The Image of the Indian in Max Brand's Pulp Western Novels

by

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In the first important Western novel of the twentieth century, Owen Wister's *The Virginian* (1902), the stalwart hero is ambushed by some Indians after a battle in which he kills several, the Virginian is wounded and later found unconscious by the schoolmarm heroine, Molly Stark Wood of Vermont. These are reservation Indians out on a rampage against their white oppressors, as Wister explains, since the time is close to 1890, and the Indian wars of the West are over. Because he was writing a Western, and following the tradition of James Fenimore Cooper as well as the stage melodrama and dime novel tradition of Ned Buntline and others, and continuing the spirit of Buffalo Bill Cody's Wild West Shows, Wister may have assumed his audience expected an Indian attack, and so he gave them one. Thus Wister, for all his literary pretensions, would seem to be motivated by the oldest axiom in show business or commercial writing: give the audience what they expect.

It is true that the incident serves a couple of other purposes in Wister's romance: the Virginian's courage and fighting prowess are reinforced by the action, and there is so little occasion to demonstrate these qualities between the initial clash with Trampas and the climactic shootout that something is sorely needed; and then, Molly Stark Wood gets the opportunity to nurse the Virginian back to health, a crucial period in their long romance. Moreover, the Virginian's convalescence allows Wister to portray the hero as a true Victorian gentleman toward women, even in his subconscious mind. For, we are told the while most cowpunchers would go into feverish deliriums and babble coarsely about the bodies of women, even their sweethearts, the Virginian never does this. A life of consistent clean living and clean thinking has saved the Virginian from sexual repressions and given him what must be the most boring subconscious mind in all the annals of the written word.

In short, Wister, for all his high literary ambitions, which often
Indian in Max Brand's Novels

The Indian in the novel of the twentieth century, \textit{The Virginian} (1902), the stalwart hero is a battle in which he killed and later found unconscious Mark Wood of Vermont. These rampages against their white betimes is close to 1890, and because he was writing a novel tradition of Ned Buntline, the spirit of Buffalo Bill Cody's assumed his audience expected one. Thus Wister, for all his motivated by the oldest axiom: give the audience what a couple of other purposes in image and fighting prowess are. So little occasion to the initial clash with Trampas, nothing is sorely needed; and loyalty to nurse the Virginian's long romance. Moreover, \textit{Wister} to portray the hero as a man, even in his subconscious cowpunchers would go into about the bodies of women, never does this. A life of living has saved the Virginian what must be the most boring the written word.

 Literary ambitions, which often take the form of boring dialogues between the narrator and the Virginian about Sir Walter Scott, does not really present his Indians in an understanding or sympathetic spirit. His polite upper middle class romance displays an attitude not far removed from \textit{The Police Gazette}'s report of the Wounded Knee Massacre:

\begin{quote}
The Indian was in South Dakota, so long anticipated, has at last become a reality, and with it has come the death of a number of brave troops of the United States Cavalry. The leader of the warriors was Big Foot and he and his braves tricked the troop into ambush. Then a wholesale slaughter began, the Indians being nearly annihilated, those who were not killed seeking refuge in the Bad Lands, where they will be frozen or starved out. As soon as the troops had cornered the Indians they fell upon them with Hotchkiss guns. The Indians fell in heaps but, determined to the last, they fought to the death even after being sorely wounded.

The saddest scene of the carnage was the killing of Captain George D. Wallace of the Seventh Cavalry, who was brutally tomahawked.

It is said the General Sheridan first remarked that: "A dead Indian is the best Indian" and the action of the soldiers appears to coincide with Little Phil's views. The action teaches the lesson that if the Sioux are of any use at all they should be fairly dealt with, and if not, that they should at once be given free passage to the happy hunting grounds. As they speak highly of the happy hunting grounds, it might be as well to start them on the journey in any case, and then if the decision be found unjust, to write them an apology.
\end{quote}

At any rate, we might take comfort from the fact that \textit{The Police Gazette} was at least as inaccurate in its time as the \textit{National Enquirer} and the \textit{National Star} frequently are today.

