Tapping the postwar assimilationist sentiment that drove the new federal Indian policy of Termination, Devil's Doorway combines Western, film noir, and "social problem" genres to convey the contradictions inherent in the 1950s treatment of minorities, particularly coercive assimilation and segregation. The film registers public confusion and anxiety over these issues of ethnic circulation and containment, and presents Indian land—on and off reservations—as contested space, the locus of national desires for an economically bountiful "home," and simultaneously a "concentration camp" from which Indians must be released.

Although ideas about social tolerance and the United States as a liberating force in World War II deeply affected literary and media representations of Native Americans, tropes of imprisonment consistently troubled such discourses with traces of indigenous and other minority group experiences of removal, segregation, internment, and holocaust. While African Americans were vigorously segregated, Native Americans were being forced to assimilate through "relocation" to urban centers, and Japanese Americans had recently been confined in wartime "camps" that were often located on reservation lands. The liberal rhetoric in Devil's Doorway reflects the strong tendency during this period to substitute Indians for other minorities in Hollywood films, yet in its focus on the inadequacy of the assimilation model the film also touches on specific issues of tribal identity, sovereignty, and land rights that were central to federal Indian policy shifts in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

This tension between a generalized rhetoric of racial difference (white and Other) and the separate histories and relationships between distinct minority groups and the U.S. government emerges in critical histories of the Western as well as in cultural products of the 1950s. Steve Neale has persuasively argued that scholarly readings of cinematic representations of Indians solely as "empty signifiers" or "ethnic stand-ins" for other minorities reenact tropes of the "vanishing Indian" by "disappearing" native people from postwar America and its artistic products. The obsession with home and land at the center of Devil's Doorway signals a very public conflict over the status of native people, especially native veterans, as separate and sovereign peoples within the United States. Clearly, figures of Indians in Hollywood films registered changes in American perceptions of native peoples specifically, and simultaneously functioned as coded references to broader, multiethnic issues of racial and religious intolerance. As texts with multiple meanings, Indian Westerns are sites where traces of public discourses about African Americans, Japanese
Americans, Jewish Americans, and others mingled with and influenced the way the films addressed Native American identities and reinterpreted tribal treaty relationships with the United States.

Devil's Doorway narrates a failure of both negotiated agreements and the reservation system, echoing the Termination policy's implicit opposition to treaty-based tribal separatism and sovereignty. Chadwick Allen has coined the term “treaty discourse” to describe the “founding discourse on which all future U.S.-Indian relations can be legally organized” ("Hero with Two Faces" 611). Treaties construct idealized versions of Indianness and whiteness that exist in a moment of accord that is both reciprocal and hierarchical, both authentic and contained. Allen invokes the definition of treaties and the reservation system articulated by legal scholar Charles F. Wilkinson: treaties, Wilkinson writes, were “intended to establish homelands for the tribes, islands of tribalism largely free from interference by non-Indians or future state governments. This separatism is measured, rather than absolute, because it contemplates supervision and support by the United States” (14). It is this “measured separatism” that the Termination policy sought to rescind as the U.S. government moved toward one result of its “heritage of colonialism,” what Etienne Balibar calls “a dual movement of assimilation and exclusion of the natives” (42-43). In the United States’ postwar growth economy, interior colonization as expansionist policy continued with new military and industrial activity, such as uranium mining and other extractive industries, on native lands (Corkin; Limerick). As in the frontier period, the country expanded into Indian territory, and a new racism against native difference, emerging from 1950s nationalism, sought to expel the “Indianness” from the country’s interior.

THE DRIFTER

Devil's Doorway tells the story of Broken Lance, or Lance Poole (Robert Taylor), a Shoshone Indian and decorated Civil War veteran who returns to his tribe's ancestral land, a valley called Sweet Meadows, only to find that unchecked prejudice and greed have come with Wyoming's territorial incorporation and the railroad. Under the Homestead Act, whites could file homestead claims but Indians could not; as a result, Lance is unable to claim ownership of Sweet Meadows though he has worked the land for years as a profitable cattle ranch. The town's most prominent lawyer, Verne Coolan (Louis Calhern), is a racist who works to destroy Lance and the other Shoshones in order to open their land for white settlement. Lance hires Orrie Masters (Paula Raymond), the only other lawyer in town, to petition on his behalf as a woman, Orrie understands something about social prejudice. Then Coolan precipitates a fight by inviting desperate shepherders to settle Sweet Meadows. There is a suggestion of romance between Orrie and Lance, but their relationship is also combative as they argue over whether Lance should compromise with the shepherders. In a climactic shoot-out, Lance and a group of reservation Shoshones hiding at his ranch are surrounded by vigilantes and, later, the U.S. Cavalry; the women and children are allowed to go back to the reservation, but the Shoshone men are killed. In the final scene, Lance puts on his military uniform and marches out to salute the cavalry leader but instead falls forward in death. Orrie utters the closing line, “It would be too bad if we ever forgot . . .”

Guy Trosper’s script for Devil's Doorway—which Mann called “the best I have ever read”—went through major alterations between 1946 and 1949, from a Western that pits a drifter against a big cattleman to a reactivation of the silent era’s sympathetic and reformist “Indian drama.” Trosper’s original short story, entitled “The Drifter,” emphasizes conflict between cattle barons and small-time ranchers, as well as the role of assertive women in the West. Its complex plot involves Barney, a wealthy rancher hiding from his outlaw past; his new wife, Letha, a femme fatale who enjoys conflict; and Charlotte “Charley” Carmody, a civic activist and ranch owner who challenges Barney’s rule and is elected as sheriff (Dudley). The drifter of the story’s title is a white ranch hand named Lance Poole, whom Letha encourages to duel with Barney. As in Devil's Doorway, there is a battle involving dynamite (at “Hell's Gap”), but Poole, far from defending his ancestral land, is placeless; he “comes and goes. He has no home, doesn’t want one” (Trosper, “Drifter”). All the primary characters are white, and the story only touches on issues of prejudice through Charlotte’s unusual role as sheriff.

In May 1948, the script reappeared with an Indian theme. Lance Poole is white but is an adopted member of a mixed-race (white-native) family. He and his adopted mixed-blood brother Ira Coffey, an outlaw, work together to defend Sweet Meadows against the invading shepherders. The script attempts comedy at the expense of the Shoshone characters through Indian stereotypes and at the expense of lawyer Orrie, whose legalistic language makes her an object of ridicule. Lance must break with Ira and his adopted Indian family to unite with Orrie, and in the end Lance himself shoots Ira rather than let him
be executed by the cavalry. Thus Ira's Indianness—a "darkness" that combines the characteristics of outlaw and victim—is purged from the narrative and from Lance and Orrie's future.

In the final version, Lance is a full-blood Shoshone Civil War veteran, and his Indian and cavalry identities divide him against himself, leading to a more complex ending in which Lance is not able simply to separate himself from his "dark" half. Devil's Doorway involves a Native American man and a white woman, and though their relationship is left un consummated, the film offers a bolder depiction of cross-racial romance than does Broken Arrow. A near-final outline of the script (December 1948) includes a scene in which Lance threatens Orrie sexually, throwing her onto the bed in his cabin before changing his mind and letting her go (Troper, Outline). The wavering in the script treatments of Lance—he is both sexual threat and romantic object—was intended to be titillating, but the final version steers clear of potential negative audience or Hays Office reactions to any depiction of "miscegenation" on-screen. In the film, Lance accuses Orrie of staying "on the safe side of the fence" but later merely says, "Don't cry, Orrie, a hundred years from now it might have worked." The two never kiss, despite the visual preparation of soft-focus close-ups as Orrie gazes up at Lance. Their relationship, always physically and emotionally tense, ends with Lance's death before it can begin.

