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**Vocational Education for Assimilation:  
Discussions of Indian Educational Policy in  
the Indian School Journal**

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## Introduction

The term ‘propaganda’ has become increasingly difficult to define in the twentieth century. For modern ears, the term incites a synonym for lies and deceit, ultimately being used as a form of social control and disguised under the concept of ‘democracy’. Indeed, all these ideas are valuable; particularly today in regards to the thriving and the ever developing modern mass media. Nonetheless it is often beneficial to strip the term back to a simpler definition, freeing it from these contemporary associations. In his 1928 classic *Propaganda*, Edward Bernays defined propaganda as the ‘conscious and intelligent manipulation of information’ created to capture public attention ‘in the interest of some policy or commodity or idea’.<sup>1</sup> Although Bernays’ definition may not have covered the far reaching capabilities of propaganda in the twentieth century, it is a definition which adequately covered the propaganda campaign of one particular media outlet in America in the first quarter of the twentieth century. *The Indian School Journal*,<sup>2</sup> produced at the Chilocco Agricultural School Oklahoma, was a comprehensive publication that disseminated a simple message: Native American Indians would best be assimilated into American society through the off-reservation boarding schools.

This dissertation aims to fill a substantial historiographical lacuna by providing an analysis of a largely under acknowledged, yet significant, publication – the ISJ. In conjunction with Bernays’ interpretation of propaganda, the ISJ consciously, and intelligently, used its material to convince readers of its assimilationist agenda. The publication disseminated its message in three ways. First it drew on war time discussions of Indian citizenship to highlight that Indians were indeed capable of rapid assimilation. Not only had their role in the war proved this, but the institution had produced effective soldiers who served as an emblem for what this system of education could achieve. The discussion of Indian cultures and traditions within the ISJ were implemented to insinuate that the school was not eradicating all forms native cultures. Instead the ISJ appeared to celebrate what it conceived to be the ‘valuable’ Indian lifeways. Finally, and most significantly, the ISJ fervently advocated that the institution’s curriculum of ‘vocational education’ provided the best program to assimilate Indians for citizenship. Ideas of equality, attained through hard work, were propagated to the students. However a dichotomy is apparent when we consider the message that the publication was propagating to the public and federal policy makers. Vocational education at Chilocco was propagated to these groups as an assimilationist program, which would prepare Indians for trades in industry and agriculture, and could be taken back to the reservations. Although the publication stressed notions of equality and Indian progress, education for the school’s officials, and the ISJ’s editors, ultimately meant Indian self-sufficiency. Thus they could not escape the paternalistic sentiments and contradictions at the heart of assimilation: to believe Indians needed to be assimilated to the dominant (American) society, was to believe that Indians were inferior – their savagery needed to be cured with teaching them the civilized ways of the white man.

The period between 1916 and 1926 has been selected as this is when public discussions of Indian educational policy reached a notable high point. As war time conditions required a large and skilled work force, significant changes in educational policy were taking place in schools across America.<sup>3</sup> The government embarked on a

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<sup>1</sup> E. Bernays, *Propaganda* (London, 1928), 9.

<sup>2</sup> Henceforth *the Indian School Journal* will be shortened to ISJ.

<sup>3</sup> J. Hillison, ‘*Agricultural Education Preceding the Smith-Hughes Act 1917*’, 1986. <http://pubs.aged.tamu.edu/jae/pdf/vol28/28-02-08.pdf> [first accessed 10/03/1993].

period of legislative reform introducing vocational education as a feature of education across all schools in America. Notably, the Smith Hughes National Education Act of 1917 promoted vocational agriculture across the nation, and provided federal funds for this purpose.<sup>4</sup> The period leading up to this act saw huge developments in public attitudes towards the purpose of education. The demise of social Darwinism at the end of the nineteenth century, which placed emphasis on educating the gifted and talented, shifted attitudes of education away from academia and focused on the practical aims of education.<sup>5</sup> Nonetheless, revisionist historians, such as Harvey Kantor, have painted a very different picture of this redefinition, and practical focus of education programs in America. In conjunction with other revisionist historians he argues that ‘vocational education was not the product of democratic sentiments’, but was pushed by businessmen and efficiency minded educators ‘that were concerned with using the schools to control workers and feed the corporate industrial society that was emerging in the early twentieth century’.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, in the early 1920s the system of off-reservation boarding schools, and the policy of assimilation, came increasingly under scrutiny as reformer John Collier led the campaign against the schools. Collier’s American Indian Defence Association, founded in 1923, worked for the next decade to change the focus of federal Indian policy from destruction of Native cultures to respect for native lifeways.<sup>7</sup>

David Wallace Adams has produced the most comprehensive overview of federal Indian educational policy, and its impact on the off-reservation boarding schools. Most useful to this study is the attention paid within Adams’ work, *Education for Extinction*, to Estelle Reed - Indian Superintendent. Adams concluded that her initial introduction of vocational training in 1910 ‘marked a definite shift in emphasis’ as Indian students were introduced to a system of education geared towards large scale industrial training.<sup>8</sup> Although Adams’ arguments can be substantiated, the vocational program at Chilocco Agricultural School was not geared towards the notion of ‘large scale industry’. K. Tsiana Lomawaima’s case study of Chilocco *They Called it Prairie Light*, asserts that the program was directed ‘towards creating a rural underclass’.<sup>9</sup> Alongside its primary agricultural program, the school offered other small scale craftsmanship courses, such as: harness making, blacksmithing, printing, carpentry, masonry and home economics. Lomawaima’s study, conducted in the 1980’s, employed oral histories to gain insights into student experiences of Chilocco. Her book is essentially a presentation of interviews documenting the accounts of student experiences who attended Chilocco from the 1920’s – 30’s. However, Lomawaima does not discuss the role the ISJ played at the school, she only occasionally refers to student enrolment on the printing program. Nonetheless by analysing these oral histories, we are able to gain an understanding of student attitudes towards the school administrators and the program of vocational education. It is clear that Chilocco was a strictly disciplined school, run along military lines. Ultimately Lomawaima argues that students ‘were not passive consumers of an ideology or lifestyle imparted from above by federal

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<sup>5</sup> Hillison, ‘*Agricultural Education Preceding the Smith-Hughes Act 1917*’ (1986).

<sup>6</sup> H. Kantor, ‘Work Education, and Vocational Reform: The Ideological Origins of Vocational Education, 1890-1920’, *American Journal of Education*, 94.4 (1986), 402.

<sup>7</sup> R.C. Naugle, ‘Indian Boarding Schools’: <http://plainshumanities.unl.edu/encyclopedia/doc/egp.edu.019> [Accessed 02/02/2015].

<sup>8</sup> D.W. Adams, *Education For Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928* (Kansas, 1995), 216.