Against this standard, and the film image of the Indian in some of the early silent films, the relatively understanding and sympathetic treatment of the Indian in the fiction of Zane Grey and Max Brand can hardly be praised enough. Grey and Brand were the two most widely read authors of popular Western fiction in the first age of the genre, before Ernest Haycox and Luke Short transformed it into a more complex form (as Dashiell Hammett and Raymond Chandler transformed the private eye novel and as John W. Campbell, Robert Heinlein, and Isaac Asimov reshaped the science fiction story), all this coming in the late thirties and early forties. Grey and Brand both may have been influenced by the liberalism and reform spirit of the Progressive era (roughly 1900-1916), but they wrote some of their most sympathetic work about the Indians in the 1920's, hardly a time of great public concern about treatment of minorities. Grey has received more credit than Brand for sensitivity to the Indian point of view, but it is Brand's work that I am going to examine in detail in this study. Nevertheless, a brief
summary of Grey's treatment of Indians in his fiction will be helpful here for purposes of comparison.

II

Grey's earliest "Westerns" are his Ohio River trilogy, 1904-1907, written in imitation of Cooper and celebrating the exploits of the legendary Lewis Wetzel and of the Zane family who were Grey's ancestors. Although inferior to his later novels of the Far West, and rejected by first rate publishers, these books later became commercial successes in cheap editions on the power of Grey's reputation after Riders of the Purple Sage (1912) and other popular Grey novels for Harper's. The trilogy is packed with violence, much of it based on actual historical events, and is largely anti-Indian, or one might say, anti-Shawnee. Nevertheless, there is some ambivalence in these works. The Spirit of the Border, the second in the trilogy, makes one of its central acts of violence the historical massacre of a village of Christianized Indians, "the village of peace," or Gnadenhutten, established by Moravian missionaries. And one of the heroes, Joe Downs, marries an Indian princess, although both Joe and his wife are later killed by a vicious Shawnee in a vendetta. At the end of the book, Wetzel spares Wingenund, a Shawnee chief, when he learns that Wingenund has been a secret Christian and is sympathetic to the whites. Much worse than the Shawnees, in Grey's view, are Simon and Jim Girty, the renegade whites who live with the Indians and incite them to violence. Grey's overall theme seems to be that the Shawnees would have been peaceful and civilized if the Moravians had been allowed to Christianize them; but some bad Indians, and the evil Girtys, would not allow Christianity to work, and thus created a bitter conflict between the two cultures. This is obviously a simplistic view, providing some excuse for the warlike exploits of Grey's hero, Wetzel; but at least Grey, consciously or unconsciously, is uneasily placing some of the blame for the Indian wars on white culture, even if on renegades and outcasts. In blaming the Girtys, Grey is rather like those later movies that place the "cause" of the Indian wars on greedy profiteers who sell rifles to the Indians.

Grey's Ohio River trilogy is valuable if for no other reason than the fact that Grey's view of the conflicts between Indians and white frontiersmen is probably based on folk memory of the dominant and victorious white culture in Ohio at the turn of the century. However, after his later travels in Utah and Arizona, and in his
In his Ohio River trilogy, Cooper and celebrating the zeal of the Zane family, inferior to his later novels of publishers, these books later up editions on the power of _Purple Sage_ (1912) and other The trilogy is packed with historical events, and is largely fiction. Nevertheless, there is the _Spirit of the Border_, the central acts of violence the _Spirited_ Indians, "the village by Moravian missionaries, marries an Indian princess, r killed by a vicious Shawnee Wetzel spares Wingenund, a Wingenund has been a secret wites. Much worse than the and Jim Girty, the renegade cize them to violence. Grey's Shawnees would have been Indians had been allowed to lians, and the evil Girtrys, 1, and thus created a bitter he is obviously a simplistic utile exploits of Grey's hero, or unconsciously, is uneasily Indian wars on white culture, blaming the Girtrys, Grey is ce the "cause" of the Indian n to the Indians.7

We if for no other reason than between Indians and white memory of the dominant and the turn of the century, 8 ah and Arizona, and in his successful career as a romancer of the Far West, Grey saw the condition of the Indian much more sympathetically and realistically. A few examples will suffice here.

