpetuation of violent historical erasure for Native people. Despite the field of history broadening its scopes, employing new, evermore inclusive lenses, and witnessing the emergence of Indigenous historians, the supremacy of pioneer heritage in Utah holds fast. When I bring up the subject of the pioneers and the stranglehold pioneer history has on historical knowledge and education, Darren chuckles and tells me that he has started calling Pioneer Day (a Utah state holiday celebrated on the 24th of July every year) “Manifest Destiny Day.” Expressing his feelings about the widely-celebrated state holiday, which takes inspiration from Independence Day celebrations earlier in the month, complete with fireworks and barbeques, Darren says, “It’s a day of mourning for us, it’s not something to be celebrated. How can you celebrate the demise of my culture?”

The Shoshone elder then responds with a story, as he does with most of my questions. Darren recalls a time when he was attending church more regularly, telling me that the Sunday services before Pioneer Day “was always three or four people talking about all their ancestors walking across the Plains with no shoes.” Understanding that these pioneers persevered through

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119 Parry interview.
true hardship, and by no means belittling their experiences, Darren also points out that the arrival of Americans came at a large cost to the Indigenous Shoshone – and he wants that story to be part of the larger narrative. He asked his bishop one year, “Why don’t you give me the next Sunday as a rebuttal to what happened?” Once again careful not to hammer the Saints (and their descendents) too hard with guilt for settling here, Darren asks his fellow Mormons to understand that while they celebrate the arrival of their ancestors, that very same event resulted in the diminishment of resources for the Native people who were already here. He implored, “Put yourselves in their shoes, and at least acknowledge it. Acknowledge that it wasn’t all, ‘Congratulations, everything’s happy now!’” As historians, we are told to avoid projecting our modern-day ethics and values onto the people of the past, which could taint the research with our biases, holding historical figures and events to “unfair standards” that would not have necessarily existed at the time. As if anticipating such accusations, Darren then says, “You may say, ‘Well back then it was the Wild Wild West,’ but there were still people back then that understood that people should have rights – all people should have rights. And they were advocating for that, even back then.” Despite the era of settlement and Indian Wars, and the stranglehold of Manifest Destiny pushing civilization all the way to the West Coast, there were settlers who fought for the fair treatment of Natives, and who “became almost fanatical in their devotion to exposing the wrongs committed against Indian peoples.”120 As Darren argues repeatedly, the onslaught of pioneer migration and the violence of settlement – both physical and not – came at a huge cost for his people, and the argument that “it’s just the way things were,” does not justify either the active or passive violence experienced by Shoshone people in the nineteenth century. It also silences both Indigenous voices who spoke out against the violence of settler colonialism, and

the voices of settler allies – as few as there may have been – who spoke forcefully against their mistreatment (for example, the store owner who tried warning the Shoshone before the Bear River Massacre). Acknowledgement by the descendents of those settlers is but the first step towards true healing for Darren.121

On Academia and Indigenous Wisdom

As a researcher studying the intersections of settler and Indigenous histories, it is clear for me the ways in which the academy – and the broader educational systems in the US – have not only disadvantaged Indigenous communities, but often contribute to the intergenerational violence of appropriation, silencing, and erasure of Indigenous histories and ways of knowing. I attained this knowledge through the academy, and through the literature produced by other scholars; however, I wanted to know how an Indigenous person in the community views academia and the state of education in Utah. I wanted to know, what do non-Native, or settler-descended scholars – and academia writ-large – need to do better in regards to engaging Indigenous histories and engaging Indigenous storytellers? “So, a couple of thoughts on that…” Once again, Darren offers stories as a way of answering my questions. He recalls attending the annual Western History Association conference about a month before his book, The Bear River Massacre: A Shoshone History was set to release. After presenting the history of the Bear River Massacre at the conference, and plugging the release of his upcoming book, Darren remembers being approached by another historian who said to him, “Well, I hope you used primary sources.” He tells me, “I just wanted to slap her. I mean, it was like, I was so offended. Then I just smiled and said, ‘Yeah I did – Mae Timbimboo Parry was my primary source.’”122

121 Parry interview.
122 Parry interview.
This experience illustrates one of the biggest issues among Indigenous academics and storytellers alike in regards to academia (and especially fields such as history and anthropology): questioning the veracity of oral histories as primary sources. Though oral histories are slowly becoming “accepted” as primary sources, Indigenous historians (and any academics who use oral histories and interviews in their research) still face an old guard who are more than wary of using oral histories in this way. Unfortunately, since the foundations of the academy are rooted in imperial (and therefore often racist) traditions of information gathering and presentation, the historical method itself inherently privileges settler sources over Indigenous ones, written sources over oral ones – despite the continuous efforts of Indigenous and ally scholars at colleges and universities across the country. Once again, this reluctance to change the way the academy views oral histories as primary sources illuminates ongoing violence towards Indigenous histories.  