<sup>9</sup> K. T. Lomawaima, *They Called It Prairie Light: The Story of Chilocco Indian School* (Nebraska, 1993), 82.

administrators'. By blending cooperation with resistance, the pupils 'inhabited and possessed' an institution that was committed to transforming them.<sup>10</sup>

Jennifer Bess has pioneered the first study dedicated to the *Indian School Journal*. Her work focuses on the ways in which students used the ISJ to resist 'assaults on their Indian identities' ultimately arguing that, student writing in the ISJ 'challenged the epistemological binary the Office of Indian Affairs (BIA) through aiming to annihilate the perceived savage indigenous past, and the allegedly civilised Anglo future it sought to impose'.<sup>11</sup> Although her focus on student contributions is insightful, the scope of her study is unable to address why and how school officials used the ISJ to forward their own agenda. Hence, a more rounded study of the publication is needed. Similar to Bess' work is the study produced by Beth Haller. Haller's analysis of the publications at the Carlisle Indian School also focused on student contributions. However, unlike Bess, Haller is able to offer explanation of how school officials used student contributions. She argues that these publications balanced their stated assimilationist agenda with 'representations of the cultural voices of American Indian children'.<sup>12</sup> Although Haller believes that adult American Indians had some ability to create their own marketplace of ideas through tribal publications, Indian children at government-run schools 'were firmly under the control of white society'.<sup>13</sup> Therefore, although Haller again focuses on student contributions, she has produced a more rounded study behind the aims and intentions of the publications at the Carlisle Indian School. It appears that a similar study to Haller's is needed of the publications at Chilocco. This study will attempt to fill the gaps of the established scholarship, and produce a grounding analysis of the ISJ. As a consequence, it will adhere to the notion explained in *Mass Communications*, that 'just as the media today help the public gain understanding of current issues, so the media of the past enlighten historians about past public problems'.<sup>14</sup>

### **The Off-Reservation Schools and Chilocco**

Western expansion in the nineteenth century was stimulated by America's belief in manifest destiny, which was grounded in the idea that God had given Americans the right to settle Indian lands and help progress civilisation. The American Indian, whose 'tribalism' represented a 'backwardness' to white Americans, were considered the antithesis of civilisation, and an obstacle to its progress.<sup>15</sup> After the claiming of Indian lands, the federal government was presented with the problem of what to do with these Indians. By the 1880's the general public consensus pushed for the Indians to leave behind their tribal landholdings, traditions, Indian identities, and assimilate into American society. The Dawes Act of 1884 was a response to this consensus, aiming to spur the rapid assimilation process of Native Americans. The policy dissolved tribal ownership of reservations and was designed to force assimilation by separating Native Americans from their tribal affiliations turning them into farmers.<sup>16</sup> Nonetheless, many federal agents, along with members of the public, believed the Dawe's Act alone

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<sup>10</sup> Lomawaima, *They Called It Prairie Light*, 167.

<sup>11</sup> J. Bess, 'More than a Food Fight: Intellectual Traditions and Cultural Continuity in Chilocco's *Indian School Journal*, 1902-1918', *The American Indian Quarterly*, 37.1-2 (2013), 78.

<sup>12</sup> B.A., Haller, 'Cultural Voices or Pure Propaganda? Publications of the Carlisle Indian School', 1879 – 1918', *American Journalism*, 19.2 (2002), 65.

<sup>13</sup> Haller, 'Cultural Voices or Pure Propaganda?' 66.

<sup>14</sup> J.D Startt, and W. D, Sloan, *Historical Methods in Mass Communication* (Michigan, 1989), 16.

<sup>15</sup> Adams, *Education for Extinction*, 89.

<sup>16</sup> 'A Solution to the Indian Problem' <http://recordsofrights.org/events/54/a-solution-to-the-indian-problem> [Accessed 4/2/2015].

would not be able to force the rapid assimilation of Indians. The government thus began to quickly expand its subsidies to mission schools. Most significantly, the Bureau of Catholic Indian missions expanded its schools for Native Americans from three with \$7000 in government contracts in 1873 to 38 with \$395,000 contracts 20 years later.<sup>17</sup>

General Pratt was the first to vigorously campaign for the off-reservation boarding schools as an alternative to mission schools, arguing they could offer a rapid and more effective program of assimilation. Pratt insisted that the best way to deal with the Indian was to ‘immerse him in civilisation and keep him there until well soaked’.<sup>18</sup> After a long campaign Pratt was allowed by the U.S Office of Indian Affairs to establish the first, and most notorious, off-reservation school in 1879 – The Carlisle Indian School at Pennsylvania. Pratt’s school under direct control of the government served as a ‘model’ for the off-reservation boarding school system.<sup>19</sup> The school waged an assault on the children’s Indian identities; on arrival their hair was cut short, they were given uniforms and they were forced to only speak in English. Thus the aim of Carlisle was to ‘Americanise’ Indian children culturally and physically. By 1899 twenty-five off reservation schools existed, and the Chilocco Indian Agricultural School operated along similar lines to the Carlisle school. Chilocco, located in Oklahoma, was established in 1884. It was opened as an agricultural school, yet during its initial beginnings, there was no established agricultural curriculum. It was not until 1901 that Superintendent McCowan insisted that Chilocco should become a ‘genuine agricultural school for children’.<sup>20</sup> Therefore as early as 1901, Chilocco became a distinctively vocational school. Its aim was explicitly stated in the ISJ 19 years later - ‘the aim of Chilocco is to prepare the Indian Youth principally of Oklahoma, for the duties and responsibilities of citizenship’.<sup>21</sup>

### *The Indian School Journal*

The ISJ was a monthly publication produced at Chilocco by the students enrolled on the printing program. The masthead explicitly stated that the publication ‘is issued from the Chilocco Indian School’s printing department...the mechanical work on it being done by the students of the school under the direction of the Instructor of Printing’.<sup>22</sup> The *Journal* is available to view online through the National Archive’s ‘Online Public Access’ section.<sup>23</sup> There are 186 issues of the ISJ available online, spanning the period of 1904 – 1926.<sup>24</sup> Although this is the only period of time available to view on online, the *Journal* remained in publication up until

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<sup>17</sup> F. P. Prucha, *The Churches and the Indian Schools, 1888-1912* (Lincoln and London, 1979), 10.

<sup>18</sup> Pratt quoted in Haller, *Cultural Voices or Pure Propaganda?* 67.

<sup>19</sup> Haller, *Cultural Voices or Pure Propaganda?* 66.

<sup>20</sup> Superintendent McCowan, ‘Letter’, ISJ, 6.6 (April, 1906), 82.

<sup>21</sup> ‘Establishment of Chilocco’, ISJ, 20.29 (May, 1921), 394. \*Although this study will aim to give the author of the articles reprinted in the ISJ, often in articles such as this no author is printed. Therefore, this study will suggest that these articles were produced by the ISJ’s editors.

<sup>22</sup> See Appendix III.

<sup>23</sup> The ISJ is available online at: [http://research.archives.gov/search?expression=parent-id-lnk%3A1105265+lod-display-lnk%3AItem&pg\\_src=brief&data-source=online](http://research.archives.gov/search?expression=parent-id-lnk%3A1105265+lod-display-lnk%3AItem&pg_src=brief&data-source=online)

<sup>24</sup> Although the ISJ was a monthly publication many issues are not available online. For some of the years sampled within this study there were a maximum of four available issues, and for three of the years in this period there was no availability. See appendix I for all issues sampled and all issued used. The full collection of Journals is available in the Fort Worth Archives in Texas.

the 1930's when it was adapted into the 'Chiloccoan', and became a more directly student focused publication.<sup>25</sup> Due to the vast number of issues available online, this study sought sample issues spanning the selected years of 1916-1926. The method of sampling proved effective in grasping the scope of the publication's propaganda campaign, as opposed to selectively searching for key materials.

The newsgathering techniques of the publication were made up from exchanges with other newspapers, personal reports from the editors and leading Indian commissioners; as well as letters from the public, alumni and parents. Correspondents were rarely sent out to report on stories, and although students helped with the mechanical production of the Journal, their reports and editorial comments only made up a fraction of its content. Similar to the Carlisle publications explored by Haller, 'most of their content was acquired by means of scissors and paste pot'.<sup>26</sup> Additionally on its masthead the Journal declared it was published 'in the interests of the Indian Service'. It further placed a disclaimer in every issue stating 'articles about Indians are solicited. The editor does not hold himself responsible for the opinions expressed in contributed articles'.<sup>27</sup> Consequently this study cannot claim that all the articles within the ISJ were directly intended to influence its readers and propagate a message. Due to the nature of the publication's newsgathering techniques it will consider why these articles may have been selected, and ultimately assess the representation and message that the *Journal* was aiming to portray through the selected articles.