In _The Heritage of the Desert_ (1910), Grey's first major commercial success, Grey shows that at his best he is a much finer writer than Wister and a much better observer of Western people and the Western landscape, although critical snobbery has been slow to acknowledge Grey's superiority to the genteel Easterner who wrote _The Virginian_. _The Heritage of the Desert_ is largely a portrait of the Mormom patriarch, August Naab, but it is a principle of Naab's moral dignity that he is allied with a noble Navajo chieftain, who offers to help him against Holderness's land grabbing schemes. Here and later, the Navajos are Grey's favorite Indian people, and they are portrayed elegiacally.

There are many similar portraits of Indians in later romances. _Desert Gold_ (1913), though rather harsh toward Mexican bandits, offers a memorable characterization of a Yaqui who befriends the American heroes. Since the rangers who are the male leads turn out to be rather too much like overgrown boy scouts, the Yaqui steals the story from them, and at the end of the novel, Grey identifies the Indian with the landscape in a kind of mythopoetic fashion:

... The last the watchers saw of Yaqui was when he rode across a ridge and stood silhouetted against the gold desert sky—a wild, lonely, beautiful picture. Then he was gone.

Strangely it came to Gale then that he was glad. Yaqui had returned to his own—the great spaces, the desolation, the solitude—to the trails he had trodden when a child, trails haunted now by ghosts of his people, and ever by his gods. Gale realized that in the Yaqui he had known the spirit of the desert, that this spirit had claimed all which was wild and primitive in him.10

In _The Rainbow Trail_ (1915), Grey no longer believes in the Christianizing of the Navajo, not at least as it is done by the Mormons and the evangelical missionaries. Shefford, the hero, is a defrocked clergyman from the bourgeois Midwest, obviously alienated by the sentimental piety of Victorian middle class Christianity.11 Early in the romance, Shefford comes upon a rascally missionary wrestling with a Navajo girl at Presbrey's trading post. After Shefford knocks the lecherous evangelist down and sends him packing, he learns from the trader that Willets is a missionary and that he was "teaching her religion" in order to convert the Navajo maiden.12

Later, Shefford meets Natsa-Bega, the brother of the
threatened Navajo girl, and undying friendship springs up between the two. At one point, Grey stops the action of the novel to write an interlude portraying in poetic language the ritualized and reverent average day of the pastoral Navajos (as Grey idealizes it). Later, Nas-ta-Bega helps Shefford rescue Fay Larkin, the "Sago Lily," a beautiful mountain girl, from the oppressive Mormons; Mormonism is still secretly practicing polygamy in defiance of the United States government, and the Elders intend to marry Fay off against her will to a Mormon patriarch. Clearly, the Navajos are presented as noble here in contrast to the lecherous missionary and the Gothic practices of the Mormon Church. (It should be noted that *Riders of the Purple Sage* (1912) and its sequel, *The Rainbow Trail*, differ from *The Heritage of the Desert* by presenting an unflattering image of Mormonism as a kind of Christianity in decadence, much like the image of Roman Catholic Church that appears in eighteenth century Gothic fiction.)