The acceptance of oral histories and other Indigenous ways of knowing are not the only concerns Darren has with academia; he wants to see far greater Indigenous representation in both the student bodies and academic departments in colleges and universities. He also has some ideas on how colleges and universities can achieve this. Darren recently met with the new dean of humanities at the University of Utah, Hollis Robbins, who wanted to sit down with local Indigenous leaders and talk about the issues facing Native Americans in academia today. She asked Darren why there seemed to be a lack of Shoshone students at the University of Utah, to which he replied, “Well, Utah State [University] waives tuition and room and board for any of our tribal members, that’s where most of them are at.” And how can the University of Utah enlist and retain more Native American students? With that same commitment – waive tuition and

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123 Parry interview.
boarding expenses for any and all Native American students belonging to any of the eight federally-recognized Utah tribes. Unlike his meeting with the LDS Church leader who feigned interest in understanding where Native people are today, the University of Utah seemingly embraced Darren’s suggestion: as of Spring Semester 2023, Indigenous Utahns are eligible for waived tuition at the university.¹²⁴

Despite the good-will and big win for public relations for the University of Utah, the (hopefully) increased number of Indigenous students highlights the need for real solutions in another area: student retention. Attracting Indigenous students is one matter, but retaining them through graduation is another. Darren understands this, and tells me about a conversation he had with Greg Smoak, who works for the University of Utah and directs the American West Center. Darren asked Greg about Native attendance at the U of U, and learned that out of about one hundred Native students who might sign up any given fall, only two to four make it to graduation. “We need to retain those kids. We need mentorships – there’s things that we need to do to maintain that those kids stay in school. Because if you’re on a reservation and you go to the University of Utah, you’re living in dorms and that workload at the U is not high school in the Four Corners area.” The jump from rural to university living is discombobulating in most aspects, from the general pace of life to the expectations of professors and coursework. In this case Darren offers little regarding concrete actions that might boost retention – other than representation at the teaching level.¹²⁵

¹²⁴ Parry interview. [For the enrollment policies regarding Native American students at Utah State University, see: https://statewide.usu.edu/news/2023/statewide/2023-05-15-native-american-scholarships#:~:text=May%2015%2C%202023,Tuition%2DFree%20Scholarships%20Available%20to%20All%20Utah%20Native%20American%20Students,Native%20American%20students%20who%20qualify; for enrollment policies at the University of Utah, see: https://admissions.utah.edu/information-resources/residency/american-indian-student/.

¹²⁵ Parry interview.
Teaching courses at the university level requires years of advanced schooling, and more often than not, requires having a PhD. When asked by Hollis Robbins about how to get more Native representation in teaching roles, Darren answered, “Well, if you get more Native Americans in the system – going to school and are graduating and encouraged to go to higher ed – you’re gonna get more professors. That’s the only way – using your criteria.” That last phrase is key, “using your criteria.” To help illustrate this point, Darren offers his experiences with Utah State University, where he teaches a Native American History course as adjunct faculty, but only when the usual professor – an older white woman – is unable to teach it. “Who would you rather have the class from? Me or her?” he asks Hollis. “Well, you,” she says, “because it’s a different perspective and a different way of looking at it.” Darren then ups the ante. “Now you have an opening for a professor to teach Native American history, you open it up and you have this criteria you hire from – if I apply for that job, do I have a chance in hell?” Hollis responds, “Absolutely not. We’re looking for PhD, tenured-ability people.” 126