In fact, the release of Devil's Doorway was delayed because producers at MGM feared the "pro-Indian" theme would put off audiences, and the ambiguous relationship between Lance and Orrie testifies to MGM's uneasiness about delving into a new kind of Western. Only after the release and strong financial success of Broken Arrow (which came in seventh in the year's top-grossing movies) did MGM release Mann's film. While it became clear that the public and the Production Code would tolerate "pro-Indian" Westerns and images of cross-racial romance, the delayed release led viewers and critics to assume that Mann's film was a B-grade copy of Broken Arrow (Basinger). The story's tragic ending and downplayed romance—in a black-and-white noir visual style—made it both more complex and less commercially successful than Broken Arrow, which mediated its own tragic ending by asserting that the death of the Apache character Sonseeahray "put a seal on the peace" (as I discuss later).

Reviews of Mann's first Western were mixed. Writers criticized the film's lack of authenticity: a Cue review read, "Dyeing Robert Taylor's face and hair, painting him up and sticking a feather in his hair doesn't make him a good, bad or even a convincing Indian . . . despite the earnestness of his portrayal." Variety reviewers found Taylor to be "too polished and educated for the role" and accused the studio of "a colossal piece of miscasting." A Fortnight reviewer wrote, "Taylor is probably no more Indian in spirit than Hepburn was Chinese in Dragon Seed." Other reviewers appreciated the film's "sincerity," John Alton's strong black-and-white cinematography, and the way the story "subtly draws parallels with intolerance in our own post-war period" (Independent Film Journal).

The reviewers' critical preoccupation with artifice and sincerity in representations of Indians points to the continuing problem of authenticity in the Indian drama and "pro-Indian" Westerns. Films often presented fantasy in the narrative but realism in the surface details—artifacts and costumes. In this context, the social critique inherent in revisionist Westerns attests to the paradoxical desire for integrity in a genre based on "playing Indian." The same films that comment on the United States' violent expropriation of indigenous lands and cultural identities also pursue the appropriation of "Indianness" through, among other things, casting. Reviewers' negative responses to the casting in Devil's Doorway point again to the problem of "authenticity" as a problem of unity. The disjunction between actor and role can be seen as one more displacement in the chain of substitutions if the film is read as allegory for general racial "intolerance": Robert Taylor "stands in" for a Shoshone who "stands in" for other racial groups. However, Taylor's embodiment of a Shoshone character can also be seen in the tradition of "mixed" or "half-breed" characters who represent not only assimilationist policy but also a cultural desire to amalgamate the "treaty discourse" "between two nations into a single body." The film's character Broken Lance/Lance Poole is denied precisely this privilege of freely embodying a dual identity (Shoshone and American). Despite—or perhaps because of—these contradictions, both the critical and the more positive reviews suggest that audiences were deeply responsive to cinematic critiques of westward expansion, a point proved dramatically by the box-office success of Broken Arrow.

**Broken Arrow's "Clear Talk"**

In Broken Arrow, Tom Jeffords (Jimmy Stewart) befriends Cochise (Jeff Chandler) and negotiates a peace between the Apaches and settlers in the 1870s. The film depicts a mixed-race couple (Jeffords and his Apache child
bride, Sonseehahray, played by Debra Paget) attempting to heal social rifts through their union, but peace comes only when the bond is broken and the Native American partner is sacrificed. Although the film's successful peace talks allude to the possibility of both assimilation and cultural tolerance, dual tensions of the conformist 1950s and the breakdown in cross-cultural communication toward the end of the film, along with the end of the cross-racial marriage through the death of Sonseehahray, complicate the film's verbal pro-assimilation message.\(^ {11}\) In contrast to Devil's Doorway, the events of Broken Arrow act as a ceremony of purification for Jeffords, who is "sick and tired of all this killing." Through his relationship with Sonseehahray and through her death, both Jeffords and his community are reborn as a nation in harmony with itself and its conquered peoples.\(^ {12}\)

Several critics have addressed the relationship of voice-over and dialogue to the film's function as representation. Armando José Prats has described the way Indian Westerns—especially those of the 1950s—systematically transmute visions of Indians into an absence. The appropriative vision of the films (and their white heroes) becomes a dispossession of Indians through knowledge of them; seeing, and by extension spectatorship, becomes "a hostile act" (Invisible Natives 11). Prats argues further that voice-over narration in Broken Arrow and other pro-Indian Westerns dissociates a white man or couple from the violence of Manifest Destiny and conquest yet reiterates the story of the vanishing American. As I discuss in the final section of this chapter, my reading of Devil's Doorway suggests a similarly conflicted positioning of the viewer as both an instigator of genocidal frontier violence and a conscientious eyewitness, ready to intervene in the name of social justice.

In Broken Arrow, visual icons of communication—arrows, smoke signals, hand signals, mirror signals, maps, and the U.S. mail—become tropes for military advantage during the Indian wars and have a self-referential function in which cinematic representations of history are part of the spoils of conquest. Verbal elements in Broken Arrow gesture to the power of the visual—and the idea of revisionism—through the motif of eyes. The script goes to some trouble to establish the superiority of Apache vision, visual communication, and military intelligence. When Jeffords is captured by the Apaches at the beginning of the film, he is forced to watch while a gold miner is buried in the sand and left, his face rubbed with mescal, for the ants to devour. Later, as Jeffords describes his plan to visit Cochise, his friend Milt warns him, "Well don't try it, Tom, the ants'll be feedin' off your eyes." When Jeffords insists, Milt leaves the room, saying, "It's your eyes." Later in the film, General Howard confesses that his "eyes are getting old." In contrast to these references to the vulnerability of white men's eyes, Apaches are presented as accurate readers of both the landscape and human motives. When Jeffords and his Apache teacher Juan send smoke signals to Cochise's men, Juan says, "Enough, Apache eyes are quick"; later in the same scene, he tells Jeffords not to lie to Cochise, because "his eyes will see into your heart."

This hypervisualization of Native American military prowess—here indicated through visual acuity—was part of a long-established warrior stereotype that recirculated both during and after World War II. The U.S. absorption and appropriation of this image, harnessed for national purposes during the war, became a reified media cliché. Publicity photographs portrayed native soldiers in fighting poses wearing Plains-style feather headdresses, and Pima soldier Ira Hayes's participation in putting up the American flag at Iwo Jima made him—through his photographed image—an instant celebrity and an icon of nonwhite American patriotism available for multiple public uses.\(^ {13}\) Publicity for Broken Arrow clearly emphasized the theme of overcoming racial prejudice, and secondarily the idea of historical accuracy, but methods for promoting the film made Apaches available as visual signs by appropriating historical Apache wilderness skills to target a youth audience.\(^ {14}\)

Broken Arrow opens with Tom Jeffords riding through the wilderness and realizing from the gathering buzzards that "something—or somebody—was getting ready to die." The "somebody" turns out to be a wounded Apache boy, never named in the film, whom Jeffords heals and returns to his people. This opening image of impending fatality is carried through in the film with the deaths of the two prominent young Apache characters, the boy and Sonseehahray. Jeffords encounters both characters during their ritual transformation from childhood to adulthood; the boy is in his "novice time," when he "learns to be a man," while Sonseehahray is "in the holiest time of her life" during the ceremony marking her transition to womanhood and eligibility for marriage.