Produced within the school's print shop, the publication had a dual purpose. Not only did it exist for the purpose of educating the school's students in the processes of printing, but the shop operated to produce a profit; the yearly subscription fees for the ISJ amounted to 50 cents.<sup>28</sup> The 'Indian Print Shop' was thus able to remain operational due to the subscription fees paid by readers. Additionally the shop produced publications for establishments outside of the school. Most notably in 1916 the ISJ printed a short article 'Greenville School Agency and News' which stated that the 'the printing executed for Greenville by Chilocco Indian Print Shop is a fine advertisement for the boys of that department'.<sup>29</sup> The Greenville School, being situated in San Francisco, demonstrated how the print shop was capable at circulating its material across a vast geographical area. Furthermore the shops capabilities of printing large volumes of material was highlighted in 1920 when the ISJ declared that 'the printers mailed several packages containing 2000 bank cards, to Mr E.K Miller at Greenville'.<sup>30</sup> Despite these statements issued by the ISJ, there is a lack of data and evidence over the distribution of the *Journal*, and ultimately its readership. Although this lack of data is problematic in trying to gain a full understanding of the publications propaganda agenda, through the analysis that will follow in this study, it will be clear who the intended audience for the ISJ's propagandist message was.

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<sup>25</sup> Issues of the 'Chiloccoan' are also available online through the National Archives.

<sup>26</sup> Haller, 'Cultural Voices or Pure Propaganda?', 71.

<sup>27</sup> These comments can be found in all the issues that have been assessed. They are incorporated into the contents page, and also form the masthead of the first page of every issue. See Appendix III.

<sup>28</sup> ISJ, 20.9 (October, 1920), 246.

<sup>29</sup> Special Correspondence, 'Greenville School and Agency News', ISJ, 16.6 (February, 1916), 310.

<sup>30</sup> ISJ, (October, 1920), 267.



## Chapter 1: The Indian as a Citizen

This chapter will refer to ways in which ISJ utilised the government's change in attitude towards Indian assimilation and citizenship, building upon these ideas to disseminate its own message. Before the war intellectuals and government officials had argued that Indians were incapable of rapid assimilation. By reprinting important government propaganda dispatches that began to argue against these former ideas, and by emphasising the role played by former Chilocco students in the war, the ISJ propagated that Indians were, capable of assimilation. Ultimately these messages within the publication served as evidence against critics who still doubted the capability of Indians to be assimilated. Thus, the ISJ represented Chilocco to be an institution that understood the nature and capabilities of the Indian.

On the surface it could be argued that the interests of the government and Chilocco had always converged; both institutions were committed to solving the 'Indian problem' through assimilation, and the off-reservation boarding schools were reliant on federal funds. However assimilationist programs consistently came under contention, and were constantly challenged by federal policy makers. Most notably Francis Ellington Leupp, Indian Commissioner from 1905-1909, waged a strong campaign against the off-reservation schools. Leupp suggested in his 1910 work, *The Indian and His Problem* that Indians were 'of a simple mind'. Due to their mental incapability's assimilation was not a solution.<sup>31</sup> Alternatively it would be best to 'leave him to himself, on the principle that any group of men are governed best when governed last'.<sup>32</sup> Leupp concluded that due to these factors the off-reservation schools had become nothing more than a 'meaningless habit'.<sup>33</sup> Intellectuals were also making similar arguments. Significantly, S. G. Hall, a leading psychologist of the early twentieth century, suggested that because Indians were a 'lower race', he doubted their capacity to move beyond their present cultural conditions; therefore they were genetically programmed to remain in these conditions.<sup>34</sup> Although it is unclear whether Leupp was acquainted with the ideas of Hall, it is evident that the off-reservation system was facing much criticism before the outbreak of the war from intellectuals and within the government. These criticisms would give Chilocco school officials, who were concerned with keeping the school open, powerful motivations to use the ISJ as a platform for their assimilation agenda.

Nevertheless with Leupp's time as Indian Commissioner ending in 1909, and the outbreak of war in 1914, the general attitude towards assimilation within the government changed, and leading Commissioners began to point towards its success. Consequently during WW1 the government disseminated its own propaganda which praised assimilation programs and emphasised Indian patriotism. Barsh rightfully maintains that this campaign began in January 1918 'when the Indian Press Office released material containing statistics on Indian enlistment'<sup>35</sup>, sparking a flurry of newspaper stories. Eventually, and largely due to the significant Indian role in the war, ideas of Indian citizenship were openly discussed in government press material. Although there may have been a genuine gratitude towards Indians and their service, there was indeed a government agenda within

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<sup>31</sup> F. Leupp, *The Indian and his Problem* (New York, 1910), 7.

<sup>32</sup> Leupp, *The Indian and his Problem*, 43.

<sup>33</sup> Leupp, *The Indian and his Problem*, 29.

<sup>34</sup> Adams, *Education for Extinction*, 113.

<sup>35</sup> R. L. Barsh, 'American Indians in the Great War', *Ethnohistory*, 38.3 (1991), 13.

this propaganda to increase and maintain their force of skilled war time personnel. This agenda was clear within a federal news dispatch reprinted in the ISJ in October 1917, which urged 'Service in Need or Men' and further disclaimed 'labour scarcity in the Indian irrigation service...it is necessary for the employees to know farming and to understand the difficulties concerning water distribution'.<sup>36</sup> Thus the government's agenda in gaining experienced servicemen was evident within this dispatch. It is also worth noting that other media outlets at the time also published and reprinted the government propaganda that related to Indian citizenship. The New York Evening Sun regularly included statements made by Indian Commissioner Cato Sells. The paper exclaimed that 'federal Indian schools were almost emptied by enlistments when the war was declared', consequently Sells maintained that 'these young men were quick to catch the spirit of the new era'.<sup>37</sup>

When compared to these other media outlets, it is arguable that government discussions of citizenship provided public relations material for the ISJ to help disseminate more explicit ideas. This was evident within the reprint of an official dispatch in 1917, written by Horace Johnson, Indian Superintendent of Oklahoma. The article, titled 'Equal Rights under the Flag', gave a general account of 81 Oklahoman Indians that received patent fees for their lands in 1916. As a consequence they were given interviews by the Board of Competency to 'judge their worth as prospective citizens'.<sup>38</sup> Johnson pointed towards the Indian's new willingness to accept their role as citizens. He stated that 'many were anxious to become citizens', and for the majority of these patents 'they appreciated what the government had done for them' thus 'were ready to share the burdens of citizenship to become tax payers, and lawmakers.'<sup>39</sup> Likewise, these ideas of a willingness, and openness to accept citizenship were further echoed in an official government letter printed in the ISJ in September 1920. The letter written by the Assistant Indian Commissioner was addressed to all off-reservation school Superintendents. It maintained that:

The splendid record of the Indians in the world war, with the numberless personal incidents that glorify it...should assure us of a spirit never before so receptive to the lessons that may be drawn to their advantage from the decisive events in American history.<sup>40</sup>

By stressing the willingness and openness of Indians to become citizens, these government attitudes contrasted significantly to the ideas advocated by Leupp a decade earlier. Through selecting and publishing these government articles, the ISJ was using them to help reinforce ideas that Indians were making significant progress, and deserved citizenship status.

More than this, the ISJ built on these government dispatches, to propagate that it was the role of the off-reservation schools that had changed Indian attitudes. This was explicitly highlighted within a monthly feature titled 'In the Council Tepee' in the October 1918 issue. Unlike other monthly features in the ISJ, the author and

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<sup>36</sup> 'Service in Need of Men', ISJ, 18.2 (October, 1917), 245.

<sup>37</sup> *New York Evening Sun* (20 December, 1918)

<sup>38</sup> H. Johnson, 'Equal Rights under the Flag, ISJ, 17.5 (January 1917), 231.

<sup>39</sup> Johnson, 'Equal Rights under the Flag', 233.