Darren addresses this multiple times throughout our interview, and hopes to see colleges and universities in Utah change their faculty hiring parameters – at least in the short term – that would allow Indigenous history keepers, storytellers, and others with expertise to work in universities not only sharing important knowledge, but also serving as mentors and role models for Indigenous students. “I think that will make a huge difference. And if I, teaching my Native American history class – a young Native American girl can come up and I’ll say, ‘We need you. We need you doing what I’m doing today.’ [It’s a] completely different animal. And now we start to retain and even get them into grad school and get them to the point where they can be leaders. That’s where I hope it goes. Academia is really slow to change. Like, really slow. But, I

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126 Parry interview.
mean, you can always hope, and I’m holding out hope that they do the right thing and start letting subject experts in certain fields teach.” Will the academy, with its penchant for tradition and degree-based professionalism, change course to allow Indigenous leaders and subject experts to teach future generations? Only time will tell.\(^{127}\)

**On the Youth & Education**

Like many Indigenous elders across Turtle Island, Darren sees himself as both a storyteller and educator, and he believes wholeheartedly in providing the youth with critical historical perspectives. I wanted to know what inspired him to become such an avid educator and representative of his Shoshone culture. Growing up, Darren was immersed in his Shoshone culture thanks to spending a good portion of his childhood with his grandmother, Mae Timbimboo Parry, who taught him how to brain-tan hides and harvest pinyon pine nuts in the City of Rocks area. He remembers Mae telling him, “Darren, no one has ever wanted to hear our story before. One day, you will have to make them listen.” In high school, Darren had an epiphany of sorts, a calling to educate the population about Shoshone history and the realities of pioneer settlement in the region. After being disappointed in a high school history class about Native Americans, Darren thought, “Holy cow. Where do they get this stuff? Where do they get this stuff that they’re teaching us? Because it was nothing like the culture and the stories that I had been taught.” It all clicked a year or two later, when Darren came across the famous quote attributed to Winston Churchill: “History is written by victors.” “Makes perfect sense why Native American histories are not in our history books, from the perspective of the Native Americans. We didn’t win! We were never ‘victorious’ in anything, so we were never able to

\(^{127}\) Parry interview.
write our history – memorialize our history in a way that the Western world today views and honors and learns about the past. That’s been my life mission since then, is sharing a perspective of a people whose story has never been told.” Darren had a calling to confront the harmful legacies of historical erasure through telling the hard histories of his people the textbooks conveniently left out.128

Darren is particularly fond of educating the youth, and tells me that he spoke to seventy or more elementary schools just last year (2022), mostly fourth-graders since that is the age where the history curriculum first focuses on Utah history. “I’ll tell ya, Chase, I’ve not had to make anybody listen. People want to know. And, especially the younger generations, I think they honor truth-telling. And that’s been really, really good to see.” In true Darren Parry fashion, he has a story to tell me, one that illuminates why he places so much faith in the younger generations, and their capability for healing and reconciling historic injustices:

We were at the Daughters of Utah Pioneers monument this fall. And I’m standing there with seventy fourth-graders. And the monument’s there, but right next to the monument is this big tree, and people hang things in the tree, tokens or gifts to honor those who died that day. It might be a ribbon tied, it might be a dreamcatcher… And you know… we talk about the monument and historical perspective. We go over and look at the tree, and I tell them not to touch it because it’s sacred and people leave things there for sacred reasons. And we’re standing there and looking – it’s quiet – and there’s a boy standing there, and he said, “Hey, there’s a mirror hanging in the tree.” And we looked over and saw this mirror hanging off a branch, and he said, “Why do you think someone hung a mirror in the tree?” I’m like, frantically trying to come up with something clever to tell this kid, ‘cause I have no clue. And then this little girl, little fourth-grader, two-foot tall next to him said, “I know why.” And I said, “Why do you think?” And it’s dead silent, and she said, “It’s here to remind us that we did this. And we could do it again if we don’t learn.” From a fourth-grader! And I look over at the teacher – my hair’s standing up on-end, and I have chills – and I’m like looking at her teacher like, “What was that?!” I went away that

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day thinking I was taught the most powerful lesson from a fourth-grader who completely understood time and place and where we're at, and all of it. And I thought, “We’re in good shape going forward, because I think these kids wanna learn, they wanna know.”

