Redemption Through Representation: Grace Carpenter Hudson and Her Portraits of American Indian Children

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Redemption Through Representation: Grace Carpenter Hudson
and Her Portraits of American Indian Children

Meagan Camille Anderson

A thesis submitted to the faculty of
Brigham Young University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

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ABSTRACT

Redemption Through Representation: Grace Carpenter Hudson and Her Portraits of American Indian Children

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Department of Comparative Arts and Letters, BYU
Master of Arts

In his 1978 biography of Grace Carpenter Hudson, Searles R. Boynton refers to the artist as "the best in California," praising her life-long dedication to depicting the Pomo children of Northern California. During her lifetime (1865-1937), Hudson's work traveled to museums, world fairs, and expositions across the United States. The purpose of this research is to assert that Hudson's work is evidence of, and a response to, turn-of-the-twentieth-century Euro-Americans' hopes that the American Indian child could be "redeemed," or "saved," from their "savage" or "undomesticated" past. Additionally, this paper aims to convince the reader of the significance of Hudson’s art as it marks an implicant, although paramount, shift in the history of representation of the American Indian child. To accomplish these tasks, it will be necessary to investigate artwork featuring the American Indian child produced before and after Hudson, the artist’s early influences, along with the artist's own work and words.

Based on these sources, this thesis attempts to identify how viewers can understand the popularity of Hudson's work as a point of transference that existed between representation and reality during a period of the simultaneous rejection and resurrection of the American Indian. Through a process of perpetuating ideologies, the manipulation of the studio, subject, and space, and modernist influences regarding Indigenous peoples, the work that Hudson produced is emblematic of a time in which the larger American public was more interested in the proliferation of Euro-centric ideals than the preservation of American Indian life and culture.

Keywords: American Indian, American Indian Children, Pomo, Pomo Tribe, California American Indian, Grace Carpenter Hudson, American Art, American Indian Imagery, Post-Colonialism
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Gratitude to James Swensen, Kenneth Hartvigsen, Elliott Wise, and Andrea Kristensen.

Dedicated to Riley.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TITLE PAGE</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE OF CONTENTS</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF FIGURES</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hudson and the Pomo</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representing the Pomo</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Influences</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blank Slates</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hudson’s Attic</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing the Pomo</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Vanishing Crisis</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURES</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF FIGURES

Fig. 1. Grace Carpenter Hudson, Left Behind, 1927, Private Collection ........................................ 35

Fig. 2. Painting attributed to John Cloudman, Pomo Indians of California, ca. 1852, Location Unknown ........................................................................................................................................ 36

Fig. 3. Artist Unknown, An Indian Rancheria, ca. 1874, Location Unknown ................................. 36

Fig. 4. Artist Unknown (after a photograph by C.E. Watkins, A Camp of California Indians, ca. 1869, Location Unknown ........................................................................................................................................ 37

Fig. 5. Artist Unknown, Woodcut of Junipero Serra, 1787, Location Unknown ............................. 37

Fig. 6. Artist Unknown, Father Narcisco Duran and an Indian child, probably at Mission San Jose, lithograph in the published account of Eugene Duflot de Mofras’s visit to California in 1841 and 1842 ........................................................................................................................................ 38

Fig. 7. Artist Unknown, The Day of San Carlos, c. 1850, Location Unknown .................................. 38

Fig. 8. Charles Nahl, Engraving of California Indians Leaving or A Road Scene in California, c. 1850, Location Unknown ........................................................................................................................................ 39

Fig. 9. Aurelius Carpenter, Captain Charley Pinto and his wife, Mary, c. 1885 (in their home), Grace Hudson Museum and Sun House ............................................................................................................. 39

Fig. 10. Grace Carpenter Hudson, The Medicine Dancer, c. 1893, location unknown ............... 40

Fig. 11. Grace Carpenter Hudson, Ray of Light (Da-ta-leu), 1917, Private Collection ................ 41

Fig. 12. Grace Carpenter Hudson, Yokia Treasures, 1894, Location Unknown ............................ 42

Fig. 13. Grace Carpenter Hudson, Mendocino Products, 1895, Location Unknown .................... 42

Fig. 14. Grace Carpenter Hudson, Boy with Ducklings (Chicky Ducks), 1909, Private Collection ........................................................................................................................................ 43

Fig. 15. Grace Carpenter Hudson, The Little Jack, 1916, Location Unknown .............................. 44

Fig. 16. Grace Carpenter Hudson, Hu-hi-ya and Bu-shay, Location Unknown ............................ 45

Fig. 17. Aurelius Carpenter, Grace Carpenter Hudson and John Hudson in Grace’s Studio, 1890, Location Unknown ........................................................................................................................................ 46
Fig. 18. Grace Carpenter Hudson, Little Mendocino, 1895, California Historical Society Louis Sloss Collection

Fig. 19. Grace Carpenter Hudson, The Interrupted Bath (Quail Baby), 1892, Location Unknown

Fig. 20. Grace Carpenter Hudson, The Runaway, Date Unknown, Location Unknown

Fig. 21. Grace Carpenter Hudson, Basket Baby, 1935, Private Collection

Fig. 22. Grace Carpenter Hudson, Who Comes?, 1894, Location Unknown

Fig. 23. Grace Carpenter Hudson, Portraits of Pomo Chief, 1912, Private Collection

Fig. 24. Grace Carpenter Hudson, Kay-Will, 1928, Private Collection

Fig. 25. Grace Carpenter Hudson, Cornered, Date Unknown, Location Unknown
Introduction

Since the first moment of contact, American Indians have been victims of the Euro-American imagination. In popular culture and through media, “good” and “bad” American Indians have been portrayed through a set of racial stereotypes and visual clichés. These ideas and representations are so powerful they have shaped ideas and tropes about Indigenous populations to natives and non-natives for generations.¹ As historian Robert Berkhofer wrote in The White Man’s Indian, “Native Americans were and are real, but the Indian was a White invention and remains largely a White image, if not [a] stereotype.”² Choctaw scholar Devon Mihesuah framed the problem this way: “No other ethnic group in the United States has endured greater and more varied distortions of its cultural identity than American Indians.”³

The purpose of this thesis is to analyze portraits painted by Grace Carpenter Hudson featuring children of the Pomo tribe, arguing that these depictions mark a shift in the visual narrative of American Indian representation as these works mirrored nineteenth and twentieth-century Euro-American hopes that the American Indian child could be “redeemed,” or “saved,” from their “savage” or “undomesticated” past. To accomplish this task, it will be necessary to investigate the history of depictions of Native Californian children, Hudson’s early influences, as

¹ There are risks associated with referencing all Indigenous American peoples as “American Indian” or “Native American.” References within this essay are based on the 2019 “Tribal Nations and the United States” report by the National Congress of American Indians, who defined Native American as “All Native people of the United States and its trust territories (i.e., American Indians, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, Chamorros, and American Somoans), as well as persons from Canadian First Nations and Indigenous communities in Mexico and Central and South America who are U.S. residents.” This essay deals primarily with the Indigenous inhabitants of modern-day California and as such, will be identified throughout this essay as American Indians. According to the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), “there are 574 federally recognized Indian Nations (variously called tribes, nations, bands, pueblos, communities and native villages) in the United States,” in addition to hundreds of sovereign tribal Nations, each Nation's culture is uniquely shaped by its history, original languages, beliefs, and its members’ past and current relationship to land they once held, or still hold, claim to.
³ Devon A. Mihesuah, American Indians: Stereotypes and Realities (Atlanta, GA: Clarity Press, 1996), 9.
well as how the artists’ manipulation of her subject, canvas, and studio reflect modernist — late
nineteenth and early twentieth century — attitudes generated by a white audience.