<sup>40</sup> E. B. Merit, ISJ, 20.8 (September 1920), 232.

place of publication were omitted. As a result there is reason to believe that the editors of the ISJ were responsible for the production of this feature. Under the heading 'The Indian and Education' the article stated:

Time was, in the memory of many superintendents and teachers in the Indian schools, when the great majority of Indians did not want to have anything to do with the schools...but time and effort have changed this attitude, seldom now do we find among Indians any organized opposition to schools.<sup>41</sup>

Hence, these ideas were directly related to the messages put forward in the government's propaganda campaign which initially recognised that Indian's were more 'willing' to become citizens. Indeed the ISJ suggested this had only been achieved through the 'time' and 'effort' of assimilation programs like the ones implemented at Chilocco.

By publishing letters from former students who were fighting on the front line, the ISJ could again disseminate the message that the school was responsible for education of these soldiers who were worthy citizens. Not only did these letters again build upon ideas within government propaganda, but the students provided a case of evidence against those who were still unconvinced of the Indian's assimilation capabilities. The issues throughout the period from 1918 – 1920 included many letters from former students. However the ISJ dedicated a four page spread to these letters in the January 1919 issue of the ISJ, and included photographs of the soldiers on and off duty, placed under the heading 'Letters from Our Boys in the Army and Navy'.<sup>42</sup> The reference to 'our boys' reinforces the idea that Chilocco was accountable for the raising and educating these Indians who were serving in the war. The section constituted four lengthy letters from former pupils. Interestingly, the photographs included did not match the writers of the letters, and there are no accompanying letters for the photographs.<sup>43</sup> This suggests that the ISJ's editors had other letters and materials sent to the school that were not included in the journal, and that the ones which were included were part of specially selected editing process. Again this highlights that the ISJ consciously manipulated its material to disseminate a message.

The letters exhibit the student's patriotism and exuberance for military service. The opening letter recounts the details of heavy bombardment, and concludes 'it was a thrilling dramatic story, that of actual suspension of hostilities'.<sup>44</sup> The writer later states 'the trip has been a wonderful and fulfilling experience'.<sup>45</sup> Despite the traumatic details of fighting which are included in the account, the former student is enthralled by his war time experience and states that he was 'fulfilled' by serving his country. Another letter stated 'I have been in the army almost four months and like it very well, although a soldiers life is no easy thing'.<sup>46</sup> Through these selected letters the ISJ was able to build up a powerful representation of their former pupils; they were clearly courageous. Although the war was not easy, they had an unwavering sense of enthusiasm remaining patriotic to the cause. Their enthusiasm for military service was testimony to rapid pace of their assimilation – as the ISJ

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<sup>41</sup> 'In the Council Teepee', ISJ, 19.2 (October, 1918), 74.

<sup>42</sup> 'Letters from our Boys in the Army and Navy' ISJ, 19.5 (January, 1919), 178.

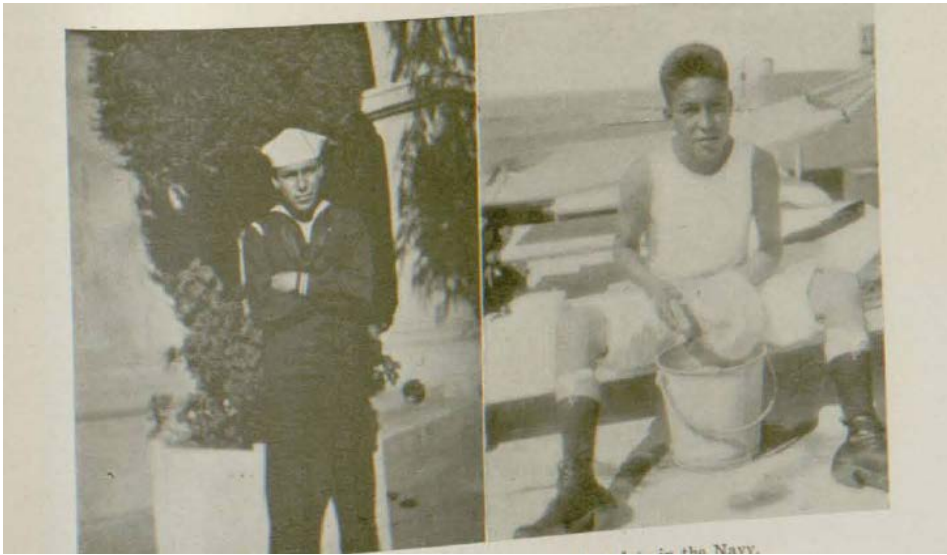
<sup>43</sup> See Image 2.

<sup>44</sup> 'Letters from Our Boys', 178.

<sup>45</sup> 'Letters from Our Boys', ISJ, 179.

<sup>46</sup> 'Letters from Our Boys', ISJ, 179.

had already stated there was a time when children did not want to be assimilated – now they were defending America and truly assimilated.



**Image 2: One of the photographs included in the ISJ of a former student on and off duty. The letter had no published accompanying letter. ISJ, 19. 5 (January, 1919), 179**

In conjunction with student letters, the ISJ propagated that it was Chilocco's vocational curriculum which had produced skilled and successful soldiers. In the October 1917 issue of the ISJ, the editors began a monthly feature titled 'The Indian and the War – News and Comment Regarding the Indian and the Part he is playing in Defending Democracy'.<sup>47</sup> As the title suggests the feature was orientated towards public contributions which noted the achievements of Indian soldiers in the war. In one featured letter the writer stated 'it is gratifying no doubt to know that the military training and industrial training that the boys received at Chilocco has fitted them for desirable placed in the national army'.<sup>48</sup> The ISJ'S editor, and printing instructor, reinforced these ideas in October 1918, suggesting that when entering the war service Chilocco students 'are being given places of leadership...because they were better trained in school for effective service than most of the white young men'.<sup>49</sup> Therefore this public contribution, and the statement made by the editor helped emphasise that not only were former Chilocco students making an active contribution towards the war effort, they were highly skilled due to their vocational training they had received in school.

Through the meticulous selection of student letters, public contributions, and statements made by the ISJ's editor, a clear message was being disseminated by the ISJ; Indians were capable of citizenship, and had proved this within the war effort. Chilocco's assimilation program had contributed largely to this progress, primarily through changing Indian attitudes towards assimilation, and producing highly skilled Indian soldiers. More so the attitudes behind this message are evident - the school officials at Chilocco, and the ISJ's editors, believed they understood the true nature and capabilities of the Indian. In the end these arguments demonstrated

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<sup>47</sup> 'The Indian and the War', ISJ, 18.2 (October, 1917), 74.

<sup>48</sup> 'The Indian and the War', 74.

<sup>49</sup> E. A. Allen, 'R.D Hall, Critic', ISJ 19.2 (October, 1917), 46.

the paternalism and the paradox at the heart of the assimilation policy in education. Although the editors of the ISJ and the School's officials clearly believed in the capabilities of Indians to be assimilated – this could only happen through education.

## Chapter 2: The Indian Free to be an Indian

Although propagating the school's assimilationist agenda, the ISJ allocated space for the discussion of Indian cultures and traditions. Thus creating a paradox and posing the question – why did an institution dedicated to rapid assimilation and 'Americanisation' of its students allow these discussions to take place? This chapter will argue that discussions of native and cultures and traditions, like the discussions of citizenship, were used to disseminate a message, and build up a false representation of Chilocco. The publication insinuated that the institution was not eradicating all Indian lifeways – instead it was valuing unique native identities and practices. However, when deconstructing the ISJ's discussions of native practices, the limit of these discussions is evident. Furthermore, student oral histories relay the harsh punishments students faced if expressing any cultural continuity.