Structurally parallel, both characters are killed by whites, the boy on an Apache raid, and Sonseehahray while protecting Jeffords during an ambush of Cochise by hostile ranchers. Their deaths suggest the film's premise that Apache numbers and power will dwindle, since their life cycles have been interrupted and neither will reach full maturity or have children of their own.

When Apache warriors come to rescue the boy, they shoot an arrow near Jeffords to indicate their presence, and then two more. There is a brief, low-
angle shot of Jeffords against the sky, framed and trapped by arrows that form a barrier between him and the Apache boy. “This is clear talk—it says they can still kill!” says the boy. His speech inaugurates the arrow as a primary symbol in the film, linking the ability to “speak” through action with masculine aggression and military power. Later, Cochise leads a successful ambush by maintaining a high position on a bluff where he can see the action clearly, then signals different war parties to attack at key moments by having a man shoot arrows into trees or into the sky. Just as the Apaches use networks of visual signals—arrows and mirrors—to communicate across great distances in the western landscape, they also maintain tactical advantages over the U.S. military and over Jeffords by staying above them physically. Their positioning becomes a location for Apache military signaling or “speech” that occurs simultaneously with Jeffords’s voice-over (as the Apaches speak, they are spoken for and spoken over by Jeffords). Such a system equates vision with appropriation and situates the spectator in the ultimate position of superiority.

Active communication is tactical power in Broken Arrow, and when Cochise stops the mail running, he hampers the settlers’ abilities to fight and to maintain private and commercial ties to the East. When talking with Cochise about letting the U.S. mail go through, Jeffords asserts, “When the Indian wishes to signal his brother he does so by smoke signs. This is the white man’s signal [holding out a letter]. My brother can look at this and understand my meaning. We call this mail, and the men who carry the mail are like the air that carries the Apache smoke signals.” The analogy between visual Apache communicative systems and the whites’ use of paper—specifically maps and the U.S. mail—is quite explicit in this speech. When Jeffords first enters Cochise’s wickup, the camera briefly cuts to the leather U.S. mail bags Cochise has taken during raids. Later in the film, through treaty negotiation, the Apaches give up their military advantage and their appropriation of U.S. communications through the mail to accept a paper treaty and map of the new reservation.

When Cochise talks to the Apache leaders about the treaty, he holds the rolled-up map of their territory in his hand, and as he concludes his speech, he exchanges the paper for an arrow. Their similar shapes link the objects visually, and as Cochise “breaks the arrow” to mark his approval of the treaty with the U.S. government, he indicates an exchange of “clear talk” through martial power for a representational system on paper, one to which he has no access. He renounces his method of communication, signing over the power of self-representation with his agreement to demilitarize. The film’s interpretation of this treaty moment retrospectively gives Jeffords the power to speak for the Apaches, which he does by narrating events in voice-over, and it gives the filmmakers the power to assimilate the Apaches by rendering all speech in English. The visual communicative icons in the film, especially the arrow as both a weapon and a masculine symbol, can be seen as analogous to the medium of film itself, where the Apaches become visual icons rendered on the screen for public consumption. Indigenous self-representation, symbolized here by the arrow, is characterized as a sexualized threat to white settlement that becomes over the course of the film available for appropriation, what Prats might call a metonymy for Indian absence, a fragment “at once hinting at and concealing a complete human identity.” The arrow as a synecdoche in this scene signifies the Indian in order “to suppress him”—to render him absent from the settlers’ frontier landscape (Invisible Natives 23, 31).

Jeffords’s argument that the mail is not used to carry messages against the Apache is tantamount to arguing that private and public messages do not act in concert in times of war, but over the course of the film we learn—and Jeffords learns—that private and familial relations, as well as private communication, are available for public purposes. Verbal communication between groups and individuals begins to break down as Ben Slade’s boy Bob lies to Cochise and Jeffords in order to lead them into Slade’s ambush. For Jeffords, communication breaks down when Sonseehray is killed and he calls the peace treaty a lie. When Cochise speaks to him, he says, “Why do you speak to me? Speak to her [the slain Sonseehray]. What she hears I’ll hear.” Yet the body of Sonseehray—a character coded as a “bearer” of culture—becomes the visual emblem of the success of Jeffords’s negotiation rather than its failure. Framed with the pile of stones that mark each day of the armistice, and which also resembles a memorial or grave, Jeffords is comforted by General Howard, who tells him, “Your very loss has brought our peoples together in the will to peace.” The grave marker that puts “a seal on the peace,” like Cochise’s “broken arrow,” also stands for the “vanishing” of native people that leaves Arizona open for white settlement. Significantly, Sonseehray’s “gift” of her body to Jeffords sexually represents a union that is broken when she also gives her body to the treaty process through her death, “signing” herself over out of love and loyalty to Jeffords. Rather than devaluing the treaty process as Devil’s Doorway does, Broken Arrow maintains and misreads this site of exchange in “a (fantasy) version of the treaty story in which Indians sign over all of their
rights to self-determination and ongoing, distinctive identities.”

According to Allen, “Central to these fantasies is an available and thus knowable Indianness: an Indianness defined as racially ‘pure’ but organized in non-Indian terms” (“Hero with Two Faces” 612). The death of Sonseeahray enables such a “pure” exchange, undisturbed by future mixed-race children, while the “broken arrow” of the film’s title connects the treaty-based reservation with compromised Apache masculinity, just as does Lance’s Shoshone name, “Broken Lance,” in Devil’s Doorway.

(DIS)INTEGRATING INDIAN NATIONS

In Devil’s Doorway, the successfully assimilated Indian is rejected by whites in power, and those Indians who have gone to the reservation are driven in desperation to leave it, saying, “We will die, but we will never go back to the reservation.” This is the double bind that Devil’s Doorway presents: Indians cannot assimilate and cannot be contained, but instead are forced into a hopeless and violent conflict with the settler community. In the film, prejudicial laws and attitudes bar Lance from participating in the “American Dream” and the frontier economy of masculinity that are so central to the traditional hero of the Western genre. Indians are prohibited from buying alcohol, owning or homesteading land, and living away from the reservation; even legal recourse is nearly beyond their means. Territorial Wyoming is no longer the egalitarian society in which the assimilated Lance can build his cattle business. Devil’s Doorway reveals white-initiated violence and racism to be institutional as well as individual, and to stem from the land greed of a new nation that reserved homesteads for white settlers. The film’s focus on the post–Civil War period provides a historical code for the time when the film was made, and the issues facing the cinematic Shoshones parallel in striking ways the struggles over civic identities of native peoples—especially World War II veterans—in the post–World War II and Termination era.

The 1950s marked a time of political upheaval for native peoples specifically linked to the social changes the United States had undergone in a time of war. Historian Alison Bernstein writes that World War II “represented the first large-scale exodus of Indian men from the reservations since the defeat of their ancestors” (40). Approximately twenty-five thousand Native Americans served in the armed forces during World War II, and another forty thousand native men and women left their homelands and reservations for war-related wage work in cities and towns (40, 68). After the war, however, native people faced conflicting public reactions to their presence outside of reservations, and a nation invested in ideas of modernity and progress turned to nineteenth-century laws to control tribal collective action. The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), the military, and Congress advocated integrating Native Americans into white communities while segregating African Americans, though Native American and African American populations were often deeply entwined, especially in the South. Termination policies sought the breakup of reservations and the movement of native peoples to urban areas, but unfair wages, restrictive voting laws, stereotyped representations of Indians in the media, and other discriminatory practices suggested that “mainstream” American culture would not welcome full participation of native peoples as citizens.