Although there has been some research conducted concerning Grace Carpenter Hudson’s
life and work, these publications are primarily biographical. In 1987, Searles R. Boynton wrote
*The Painter Lady: Grace Carpenter Hudson.* This text is the product of Boynton’s dedicated
interest in Hudson and is the primary biography of the artist. In addition to chronicling her life,
Boynton’s text also provides readers with an extensive portfolio of thumbnail-sized images of
Hudson's work. This resource, which serves a dual purpose as an image archive, is invaluable as
it has documented an extensive number of Hudson’s works. Yet, in the preface of his biography
of the artist, Boynton tells his reader that although his interest in the artist's life has produced
insightful information, “...many more gaps [,] remain in understanding completely the life of
Grace Carpenter Hudson.”

In 2014, curators at the Grace Hudson Museum and Sun House, Karen Holmes and Sherri
Smith-Ferri, wrote *Days of Grace: California Artist Grace Carpenter Hudson,* which explores
and carefully details Hudson’s year-long sojourn to Hawaii in 1901. This text examines the time
that Hudson spent in Hawaii painting Native Hawaiians, but does not further scholarship related
to Hudson’s Pomo portraits. A third text *Aurelius O. Carpenter: Photographer of the Mendocino
Frontier,* authored by Holmes, Smith-Ferri, and Marvin A. Schneck is a biography of Hudson’s
father, and includes some information about and photographs of Hudson. Despite the fact that
this text provides useful information about Aurelius Carpenter, there is more research to be done

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5 Boynton, 1.
in addressing how Hudson’s art may have been influenced by her father’s work. Although these texts provide insightful information about a period of Hudson’s life and the life of her father, the purpose of these publications is not to examine or further arguments regarding Hudson’s depictions of the Pomo of Northern California.

This thesis differs from work done by Boynton and others in that it addresses how Hudson’s art reflects nineteenth and twentieth century ideas concerning the “redemption” of the American Indian child. Moreover, Hudson’s work reveals a postcolonial deviation, a divergence from typical depictions of American Indian children by a white artist, stemming from larger shifts in U.S. attitudes and policy concerning American Indian populations. A study of the connection between Hudson’s work and modern events regarding American Indians offers fascinating insight concerning the influence of the perforation of colonialist ideologies and systems regarding redemption, transculturation, identity formation, modernism, and consumption.

This research is significant as it is the first to assert that Hudson’s paintings of Pomo children signify themes related to a white audience needing to “save” the youngest generation of American Indians. This thesis is consequential in relation to studies of Grace Carpenter Hudson as well as to the history of American Indian representation and the study of depictions of American Indian children. Studying Hudson’s paintings of Pomo children can aid future scholars in understanding a critical moment in the history of the United States enshrined on Hudson’s canvases, a moment in which the narrative shifted from killing, to saving, the American Indian.

**Hudson and the Pomo**

Grace Hudson’s parents, Aurelius and Helen Carpenter, made their way from Kansas to present-day Ukiah, California in 1857. This move was made in an effort to leave behind the
conflict and uncertainty revolving around the issue of statehood in the Midwest. Named for the Pomo, the American Indian tribe who inhabited Northern California, word for “deep valley,” (Yokaya in Pomo dialect) Ukiah is located two hours north of San Francisco, California. Before the arrival of the Carpenter family, the area was part of a Spanish land grant that claimed indigenous land for colonization in California. When the Carpenters arrived in the valley, the Pomo were still recovering from many years of conflict and sickness resulting from the effects of colonization. The first record of Hudson’s interaction with the Pomo is recorded within her mother's journals. Regarding her own children and the Pomo, Helen Carpenter describes the attention that her newborn twins, Grace and Grant, elicited from the local tribe as they were fascinated with the first set of white twins born in the valley.8

Throughout her life, Hudson was surrounded by those interested in the neighboring Pomo population: her mother wrote about the Pomo, her father photographed the Pomo, and her husband worked in preserving artifacts of the Pomo. Helen Carpenter, Hudson’s mother, kept extensive travel logs and guides as she and her family traveled West, and many of these writings included information about American Indian populations. Helen's ritual of record-keeping continued throughout her life and her work was even published in prominent magazines of the time, including an 1893 Overland Monthly article about the “diggers,” referring to the Pomo of Ukiah.9 Hudson’s father photographed the Pomo, and later in her life, Hudson’s husband John Hudson left his job as a medical doctor to work as an anthropologist, specializing in and collecting Pomo artifacts.

8 Boynton, 13.
In 1880, after a year of art school at the San Francisco Art Association — now the San Francisco Institute of Art — Hudson returned to Ukiah to open a painting studio. It was in this space where she worked on her canvases and taught art classes. Moving back to Ukiah brought her home to the people she loved to paint most: the Pomo. Hudson’s biographer wrote, “Hudson had been a child raised among the Indians, and she understood them better than many of her contemporaries […] unlike many other artists who journeyed west in search of a proud and noble race, Hudson was comfortable with the day-to-day life of men and women whom she knew best as her friends and acquaintances.”

Over the course of a forty-year career, Hudson’s paintings of Pomo children resonated with audiences across the United States and her work hung in exhibitions at the San Francisco Art Association, the California State Fair, the Mechanics Fair in San Francisco, the Columbian Exposition in Chicago, the Smithsonian, and other galleries. An 1896 article in the New York Journal described Hudson as “one of the greatest American Indian painters.”

The subjects of Hudson's paintings deserve a voice within an analysis of her work; however, all too often, the voice and story of Indigenous peoples and minority groups have been lost to history or replaced with prevailing settler narratives. In order to better understand the subjects of Hudson’s paintings, it is necessary to summarize Pomo life and culture as well as the years of mistreatment and violence inflicted on California Natives leading up to the time in which Hudson began interacting with them. The basket-weaving Pomo lived in small groups or bands bound by Northern California geography and had up to as many as twenty chiefs at one time. In the Northern Pomo dialect, -pomo or -poma is a word meaning “people” and was used

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10 Boynton, 39.
11 Boynton, 44.
as a suffix after the names of places to mean a subgroup of people in that area. By 1877, shortly before Hudson began painting young members of the tribe, the use of Pomo had been extended in English to mean the entire people known today as the Pomo.\textsuperscript{13} The modern history of the Pomo parallels the fate of many California Indian Tribes as it is a tale plagued with heart-wrenching devastation and death. In the nineteenth century, the onset of the California Gold Rush acted as a catalyst for violence against Indigenous people. Additionally, the Pomo were affected by smallpox, cholera, and conflict. Their way of life continued to alter dramatically and tragically before Hudson was born and throughout her infancy and childhood in the 1860s and 1870s.