Still later, in the 1920's when he was speaking out in his fiction on social causes, Grey tackled the situation of the Indian more directly in *The Vanishing American* (1922). Here Grey presents a star-crossed love between a white girl and Navajo man, Nopahie, who embodies all the nobility and dignity that Grey attributed to the Navajos. The novel ends with Nopahie's death rather than a marriage between the two, evidently one of the reasons the book has drawn the censure of Professor Russel Nye, who feels that Grey evaded a disturbing theme. Although I respect Professor Nye's work immensely, I would argue that Grey's ending here is due not to the fear of miscegenation, but rather to a realistic awareness of the social hostility toward this kind of Indian-white marriage, and perhaps more importantly, to the desire to make an impact on his audience with an "unhappy" or sentimentally "tragic" ending. At any rate, Grey's book presents Nopahie's death as symbolic of the Indian's fate, and fate is now viewed as bleakly tragic.

Grey also presents the Indian sympathetically in two romances that show what is now known fashionably as "ecological consciousness." In *Thunder Mountain* (1932), the chief of a band of Sheepcater Indians prophesies in a prologue to the novel that Thunder Mountain is an accursed place because it conceals gold, and because the mountain itself is unstable and susceptible to slides. In the romance, we get the
friendship springs up it stops the action of the II in poetic language the pastoral Navajos (as Shefford rescues tiful mountain girl, from still secretly practicing II helps Shefford rescue st her will to a Morman presented as noble here in and the Gothic practices noted that Riders of the II SeIlting an unflattering bISeIlting an unflattering Christianity in decadence, die Church that appears ) was speaking out in his led the situation of the g American (1922). Here between a white girl and les all the nobility and Navajos. The novel ends marriage between the two, has drawn the censure of Grey evaded a disturbing Nye's work immensely, I is due not to the fear of awareness of the social in-white marriage, and dire to make an impact on r sentimentally "tragI presents Nopschie's death as is now viewed as bleakly sympathetically in two known fashionably as Mountain (1932), the prophesies in a prologue is an accursed place e the mountain itself is the romance, we get the story of the life and death of a mining camp, which begins with a murder and a stolen claim and proceeds through a career of greed and injustice until finally destroyed by a landslide. Thus nature takes revenge on man for man's capacity and desecration of the wilderness. Man's justice is viewed in a particularly unflattering light in Thunder Mountain, for vigilantes, usually the instruments of popular justice, are about to hang the hero on false evidence, when the mountain strikes back and destroys the camp. In this novel, the mining camp may perhaps be a symbol for America, being punished by the depression; at any rate, the Indian serves as a tragic chorus on the tragedy of white lies and greed.

The Piutes, however, in Wild Horse Mesa (1924) act as agents of justice wronged by the whites. Here the hero, a wild horse hunter, befriends the Piute chief, Toddy Nokin, and prevents his unhappy daughter, Sosie, from eloping with a treacherous white man. Sosie's bitterness against her situation is presented with compassionate understanding: educated by missionaries at a reservation school, she no longer feels a part of her father's Indian world, yet her white education is not a passport to place of respect in white society. In repayment, the Indians befriend the hero at the end of the book by shooting the villain; but it is clear that like the great wild horse herds, the Piutes are an anachronism and soon will be forced to adapt or become extinct.

Grey offers no way out of the dilemmas presented by The Vanishing American and Wild Horse Mesa, although he hoped that his work would create understanding and sympathy for the Indian. Like many authors of Westerns, he was caught in the contradictions between his love for the wilderness as it was, and had been, and his celebration of the heroic effort that conquered the frontier in support of the myth of progress.