This story illuminates much about the ways in which we collectively produce and reproduce knowledge and memory. When we visit these sites where historical traumas took place, whether they have been memorialized through “official” channels such as the National Register of Historic Places, or through the repeated pilgrimages of the impacted, interested, and/or repentant, we continually bring these memories and histories into the present. Much like the mirror hanging in the Russian Olive at the Bear River Massacre memorial, these memory sites offer visitors a chance for deep reflection. If we listen to the ghosts of the past, much like that little fourth grade student, we can learn more than just the historical facts of the place; we learn that the living threads of history are woven into the present and if we listen hard enough, we might learn where those threads touch our own lives. “We did this. And we could do it again if we don’t learn.” Sitting in the revelatory discomfort of these truths creates the space necessary for us to confront the ongoing violence of historical erasure and silence that still affects Indigenous communities today.

While Darren spends ample time teaching (and learning from!) the youth, he also has his sights set on something much bigger – something that will have an impact on historical curricula around the state. Last year (2022), Darren filed the paperwork with the IRS to start a nonprofit organization called Bichu-Nanewe (pronounced Bee-choo Nuh-new-uh), which translates to The Return of Our People in the Shoshone language. Teaming up with Utah State University professor Breanne Litts, the duo wrote a grant proposal to the National Science Foundation, through which they were ultimately funded three million dollars over three years. Darren says,
“The first thing we wanted to do was develop Native American curriculum – from Native Americans’ perspective, and working with the state [of Utah] to develop this so it lines up with their goals and everything else.”\(^{129}\)

Darren and Breanne spent the first year of the project surveying fourth, seventh, and eleventh grade teachers around the state (the years which focus on Utah history), asking questions like, “What do you teach today? Where do you find the material? What would you like to see in a curriculum? How can we best help you teach this subject matter better?” To Darren’s surprise, the number-one source of Utah teachers for Native American history is not the standardized textbooks; rather, teachers tend to get most of their Native American history through Google. “And so our follow-up question was, ‘Do you not have a history book?’ And they go, ‘Absolutely we have a history book, but you cannot teach out of it. Even today’s history books aren’t doing an adequate job of sharing everybody’s perspective.’” A stunning indictment of the state of Native American history in Utah’s public school curriculum, the fact that teachers prefer Google and Wikipedia as sources shows just how poorly the curriculum covers Utah’s Native American history, and illuminates the need for initiatives like Bichu-Nanewe. “They’re using Google to find out about the Shoshone people, and at least, you know, Wikipedia does a better job than – I hate to say it – than a lot of the history textbooks do. But that’s where they’re getting their information, and so, you’re going, ‘Holy cow!’”\(^{130}\)

Having completed the first year of the initiative surveying the state’s teachers – and getting quite interesting results – Darren and Breanne are now moving into year two, which focuses on developing a new curriculum with Utah’s Indigenous tribes. In Darren’s words, “We’re saying to the tribes, ‘Here’s what the teachers would like to see, how can we work with

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\(^{129}\) Parry interview.

\(^{130}\) Parry interview.
you? What do you want us to teach of your history? And how can we put that together?’ And then
making sure it’s culturally-appropriate with the tribes – no matter what, the tribes have to buy
into all of it.” By engaging the tribes directly, asking *them* how they would like to see their
histories taught, and respecting each tribe’s sovereignty and confidentiality, the *Bichu-Nanewe*
initiative could be a paradigm shift in the way state curriculums approach Native American
histories. If everything goes according to plan, year three of the project will see the production
and distribution of materials into the classrooms. According to Darren, this will be different from
traditional Western history education. “This is the way the tribes teach – it’s not necessarily the
way Western education system teaches you to teach – it’s completely different. It’s storytelling,
and hands-on.”