A wave of immigration to America post WW1 sparked new intellectual currents in response to an emerging multicultural society. Many thinkers began to advocate the idea of cultural pluralism; simply defined, cultural pluralism maintained that the many smaller cultural groups within America should retain their values and practices – as long as they were consistent with the values and laws of the dominant culture.<sup>50</sup> Protestant missions provide a notable example of a group who advocated ideas of cultural pluralism. During the start of the 1920s missionaries began to believe that Indian's held many valuable traits and romanticized the Indian figure as a spiritual, ecological and noble citizenry.<sup>51</sup> This idea was also mixed with the fear that the white man's way was corrupting these valuable traits. As early as 1914, Arthur Wedge of the Society for Propagating the Gospel, noted that exposing Indians to whites had brought many dangers and the possibility of turning Indians into greedy materialists. He stated that if the Indian chose the wrong route to achieve goals of citizenship and assimilation, he 'might do violence to his native mysticism'.<sup>52</sup> Hence, it is evident that new ways of viewing native cultures were having an effect on various groups within society. These ideas were the antithesis of the aims of Indian boarding schools, which believed that assimilation needed to be an entire eradication of former Indian ways of life. Pratt famously voiced this when he stated the aim was to 'kill the Indian – save the man'.<sup>53</sup> Although it is difficult to find any direct criticisms made against the off-reservation boarding schools from groups who advocated cultural pluralism, the ISJ's permitted discussions of native traditions and cultures suggest that it was aware of these ideas. It can even be argued that the discussions of native cultures served to propagate a message to these groups that the off-reservation schools were not institutions of cultural genocide.

Evidence for the 'restricted' discussions of native cultures can be found within the March 1916 issue of the ISJ. The issue published two consecutive articles discussing aspects of native cultures and traditions. Once more the place of original publication is not given, and as a result there is reason to believe that these articles were produced exclusively for the publication in the ISJ. The article 'Indian Immon' describes the bath lodge within an Indian Camp, stating 'it is a relic of antiquity...in fact the Indians do not remember a time when it was not

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<sup>50</sup> 'Cultural Pluralism': <http://immigrationinamerica.org/454-cultural-pluralism.html> [Accessed 12/04/2015].

<sup>51</sup> K. Tsiana Lomawaima, and T.L McCarty, 'When Tribal Sovereignty Challenges Democracy: American Indian Education and the Democratic Ideal', *American Educational Research Journal*, 29.2 (2002), 281.

<sup>52</sup> A. Wedge quoted in J.B LaGrand, 'The Changing 'Jesus Road': Protestants Reappraise Indian Missions in the 1920s and 1930s', *The Western Historical Quarterly*, 27.4 (1996), 485.

<sup>53</sup> Pratt, quoted in the Digital History Collection:

[http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/disp\\_textbook.cfm?smtID=2&psid=3505](http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/disp_textbook.cfm?smtID=2&psid=3505) [Accessed 17/02/2015].

used. The bath is taken with much ceremony and is religious in character'.<sup>54</sup> The reference 'relic to antiquity' places this ceremony in the past – it is no longer part of the Indian culture. Although the article acknowledges the ceremony was 'religious', the discussion is particularly limited here, and the author gives no further details of the role of religion in the ceremony. Immediately after this discussion followed a similar article 'Indian Songs'.<sup>55</sup> The author does not specifically refer to any of the words in Indian languages, but attempts to represent the meaning of the songs through the English language. It is concluded that the 'songs contain some surprising revelations...the songs teach that good men live to old age, that evil deeds bring their own punishment upon the offender'.<sup>56</sup> These articles highlight two points of interest. Firstly it is evident that these discussions of Indian cultures and traditions are made from an Anglo-American perspective, as the author of the second article is 'surprised' by his discoveries when surveying Indian songs. As a result relaying native cultures and practices from a non-Indian perspective limits these discussions. Indeed, there are very few details given over the religious aspect of Indian ceremonies, and the writer in the second article does not attempt to include translations of Indian songs, the meanings of the songs are merely described in English.

Once more, the ISJ selected narratives of native medicinal and farming knowledge, which served to propagate the idea that Chilocco was using these 'valuable' Indian lifeways as a grounding base for their educational program. Notably, the piece titled 'Nameless Indian Hero of Medicine' printed in the February 1925, retold a story of the first Indian who discovered a great medicine that could cure malaria. The story recounts that after drinking from a pool of water where the branches of an overhanging cinchona tree had fallen, the Indian medicine man 'was immediately relieved of the chills and fever...he showed his fellow Indians that bitter bark that had cured him...and later introduced it to the whites'.<sup>57</sup> By the reprinting and re-telling of this story – the publication is valuing the traditional medicinal practices of Indians. More significantly, there is recognition of the Indian's knowledge in curing such a disabling disease which had a profound effect on the lives of white people. Likewise, the retelling of historic Indian farming practices in the October 1920 issue of the ISJ made a similar point. The reprinted contribution celebrated the news of the North Dakota Agricultural College shipping 'two bushels of selected white flint to the Famer's Association of Natal, South Africa'.<sup>58</sup> The author informed in the article that the corn shipped was the 'direct descendent of one of the eight varieties of corn cultivated by the Mandan, and Hidatsa Indians in North Dakota, hundreds of years ago' therefore 'the world owes to the American Indians the great gift of corn'.<sup>59</sup> By emphasizing the ancient farming practices developed by Indians, the ISJ was able to clarify the aims of Chilocco; Indians had historically demonstrated clear aptitude and knowledge for farming, the school did not want to obliterate this. This was further amplified within the reprint of an article written by Cato Sells, who suggested 'the character of the Indian's lands and his native instinct point to his successful future as a stock-grower; but while he loves animal life and is the natural friend of the herd, he has needed sympathetic instruction...he has not understood the values of quality and quantity'.<sup>60</sup> Therefore, by valuing the important historic contributions of Indian lifeways to modern America, the ISJ was

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<sup>54</sup> H. M. Bedell, 'Indian Immon', ISJ, 16.6 (March, 1916), 249.

<sup>55</sup> D. Moines, 'Indian Songs', ISJ, 16.2 (March, 1916) 249.

<sup>56</sup> Moines, 'Indian Songs', 249.

<sup>57</sup> 'Nameless Indian Hero of Medicine', ISJ, 24.22 (February, 1925), 262.

<sup>58</sup> 'Indian Corn Sent to Foreign Farmers', ISJ, 20.9 (October, 1920), 261.

<sup>59</sup> 'Indian Corn Sent to Foreign Farmers', 261.

<sup>60</sup> 'Indian Corn Sent to Foreign Farmers', 261.

sending a nuanced message to the reader that Chilocco would not destroy all that was good within these historic practices, but instead build upon them. Furthermore and as Sells' argued the former Indian ways of life had provided the Indian with a natural aptitude in skills such as farming. The school merely wished to refine these skills.

Ultimately these examples suggest that the ISJ attempted to represent Chilocco as an institution which promoted ideas of cultural pluralism, when in reality, assimilation and Americanisation was still the ultimate aim of the school. These discussions were limited in their nature – they did not incorporate any tribal languages, or religious discussions. Once more the ISJ only endorsed traditional Indian lifeways (such as farming, and Indian medicinal practices) which were beneficial to Anglo-American society. Lomwaima and McCarty have produced a critical analysis of the contradictory policies and practices within American Indian Education. They conclude that education reveals a patterned 'response to cultural and linguistic diversity, as the federal government has attempted to distinguish 'safe' from 'dangerous' Native practices'.<sup>61</sup> Their studies maintain that at a federal level there was a profound ambivalence toward some aspects of native cultures. Most notably they conclude that linguistic and religious practices presented a perceived threat to the federal government, who were merely looking to water potentially safe areas of diversity within democracy.