One of the major differences between Grey and Max Brand is that there is really no very strong myth of social or national progress in Brand's Westerns. This is due in part to the alienation and cynicism of the author. Max Brand was the major pseudonym for Frederick Schiller Faust, a Californian whose highest ambition was to be a poet, or failing that, at least a great novelist. Born in 1892, Faust grew up in the actual West, in turn of the century Modesto, in
the San Joaquin Valley, and for him the valley towns created by the
gold rush and the westward course of empire were purgatories of
physical labor, social bigotry, and cultural sterility, or at best
provincialism. Faust's father had been a shabbily genteel lawyer
from Illinois who had followed the rainbow west first to Seattle, and
then to California. But there had been no pot of gold for Gilbert
Leander Faust: instead the hardships of life in the Far West brought
poverty, failure, and eventually destroyed the health of the elder
Faust's wife, and finally his own. Orphaned at thirteen, young
Frederick Faust was a brilliant lad toughened by hardships. Living
with relatives as a poor relation, he performed much hard physical
labor to earn his keep while distinguishing himself as a schoolyard
boxer and as a student. His ambition was to escape from the
workaday agricultural West that had destroyed his father, and
Faust saw his intellect as a means to that end. Meanwhile, like many
imaginative children and young people, he nourished fantasies of
being a dispossessed gentleman who was obliged to restore pride and
fortune to the family.

Faust's drive took him to the University of California at
Berkeley on a scholarship, where he made a reputation as a
promising poet and student of literature. Unfortunately, he also
made a name for himself as a campus rebel, and became the
scapegoat for President Benjamin Ide Wheeler's self-appointed
mission to uphold the sanctity of nineteenth century social and
academic ideals. Instead of being graduated in 1915, Faust was
prevented from taking a degree by President Wheeler and made the
object of Wheeler's angry commencement address.

After a wanderyear that stretched into two years, Faust turned
up as a starving poet in New York, after having sailed to Hawaii,
worked his way back to Vancouver on a tramp steamer, enlisted in
the Canadian army and tried to desert; he was later shipped to
Toronto and succeeded in deserting; and then hitchhiked and rode
the rods to the Big Apple. To avert starvation, Faust became a
writer for the pulp fiction factories of Munsey and Street and Smith;
from the first, Faust was a favorite protégé of the Munsey editor,
Bob Davis, his "discoverer." An enormous talent for rapid
composition made Faust the "king of the pulp writers" under the
name of Max Brand (and other names). With newfound affluence
Faust was able to marry his college sweetheart. Eventually, with his
income soaring, Faust moved to Italy and rented a villa, where he
could write his poetry, grind out his prodigious production of pulp
Westerns, and live in the style of a latter day Renaissance aristocrat.
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Although Faust always disparaged his pulp fiction, and for
years engaged in as little re-writing as possible, the Max Brand
Westerns show a highly literate and evocative style, and reflect
Faust's personality to a remarkable degree. The heroes are nearly
always outsiders or outcasts, and in many cases outlaws or men with
prison records, and they are nearly always extra-ordinarily talented
men hampered by birth and social hostility. There is a great deal of
sympathy for the underdog in Faust's pulp Westerns, whether this
character happens to be a Chinese, an Indian, a Mexican or
Mexican-American, an outlaw, a wild horse, or a dog gone feral, or
an orphan boy. In at least two novels, the hero is a white boy raised
by the Chinese; in several others, the hero is an outlaw's orphan;
and in a number of other stories an American hero finds himself
more at home among Mexicans than in his native country.89 These
Westerns reflect the attitudes of the Frederick Faust who had not
only fled the modern West, but found twentieth century
industrialized America a dreary place in comparison with the more
timeless and traditional world of Italy.

Most of the Westerns Faust wrote under the pseudonym of Max
Brand and other names take place in the post-Indian West where the
conflict is mainly between outlaws and the law. To a great extent,
this West is a creation of Faust's imagination, stimulated by his
knowledge of folklore and Western legend, but it shows some
resemblance to the world he knew in California as a child and an
adolescent in the period 1892-1912. But when he decided to write
romances about Indians, Faust, or Brand as we shall call him in this
role from now on, had no personal experience to draw on. Instead,
he went to the books in his library for material, using, according to
his biographer, the works of George Bird Grinnell and James
Willard Schultz.90 Since he has little knowledge of the Great Plains
or of real Indians, Brand's Indian Westerns represent a creation
almost entirely spun out of his powerful imagination stimulated by
some historical research. As such, these works are singularly
fascinating.