Dillon Myer, who had been head of the War Relocation Authority in charge of interning the Japanese American population from the West Coast, took over the BIA in May 1950 and actively encouraged a view of reservations as temporary centers for detention rather than permanent land bases for tribal communities. The Termination policies enacted during his leadership of the BIA called for the disintegration of the reservation system, with forced and voluntary integration—through the “Relocation” program—of native peoples to urban areas. Liberals already involved in the fight for desegregation and civil rights in the South, and conservatives interested in eliminating special government services to native peoples, moved for different reasons (and often with good intentions) toward the same goals during Termination: dissolving the special sovereignty status of native tribes as “domestic dependent nations.”

Indian reservations in the late 1940s and early 1950s became once again materially and discursively contested lands, claimed by multiple interests (tribal, governmental, and private), yet represented in popular rhetoric as prisons from which Indians must be “set free.”

The individualist and capitalist emphases in the postwar period, along with the truly desperate situation on the Navajo and other reservations, led both politicians and ordinary citizens to view reservations not as tribal lands but as “concentration camps” for temporary detainees, rhetoric drawn from the Jewish experience in Europe that the government—and the media—never applied to the Japanese Americans in internment camps but often used in advocating the termination of reservations. Los Angeles Examiner coverage of a drought and food shortage crisis in the Southwest characterized the Navajo
reservation as “the vast concentration camp of the desert” (quoted in Bernstein 153–54). In America’s Concentration Camps: The Facts about Our Indian Reservations Today, a pro-assimilation book published in 1956, Carlos Embry equates assimilation with freedom and reservation tribal government with “forced communism” (210), concluding that if Congress would “close our concentration camps . . . The Indian could hope to progress as the people of this great country have progressed. The Indian then could take pride not only in being an Indian but in being an American” (229).

Such assimilationist impulses were in place before the war, however. During the war the BIA under John Collier had recommended segregated military units for Native American soldiers, but the War Department determined that integration with white units would help to “break down tribal ties” among native soldiers, even as the department maintained segregated units for African American soldiers (Bernstein 41). Many southern states, like Virginia, recognized only “two kinds of people—whites and Negroes; anyone of ‘color’ fell into the latter category,” and in Mississippi the draft board “drafted dark-skinned Choctaws into segregated units, while lighter-skinned Indians ‘passed’ into white platoons” (42).

The overdetermination of black-white racial dichotomies and the blurring of distinctions between other minority groups through tropes of containment in media and governmental rhetoric offer one explanation for the use of Indians in Hollywood films to represent ethnic “Others” (making celluloid Indians intoiphers for other minorities, such as Japanese Americans and African Americans). But these elements also work conversely to bring radically different minority experiences to bear on the way the films comment on—and audiences understand—issues of Indian policy. The films themselves become an unstable and ambivalent site for the containment and circulation of ethnic identities. In classic Westerns, the image of the “savage” Indian attacking white settlers represents an impure violence meant to contrast with the cavalry’s ability to purify through violence. The carefully maintained racial boundaries of the Western break down when the Indian is also the cavalry, and this blurring not only disrupts the binary stability of the system of “measured separatism” but also re-presents images of native men in uniform who were very visible indeed during and immediately after World War II.

In Devil’s Doorway, Lance’s Indian/cavalry double identity threatens the boundaries on which the (white) civilization of the Western is based, and as a returned veteran of the Civil War—a war of a nation against itself—he also represents the threat of the nation’s own violence brought back upon its communities. Devil’s Doorway manifests the contradictory public views of native people that brought both liberals and conservatives to endorse Termination. It supports the idea (but not the practice) of an Indian “homeland” while rejecting the treaty and reservation system, and it presents in Broken Lance/Lance Poole an unstable Indian civic identity as Lance fluctuates between integrationist and separatist impulses. The film powerfully raises but never resolves the problem of postwar American unity and national integrity, and in doing so rejects the very idea of compromise, negotiation, and treaty. The reservation, as a form of compromise with the government, is especially unacceptable to the cinematic Shoshones because it is not located on their homeland—this disjunction between Lance as an assimilated Indian living on ancestral land and his displaced reservation tribespeople increases his sense of alienation from both Indian and white cultures. The metaphor of the Civil War further amplifies the social prejudice and inner struggle Lance experiences as an assimilated Indian who is also loyal to his Shoshone people and heritage: in a near-final script, Orrie begs Lance to “stop that war that’s going on inside you” (Troser, Script).

**TERMS OF CIRCULATION**

In contrast to Broken Arrow’s self-consciously talky style, Devil’s Doorway tells its story primarily through visual composition, noir stylistics, and costume. Jeanine Basinger calls Devil’s Doorway and The Furies (1950) Anthony Mann’s “transitional” films as he moved from his noir period (T-Men [1947], Raw Deal [1948]) of the late 1940s to his Western genre decade of the 1950s. Mann directed a series of films in the late 1940s and early 1950s with startlingly similar themes involving illegal or out-of-control circulation (of money, laborers, women, and guns), racial boundaries, and masculine bonds: T-Men deals with undercover Treasury agents tracking a counterfeit ring; Border Incident (1949) with undercover Immigration and Naturalization Service agents tracking illegal immigrant papers and migrant workers; Winchester 73 (1950) with the circulation of a much-desired rifle; The Furies with a rancher who pays his workers with his own currency; and Devil’s Doorway. In Devil’s Doorway, the term of circulation—the focus of each character’s desire—is not a movable thing like guns, money, or paper but rather a place, Sweet Meadows, that each
wishes to see as “home.” At issue is title to the land. As in Winchester 73, Indians are excluded from the economy of buying and selling the object of desire, and a woman circulates as a metaphor for that object. The land is spoken of as female in the film: “She’s pretty,” and “our mother, Sweet Meadows.” The “ache for home” in Devil’s Doorway suggests the “yearning” for the “land-as-Mother” that Annette Kolodny terms the “American pastoral impulse” (153–54). Lance’s absent mother heightens his sense of the land-as-mother and of his attachment to the land, just as Orrie’s absent father justifies her occupation as a lawyer. The inter racial romance between Orrie and Lance cannot take place because both the narrative logic of the film—the exclusion of the Indian character from access to woman and land—and the external logic of the Production Code prohibit it. Devil’s Doorway voices a postwar longing for an uncontested home but reveals that imagined home/land (both familial and national in scale) to be fraught with private and institutional corruption.

Each of Anthony Mann’s transitional films deals with what Richard Slotkin calls the Western’s “transgression of the borders,” specifically in terms of racial borders between whites and Mexicans or Native Americans. In T-Men and Border Incident, undercover agents marked as ethnically Other are forced to watch their white partners killed, sacrifices that allow each sting to succeed. Unlike the classic Western in which nonwhite characters represent the “dark” forces on the frontier and in the psyche, Devil’s Doorway also resembles film noir in its exploration of the corruption inherent in settler society, particularly white men, in the identity crisis of the protagonist, and in the uneasy feeling of a world out of balance. The film helped shape Mann’s impact on the Western genre, especially on the development of the “psychological” and later “revisionist” Western. The film noir movement is often attributed to cultural anxieties about the new power of women as they entered the workforce, to the sometimes unacknowledged troubles of returned World War II veterans, and to the fragmentation of a country that previously had been unified by the war effort (Place; Krutnik). African Americans and Native Americans also entered the workforce in great numbers during the war, and they too were pushed out of many industries when white soldiers returned to claim their jobs. Perhaps the heightening of racial tensions at the end of the war—the highly publicized participation of Native Americans in the war and their return to second-class citizenship at home, for example, as well as the civil rights movement—also contributed to noir’s “dark” cynicism.  