The Pomo are the subject of nearly all of Hudson’s paintings and in order to better understand narratives of abduction and death later told by the artist, it is necessary to recognize how the Pomo were affected by the California Indian massacres and the model of indirect federal support for local Indian-killing campaigns. The most known, most tragic, and seemingly most unnecessary of these conflicts was the Bloody Island Massacre, which occurred in May 1850 in Clear Lake, California.\textsuperscript{14} According to reports, settlers had been brutally abusing Pomo women and children and forcing Pomo men into slavery.\textsuperscript{15} This feud led to the First Cavalry Regiment of the US Army being called into the area to murder any Pomo they could find. Four hundred women and children were slaughtered. In 1800 there was an estimated 10,000 to 18,000 Pomo

\textsuperscript{14} James H. Leach. “Chief Augustine’s Pomo Tribe Killed Two White Men, so the Soldiers Came for Revenge.” \textit{Wild West} 9, no. 2 (August 1996): 78.
\textsuperscript{15} Elizabeth Larson, “Bloody Island Atrocity Remembered at Saturday Ceremony,” \textit{Lake County News} (May 12, 2007).
among seventy tribes speaking seven Pomo languages. By 1880, the population had dropped to an estimated 1,450 people, and the 1910 census reported 777 Pomo peoples.16

The Pomo who the Carpenter and Hudson families interacted with were a strong, resilient, and persevering people. The persistence of those Pomo allowed the Pomo Tribe to continue to grow on into the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Additionally, it was the diligence of Hudson’s family members in documenting varying aspects of Pomo culture that has contributed significantly to what contemporary scholars know about Pomo history. Moving to Ukiah provided many opportunities for the Carpenter and Hudson families to interact with the Indigenous population. Helen, Aurelius, Grace, and John were all part of the phenomenon of preserving American Indian culture, whether that was through writing about Pomo, studying and preserving Pomo artifacts, or photographing and painting the Pomo.

Representing the Pomo

Just like many aspects of recorded American Indian history, there is a complicated and scattered record of images featuring the Pomo and more specifically, California Indian children. Analyzing earlier images, those produced before Hudson’s work, featuring the Pomo and other California tribes is crucial to understanding how Hudson’s art was different. Hudson’s art dramatically differed as it mirrored a time in history when “the vanishing race” paralleled the popularity of her images of children; or the growing, and next, generation of what was seen as a dying race. Hudson’s images reflect a rising generation of American Indian children who needed to be “redeemed” or “saved” from their past.

For centuries, portrayals of the American Indian were divided into two primary categories: the first being the ‘wild savage’ who was dangerous, primitive and exciting, and the second being the ‘romantic savage’ who lived in a state of perpetual naivete as an innocent child. Hudson’s painting titled Left Behind (Fig. 1) depicts a young American Indian child with tears running down his cheeks and onto his chest. The only thing wild or primitive about him is the single feather headdress that signifies his Indigenous heritage to the outside viewer. Hudson’s paintings of the children of the Pomo tribe of Northern California align more with the “romantic savage” interpretation as they feature children who are not depicted as threatening or dangerous but painted as guiltless and innocuous.

These unquestionably problematic categorizations regarding the “wild” and the “romantic” have been considered and scrutinized, as have images that unapologetically reflect the same themes. However, little research has been conducted regarding the actual “innocent child,” the American Indian children who grew up in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, a time when their lifestyles and cultures were being challenged in ways that resulted in extensive change regarding reservation life, Indian boarding school programs, and the loss of culture, language, and tradition.

Hudson’s images were not driven by guilt regarding American Indian treatment or previous representations of the American Indian, but by a desire to depict children in a way that a Euro-American audience would be comfortable with. Earlier images of the Pomo are almost purely anthropological, and other images of California Native children reflect themes concerning servitude and white dominance. Hudson’s work and the works that came before her Pomo portraits reflect varying views toward solving the “Indian problem” widely believed to exist in the United States.
Images of Pomo children produced before Hudson’s paintings are few. In *Drawn from Life: California Indians in Pen and Brush*, Theodora Kroeber writes that although “the Pomo are much the best known of the thousands who once lived content and well in California’s ubiquitous hill lands... our pictures [...] are disappointing.”¹⁷ There are very few images of the Pomo, and fewer that include a child. In *Pomo Indians of California* (Fig. 2) an older man, woman, and child — perhaps a family — are seen sitting outside of a dwelling. The child is in the nude and sits near a basket, perhaps alluding to the Pomo’s mastery at basket-making. It is the nudity, exposer to the elements and even the stance of the figures that promotes the idea of the exotic “other,” a people so different that they can hardly be understood. This image varies significantly from Hudson’s later work of children as it depicts a family unit engaged in everyday tasks. There is no underlying message regarding the need to save the child from the setting.

Two more examples are *An Indian Rancheria* (Fig. 3) and *A Camp of California Indians* (Fig. 4). The first image, *An Indian Rancheria*, is categorized within *Drawn from Life* as a depiction of the Pomo. Groups of people are gathered in a community-setting and there is one child at the forefront of the image. The child is dressed in a simple skirt, a symbol that may allude to his plain life and uncomplicated nature, and — as indicated by the pile of fish at his feet — may have just come from a fishing expedition, a common and necessary practice for the Pomo. The second work shows various Pomo homes. Children and adults are scattered throughout the image, attending to the day’s work. There is nothing about any of these three images that communicates to the viewer that the child must be removed from his people or redeemed from his primitive background.

Beyond the Pomo, other images of other California Native children can be separated into three categories: The Native as propaganda attesting to the benevolence of Spanish rule, the Native as servant, and the Native as savage. Any hint at themes regarding “redeemability” in these works is underscored by the system of servitude American Indians were subject to under Spanish Catholic rule. A 1787 woodcut of Junipero Serra (fig. 5) depicts Serra holding a cross with the crucified Christ above throngs of people. Native children are shown in the background of the woodcut, on the left-hand side of Serra among a group of American Indians. This image appeared in Serra’s biography, attesting to the role that he played in establishing the Franciscan Mission System in California. The inclusion of children in this image may signify the benevolence of the Spanish, as the American Indian population is depicted in this engraving as happy and thriving. While the intention of the unknown artist may not have been to depict the American Indian as subservient or docile to Spanish colonization, American Indians were subject to unbelievably harsh conditions under Spanish rule.18

In addition to the Junipero Serra woodcut, there are other images that feature the California Indian as submissive and subservient. In an 1841 lithograph titled Father Narcisco Duran and an Indian Child (fig. 6), produced during the Mexican Period of rule in California, an American Indian child is portrayed as a deferential servant, caring to the needs of the Father.19 Further evidence of American Indian children seen as servants is an 1879 etching of a California Indian boy serving as an altar boy in The Day of San Carlos (fig. 7), which shows a young boy alongside other natives and Spaniards serving in a church service. These images, although some


19 This piece was published in an account written by French author Eugene Duflot de Mofras regarding his visit to California. This is significant as it is evidence of the global proliferation of the American Indian image.
religious in nature, were not advocating or portraying the American Indian in the same manner in which Hudson did only decades later.

Artist Charles Nahl, California’s preeminent painter of this time, engraved *California Indians leaving* (fig. 8) which depicts groups of American Indians, including children, being driven from their land. Because this image depicts a people being forced from their home, this work can be analyzed as a type of artistic trope referencing Adam and Eve being driven from the Garden of Eden and fleeing into an unknown darkness. This connection may also infer that the American Indian was to blame for their being removed from their homeland. This is significant not only as it aligns with Euro-American expectations regarding American Indian removal and relocation, but also because it satisfies a Euro-American desire based on manifest destiny.

Of the Indigenous peoples of California historian James Rawl writes, “Needing to discredit Hispanic claims to California, American observers saw the Indians as victims; needing to acquire a cheap labor force, they viewed the Indians as a useful class; needing to gain unimpeded access to the resources of the Golden State, they regarded the Indians as obstacles to be eliminated.”20 In the four above examples of California Indians, the artists were portraying the American Indian in line with federal policies, Catholic influence and attitudes toward Indigenous people, enacting themes of violence and using the Native population to suit their own propagandistic agendas. At the same time that many of these images were being produced in the nineteenth century, the federal government of the United States spent an estimated $1,700,000 on campaigns against California Natives.21

While these earlier California works signify a period of servitude, violence and primitivism, Hudson’s work reflects a change in US government policies and action aimed at the

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21 Madley, 117.
“redeemability” of the American Indian. Between 1887 and 1933, federal policy aimed to assimilate American Indians into mainstream American society. Although to modern observers this policy may look both patronizing and racist, the Euro-American ideology that dominated U.S. society saw it as a cause backed by the mission of Christianity. As one philanthropist put it in 1886, the Indians were to be “safely guided from the night of barbarism into the fair dawn of Christian civilization.” In practice, this meant requiring Indigenous populations to become as much like the white American as possible: converting to Christianity, speaking English, wearing western clothes and hair styles, and living as self-sufficient, independent Americans.