IV

The first important Max Brand Western to deal with Indian life
is The White Cheyenne (1925).92 This is a rather robust and at times
rollicking saga of a gambler who befriends a white giant raised by
the Cheyennes. The setting is the Great Plains in the 1870's. The
novel is narrated in a serio-comic tone by the gambler, a scapegrace Southern gentleman who was run out of Charleston for killing a fellow “gentleman” in a duel. At first we expect Rivers to be the hero of the tale, although he makes it clear that he doesn’t really believe in the Southern code of honor, and it was this, as well as his reputation as a black sheep, that provided the reason for his swift departure from Charleston. But Rivers’s first person narration—and Brand practically invented this technique for the Western—functions with its sardonic humor to counterpoint the adventures of Lost Wolf, the White Cheyenne. Like many Brand heroes of the twenties, Lost Wolf is a kind of overwhelming natural force, at times comic and at times frightening, but governed by a different code from civilization, and being by his nature something of an affront to it.

Brand makes Lost Wolf admirable by several devices of characterization. Lost Wolf was supposedly raised by the Cheyennes, and then taken into white society by a plainsman, Danny Croydon. While with Croydon, Lost Wolf learned to read and write, and to speak flawless English. Both Lost Wolf and the Cheyennes talk in a highly poetic idiom, much like the translations of Plains Indian speech that we find in many books today. This is generally true for all of Brand’s novels containing Indians; it is the whites who speak in a coarse slangy vocabulary, whereas Indian speech is invariably dignified, and admirable.

Moreover, Lost Wolf is a great warrior with six-guns and rifle, as well as with knife and bare hands. He is a good tactician, and among the Cheyennes, a rich man, owning many ponies and buffalo robes, thanks to his raids against the Pawnees and the Sioux. But since re-joining the Cheyennes, Lost Wolf has not taken part in any raids against whites; thereby, Brand assures the sympathy of his white readers.

Nevertheless, Lost Wolf does kill two white men, and he chases another out of the country. Since the man Lost Wolf frightens away is a bully and a gunfighter who has brutally beaten the narrator, the white reader will still approve of Lost Wolf’s action. But Brand deals with white racism and challenges the reader to a sense of fairness toward the Indian in the sequence where Lost Wolf kills two white men. Here Lost Wolf is avenging an Indian friend who disappeared in the vicinity of a wagon train. The narrator becomes a spy for Lost Wolf, joins the wagon train, and learns that two brothers who hunt for meat for the train had shot Lost Wolf’s Cheyenne friend as callously as they shoot buffalo. Rivers, the
one by the gambler, a scapegrace out of Charleston for killing a man by the gambler, a scapegrace out of Charleston for killing a man, and it was this, as well as his first-person narration - his technique for the Western - counterpoint the adventures of Rivers to be the hero that he doesn't really believe it was this, as well as his provided the reason for his Rivers's first-person narration - his technique for the Western - counterpoint the adventures of Like many Brand heroes of the overwhelming natural force, at 19, but governed by a different something of an admirable by several devices of supposedly raised by the Cheyenne society by a plainsman. Danny Lost Wolf learned to read and write. Both Lost Wolf and the Cheyennes by a plainsman. Danny Lost Wolf learned to read and write. Both Lost Wolf and the Cheyennes, much like the translations in many books today. This is because containing Indians; it is the ugly vocabulary; whereas Indian admirable. He is a good tactician, and owning many ponies and buffalo. But Lost Wolf has not taken part in any of the Pawnees and the Sioux. But Lost Wolf has not taken part in any and assures the sympathy of his wild two white men, and he chases the man Lost Wolf frightens away brutally beaten the narrator, the Lost Wolf's action. But Brand challenges the reader to a sense of quince where Lost Wolf kills two venging an Indian friend who shot train. The narrator becomes an Indian friend who shot train, and learns that two the train had shot Lost Wolf's they shoot buffalo. Rivers, the narrator, entices the two brothers away from the train, where Lost Wolf kills them (presumably in a duel) to avenge his Indian friend. The reader is thus led to condemn white racism, and to admire Lost Wolf as a man of honor who provides retribution for a red friend's murder. If the reader goes this far with Lost Wolf, he has accepted him as a hero, while also siding with the Indians for a change.