I am immediately aware of the potential implications this initiative could have far beyond
Utah’s socially-constructed borders. “What a great sort of outline you’re laying for other states
who might be interested in the same thing – other tribes who want to do that in *their* home
states,” I say to Darren. He knows this, of course, and wants *Bichu-Nanewe* to serve as a
blueprint for others. “Let’s take this, you know, to Idaho and Wyoming. ‘Cause it can be done
now, and this is the way we should be doing it. Working with the local tribes to teach their
history. What do they want taught? Nobody’s ever asked them. You’d be surprised at what they
really value – what their value system is, because it’s not colonialism.” Darren is hopeful this
initiative will bring about change in the education system, and in the ways the youth are taught
the state’s history – where Native American histories are no longer relegated to the “pre-history”
module of class. Additionally, Darren wants students engaging with this new curriculum to
perhaps question the status-quo society has taught for so long; to show students that there is a

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whole different way of doing things and different perspectives and forms of knowledge that should, at the very least, be taught on-par with the Western values most of us are so comfortable with. Whether it is engaging students at the Bear River Massacre site or flipping the state’s historical curriculum on its head, Darren Parry is committed to bringing about a better world for both Indigenous and settler-descended youth, where real – often tough – histories inform their worldviews.132

**Coming Back to Ogden**

The Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation gained federal recognition in 1985. In order to serve their tribal population, the Band established two tribal offices – one in Pocatello, Idaho, and the other originally in Brigham City, Utah. In 2022, the Northwest Band sold the property in Brigham City, where they had outgrown the space. This brought the Band back to Ogden, where a 13,000 ft² space could better meet their needs, where in addition to the need for more space, the Band can also better serve their tribal population here, as the majority of enrolled Northwestern Band tribal members live in Weber and Davis counties. The Band also has big plans for their new Ogden Headquarters – approximately three times the size of their former Brigham City office – where there are plans to develop a large Tribal library and museum on site, bringing Shoshone history to the heart of Ogden and through an Indigenous, decolonial lens.

Moving their tribal headquarters to Ogden is but the latest piece of the Shoshone reclaiming space in their traditional homelands. As mentioned previously, Darren Parry and the band recently successfully lobbied the Ogden City Council to rename 2nd Street – albeit ceremonially – to Little Soldier Lane, which “was quite the process,” according to Darren. After hosting an event in collaboration with the Weber County Heritage Foundation named “Meet the

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132 Parry interview.
Shoshones” at the historic Bingham Fort/Stone Family Farm, where upwards of 500 community members showed up to learn about Shoshone history and culture (on land that has been confirmed to be an historic Shoshone campsite), Darren and the Northwestern Band received an award from the Ogden City Council “for sharing Shoshone culture in the Ogden area.” In our interview, I asked Darren whether Ogden City had ever asked the Northwestern Band to participate in its annual Pioneer Days parade or festivities. The last time the NWB participated was apparently in 1856, where Little Soldier marched in the parade carrying a sign that read, “The Thousands of Manasseh,” a reference to the storied Lamanites in the Book of Mormon. “Do you hope for more collaboration with Ogden City going forward?” I asked. “I do, I do. And I do just because it just fosters a better relationship. And it allows those people to learn more about a culture that they really don’t know that much about… The more we know about each other, the better we’re gonna treat each other, hopefully.”

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Conclusion

The state of Indigenous history in the Intermountain West looks much the same as it does around the United States. The precedents of our colonial forebears maintain a strong grip on both the academy and the general public’s understanding of both Native American and United States histories. However, as I hope this thesis shows, there exists a growing movement led by Indigenous scholars, academics, storytellers, and activists working hard to shift the historical paradigm in favor of truth-telling, imporing non-Native and settler-descended academics and citizens to face the reality of hard histories, creating a better world for future generations. This fight confronts five centuries of European imperialist history across Turtle Island, and two centuries of the same here in the Intermountain West – a daunting mission to be sure – yet it is long overdue. We see the evidence of this struggle almost daily: we see fierce backlash to any attempts at reconciliation with this nation’s foundational crimes of African slavery and Indigenous dispossession and genocide; Critical Race Theory is conflated with any discussion about racialized histories, and books and courses about the same are banned; intense demonstrations and arguments at home and in the academy accompany Confederate monument removals; and here in the West, we live in the continuous struggle between the pride of pioneer heritage and addressing the violent dispossession which took place in order for that heritage to flourish. Intense struggle always accompanies progress.
As this thesis demonstrates, the struggle to reconcile tough histories here in the Intermountain West falls on multiple fronts. In Ogden City, the traditional winter campgrounds for numerous Shoshone bands, official city histories rely on the silencing and erasure of the historical Native presence, propping up age-old pioneer histories in order to elevate the city’s preferred pioneer heritage. This commitment to the legacies of westward expansion and Manifest Destiny continues a long history of vilifying and erasing Indigenous peoples in the West, and has no place in a truly inclusive and honest present. In order to move beyond the stagnant fantasy of pioneer heritage as the only history of Ogden, a thorough reexamination and reinterpretation of the sources is necessary. In addition to reexamining and reinterpreting the traditionally accepted narratives, scholars of Ogden history—or of settler colonialism in the Intermountain West—must search for previously undiscovered or overlooked primary sources from the settlement era, which could serve to illuminate new narratives and pave the way for a truly decolonial history of the region. My sincere hope is that this thesis marks the beginning of such an endeavor.