All of these trends were popular during Hudson’s lifetime and ideas concerning the “Americanization” of the American Indian were the foundation for Hudson’s emphasis on redeemability. Hudson’s work can be viewed as a reconstruction of this idea involving the need to Americanize, change, or save the American Indian. Furthermore, her work can more accurately be viewed as a construction produced at the behest of an established ideology - whose function was the formation and perpetuation of an iconography that was founded in discrimination and whose goal it was to save the American Indian child.

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23 Additionally, Federal policy was enshrined in the General Allotment (Dawes) Act of 1887 which decreed that American Indian Reservation land was to be divided into plots and allocated to individual American Indians. These plots could not be sold for at least twenty-five years, but reservation land left over after the distribution of allotments could be sold to outsiders, primarily the Euro-American population. This meant that the Dawes Act became, in practice, an opportunity for Euro-Americans to acquire American Indian land. This process was accelerated by the 1903 Supreme Court decision in Lone Wolf v. Hitchcock that Congress could dispose of American Indian land without gaining the consent of the American Indians involved. Not surprisingly, the amount of land ‘owned’ by American Indians shrank from 154 million acres in 1887 to a mere 48 million half a century later.
Early Influences

Euro-American ideologies and iconography concerning the American Indian are also seen within the work of Hudson’s father, Aurelius Carpenter. Carpenter was one of the earliest photographers in California and, with his wife Helen, ran a successful commercial photography studio in Ukiah aimed toward Euro-American and American Indian clientele for over forty years. Studying the work and methods of Carpenter related to the production and consumption of images of American Indians provides a foundation for understanding the later context in which his daughter produced images of similar subjects. For Carpenter and many other photographers and artists, the studio was an easily controlled environment.

In Carpenter's photographs, patronage dictated whose story was told. This difference in ideology and representation is best seen in whether or not the American Indian commissioned works or if they were Carpenter’s creative projects, works that were not paid for by the subject. One of the works commissioned by members of the Pomo tribe, Captain Charley Pinto and his wife, Mary (Fig. 9), features a modern setting. Pinto and his wife are wearing Anglo-style clothing and are seen in a home built from lumber adhering to traditional Euro-American techniques. Additionally, contemporary articles can also be seen such as the kerosene lamps and the lace mantelpiece. These patrons are similar to the Euro-American in that they are using similar technologies, living in similar houses, and wearing similar clothes. Aside from a possible, albeit slight, reference to the slothfulness of American Indian men — due to the fact that the man in the image is laying down — and viewing American Indian women as craft-makers, these patrons do not adhere to the Euro-Americans’ expectation of the stereotypical “savage.” This is because this work was commissioned by the subjects themselves and was not designed to be viewed by a white audience who expected a certain “type” of American Indian. While not
adhering to the Euro-American “savage” ideal, it is still important to mention these slightly cliched roles of the American Indian husband and wife as they are evidence of the pervasiveness of the Euro-American archetype regarding the American Indian.

Just like Carpenter, Hudson must be understood as an aspect of, as well as an antidote to, the spread of commodity culture as the twentieth century began. Almost all of Hudson’s paintings of Pomo children were commercial products as they were displayed and sold to patrons around the nation. Both the subjects, their wellbeing and need to be “redeemed,” and the signs and symbols that signified “Indianness” mattered to the Euro-American viewer. An example of the perpetuation of boundaries between Native and non-Native culture can be seen within Hudson's drawing of a Pomo named Charley Brown (fig. 10), who was known to model for Carpenter’s photographs. The Carpenter photo depicts Brown engaged in ritual dance and was seen by an innumerable number of readers as it was featured in Helen Carpenters article in Overland Monthly.²⁴ Both the photograph and the drawing were designed to appeal to the tastes and expectations of a non-Native audience. In the image, authentic Pomo regalia were mixed with fake artifacts, like the staff and headdress, telling a story and representing a people in ways that a white audience would be familiar with and comfortable.

Catering to the expectations of a white audience was a marketing strategy that brought attention to Hudson’s work. Audiences were approaching the art with the idea of “saving” the American Indian in mind already as American Indian Boarding Schools were also becoming popular in the late nineteenth-century. Additionally, The Dawes Act of 1879 promised U.S. citizenship to American Indians who took advantage of the allotment policy and “adopted the

²⁴ Carpenter, 146-155.
Adapting to a white society and life meant that the education of American Indian children was considered an essential part of the civilizing process. Richard Pratt, the founder of the Carlisle Indian Industrial School in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, the first American Indian Boarding School, advertised to the Euro-American population that his goal in running the school was to “kill the Indian in him and save the man.” Many, including Pratt, believed that it was more affordable to educate the American Indian than to continue to fight against tribes.

Hudson was aware of the introduction of American Indian boarding schools. One of Hudson’s paintings even alludes to Pomo children leaving Ukiah to attend a Boarding School. This particular painting depicts a small Pomo girl with a necklace of shells around her neck. The subject, Da-ta-leu, looks up at the viewer suspiciously, as if the child is afraid the object in her hand may be taken. Of this painting, Ray of Light (fig. 11), Hudson wrote, “When she was a maiden, Da-ta-leu’s mother was sent to a government school. She returned wishing that she was not an Indian, but ma-san, or white. Her child’s birth brought her heart back to the tribe and, in grateful thanks, she named her Ray of Light.” Hudson never stated an official position on American Indian policy, however, the key to understanding her work through a lens focused on redemption is understanding how the rest of the U.S. was viewing the American Indian: as an object to be educated, Americanized, and redeemed.

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25 An Act to Provide for the Allotment of Lands in Severalty to Indians on the Various Reservations (General Allotment Act or Dawes Act), Statutes at Large 24, 388-91, NADP Document A1887.
27 Boynton, 130.
Blank Slates

Hudson's work is evidence of the ways in which American Indian children were seen in the minds of the Euro-American, awaiting redemption that only a modernized, white world could provide. Since the eighteenth century, philosophers such as Rousseau and Locke popularized the idea that all deviations in a child are to be attributed chiefly to his faulty upbringing or the ill-considered direction of parents and teachers, but in no case to the child himself. Locke wrote that the child’s mind is a blank slate, a *tabula rosa*, on which any kind of knowledge could be easily printed. Therefore, he attached great importance to the role of education and wanted it to begin early. He considered children as ‘rational creatures’ who could be disciplined into moral, social beings. Another definition compares children to "white paper, or wax, to be [molded] and fashioned as one pleases." 28 This idea was passed down through generations as it became the basis, in many ways, for understanding the development of children, and it stayed relevant through a myriad of publications and discourses in a variety of fields. This idea applied to all children; however, it is especially notable how this concept was used to promote themes of redeeming the American Indian child, and not the Euro-American child.