Student oral histories also reinforce the ideas presented by Lomawaima and McCarty. The military nature of the school enforced a regime of assimilation that required students to forget their tribal languages and religions. Former student Randel Carpenter remembered the physical punishments students received if they were caught talking in their native tongue, he stated 'we had a belt line. Somebody get out of line... you know they had to run the belt line'.<sup>62</sup> Another former student recalls how tribal groups often conversed in their native tongue when away from the watchful eye of the matron, Vivian stated '...I don't know what they were doing, they were in their tongue, but they were all Ponca Indians...it sounded like they were praying'.<sup>63</sup> Indeed these practices were banned and frowned upon by the school authorities, who viewed them to be acts of covert resistance against assimilation. The military system that was enforced within the school highlights the school authorities' attempts to stamp out any kind of covert resistance. Noreen remembered the marching discipline of school stating 'it was run sort of like a military institution, actually. You marched everywhere! You marched to school, you marched to dinner...you marched to church, everywhere you went.'<sup>64</sup> Furthermore, Clara, a former student who graduated in from Chilocco in 1923 remembered the strict punishments enforced on students. She stated 'I do remember one incident where a girl was locked up in a little room for several days because she had another girl cut her hair too short. I always thought that punishment was much too severe for the crime'.<sup>65</sup>

Therefore these student oral histories help highlight the reality of student life at Chilocco. Strict punishments were enforced for those who did not adhere to the school's assimilation program. Although the ISJ allowed discussions of native cultures and identities there was clearly a limit on these. The school and the ISJ allowed no

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<sup>61</sup> Lomawaima, and McCarty, 'When Tribal Sovereignty Challenges Democracy', 281.

<sup>62</sup> R. Carpenter, quoted in Doris Duke Collection: The University of Oklahoma Western History Collections (1968): <http://digital.libraries.ou.edu/whc/duke/search.asp?term=carpenter&type=0&name=Go> [Accessed 12/12/2014].

<sup>63</sup> Vivian, quoted in Lomawaima, *They Called it Prairie Light*, 47.

<sup>64</sup> Noreen, quoted in Lomawaima, *They Called it Prairie Light*, 150.

<sup>65</sup> Clara, quoted in Lomawaima, *They Called it Prairie Light*, 122.



room for tribal languages, and the practice of native religions. Why school officials, and the government saw tribal languages and native religions as potentially threatening is unclear. However the reality of life in Chiloco and the punishments that ensued if a student was caught expressing cultural continuity through these terms reflected the arguments made by Lomawaima and McCarty. Ultimately these points suggest that the ISJ's discussions of Indian lifeways were again part of the publication's wider propaganda campaign. The Journal built up a misleading representation of the school through its suggestion that the institution embraced notions of cultural pluralism. However as student oral histories help indicate, and upon further analysis of these discussions, it is evident that assimilation within Chilocco meant the eradication of cultural and religious practices which could be deemed essential to Indian cultural continuity.

### Chapter 3: The Indian for Industry and Agriculture

This chapter will consider the conflicting messages that were disseminated by the ISJ concerning the school's vocational curriculum, in turn highlighting the paradoxes that were inherent in the policy of assimilation. Leading on from the claims established in the previous chapters, Chilocco's school officials, and ISJ editors, paternalistically believed they understood the true nature and capabilities of the Indian. These beliefs formed the basis of a substantial amount of material within the publication that was directed towards convincing the school's pupils that a vocation, achieved through hard work, would provide them with the best future in a modernising America. The *Journal* materialised this by stressing that hard work and labour would raise Indians to the same civilized level as white Americans and bring equality to their lives. Nonetheless these ideas contradicted the message that the ISJ propagated to the public and federal policy makers. In regards to these groups, the *Journal* was disseminating the message that vocational education within the off-reservation schools was producing Indians who would consequently become self-sufficient. Through the deconstruction of this message it can be suggested that school officials at Chilocco were primarily concerned with producing a curriculum that would incite Indian self-sufficiency on the reservations, rather than providing an education that would assimilate Indians fairly in society and place them on a level platform with their white counterparts. Therefore, Lomawaima's claim that Chilocco was producing a 'rural underclass' is warranted.

There were justified reasons for the ISJ to embark on a propaganda campaign that aimed to influence student opinions towards the school's curriculum. Student accounts of boarding school life highlight the ambivalence that was felt towards the program of vocational education; they often did not see the value of the physical labour and work they were required to do within the program. Often the tasks seemed menial and mundane. One Chilocco student remembered his experience working in the print shop stating 'we did nothing but clean those little maps that they use for type...that was the only thing he'd allow us to do. And we wanted to learn to print...' <sup>66</sup> It was not merely students who disagreed with the off-reservation school's curriculum. Parents of students, and tribal leaders, challenged the off-reservation school's vocational training as a means of assimilation. As Albert Yava who started school in 1893 records 'there was a lot of resistance. The conservatives felt very strongly that the white man was cramming his ways down our throats'. <sup>67</sup> Brenda J. Child in her study *Boarding School Seasons*, has explored the letters exchanged between students and parents at the Haskell off-reservation school. Through the letters parents questioned the schools regimentation, excessive physical labour, poor nutrition, overcrowding and disease. <sup>68</sup> There was a clear need to convince students and parents of students the value of the Chilocco's assimilationist program and its use of manual labour. The ISJ therefore consistently advocated that if Indians were to thrive in American society and fully assimilate they would need to adopt American values of hard work. Indeed the American identity, and the ideas inherent to the 'American dream', were built on the concept of the 'self-made man', who if worked hard enough and persevered, could achieve anything he wanted to.

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<sup>66</sup> Coleman, quoted in Lomawaima, *They Called it Prairie Light*, 119.

<sup>67</sup> Albert Yava quoted in J. Reyner, and J. Eder, *American Indian Education: A History* (Oklahoma, 2006), 40.

<sup>68</sup> B. J. Child, *Boarding School Seasons, American Indian Families, 1900-1940* (Nebraska, 2000), 7.

Although there is a lack of source evidence relating to the ISJ, that can help gauge the readership of the publication, features and articles within the *Journal* appear to be directly aimed at the school's students. Most notably the 'Chilocco News in General' feature constituted a large section of the *Journal* which often advertised extra-curricular activities for the students. For example YMCA meetings were advertised giving details of the days meetings would held on.<sup>69</sup> Additionally there were instances in the publication where material was directly published with the intent of being read by students. Notably, in a 1917 issue of the ISJ an article under the heading 'Walter urges students to avoid using tobacco' pressed students to obtain from smoking, and to 'resist its temptation'.<sup>70</sup> These features indicate that the publication was read by the students. The monthly features within the ISJ also suggest that students made up a significant part of the publications readership.

It can be reasoned that many of the poems within the ISJ, imbued with the rhetoric of hard work, were directly aimed at the students. There are boundless examples of poems and speeches within the ISJ which express the value of hard work, however a very explicit example of one of these poems can be seen in the April 1921 issue of the *Journal*, in a reprinted of a poem produced by the Editor of the *Star Tribune* in Minnesota. The poem 'I am the farmer' emphasised the importance of farming as a vocation, and the level of responsibility involved. It stated 'I am the provider of all mankind...upon me every human being constantly depends. A world itself is built upon my toil, my products, my honestly, because of my industry, America my country, leads the world'.<sup>71</sup> The reprint of this poem stood alone unaccompanied by any editorial comment. The message of the poem was potentially clear for the students. It stressed that Indian students enrolled in the agricultural program, who worked hard to 'toil' the land, would not only be raised to the same standard as whites – but their role in America would be so important that they would be 'depended on'.