Several critics have noted the resemblance between noir and Western heroes in their shared outsider status, their precarious positioning between law enforcer and lawbreaker, their potentially tragic fate, and their individual codes of honor. Both figures help to maintain a social order from which they do not benefit, according to Edward Recchia, yet “there still remains that essential difference between the films themselves: underlying the Western is an indefatigable sense of optimism; underlying the detective film is a critical vein of cynicism, if not pessimism. In the Western, the frontier is still to be conquered; in the detective film, there is already the smell of a civilization in the early stages of decay” (602–3). This sense of optimism, so apparent in Westerns like Broken Arrow, becomes muted and darkened in such “psychological” Westerns as Zinnemann’s High Noon (1952) and Mann’s Winchester 73, which question the purity and goodness of both the hero and the community he protects, and later by “revisionist” Westerns, such as Peckinpah’s The Wild Bunch (1969), Penn’s Little Big Man (1970), and Eastwood’s High Plains Drifter (1973). Mann’s 1950s Westerns played a pivotal role in developing this more disturbing side of the genre, and Devil’s Doorway, in particular, was ahead of its time in offering a social critique of the frontier colonization (or “civilizing”) process. Devil’s Doorway combined the noir critique of “civilization in the early stages of decay” with the very process of conquering the frontier so important to the Western. The film becomes a case study of the corruption, prejudice, and greed that pushed forward an agrarian “American Dream” of homestead land and immigrant opportunity.

It is the Homestead Act of 1862 (which arrives in Wyoming with territorial incorporation) that establishes an economy of white settlement, law, and “civilization,” and that excludes Lance on the basis of his status as an Indian and a “ward of the government.” Lance is barred entirely from participation in this settlement order; although he is rich, he cannot buy or own his land, and although he has worked the land for more than five years, he cannot stake a claim to it under the Homestead Act. Lance’s encounter with this law suggests that his “fitness” or competence in the wilderness (a defining feature of the Western hero) and in the capitalist market is irrelevant, because the system by which territories and people are incorporated into the nation ensures the survival of hierarchy.  

Lance is also refused the right of all (white) men in the frontier Western to buy a drink in the saloon. Although his masculinity as a fighter has been proved in the war, the laws that come with territorial incorporation are perceived in the film as emasculating.
Lance Poole/Broken Lance (Robert Taylor) meets Orrie Masters (Paula Raymond).

The very idea of a treaty or negotiation becomes associated with femininity in the film, and Orrie Masters, Lance's romantic interest, comes to represent both colonizing “master” and feminine object, both home and its invasion, both a reasonable voice of compromise and tolerance and an unstable potential for betrayal. Orrie fulfills Western and noir female roles, taking on the characteristics of both Charlotte Carmody and Letha in Guy Trosper’s story “The Drifter.” Although she is a powerful character in the film because she is a lawyer, Lance first finds her dusting her books, rather than reading them, and she seems as interested in putting iodine on a cut he received in a bar fight as in filing a homestead claim for him. This scene establishes both Orrie’s femininity and her infringement on the masculine province of the law. Lance’s wound, which comes from his fight with Ike in a bar where territorial law has banned the sale of liquor to Indians, suggests both Lance’s fighting prowess and his ultimately tragic fate. Orrie’s status as a woman enables her to cross boundaries, which she continually does as a negotiator between the town and Sweet Meadows. Like the “good woman” of the Western, Orrie is chaste, associated with “civilizing” professions like the law, and in the end allied also to the cavalry when she calls them in to stop the fighting. But this act also links her to the femme fatale of film noir; by summoning the cavalry, she betrays Lance, ruins his chances of winning the fight, and breaks her promise to tell no one that reservation Shoshones are hiding on Lance’s ranch at Sweet Meadows. Orrie circulates among men as she attempts to negotiate compromises between the men vying for title to the land; her loyalty is made suspect by virtue of her sex. Her failure to negotiate a peaceful settlement offers the clearest example of a breakdown of cross-cultural negotiation: in one scene, she works to convince the men of Medicine Bow to sign a petition to change the law to accommodate Indian homesteaders, but her efforts are undermined as news of the first acts of violence in the conflict reach the town.

The land itself is associated with “home” and with mothering. Sweet Meadows seems to represent both what is deeply familiar to and desired by all men, and what must be kept from “outsiders” with great violence. Orrie’s mother, on hearing about Jimmy’s (Lance’s nephew’s) Shoshone rite of passage into manhood, declares, “That boy’s got a good home.” Lance clearly sees Sweet Meadows, his ancestral place of origin, as home and as mother: “It’s
hard to explain the way an Indian feels about the Earth ... it’s the pumping of our blood, it’s the love we’ve got to have. My father said the Earth is our Mother. I was raised in this valley; now I’m part of it, like the mountains and the hills, the deer, the pine trees and the wind. Deep in my heart I know I belong. If we lose it now, we might as well all be dead.” In this speech, Lance associates relocation away from the land with disappearing. The film engages the well-used trope of the “vanishing American,” but Lance’s connection between losing the land and vanishing also presumes a loss of identity and land base as reservation communities were forcibly (dis)integrated.

Lance’s enemy, the lawyer Verne Coolan, also wishes to see Sweet Meadows as home. When trying to provoke Lance to fight in the bar, he tells his hired gun about Sweet Meadows: “It’s like the laugh of a beautiful woman,” he says. “It’s what all men dream of when they ache for home.” Coolan’s lust for land—as-female is sexual rather than familial. Later, when convincing the sheepherders to stake a claim to Sweet Meadows, Coolan says, “Through that pass the range never dries up, the mountains keep the wind out. There’s a water hole in there big enough to float a clipper ship, and the grass is belly high on a steer. Oh, it’s a place for home. I’d like to live there myself.” And when the Shoshones flee the reservation and ask to stay at Sweet Meadows, Lance translates their request to Orrie: “They want a place to live, they want a home.” Finally, as Orrie desperately tries to convince Lance to compromise with the sheepherders, she says, “They have a right to live. It’s just as terrifying for them to be without a home as it is for you.”

Orrie is not the only metaphor for the land. The sheepherders, seeking a home for themselves and their livestock, are always on the move in search of permanent grazing for their starving flocks. The “reservation Shoshones” who hide at Lance’s ranch are also linked to the land as “home,” and they too circulate—illegally. They flee from the reservation, saying that conditions there are so terrible that “we will die, but we will never go back to the reservation.” In the film, the parallel groups of displaced people—the sheepherders and Shoshones—have no inherent dislike for one another. In fact, their competing need to possess Sweet Meadows as their home suggests that they have much in common, as Orrie argues. But the scene in which the herders’ sheep and Lance’s cattle attempt (and fail) to share the same street in town implies that different “stock” cannot share a home, just as Orrie and Lance cannot overcome their racial differences to make a home together. To the extent that the Shoshone cattlemen and Scotch-Irish immigrant sheepmen represent nonwhite and white men, especially returning World War II soldiers, these scenes point to postwar anxieties over disunity and competition over resources between groups coded as racially different. How can a nation of different “kinds” come together to make a home? The use of livestock as racial metaphors is even more pronounced in earlier versions of the script. In a May 1948 version, the mixed-blood Ira Coffee explains his fear of living on a reservation: “How’d you like it? You got a red hide, so your law says get into the corral with the rest of the animals! . . . We’ll turn you from a bull into an ox!” (Trosper, Script). This speech to the lawyer Orrie equates reservations with dehumanization, and confinement with castration. In a scene deleted from the final script, Lance’s father points out a new, all-white Hereford bull (Herefords are red cattle with white marks on the chest and head) and claims that it will “help raise a finer breed of cattle” (Kopp). The whiteness of the “red” bull clearly represents Lance’s assimilated status and the possibility of racial mixture.