The United States Government followed this Lockonian enlightenment idea that children could be sculpted into good American citizens. Locke’s opinions on the child's mind would have been supported by those advocating for the opening of American Indian Boarding Schools and would have fit nicely within the motto: “kill the Indian, save the man.” 29 The proliferation of this idea is also evident in the words of Richard Pratt, who spoke at the Carlisle School opening, saying: “He is born a blank, like all the rest of us. Left in the surroundings of savagery, he grows

to possess a savage language, superstition, and life.”\textsuperscript{30} Childhood was the formative period, in which American Indian children could be removed from a state of ‘savagery’ to become wise, contributing citizens of the United States.

Euro-centric ideas such as the blank slate were often synonymous with Christian beliefs; therefore, it is appropriate to refer to this assimilation and acculturation process as one that advocated for the “redeemability” of the American Indian child. In Christian theology, redemption (Greek: \textit{apolutrosis}) refers to the deliverance, usually of Christians, from sin. Redemption has an important position in salvation because transgressions form part of a great system against which human power is helpless and trapped, thus creating the need for redemption. Richard Pratt preached about the missionary who is sent to teach the American Indians and made many allusions to the fact that the American Indian is “in bondage.”\textsuperscript{31}

Euro-American Victorian beliefs concerning childhood and accompanying childhood innocence were prevalent during Hudson’s lifetime and are themes her audience would have been familiar with. During the nineteenth century, views concerning childhood shifted as the child came to be seen as the pinnacle of innocence and simplicity. Art featuring white children depicted children in ways that capitalized on their innocence and naivete, just as Hudson did in her art featuring the Pomo child. Additionally, Victorian art produced by the Euro-American artist typically depicted white children in a bassinet or perambulator, similar to how Hudson used the basket or cradleboard in her images of American Indian children. Victorian ideas of the innocence of childhood would have been applied to Hudson’s work, as viewers would have approached a Pomo child on one of Hudson’s canvases with the idea that the child was truly an

\textsuperscript{30} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{31} Ibid.
innocent victim. This idea, mixed with U.S. attitudes toward the American Indian, would have inspired many viewers to want to “save” the Pomo child.

Additionally, Hudson painted many Pomo children alongside young, wild animals in order to further signify the child as an innocuous blank slate and his need to be saved from his “primitive” environment. Although the children are depicted in nature, they are not primitive or wild themselves, but in need of saving and removal from the wilderness in which they are portrayed. *Yokia Treasures* (fig. 12) was featured in the *San Francisco Chronicle* with the caption: “The treasures are the three things most highly prized by the Indian -- his child, his dog, and a fancy basket… probably, if the Indian were called upon to part with two of his three treasures, he would keep the basket.”

The assumption that the “Indian” would choose a basket over his child is problematic and reflects white theories regarding the welfare and protection of American Indian children. Perhaps this was written here to correspond with themes regarding the “savagery” of the American Indian, as only a savage would choose a material possession over his child. It is difficult to imagine that this type of commentary would be made by a journalist discussing a depiction of a white child, but here, the ‘other’ child must be saved from the past; the ‘man’ must be saved, and the American Indian, who the journalist is saying would neglect his own child, destroyed.

Hudson’s depictions of children with animals were very popular among varying audiences and featured animals who, like the Pomo children painted beside them, were innocent and young. This pairing of subject matter underscores the emphasis that Hudson was placing on innocence and redeemability. *Mendocino Products* (fig. 13) features a sleeping Pomo baby carefully watched over by a puppy. This work was featured in the California State Fair, one of

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32 Boynton, 34, 95.
the largest events in the state. In Boy with Ducklings, 1909 (fig. 14) a small Pomo boy is holding and admiring ducklings. This scene becomes problematic when one realizes that the boy is holding ducklings, but the mother-figure animal in the scene is a hen. It is possible that this scene may have been painted by Hudson, a childless woman, because she saw herself as a surrogate mother to Pomo children. Just as the hen and the ducklings, she viewed her role as a mother with a responsibility to “save” children who were not her own. The ducklings are under the shelter that the hen provides, just as the Pomo were oftentimes painted under the roof of Hudson’s home.

Another painting featuring a Pomo child and a young animal is Hu-hi-ya and Bu-shay (fig. 16). This work offers an especially interesting connection between the American Indian and animals. Of this painting Hudson writes:

The two subjects, human and deer, wandered through the woods, for the little girl had no brother, sister, [or] dog […] only the amusement and companionship of the wild-but-gentle creatures of the forest. One day, she was sitting very still watching a squirrel, when tiny Bu-shay walked straight to her and said, “Take me home! Take me home!” At least so Hu-hi-ya told her mother when she reached home with Bu-shay in her arms. The deer took easily to … Hu-hi-ya’s bed […] but no one except Hu-hi-ya ever heard him speak.33

Through her work, Hudson is saying that it is the children on the canvas, rather than Bu-shay, who is pleading “take me home, take me home,” to the white viewer. Richard Pratt wrote that the American Indian child, raised by his/her parents in the wilderness, would grow to possess superstitions. American Indian children and myths surrounding their relationships with animals demonstrate ways in which their naivete, or ‘otherness,’ was signaled to Euro-American audiences.

Tabula rosa and Victorian influence are both themes seen within Hudson’s work, and her portraits of innocent children with innocent animals furthers both of these ideas. While Indian

33 Boynton, 77.
Boarding Schools and the incorporation of young animals may have brought attention to, and partially explain, the appeal of Hudson’s work, it was what she did within her studio and on her canvas that built upon this foundation concerning the “redeemability” of American Indian children.

**Hudson’s Attic**

Hudson and her anthropologist husband John Hudson carefully crafted their home's attic to replicate their version of an American Indian space. In a photograph taken by Aurelius Carpenter of Grace and John Hudson at home, one can see the two sitting inside a room full of Pomo clothing, photos, and artifacts (fig. 17). This complicated merging of Pomo and Anglo culture, a space dedicated to American Indian artifacts within the home of an Euro-American family, was not uncommon during the early nineteenth century because many believed that creating an impressive space within the home to showcase American Indian artifacts was a demonstration of taste.

Researcher Mary Louise Pratt defined these “Indian Corners” as a “contact zone,” a term defined as “a space of intercultural negotiation in which European Americans and Natives encounter each other’s practices and values, albeit under conditions of radical inequality.”

Historian Elizabeth Hutchinson wrote extensively on the popularity of Indian Corners at the turn of the twentieth century and argued that these spaces devoted to Indian artifacts were created not because the collector had an abiding love of American Indian peoples, but instead as evidence of his desire to reframe artifacts into his own culture and home. Historian Jean Baudrillard has commented on this phenomenon and how the collector overwrites an object's historical and

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cultural meaning by inserting it into a context where it refers only to its new owner.\textsuperscript{35} Hudson’s Pomo portraits, too, were placed within a white space where they are only referenced through a white lens. Pomo artifacts and Hudson’s paintings were placed in spaces where they were most oftentimes seen by a white viewer, forming various “contact zones.”

However, Hudson’s “Indian Attic” differed from others and was unique as it served as a place wherein the barrier between the Euro-American and the American Indian was literally broken. Hudson physically brought American Indian children into her space and “posed” them according to her own wishes. As most portrait photographers and artists learned when posing small children, the subject may not react precisely how one would wish. This idea leads to another challenge related to the art of representation. Often in this situation, Hudson would paint the head of one baby onto another's body and then change the features according to the proportions of another. Often common in art, this Frankensteinian meshing of pieces in the name of representation is dehumanizing and detracts from the individual identity of any given sitter.