Lost Wolf's Cheyenne notions of honor and humor cause a good deal of trouble for the residents of the plains town of Zander City, and the citizens, already biased by white bigotry, rise up in arms when Lost Wolf kidnaps Peggy Gleason, their most celebrated beauty. But the novel has a happy ending, more or less according to pulp formula: Peggy Gleason is a spoiled young beauty used to intimidating young men, but Lost Wolf's dominance of her wins her love. Although he respects her chastity, he treats her pretty much as though she were a Cheyenne squaw when he brings her captive to the tribe. His rough handling causes her to love him; she is motivated apparently by the kind of feminine perversity so common in pulp fiction and the movies of the twenties (it was the age of *The Sheik* and Douglas Fairbanks's *Taming of the Shrew*). But the Cheyennes will not accept Lost Wolf's choice of a white wife. Lost Wolf and the girl are told to leave the Cheyenne tribe and to return to the whites (not presumably at Zander City, where he would be shot or hanged).

Rivers, the narrator, asks the inevitable question: “But do you think he will not be an outcast both from the reds and the whites?” However, the serious issues of the ending, Lost Wolf's marriage to a girl raised in white culture, and Lost Wolf's difficulties of adjustment to white ways, are both treated lightly. It is suggested that Peggy Gleason will soon dominate him, as he has “tamed” her. And a frontiersman named Danny Croydon dismisses the problem of accommodation to white society: “What he doesn't know by teaching, he knows by instinct. I think that lad will find a way to get along with the whites, when he bends his mind to it.” Although Brand is capable of almost any kind of ending that sounds faintly plausible, since he viewed his writing as commercial hack work, he doesn't always follow the expected formulas. And a decade later, he was to treat assimilation to white culture more seriously.

In short, *The White Cheyenne* describes Cheyenne culture with sympathy, but it presents Lost Wolf as a curiousity, sometimes formidable, sometimes merely comic. Lost Wolf is a kind of Tarzan in the white world, and his Cheyenne attitudes are an excuse for Brand to draw the reader into a male chauvinist fantasy.
Interestingly enough, by the middle twenties, Brand was beginning to be a little disenchanted with his marriage, evidently because he thought his wife lacked intellectual seriousness and retreated too much into domesticity."

Indians continue to show up as minor characters in some other Westerns of the next few years. In *The Border Bandit* (1926), the hero, raised as a milksop by a New England mother, comes to Texas to collect a legacy, but makes the mistake of giving a contemptuous push to a drunken Comanche. The Comanche chief, White Hawk, repays the insult by kidnapping Oliver Tay and selling him into slavery to a Mexican mine owner. Tay turns into a he-man, escapes, and becomes a border Robin Hood, wanted in the U.S. and Mexico, and also a deadly enemy of the Comanche chieftain. But the image of the Comanches is not entirely negative, for Tay becomes the brother of another Comanche warrior, Yellow Wolf. Here we find Brand moving into the tradition of Leatherstocking and Chingachgook. A similar relationship with an Indian is worked into *Sawdust and Sixguns* (1927-28) where another tenderfoot, Anthony Castacane, uses his training as a circus athlete to terrorize Dodge City. Outlawed by false accusations, Anthony finds blood brotherhood with Big Crow, an Osage warrior whom Anthony helps in a fight with the Pawnes. (Because the Pawnes were the perennial enemies of the Cheyenne, and because Brand relied heavily on Grinnell's books about the Cheyenne, the Pawnes seldom receive much sympathy in Brand's books.) In a much later novel, *Lucky Larrabee* (1932), Larrabee the hero, also establishes blood brotherhood with an Indian, this time a Cheyenne whom he fights to a standstill. The novel primarily deals with the pursuit of a wild horse, however, and Brand follows his sources in suggesting that Indians were rather rough in their treatment of their mounts.