Mann depicts Lance’s transformation from “good Indian” to “bad Indian” through the classical Hollywood technique of repetition and variation. Orrie enters Lance’s cabin in parallel scenes to ask him to compromise with the
sheepherders, and later with the cavalry. In each scene they stand facing one another in a two-shot framed by the window of Lance's cabin. But in the latter scene, the cabin is a shambles: fallen pieces of wood make jagged X marks across the window, and the air is full of smoke, registering visually what Lance's father says at the beginning of the film, that Indians are "doomed" because they are surrounded by whites. This scene reverses the iconography of the classical Western in which the settlers' homesteads lie in smoking ruins. In a narrative treatment that links women and the land through the image of the home, the destruction of white settlements in the Western usually provokes the male hero to violent, often vigilante, action in revenge, as it does Ethan Edwards in The Searchers (1956), but in Devil's Doorway the destruction of the Shoshone settlement puts "a seal on the peace." As Lance says, "We're all gone."

Also parallel are two bar scenes at the Big Horn Saloon in town. The film opens, as do many Westerns, with a lone rider in the desert. As Lance rides into town a dog barks at him, a codified moment in the genre that indicates the rider's threatening, outsider status (as does the dog barking at Scar in The Searchers [1956], and the dog that slinks away from Wilson [Jack Palance] in Shane [1953]). We see that the rider is wearing a cavalry uniform. The stranger turns out to be the prodigal son returned home, and the old-timers welcome him by buying him a drink. His welcome is interrupted, though, by racist comments from a shadowy figure in the foreground. The insults serve as a warning that the masculine, egalitarian spirit of the old West—and metaphorically of World War II—will give way to a hierarchical "law and order" when the lawyers and settlers come. The scene is shot from the far end of the bar, the audience sees the three men drinking in the background, and the bar dominates the screen. The figure in the foreground—the lawyer Coolan—drinks alone and watches the men. His position as spectator mirrors that of the audience and is an example of how, as Ann Kaplan has said in another context, "Even within stories about [the United States] ... Hollywood films mimicked the 'imperial gaze' of people who traveled to cultures in different lands" (64).

Later in the film, five years have passed and Lance has become a wealthy, successful cattleman, having combined the traditionally opposing roles of cowboy, Indian, and cavalryman. On the day he deposits $18,000 in the bank and tries to buy Zeke, the sheriff and an old friend, a drink at the saloon, he encounters the territorial law forbidding sale of alcoholic beverages to Indians. The scene is shot from the same perspective: Coolan—now with Ike, a hired gunslinger—watches the drama from the foreground in the crowded bar. Ike fires trick shots at Lance, and during the ensuing fistfight, Coolan watches with intense interest and pleasure. Low-key lighting predominates, heightened by flashes of lightning. The bar scenes are the most noir in the film, with their claustrophobic atmosphere emphasizing Lance's entrapment by Coolan and by the townspeople who crowd around to watch the fight. The scene renders an unusually strong use of the expressionist tradition in the Western through John Alton's cinematography, which gives the bar's interior an urban, tauntingly ominous feel. The bar itself overwhelms the scene visually as it marks foreground and background, creating oblique lines that express Lance's growing realization that the peace he fought for will not be his to enjoy.30

This scene is the centerpiece of the film; the destruction that is personal and intimate in the saloon becomes epic in scale as Lance fights the sheep-
herders over Sweet Meadows. Coolan's absorption in the spectacle of the fight is such that he leans forward and knocks over his liquor bottle. This display of waste reveals the hypocrisy of the law denying the sale of liquor to Indians and at the same time foreshadows the shot of liquor Lance will throw in the face of the vanquished Ike. The act also alludes to the waste of Lance's life at the end of the film: blood, too, will be spilled to satisfy Coolan's—and the viewer's—desire for visual pleasure. Coolan's voyeurism fetishizes the racialized masculine body, as did his hostile gaze at the film's beginning.31 Like Letha in Guy Troser's original short story, Coolan finds pleasure in inciting men to fight. Like the banker in Stagecoach (1939), he represents a self-righteous and corrupt eastern "civilization" invading the rough, democratic purity of the old West; props such as his elegant liquor glass (distinct from other men's shot glasses) mark him as a city slicker. Coolan's delight in violence—as-performance reveals his own underlying fraudulence, and indeed he lies to the shepherders to orchestrate a conflict. His desire to witness violence—and his gratification in the processes of destruction—drives the narrative. In contrast, Lance is here indicated as "authentic": he always tells the truth, stands by his word, is unwilling to compromise. His authenticity is heightened by his status as an Indian, as much a moral barometer and symbol of the uncorrupted as a sign of menace in the film.

The film engages in an "imperial gaze" by adopting Coolan's point of view in several key scenes, including the opening bar scene and his death at Lance's hands during the vigilante attack on Sweet Meadows. At the same time, the film critiques this gaze by vilifying Coolan's avid desire for colonizing and genocidal violence against the Shoshone people. The possessive gaze itself becomes a term of circulation: First Lance gazes on Sweet Meadows when he returns from the war, but later Orrie's gaze predominates as she becomes a witness to the male contest over the land. Finally, as Lance falls forward in death and in surrender, the young cavalry leader looks toward the "Devil's Doorway" pass into Sweet Meadows, and the camera (and thus the audience) assumes his point of view as both possessor and eyewitness.32

Instead of seeing an assuring future for both assimilation and the reservation system, as Broken Arrow promises for the Apache, viewers of Devil's Doorway witness the costing equivalent of the stereotyped reversion to savagery in Lance. Visually, Lance is coded as a hero by his white hat, while Coolan and Ike wear black hats, marks of villainy since the early silent Westerns; but here the racialized "colors" of the classical Western are reversed, and a "dark" man wears a white hat. He first appears in his full cavalry uniform and later wears cowboy clothes; as the film progresses, a silver belt, headband, and beaded necklace suggest that Lance has become more identified with his Shoshone culture. Even his skin color seems to darken over the course of the film. Lance's costume changes narrate the failure of assimilation visually, linking his reestablished Indian identity to a long-standing stereotype in literature and silent film that Indians educated at boarding school or in the military will go "back to the blanket" upon return to their families and tribes.33 Such public and governmental suspicions of "false assimilation" in terms of retained ethnic difference imply parallel fears of "counterfeit" patriotism. Lance's return to the cavalry costume at his surrender is a jarring reminder that he arrived home as a cavalry soldier as well as an Indian. Had he remained assimilated and kept his allegiance to the military, abandoning the reservation Shoshones who sought refuge on his ranch, Lance would not have had to contend with the U.S. Cavalry, but the film's politics do not allow Lance to survive as a Shoshone or to maintain his allegiance to the tribal nation as well as the United States. In taking in the escaped Shoshones, he seals his fate. The film's title, Devil's Doorway—the pass into Sweet Meadows—indicates Lance's double bind; his liminal status as an assimilated Indian relegates him to a hellish no-man's-land rather than the sweet meadows of home.34 In the penultimate scene, Lance touches his father's pipe and his old cavalry uniform, emblems of his compounded identity. Both pipe and uniform metonymically invoke the treaty-making process, but as these signs come together in Lance they can no longer function as markers of a "measured separatism" between nations. In this film, the postwar nation ultimately cannot accommodate a man who assimilates but retains his difference, who is Indian and homesteader and cavalry.