Ogden City, Weber County, and the entire Intermountain West would also benefit from renewed attention to the public history installations throughout the region. Public history seems to be an underrepresented and undervalued form of historical education here. As this thesis demonstrates, the existing public history infrastructure as it pertains to pioneer settlement relies on the monuments established by the Daughters of Utah Pioneers in the mid-twentieth century, rife with historical biases and inaccuracies. Only recently has the Daughters of Utah Pioneers organization begun reckoning with this legacy, and only at the behest of local Indigenous leaders who strive for thorough truth-telling in the twenty-first century. We in the academy may write and rewrite these histories until the cows come home, but unless we are engaging the general citizenry through accessible, palatable public history projects, the culture surrounding these
outdated narratives will likely continue stagnating. Organizations such as the Weber County Heritage Foundation provide valuable public history, though like many such organizations, are chronically underfunded. To confront this, organizations like the Ogden City municipal government might consider hiring an in-house public historian, or committing funding to local history organizations so that they may hire professional historians. In any event, local governments should commit to collaborative work with their local Indigenous populations in order to create an historical narrative which elevates Indigenous histories to the same level as it does pioneer heritage – a narrative that serves the entire community and brings the municipality into the twenty-first century in inclusive and responsible ways.

Finally, the ways in which the State of Utah educates its youth about the history of the state deserves serious attention and revision. Relegation of its first peoples – of which there are at least nine unique Indigenous communities in the state today – to the state’s “pre-history” section of the curriculum only serves to continue the historical erasure of contemporary Native peoples. Darren Parry’s *Bichu-Nanew* initiative seeks to remedy this situation, but has a long way to go before incorporation into the state’s historical curriculum. Teaching the history of regional events such as the Bear River Massacre should be mandatory in the classroom when teaching about the settlement era, which would serve to illuminate for students the costs of pioneer settlement for Native people. Additionally, historical curriculums need to incorporate contemporary Native peoples into the story. It will no longer suffice to keep Native people in the past when they have thriving and vibrant cultures and communities today. Indigenous youth deserve representation throughout their education, and even non-Native youth would benefit from this inclusion in their education, which would serve to eliminate the common stereotype of “extinct” Native Americans in the public psyche.
Furthermore, the higher education system in the state in regards to enrollment of Indigenous students and hiring of Indigenous staff and faculty needs reform. Both the University of Utah and Southern Utah University have recently announced full tuition waivers for members of Utah’s eight federally-recognized tribal nations, and as of May 2023, Utah State University updated their policies to offer the same. Our universities state-wide ought to adopt the same policies as the University of Utah, Southern Utah University, and Utah State University, which could go a long way in beginning a long overdue reconciliation process. In addition to tuition and boarding waivers, universities state-wide should follow the University of Utah’s humanities department’s example of hiring Darren Parry as a Practitioner-in-Residence in the Environmental Humanities program despite his not holding a doctorate. Indigenous elders hold invaluable knowledge in the forms of history and environmental sustainability that would enrich the experiences of students throughout their collegiate careers. Increasing the numbers of Indigenous faculty and staff would also serve as positive representation for Indigenous students at these institutions.

Rectifying historical violence and traumas must happen on multiple fronts and must include a diverse cast of people putting in the footwork. This thesis serves as a small, though hopefully meaningful step in this process. Whether we are confronting problematic local historical narratives, analyzing existing sources and histories, calling for new public histories, or working towards solutions in education, Indigenous knowledge keepers, storytellers, elders, and activists need to be given more than a seat at the table – they must be given active leadership roles in this process. Together, we can create a more honest, collaborative, and healthy future for the generations to come based on honest, truthful, and oftentimes painful historical analysis.
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