One of the distinguishing features of many of Hudson’s paintings is the presence of ropes, tight swaddling clothes, or other forms of restraint around the children. Non-threatening children, although they were still sometimes bound in Hudson’s paintings, most-likely provided a sense of security for a white audience. It is because of the inclusion of restraints, and oftentimes tears, in Hudson’s work that an iconographic connection to the mistreatment of American Indians can be observed and considered. It is critical to acknowledge the spaces in which Hudson was creating her art because her studio represents not only a space of contact but also an area where the lines between reality and fantasy were blurred to allow the piece of art to become more “Indian.”

\textsuperscript{35} Ibid., 26.
In an effort to “Indianize” her space, subject, and art, Hudson participated in a sort of “museum process,” a term coined by researcher Curtis M. Hinsley: “the [process of] constructed meaning of Indian demise within the teleology of manifest destiny […] and it did so by encasing, in time and space, the American Indian.” Hudson was encasing the Pomo child within her canvas, studio, and the “museum space.” Hindley continues:

Dehistoricization was the essence of the process. Anthropologists, journalists, politicians, and philanthropists collaborated to bring about what they assumed to have already arrived: the final stage of the transition of Native Americans from living communities to ‘life groups,’ from autonomous historical agents to market commodities and museum pieces. The museum process took many forms: World’s Fairs, Wild West shows, anthropology museums and publications, on-site tourist attractions, courier shops and Indian markets. All provided public spaces for safe consumption of a newly dehistoricized Indian; in most of them, there was an element of theatre.\(^{36}\)

This statement by Hinsley supports the idea that Hudson’s work provided a “safe space,” a sense of security, to the white viewer. The future of the American Indian was going to be different, and Hudson was part of this larger phenomenon that existed in the name of a prevailing ideology related to saving or redeeming what was left of American Indian culture, the child.

The 1893 World’s Columbian Exposition was another place to see the “encasement” of the American Indian. A hallmark of the modern world was the advent of the World’s Fairs and to be part of them was a great achievement. Grace Hudson’s piece, *Little Mendocino* (Fig. 18) was exhibited in the fair’s California Building. In this piece, the child is strapped into his basket, which is resting against a tree, and a tear runs down the face of the small child. The work became so famous that scandals involving the making of illegal copies arose, which perhaps brought even more attention to Hudson’s subject.\(^{37}\) The Ukiah *Republican Press* proudly reported,


“Connoisseurs pronounce it the best painting on exhibition from the novelty of the subject and the excellent execution of the artist. It differs from most of the pictures insomuch that the work is finer, shows well in any light, and will stand scrutiny.”

Also displayed in the show was Hudson’s piece, *The Interrupted Bath* (fig. 19), which features a small, nude boy who seems to be startled by the very presence of the artist and the audience. This child appears to be alone and in need of help from the outside viewer.

Hudson created a viewer experience that allowed the Euro-American exposure to an American Indian from a distance, while still providing a reminder that these children were “different” and, all the while, stressing the instinctive need to “save” the child. Creating this barrier allowed one group to look into the lives of another group, deemed to be unable to defend themselves. This is typified because the subject is not only a “defenseless” child, but also an American Indian. The underlying theme of Hudson’s work is that the American Indian child was alone, isolated, and needed sympathy and saving, which only a white, museum-going audience would be qualified to provide.

Hudson’s Pomo portraits were not the only American Indians involved in the 1893 World’s Fair. Among depictions of the U.S.’s Indigenous population was a living representation of American Indians, organized by fair officials who relied on a “civilized” American Indian to recruit others to join. This display was designed with the intention of educating the Euro-American on the lives and culture of American Indian peoples. However, a letter sent to *The New York Times* objected to the display, protesting that it “has been used to work up sentiment against the Indian by showing that he is either savage or can be educated only by Government

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38 Boynton, 30.
agencies.” In this exhibition, American Indians were depicted as threats that needed to be contained and changed by the United States government. Unlike the living display, Hudson was not depicting the primitive and wild American Indian; but like the display, she was showing her Euro-American audience the need to educate, tame, and save American Indian children.

**Marketing the Pomo**

In addition to editing the studio space and her subject to signify a particular ideology, Hudson also marketed her portraits to her advantage. Curiously, it is not only through the artist's work but also through the artist's words that she furthers the ideology regarding the redemption of the American Indian child. Primarily through local and national newspapers and magazines, Hudson told a wild, exotic story involving her attempts to "borrow," or abduct, American Indian children in order to appeal to a Euro-American audience. Late nineteenth-century events in the Pomo community concerning violence and kidnapping made this lie more believable to a predominantly white audience. In a Sunday issue of the *San Francisco Call* in 1895, Hudson attempted to answer how she produced her paintings of Native American children. She said:

> When I see a baby that I want to paint, I have to kidnap it first. Why, if these Indians here in Ukiah knew I painted their babies, I would be regarded as a murderess in a chamber of horrors. When I want a subject, I first have to find a squaw with a papoose. If the child's face suits me, I enter into negotiations with the mother to do some work for me.40

Through a mixture of humor and seriousness, the artist told her audience that she would hire a Pomo mother to come to her property to do work around her home. Hudson claimed that she would then make the child cry, usually with the help of her dog, a St. Bernard, as an excuse to pick up the child and take him up to her painting studio in the attic of her home.41

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40 Boynton, 39-40.

41 Ibid.
This narrative of ‘kidnapping’ children adds a supplemental level of menacing excitement to a subject that is already foreign and mysterious to many Euro-Americans and played off of perceived superstition and actual abduction narratives in reality and dime-store novels regarding American Indians. Hudson was telling a story that involved “taking” the American Indians out of their homes and into her studio space, all while perpetuating myths concerning Pomo feelings toward representation which, in reality, were not unlike Euro-American ideas toward portrayal and depictions. She was taking these children and putting them in a white space (her home), and exploiting them, putting them on display for the purpose of reminding her white audience of their existence as children who needed saving.

Hudson’s style of eliciting an exciting and emotional response from a viewer is well illustrated in The Runaway (fig 20). In an interview penned by her twin brother, Hudson said that this work “illustrates my method as well as any.” She continues explaining her “method:”

I employed a squaw with a petulant baby two years of age to do some work. While she was busy I sent my little niece out to entice the crying child away. She gave it some candy and induced it to accompany her. When they got opposite my place of concealment and out of sight of the mother, my niece seized the child under the arms from behind, held it and gave it a shake. As it commenced to wiggle and cry, I photographed it, and just had time to hide again before the anxious mother came running to see what had happened […] The baby’s pose I caught very nicely; but I had to put a little Indian girl on the canvas in place of my golden-haired niece.

This article by Grant Hudson, the painter’s brother, elicited a response from Grace as she was ashamed that her brother would have ever published anything about her photographing her subjects, as photographing subjects was seen as a type of shortcut in some artistic circles. However, while Grace Hudson was upset about the photography aspect of Grant’s article, she made no mention of disagreeing with his claims as to how she acquired her subjects.

Additionally, Grant perpetuated cultured stereotypes as he wrote that the Pomo have “simple natures,” believe in “evil spirits” and that to their “simple minds […] the telephone and
telegraphs are utterly beyond comprehension.” However, he writes that “Some few learned to read and write at the reservation schools, and now that the mysteries of chirography have been explained to their satisfaction, they no longer stand in awe of it.”\textsuperscript{42} This line is aimed at explaining that once “white” ideas and inventions are explained to the Pomo, they are no longer timid and superstitious. Further, this statement supports the idea that the Pomo were expected to adapt to Euro-American ideas and expectations.