Devil's Doorway allows us to view postwar American culture beginning to examine its history of "de-tribalization," land theft, and relocation, even as it entered a new phase of assimilationist policy. The powerful narrative combination of the returning veteran figure and the cross-racial romance in Devil's Doorway brings together the construction (or destruction) of both nation and family. The Indian veteran returns from a war only to try to begin a family in the midst of another war—a race war—at home. Cross-racial romance represents a desire for an integrated family, home, and nation that transcends racial and cultural differences, but the film depict men and women whose private lives are undone by their participation in the public work of frontier colonization, and a land that is only made "pure" through sacrificial, racially
marked violence. In its complex figurations of postwar America as “home” to native people, to returning war veterans, and to powerful women, Devil's Doorway manifests a constellation of tensions surrounding the U.S. government's contemporary reinterpretations of its relationships with minority communities and tribal nations.

NOTES

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1. See discussions of the political subtexts of "pro-Indian" Westerns in Lehman, Lenihan, Mortemore, Petlewski, and Slotkin. For example, Richard Slotkin and Paul Petlewski argue that Devil's Doorway uses the Western genre as a "disguise" that, although covertly and with compromises, allows the filmmakers to treat such sensitive material as American racism and anti-Semitism. Westerns of the 1950s represented both conservative cultural values and a liberal, counterculture backlash against those values. Slotkin divides 1950s Westerns into two categories, the "Cult of the Cavalry," which offers masculine, military, and heroic responses to nonwhite threats to American values, and the "Cult of the Indian," which uses the Western as a site for liberal critiques of racial and social prejudice and of right-wing politics. Devil's Doorway's comments on social prejudice came at a time between the American solidarity of World War II and the violent focus on domestic issues of race during the mid-1950s civil rights movement. However, the slow gains made in the civil rights movement occurred simultaneously with an erosion of rights for native peoples. The Supreme Court outlawed segregated schools in Brown v. Board of Education in 1954; the Montgomery bus boycott took place in 1955; and Congress passed the Civil Rights Act to address inequalities in voting rights in 1957. During the same period, legislation undermined or ended services to Indian reservations, terminated federal recognition of tribes and treaty obligations to those tribes, and shifted more tribal lands to white ownership and control. See Jacquelyn Kilpatrick's Celluloid Indians for a discussion of the revival of sovereignty issues in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s in connection with cinematic representations of Indians.

2. "Termination" is the general term for the series of resolutions and public laws enacted between 1953 and 1961 that sought to dismantle federal trust relationships with native tribes. The policy involved a complex array of legal strategies and negotiations with specific tribal entities. The Indian Claims Commission was established in 1946 to hear claims cases, in the hope that monetary compensation for land seized in the past would both solve the moral and legal problems of broken treaties and encourage assimilation through onetime per capita payments. The House Concurrent Resolution 108 (passed in 1953 by the Republican Eighty-third Congress) was the first of many congressional actions that terminated federal recognition of tribes, services to those tribes, and supervision of tribal assets, including land. Public Law 280 (1953) initiated a trend toward transferring civil and criminal jurisdiction over Indian lands from federal to state arenas, and throughout the 1950s the Bureau of Indian Affairs ran a "Relocation" program that encouraged native individuals and families to move to urban areas. Excellent and detailed historical information on the Termination and Relocation policies is available in publications by Drinnon, Fixico, Philp, and Wilkinson. See Kilpatrick for a description of Termination policies in relation to Indian Westerns of the 1950s (56).

3. In his recent book Blood Narrative: Indigenous Identity in American Indian and Maori Literary and Activist Texts, Allen asserts that indigenous activist writers "re-recognize" treaty discourse, reclaiming its original colonial authority in order to assert sovereignty through the nation-to-nation positioning implicit in treaty agreements. "Indigenous minority redeployments of treaty discourse insist that the dominant powers remember the cross-cultural and cross-national agreements it forged with indigenous nations during previous eras . . . [such redeployments] restate and reinvigorate this colonial discourse's original powers of legal enforcement and moral suasion" (19).

4. Quoted in Simmon.

5. A plethora of short "Indian dramas" and "pro-Indian" silent Westerns played in nickelodeons in the first decades of the twentieth century, including such titles as "The Redman's View" (1909, Biograph), "Iola's Promise" (1912, Biograph), and "White Fawn's Devotion" (1910, Pathe Freres). Reform films from the 1920s included The Last of the Mohicans (1920, Maurice Tourneur Productions, Associated Producers), The Vanishing American (1925, Paramount), and Redskin (1929, Schertzinger).

6. See Petlewski's discussion of Lance as a sexual threat.

7. John O'Connor argues that these plot changes, which complicate the story through moral ambiguity and the theme of racial intolerance, "fit the producers' ideas of what the public would buy . . . to enhance its appeal to post-war moviegoers" (47).

8. See Gary Edgerton's discussion of "surface realism" in Michael Mann's The Last of the Mohicans (1992). The impulse toward documentary content in Indian Westerns is indicated by the author's foreword to the screenplay for Broken Arrow: "Although this is a story film and not a documentary, it would be regrettable if the film did not convey the quality of authenticity present in a documentary history. Both the style of the narration and the selection of the background detail have been directed to achieve these ends" (Maltz).
9. See Deloria’s *Playing Indian* for historical case studies and a theoretical discussion of this phenomenon.

10. Chadwick Allen, private correspondence, July 12, 2004. I am much indebted to Allen for this and other insights into the political ramifications of “treaty moments” in Westerns.

11. The film was released at a high point of anticommunist sentiment in the United States. It played in theaters alongside anticommunist films and glorified an assimilationist model for native people but was written by a blacklisted screenwriter. Albert Maltz, who wrote the script for *Broken Arrow*, was one of the Hollywood Ten, who were first blacklisted and then imprisoned; Michael Blankfort acted as his front (Cepair). In addition to seeing native cultures as deficient or somehow “un-American” in comparison to the nonnative mainstream, many nonnative people associated tribal governments and the reservation system with communism. See Phil, *Termination Revisited*; Embry; Drinnon; and Dippie.

12. Angela Alexis has argued that *Broken Arrow* reflects the contradictory impulses of Termination policy and early 1950s politics: simultaneous valuation of individual rights and conformity, of cultural pluralism and rapid assimilation. Frank Manchel asserts that the film's distortions of history caused “cultural confusion” that powerfully affected public memory, especially since, as he notes, *Broken Arrow* was the basis for one of the first Western television series.

Many scripts for the series were drafted by none other than Sam Peckinpah, who slipped in references to “the wild bunch” and other projects of his own (“The Poacher” or “The Assassin”). He also evinced strong awareness of the politics of civic identity and voice at stake in representations of Indians. In a 1957 draft of an episode entitled “The Teacher,” Cochise chastises the new schoolteacher for inculcating Apache youth with American patriotism. His speech resonates with indigenous sovereignty claims and the problem of voice-over in the film *Broken Arrow*: “We asked for what we need—someone to teach numbers and the books—and we get a long-tongued woman who teaches the Apache to say words that have no meaning for them. (immitating sarcastically) We, the people of the United States... (then proud and angry) We are not the people of the United States—we are Chiricahua Apaches. Cochise, nor his people, wish to learn the words of a nation which permits us no voice” (Peckinpah, “The Teacher”).