Once more, war time conditions provided the perfect platform for the ISJ to stress that hard work would mean equality. In 1918, the ISJ printed a class assignment written by student Henry McKinney, titled 'A Trade Makes Every Man Equal'. McKinney stressed that 'it is necessary that every man have a trade or at least a vocation, for the reason that at the present time, more than ever before, our county demands the service from every true citizen...'<sup>72</sup> Hence, whatever vocation the students were enrolled in, they were making a valuable contribution – no matter what 'nationality we belong whether we be Indian or white man'.<sup>73</sup> During hardships every skill was crucial, and every man needed to work hard to find their place in the world. Likewise these ideas were reinforced in publications submitted by Chilocco's teachers. In 1926 the format of the ISJ changed to a more concise publication which focused on the school's individual vocational programs. The April 1926 issue was dedicated towards the school's printing program. The article 'Printing as a Vocation' produced by Chilocco's printing instructor, Francis Chapman, advocated the importance of printing and its respective role in society. Chapman addressed the students stating, 'to you young men who are now printer apprentices: your business or profession has been called the 'Art Preservative of all Arts'...You may well be proud of your calling for it's the

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<sup>69</sup> ISJ, 17.5 (January 1917), 234.

<sup>70</sup> 'Walter Urges Students to Avoid Using Tobacco', taken from *Kansas Industrialist* reprinted in ISJ, 16.10 (June, 1916), 315.

<sup>71</sup> J.P. McDonald, 'I am the Farmer', ISJ, 20.24 (April, 1921), 155.

<sup>72</sup> H. Mckinney, 'A Trade Makes Every Man Equal', ISJ, 19.4 (December, 1918), 142.

<sup>73</sup> Mckinney, 'A Trade Makes Every Man Equal', 142.

foundation of all civilization, education and business'.<sup>74</sup> Indeed this message harks back to the essence of assimilation – civilization. Not only were Indians now 'civilized' through education, they were now able to take on jobs which were once only upheld by whites, and participating in vocations that would help preserve and develop civilisation.

The ISJ's focus on vocational education was not only aimed at students. The ISJ also disseminated a message directed the public, and policy makers, that the school's curriculum was providing Indian children with an adequate education which would serve the Indian communities long term. Through teaching Indians practical skills, they would be able to take these back to their reservations, thus the assimilation programs of off-reservation schools were having a sustainable impact by creating Indian self-sufficiency. It is worth noting the policy of assimilation was primarily concerned with self-sufficiency. Indeed the aims of the Dawes Act provide an early example of this – the breaking up of reservation land and the allotting to Indian families, was hoped to incite farming self-sufficiency within Indian communities. In reality many Indian families became dependent on the government for rations.<sup>75</sup> One government official went beyond these ideas to suggest that granting federal funds for students to gain an education would intensify government reliance. He argued that the off-reservation schools would encourage Indian children to become like 'a modern Aladdin' they could rub a 'Government lamp to gratify their desires'.<sup>76</sup> Hence, there were fears within government that off-reservation schools would exacerbate the perceived Indian traits of laziness and obstinacy that the government was trying to abolish. Additionally, for the public who paid taxes into the Indian boarding schools, the ISJ aimed to highlight that their money was being well spent.<sup>77</sup> Indians would not go back to the reservation and return to their former ways; the system of vocational education made sure of this by instilling self-sufficiency in Indian students.

The ISJ highlighted the sustainable long term aims of vocational education within an article published in the November 1918. The article was produced by the Superintendent of Indian Schools Oscar Lipps, and titled 'Education and Culture: The Indian School Curriculum'. Lipps referred to individual vocational programs in the Indian schools, and their prospective aims. In regards to the agricultural curriculum in Indian schools, Lipps explained the long term impacts of the farming programs. He stated:

The course includes all of the work which is found on the ordinary diversified farm. This will fit the Indian boys to return to their land...and adapt themselves to those conditions and successfully undertake the type of farming which must be followed there.<sup>78</sup>

Additionally, the long term impacts of instilling self-sufficiency through vocational education were highlighted through the work done at another Indian off-reservation school. An article published by the ISJ in 1916, was produced by a teacher at the Colville Indian School who boasted the success of the school's program in helping

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<sup>74</sup> F. Chapman, 'Printing as a Vocation', ISJ, 25.25 (April, 1926), 234.

<sup>75</sup> Adams, *Education for Extinction*, 160.

<sup>76</sup> Annual Report for the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, for 1901:  
<http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/History.AnnRep01p1> [accessed 23/01/2015].

<sup>77</sup> Bess, 'More than a Food Fight', 80.

<sup>78</sup> O. Lipps, 'Education and Culture: The Indian School Curriculum', ISJ, 11.3 (Nov, 1918), 85.

the wider Indian community on the reservations. Referring to the school's home economics program for Indian girls, the teacher stated that '...the greatest single achievement in the girls' work has been the baking of yeast bread. It has at any rate awakened the interest of pupils and parents more than any other one thing'.<sup>79</sup> The article later maintained that the girls had been able to bake bread unassisted, and had brought this skill back to their homes to teach their parents. The teacher concluded that 'there are advantages in reaching the homes indirectly through the pupils as results can often be secured in this way when personal effort would fail'.<sup>80</sup> This article highlighted that 'practical' skills, rather than academic skills could be brought back to the reservation and taught to the wider community; therefore Colville's industrial program had proved that it was already helping Indian communities become to self-sufficient.

Therefore, although the off-reservation school superintendents believed in assimilating Indians into mainstream American society, the idea of 'self-sufficiency' implies there were limitations to how far Indians should be assimilated, thus creating an interesting paradox. This paradox was evident within the ISJ; the publication propagated that Indians were capable of citizenship and assimilation, however this assimilation was limited to giving Indians the skills to maintain small scale rural jobs on the reservations. A speech published by the ISJ in January 1919, epitomized this paradox. The Board of Education's Business Agent maintained that 'higher education although a valuable asset is not indispensable to happiness. Men live contently without it...as a means to an end, education must be useful. To be useful it must be practical'.<sup>81</sup> Of course the ISJ was not only condoning these statements by reprinting them, it was actively propagating this message to the students. Thus this article, along with the others put forward in this chapter that were selected by the ISJ, lead to several conclusions. Chilocco's school officials, and the Journal's editors, believed that Indian education should be orientated towards helping Indian reservations become self-sufficient. Due to this belief, and largely due to school's educators belief that Indians were best suited for manual training rather than academia, it is arguable that school officials could not escape the notion of Indian inferiority that was inherent within assimilation.

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<sup>79</sup> G.E Peters, 'Industrial Work at Day School', ISJ, 16.10 (June, 1916), 446.

<sup>80</sup> Peters, 'Industrial Work at Day School', 447.

<sup>81</sup> 'Education From a Business Man's Perspective', 19.10, ISJ (January, 1919), 180.

## Conclusion

This study has aimed to explore a largely overlooked publication and its respective intentions. Through an analysis of the ISJ's selected articles and editing processes, this study has argued that the publication, in conjunction with Bernay's definition of propaganda, 'consciously and 'intelligently' used its material to disseminate a message along three lines. Through stressing the Indian role in the war and advocating that Indians deserved to become American citizens, the ISJ tried to counteract the critics who argued Indians were incapable of assimilation. Furthermore, as the public consensus of thought was beginning to stress notions of cultural pluralism, the ISJ propagated that it is was not obliterating Indian cultures and lifeways, but instead building on them. Nonetheless the reality of student life at Chilocco painted a contrasting picture. These first arguments created a paradox with the Journal's ultimate mission in convincing students, the public, and policy makers of the school's vocational curriculum. By stressing the program of vocational education it was clear that Chilocco's school officials only believed in assimilating Indians to a certain strata of American society. This 'strata' meant one where Indians did not necessarily reach higher education, but were manually trained in small scale Anglo-American trades which would in turn help Indian communities become self-sufficient. Thus through deconstructing the ISJ's message, this study has been able to make some insightful conclusions over the attitudes of Indian educators and the complexities inherent in the policy of assimilation. Although trying to advocate through the ISJ that these educators viewed Indians as capable, and stressed ideas of equality, they could not escape their pre-conceived ideas of Indian racial inferiority, which were inherent in the policy of assimilation.