Whether one views Hudson’s kidnapping stories as nothing more than a marketing strategy or as misguided efforts to achieve a so-called ‘greater good’ for the Pomo, one must realize how extremely problematic these statements are, especially in light of past activities concerning the relationship between settlers and Indigenous populations. One of Hudson’s paintings featuring a borrowed infant is \textit{Basket Baby} (fig. 21). The child appears to be afraid, and a look of trepidation is plastered across his expression. The tight strings of the cradleboard keep him confined from the rest of the world. His isolation from his tribe and people is apparent, and the barrier between subject and viewer is transparent, with the perspective acting as a cushion as the distance between the figure and the viewer allows the viewer to observe the child from afar.

In reality, the Pomo featured in Hudson’s work were not always reluctant or manipulated subjects. A letter from the artist to her husband John in 1893 says, “You can paint another picture by May for them, and I have the sitter for you—Tis the prettiest little half breed baby you ever saw and the mother just jumped at the proposition of having a photo taken for free.”\textsuperscript{43} This letter is important in understanding the reality of Hudson’s process and clarifying the steps Hudson took to acquire her subjects. She would offer to take a picture of the child for free, and because no actual superstition existed regarding the production of images for the tribe, the Pomo

\textsuperscript{42} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{43} Schenck, 102.
mother was happy to let Hudson take a photo. Typically, the artist would then use the picture as the painting model and give the photograph to the mother. This is significant as it not only displays a difference between what Hudson said she was doing and what she was actually doing, but also because it demonstrates a conscious effort by the artist to market the Pomo according to her own wishes.

Hudson knew that playing into this popular idea surrounding American Indian myths and superstition would add an element of ‘exoticness’ to her work, making it more attractive to her white audiences. In one letter, Hudson explains her reasoning for her claims: “The impossibility of the practice which has been imputed to me—that of posing and photographing my models and then painting them [...] is therefore apparent.”

This was a strategic economic move on the part of the artist as she carefully staged her Pomo scenes. Although members of the Pomo tribe sometimes had their interests in sitting for a portrait, the photographer/painter could set up poses, select clothing, and choose backgrounds to create a specific, albeit sometimes exaggerated and manipulated, image.

The perpetuation of falsified and exaggerated encounters between artist and subject solidified the barrier between audience and subject and promoted ideas surrounding the need for a white audience to save the American Indian children. Another work that shows an “abducted” child is *Who Comes?* (fig. 22). Of this work, Hudson wrote the following in her painting journals: “One expects almost momentarily a view of the intruder and, with it, to hear a startled cry from the little occupant of the little cradle.”

It is not hard to imagine the Euro-American audience as the intruder, breaking that barrier of safety and tradition the child would be used to.

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44 Boynton, 47.
45 Boynton, 94.
After analyzing the ways in which Hudson manipulated her studio, canvas, subject, and “story,” it is difficult to assert that she was not playing into nineteenth and twentieth century policies and ideas involving “saving” the American Indian. Her stories added an element of excitement to her work that may have enticed viewers to attend galleries where works featuring a “kidnapped” baby were on display. It was through the process of viewing Hudson’s work that a white audience may have felt the desire to save the child from his circumstances, circumstances that — according to Hudson — were so enshrined in myth, mystery, and superstition that the audience needed to rescue the child from a culture that was both wild and naïve.

**The Vanishing Crisis**

While many viewers of Hudson’s work may have seen the American Indian as an exotic “other,” and the child as someone who needed to be saved from this “otherness,” other viewers may have felt the need to “save” the child as it was part of the younger generation of American Indians who were the bright hope of a vanishing race. If their race was disappearing, it was the white audience’s responsibility to save what was left: the child in Hudson’s work. Heretofore, Hudson’s role in promoting specific ideologies and adhering to the desires of a white audience have been investigated. However, ideas concerning the vanishing American Indian were still frequent in Hudson’s time and may have contributed to the success of her paintings. Viewing Hudson’s art through a lens of temporality, one that reflects changes in U.S. policy, aids in understanding another facet of why Hudson’s art is so deeply entrenched in the ideas of her time.

The crisis of temporality and cultural salvagery began in the nineteenth century. The crisis of temporality refers to the rate at which the American Indian populations were disappearing, and the idea of cultural salvagery stemmed from a desire to save what was left of a race that was fading away. John Wesley Powell, a contemporary of Hudson early in her career,
writing to the secretary of the interior in 1878, and arguing for establishing a Bureau of American Ethnology, offers a plea for the urgency of ethnographic salvage. For Powell, “the field of research was speedily narrowing because of the rapid change in the Indian population now in progress; all habits, customs, and opinions are fading away; even languages are disappearing; and in a very few years, it will be impossible to study out North American Indians in their primitive condition, except recorded history.”46 Through her paintings, Hudson was creating, and capitalizing on, the sense of urgency to save what was left.

Historian Jonathan Lear has written extensively on the “ethics in the face of cultural devastation.”47 As he puts it, “the problem is what happens to the subject when the possibility of living according to its associated ideals collapses. The social group may endure, and one may be able to identify with being a member of that group […] but the possibility of constituting oneself as a certain sort of subject suddenly becomes a problem.” It is certain that Indigenous populations had been, and continued to be, experiencing a collapse related to their ways of life and cultures during Hudson’s life. Lear continues, “as a consequence, it became possible to say that things ceased to happen. Native American history, therefore, came to an end in so far as the forms of traditional cultural life that had conceptualized meaningful action and subjecthood came to an end. This crisis was a crisis of temporality.”48 The crisis of temporality also relates directly to the idea of the vanishing race. In a note about one of her paintings, Hudson wrote, “Thirty years ago we did not know that the Indian would be with us always.”49 The “vanishing race” mentality is pervasive and equally problematic. By nature, it assumes that nothing could be done

48 Ibid.
49 Boynton, 105.
to protect or keep these people from vanishing. However, changes in state and federal
governmental policy changed the ways in which American Indians were perceived and depicted in art.

Further support for the argument regarding Hudson’s paintings as a response to nineteenth and twentieth century views concerning the redeemability of the American Indian comes when analyzing Hudson’s images that are not of, or seen in relation to, American Indian children. Although few, Hudson’s portraits of Pomo Chiefs and Elders do not reflect the same ideas of a need for redemption, rather, they act as a foil as they reflect a passing of time and tradition and are almost relic-like in their presentation. For example, Portraits of Pomo Chief (Fig. 23) and Kay-Will (Fig. 24). Hudson wrote, “Kay-will was the last of the old hereditary chiefs of the Pomos.”⁵⁰ Although one could argue that portraits of an older generation are inherently more tranquil than those of emotional children, Hudson spoke of the passing of the generations of American Indian Elders:

One of my models was a very old Indian, who accepted the opportunity to earn a few dollars only after years of deprivation and disease and with starvation staring him in the face. He firmly expected to die under the ordeal, but, with the remark that he couldn’t live long anyway, took his seat like a stoic and maintained his pose without so much as the twitching of a muscle for hours at a time.⁵¹

This quotation conflates claims regarding American Indian superstition. However, it is also the lack of portraits of adults and elders throughout Hudson’s career that suggest that Hudson was painting the children as a means of “saving” and “redeeming” them, while also portraying their potential for a better, white, future.