13. German propagandists had, according to John Collier, “predicted an Indian uprising in the United States” if Indians were drafted (quoted in Holm 103), but instead Native American patriotism lent credence to the U.S. war effort and provided fodder for U.S. propagandists; according to Tom Holm, “the fact that a nonwhite minority had unflinchingly thrown itself into the war effort gave the American cause moral legitimacy” (107). Jacqueline Kilpatrick cites articles in *Collier’s* and the *Reader’s Digest* from the 1940s that describe the superior outdoor skills, endurance, and “enthusiasm for fighting” of “the red soldier” (50).

14. Angela Alexis's research on the studio's advice to exhibitors reveals that “gimmicks ranged from teaching viewers how to interpret the various puffs of smoke signals . . . to building huge bonfires (with the help of the Boy Scouts and Camp Fire Girls)” (62–63). Film producers taught Apache actors (many of them veterans of the armed forces, returned from World War II) how to fit this visual image of themselves. According to Alexies, “When Daves instructed two Indians to build food coolers, fire grates, and a bough bed in the traditional Apache manner, the men were at a loss. (The problem was solved when ‘the Boy Scouts’ Handicraft Book’ provided the proper explanation),” and “an archery expert had to teach many Apaches to use the bow and arrow” (38).

15. The other film entitled *Broken Arrow* (1996), from director John Woo, maintains the significance of the arrow as a symbol appropriated by the U.S. military: in that film, “Broken Arrow” is the military code for lost nuclear missiles. Noncinematic military terms for weapons include the Cheyenne tank and the Tomahawk missile, again appropriating images of “savage” Indians for the colonizer's military purposes.


17. In Elliott Arnold’s novel *Blood Brother*, from which *Broken Arrow* was adapted, Sonseeahray thinks of “her body as something to give to him [Jefords] and she was almost impersonal in her survey” of her physical qualities. She is unconcerned about modesty, as “no Apache youth would ever look at a girl bathing,” but the reader can “look” as Arnold’s detailed description of Sonseeahray’s body unfolds during her own mental assessment (313). She later receives advice that her union with Jefords will merge cultures: “The new thing you will make will have part of you in it and part of him, as though it were a child” (314). However, as soon as Sonseeahray becomes pregnant and unavailable to Jefords sexually, she is killed off; no mixed-race child embodies their union.


19. For further discussion of the post–World War II cycle of “pro-Indian” Westerns and their relationship to contemporary Native American issues and to broader issues of ethnicity in 1950s Hollywood films, see articles by Neale and Manchel.

20. Native veterans of World War II returned to find local prejudices still strong in towns bordering reservations, and old laws such as the 1802 federal regulations concerning the sale of alcohol to Indians still in force. Dillon Myer and the BIA consistently blocked tribal attempts to choose lawyers, invoking an 1872 law prohibiting any payment or barter for legal counsel for Indian land claims without BIA approval (Bernstein; Philp, *Termination Revisited*).

21. In 1950, the median income for native men on reservations was $950, compared with $2,218 for black men and $3,780 for white men, with high unemployment rates, overcrowded schools, and high infant mortality contributing
to the alarming conditions on many reservations (Bernstein 149–50). Native Americans were prohibited from voting in state elections in Arizona and New Mexico until 1948.


23. The blurring of distinctions between camps and reservations was intensified by the fact that Japanese Americans were interned on reservation lands in several western states; the BIA had “volunteered Indian lands as sites for the ‘colonization of the Japanese’” (Collier, quoted in Bernstein 82).

24. My analysis here also complements structuralist approaches to the Western. Garry Watson has applied René Girard’s theories of violence to the Western, suggesting that the “Warrior’s Return” at the beginning of many Westerns introduces dangerously impure and contagious violence into the community, and this figure must be sacrificed in order to found or refund the community/nation. Girard describes the figure of the returning war veteran as “the conquering hero who threatens to destroy the liberty of his homeland” through “the contagious nature of the violence encountered by the warrior in battle” (42).

25. Literature and film about native veterans of World War II and other wars frequently depict community hostility toward returning war veterans, and their potential for violence in response: Zane Grey’s novel The Vanishing American and Seitz’s film version starring Richard Dix depict returning Navajo veterans of World War I. N. Scott Momaday’s House Made of Dawn and Leslie Marmon Silko’s Ceremony portray traumatized World War II vets recovering through ceremonies of reintegration and renewal in their home communities. Vietnam War veterans return home to internal and external conflict in accounts that narrate wartime and postwar experiences from a native perspective, as in Apache author Leroy TeCubé’s memoir of his infantry service, Year in Nam, and in Philip H. Red Eagle’s novellas, published together in the book Red Earth: A Vietnam Warrior’s Journey.

26. Nicolas Monti, writing about turn-of-the-century photographs from Africa, notes that for white male colonizers “the seduction and conquest of the African woman became a metaphor for the seduction and conquest of Africa” (quoted in Doane 213). The opposite construct in the Americas—a liaison between a native man and white woman—might represent the “conquest and seduction” of land as well as woman. The threat of “miscegenation” in Devil’s Doorway is one of native integration into white family structures, of native claims to property, and of native permanence rather than disappearance.

27. See Doane’s “Dark Continents” for a discussion of psychoanalytic connections between female sexuality and racial difference.

28. See Stanley Corkin’s detailed exploration and criticism of the way postwar Westerns (specifically My Darling Clementine and Red River) dramatize “how men who exhibit the terms of fitness, which are not acquired but appear innate, rightfully rule” (89).

29. Chadwick Allen pointed out the color significance of the reference to Hereford cattle. In a similar fashion in her novel Ceremony, Leslie Marmon Silko uses crossbred “spotted cattle” as a metaphor for the protagonist Tayo’s mixed-blood ancestry and ability to survive in two worlds.

30. The scene would have been even more violent without the Hays Code. In fact, this is the only scene that the MPAA suggested be cut, due to its excessive brutality. In a memo to Breen in the Hays Office dated February 10, 1950, Robert Vogel claims to have cut 25 percent of the footage in this scene, including “two objectionable kicks.”

31. See Willemen’s discussion of the “look at the male” in Mann’s films as a “fundamentally homosexual voyeurism.” Willemen argues that this imaging of the male examines “the operation of classic American cinema itself as a form of spectacle” (211–12) in which images of male ordeal reflect upon themselves as spectacle and identity.

32. I would like to thank Sean Cobb for this insight into the “circulation of the gaze” at the end of the film.

33. Devil’s Doorway avoids most of the stereotyped “Indian English” of earlier Westerns. Although Lance’s father speaks in metaphors, he uses English pronouns and articles grammatically. Although Lance initially insists on speaking English with his father, he and other characters speak the Shoshone language in many scenes late in the film (“Devil’s Doorway Indian Dialog”).

34. In contrast to Kies’s view that Lance and the Shoshones achieve “victory through death” (44), Tuska sees Devil’s Doorway as “a far more pernicious variety of racism” for its pro-assimilationist stance. According to Tuska, the film’s “strong propaganda in favor of one-settlement culture” does not allow Indian characters “cultural integrity—the right to have [their] own culture independent of the white community” (47–48).

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