In retrospect the off-reservation boarding schools did not solve the Indian problem, they created one. The schools were strictly regimented, enforced excessive physical labour, and were prone to overcrowding and rampant disease.<sup>82</sup> By the 1920s the policy of assimilation had resulted in disastrous conditions for Indian people, who faced starvation on reservations, and a short life expectancy.<sup>83</sup> In fact the pressure for reform was so strong, in part due to the efforts of John Collier, that the government commissioned an investigation of this federal policy. The conclusions of this investigation were compiled into the Meriam Report of 1928 which made some bleak assessments. The proposals issued by the Meriam report present a direct contrast to the propagandist messages of the ISJ. The report critiqued the boarding school's use of labour, arguing that many of the children 'were much too young for heavy institutional labour'.<sup>84</sup> Most significantly, the report called for the unprecedented idea that Indian people should have the power to make their own choices and that the federal government should support them, it stated that:

'He who wishes to merge into the social and economic life of the prevailing civilization of this country should be given all practical aid and advice in making necessary adjustments. He who wants to remain an Indian and live according to his old culture should be aided in doing so.'<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> J. Davie, 'American Indian Boarding School Experiences: Recent Studies from Native Perspectives', *OAH Magazine of History*, 15.2 (2001), 21.

<sup>83</sup> M. C. Szasz, *Federal Boarding Schools and the Indian Child: 1920-1960* (Oklahoma, 1975), 271.

<sup>84</sup> M. Lewis, *The Problem of Indian Administration* (1928), 346.

<sup>85</sup> Lewis, *The Problem of Indian Administration*, 86.

These proposals allude that the ISJ's propagandist message was ineffectual in influencing policy makers and the wider public. The years preceding the Meriam report witnessed a huge level of public ambivalence towards the off-reservation schools. Consequently the report's proposals oversaw a complete overhaul of the Indian education policy bringing significant changes to the off-reservation schools. In regards to the students it can be argued that the ISJ's aims largely had the opposite effect of its intentions. Although it is hard to collect specific data to argue this, oral histories do provide an insight into the attitudes former students held towards assimilation. Instead of 'Americanising' students, the strong bonds developed between children in the boarding schools, were the primary impetus to the Pan-Indian identity that emerged throughout the twentieth century. Furthermore, although many felt distanced from tribal life when returning to the reservations, others used to their education to campaign and improve life on the reservations, ultimately pushing for equality and against the policy of assimilation.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> Child, *Boarding School Seasons*, 8.

## **Appendix: I**

### **List of ISJ issues that were sampled for this study (in order of year/month)**

#### **1906**

- ISJ, 6.6 (April, 1906)

#### **1916**

- ISJ, 16.6 (February, 1916)
- ISJ, 16.7 (March, 1916)
- ISJ, 16.10 (June, 1916)

#### **1917**

- ISJ, 17.5 (January, 1917)
- ISJ, 17.7 (March, 1917)
- ISJ, 18.2 (October, 1917)

#### **1918**

- ISJ, 18.5 (January, 1919)
- ISJ, 19.2 (October, 1918)
- ISJ, 19.3 (November, 1918)
- ISJ, 19.4 (December, 1918)

#### **1919**

- ISJ, 19.5 (January, 1919)
- ISJ, 19.7 (March, 1919)
- ISJ, 19.9 (May, 1919)

#### **1920**

- ISJ, 20.8 (September 1920)
- ISJ, 20.9 (October, 1920)
- ISJ, 20. 11 (December, 1920)

#### **1921**

- ISJ, 20.24 (April, 1921)
- ISJ, 20.29 (May, 1921)

**(No availability online for the years 1922, 1923 and 1924)**

#### **1925**

- ISJ, 24.18 (January, 1925)
- ISJ, 24.22 (February, 1925)

#### **1926**

- ISJ, 25.18 (March, 1926)
- ISJ, 25.25 (April, 1926)



## **Appendix II:**

### **List of ISJ issues that were used and referenced within this study (in order of year/month)**

#### **1906**

- ISJ, 6.6 (April, 1906)

#### **1916**

- ISJ, 16.6 (February, 1916)
- ISJ, 16.7 (March, 1916)
- ISJ, 16.10 (June, 1916)

#### **1917**

- ISJ, 17.5 (January 1917)
- ISJ, 18.2 (October, 1917)

#### **1918**

- ISJ, 18.5 (January, 1919)
- ISJ, 19.2 (October, 1918)
- ISJ, 19.3 (Nov, 1918)
- ISJ, 19.4 (December, 1918)

#### **1919**

- ISJ, 19.5 (January, 1919), 178

#### **1920**

- ISJ,20.8 (September 1920)
- ISJ,20.9 (October, 1920)

#### **1921**

- ISJ, 20.24 (April, 1921)
- ISJ, 20.29 (May, 1921)

#### **1925**

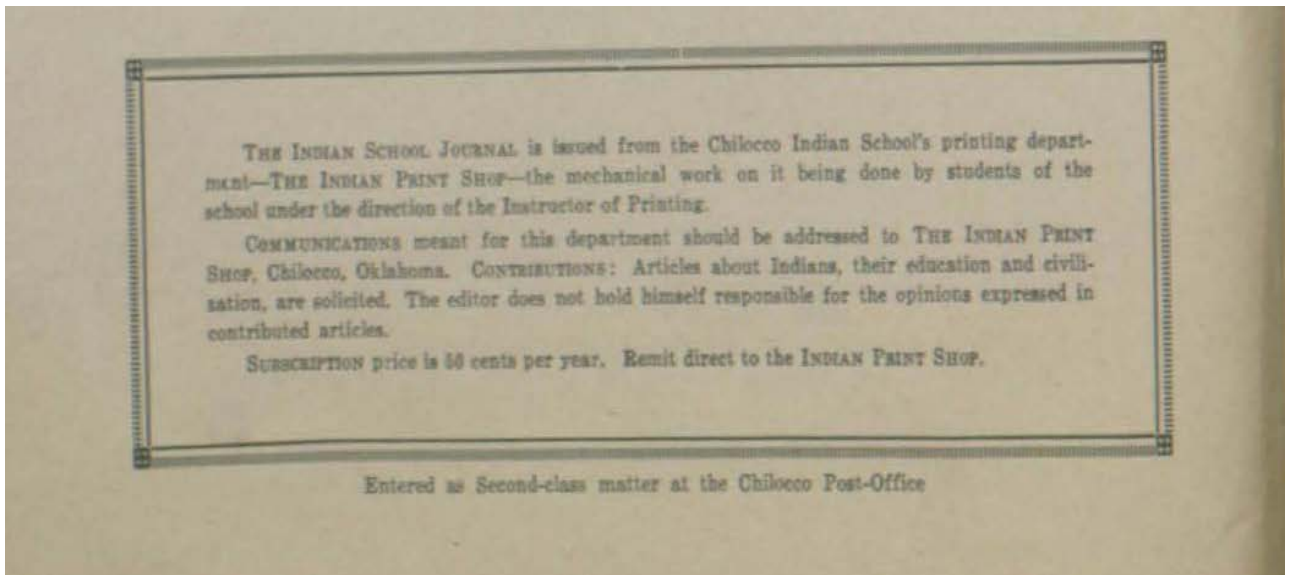
- ISJ, 24.22 (February, 1925)

#### **1926**

- ISJ, 25.25 (April, 1926)

**Appendix III:**

**Disclaimer and contextual information which can be found in the contents page of the ISJ**



**Contents page ISJ, 20.9 (October, 1920)**

## **Bibliography**

### **Articles in ISJ**

- Allen, E., 'R.D Hall, Critic', ISJ 19.2 (October, 1917)
- Bedell, H. M., 'Indian Immon', ISJ, 16.6 (March, 1916)
- Chapman, F., 'Printing as a Vocation', ISJ, 25.25 (April, 1926)
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