This idea of the vanishing race is further summarized in the words of the modern American author Henry Longfellow: “From what old ancestral Totem / They descended - what

⁵⁰ Boynton, 150.
⁵¹ Boynton, 74.
their legends - / And the story of their valor - As they traveled toward the sunset.”\textsuperscript{52} Longfellow’s words may have been inspired by the case of a California American Indian: Ishi, also known as “the last Native American.” The rest of the Yahi tribe, along with many other American Indians from varying tribes, were killed in the great California genocide of the nineteenth century. Ishi’s sudden appearance outside a butcher house in California in 1911 made headlines and anthropologists became fascinated with the idea of analyzing Ishi as the “wild, uncontaminated Indian.” These writings, combined with the art produced at the time, signify modernist attitudes surrounding the crisis of temporality: if it was disappearing, it needed first to be documented. Hudson painted the Pomo at a time when the future of the American Indian was shifting. It is this — the fact that there was no other time like this and no other artist portraying children through a lens of “redeemability” as Hudson was doing — that makes her work so interesting and so important to study.

Further support that Hudson’s depictions of Pomo children signify a unique theme regarding redemption in American Indian imagery comes from analyzing how law and policies toward the American Indian population changed toward the end of Hudson’s life. Only a few years before Hudson’s last portrait of a Pomo child, the 1928 Meriam Report was released. The Meriam Report was designed to criticize The Dawes Act and overall conditions on reservations and in Indian boarding schools, additionally, the document accepted that “government policy should continue to enable Indians to merge into the social and economic life of the prevailing civilization as adopted by the whites.” The report also rejected “the disastrous attempt to force individual Indians or groups of Indians to be what they do not want to be, to break their pride in

themselves and their Indian race, or to deprive them of their Indian culture.”53 Hudson, along with her subjects and audience, were experiencing all of these changes. This new approach to Indigenous peoples, a path focused on preserving the American Indian and enacting self-governance in their communities, was enthusiastically endorsed by John Collier, who became Commissioner for Bureau of Indian Affairs in 1933.

Collier believed that American Indian life and respect for the environment could educate Euro-Americans concerning consumerism and materialism. Collier was determined to preserve as much of the traditional American Indian way of life as possible. The change in the governmental approach had an effect on the ways that American Indians were represented. It is this shift — this emphasis on preserving the American Indian way of life, instead of watching it vanish — that marks why depictions of the American Indian after Hudson are primarily anthropologically-based images. Instead of depicting children who needed to be saved, later artists saw themselves as the ones whose duty it was to preserve American Indian culture and livelihood. Although Hudson remained consistent in her chosen subject throughout her life, understanding Collier and later changes aimed toward the American Indian helps historians to discern why representation of the American Indian varied significantly both before and after Hudson’s life.

It is through an analysis of the popular trope of the temporal nature of the American Indian demonstrated through Hudson’s words, the public fascination with Ishi, and efforts to

53 The 1928 Meriam Report accepted that “government policy should continue to enable Indians to merge into the social and economic life of the prevailing civilization as adopted by the whites.” The report also rejected “the disastrous attempt to force individual Indians or groups of Indians to be what they do not want to be, to break their pride in themselves and their Indian race, or to deprive them of their Indian culture.” Meriam, Lewis, The Problem of Indian Administration: Report of a Survey made at the Request of Honorable Hubert Work, Secretary of the Interior, and Submitted to Him, February 21, 1928/Survey Staff: Lewis Meriam...[et al.] . (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1928), 1.
save what was fleeting by Powell, Collier, and others, that one can begin to understand why
Hudson painted what she did and why her canvases were so popular during her lifetime. Hudson
was part of a larger phenomenon related to saving what was left of the American Indian
population; and in addition to saving what was left, she painted who was left, the child who
needed to be saved from his primitive, undomesticated, and exotic past.

**Conclusion**

Although the theme of saving the American Indian child from his own heritage is evident
through the majority of Hudson’s work, there is one painting that perhaps best summarizes and
weaves together the thoughts and ideas that this thesis has presented: *Cornered* (fig. 25). This
canvas features a small Pomo child, standing, sulking and trapped, amidst piles of canvases.
Based on the studio-like setting, one can assume that this is the artist’s studio. Hudson has
chosen to depict the child in a moment of intense fear and vulnerability as the subject does not
have a way out, save approaching the white artist, and is surrounded by the canvases which have
or will someday have the faces of other young Pomo painted on them. The child must be saved -
and it has nowhere to go except toward a white world.

Through an analysis of Hudson’s life, work, and times, this thesis has argued that the
artist’s depictions of Pomo children are evidence of, and a response to, turn-of-the-twentieth-
century Euro-Americans' hopes that the American Indian child could be "redeemed," or "saved,"
from their "savage" or "undomesticated" past. It is through an analysis of modernist influences
regarding Indigenous peoples and the ways in which Hudson manipulated her subject, studio
space, and story that one can understand the appeal of these images to a Euro-American
audience. Hudson’s Pomo were truly seen as the bright hope of a vanishing race; a generation
who could be Christianized, saved, and become more “white” through a process of acculturation.
Hudson’s images of the rising generation of the “vanishing race” gained popularity across the country, because this generation was different: this generation could be redeemed.
FIGURES

Fig. 1. Grace Carpenter Hudson, Left Behind, 1927, Private Collection
Fig. 2. Painting attributed to John Cloudman, Pomo Indians of California, ca. 1852, Location Unknown

Fig. 3. Artist Unknown, An Indian Rancheria, ca. 1874, Location Unknown
Fig. 4. Artist Unknown (after a photograph by C.E. Watkins, A Camp of California Indians, ca. 1869, Location Unknown)

Fig. 5. Artist Unknown, Woodcut of Junipero Serra, 1787, Location Unknown
Fig. 6. Artist Unknown, Father Narcisco Duran and an Indian child, probably at Mission San Jose, lithograph in the published account of Eugene Duflot de Mofras’s visit to California in 1841 and 1842

Fig. 7. Artist Unknown, The Day of San Carlos, c. 1850, Location Unknown
Fig. 8. Charles Nahl, Engraving of California Indians Leaving or A Road Scene in California, c. 1850, Location Unknown

Fig. 9. Aurelius Carpenter, Captain Charley Pinto and his wife, Mary, c. 1885 (in their home), Grace Hudson Museum and Sun House
Fig. 10. Grace Carpenter Hudson, The Medicine Dancer, c. 1893, location unknown
Fig. 11. Grace Carpenter Hudson, Ray of Light (Da-ta-leu), 1917, Private Collection
Fig. 12. Grace Carpenter Hudson, Yokia Treasures, 1894, Location Unknown

Fig. 13. Grace Carpenter Hudson, Mendocino Products, 1895, Location Unknown
Fig. 14. Grace Carpenter Hudson, Boy with Ducklings (Chicky Ducks), 1909, Private Collection
Fig. 15. Grace Carpenter Hudson, The Little Jack, 1916, Location Unknown
Fig. 16. Grace Carpenter Hudson, Hu-hi-ya and Bu-shay, Location Unknown
Fig. 17. Aurelius Carpenter, Grace Carpenter Hudson and John Hudson in Grace’s Studio, 1890, Location Unknown
Fig. 18. Grace Carpenter Hudson, Little Mendocino, 1895, California Historical Society Louis Sloss Collection
Fig. 19. Grace Carpenter Hudson, The Interrupted Bath (Quail Baby), 1892, Location Unknown
Fig. 20. Grace Carpenter Hudson, The Runaway, Date Unknown, Location Unknown
Fig. 21. Grace Carpenter Hudson, Basket Baby, 1935, Private Collection
Fig. 22. Grace Carpenter Hudson, Who Comes?, 1894, Location Unknown

Fig. 23. Grace Carpenter Hudson, Portraits of Pomo Chief, 1912, Private Collection
Fig. 24. Grace Carpenter Hudson, Kay-Will, 1928, Private Collection
Fig. 25. Grace Carpenter Hudson, Cornered, Date Unknown, Location Unknown
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