Even the ferocious Apaches are treated kindly in *Tamer of the Wild* (1931), where the hero, a professional thief in white world, wins some honor among the Apaches, and then gains the confidence to become a leader among whites. The novel is set in a remote part of Arizona (though Brand never names the territory, his setting is clearly the rough desert county we meet in novels about the Apache), where a lonely mine is menaced by Apaches. Rory Michel, the hero, feels some sympathy for the Apaches because of his profession of thief: as he says, Apache ethics make theft permissible in many situations. His success in healing a sick Apache child makes him a shaman to the Apaches, and helps him win the close friendship of one family in the tribe. However, he is unable to
prevented a clash between Apaches and whites, and ultimately forced to side with the whites. This bitter battle between whites and Apaches erupts here because of two men: the chauvinistic and bigoted Colonel Ware, who owns the mine, and a scheming Apache medicine man who dislikes Rory and wants bloodshed. In the evil medicine man, Brand resorts to a cliche villain, and the novel ends somewhat unrealistically with the Apaches leaving the battle after Rory breaks the power of the wily shaman. Despite such flaws, *Tamer of the Wild* deserves some credit as an early attempt to treat Apache culture sympathetically (it was published in the same year as Will Levington Comfort's strong novel, *Apache*, dealing with the tragedy of Mangas Coloradas, a great Apache leader. And this is sixteen years before Elliott Arnold's *Blood Brother* was published in 1947; Arnold's novel is the basis for the taboo breaking Hollywood film, *Broken Arrow* (1950), treating Cochise sympathetically.)

Brand was apparently fascinated by the theme of a white man leaving white civilization and finding honor and a sense of identity among Indians. He also seems intrigued by the challenge of portraying Indian culture "from the inside" in this kind of novel. One such plot deals with the white man who joins an Indian tribe, the basis for *The Rescue of Broken Arrow* (1929-30). This time, the hero is an Irish-American gutter snipe, Bandon Suir Cashel, from the slums of New York. Somehow Cashel has joined a wagon train to escape his past as a sneak thief, but the pioneers, led by a self-righteous egotist, Fitzroy Melville, expel Cashel and set him adrift on the prairie. Cashel befriends Broken Arrow, the greatest Cheyenne warrior, and again a great kinship develops. Broken Arrow is a man of unimpeachable honor, and the first person to treat Cashel decently. Cashel learns to have a conscience from Broken Arrow's example and hopes to become a member of the Cheyenne tribe in good standing. Yet he is not fully accepted until after Broken Arrow's capture by the Pawnees, when Cashel engineers one of the daring escapes that were Max Brand's stock in trade. (Northrop Frye calls this sort of thing the "Houdini motif.") After gaining hero status, Cashel is allowed to settle in the tribe and marry one of its most beautiful maidens. As frequently happens in a Brand romance, the hero finds better treatment from outcasts, or minorities like Mexicans or Indians, than he does from the dominant whites. However, despite this sympathetic treatment of the Cheyenne, Indian life is obviously romanticized a good deal.

A variation on the theme of a white gaining honor among the Cheyennes shows up in *Vengeance Trail* (1931). When Brand
tended to re-work a plot used earlier during his peak period in the thirties, he nearly always improved on it with better characterizations and more thoughtful treatment of theme. *Vengeance Trail* is a good example. In this story, a fourteen year old boy, Johnnie Tanner, is the main hero; joining the Cheyennes after a trek West, Johnnie becomes a tribal hero, although unlike Cashel, he eventually returns to the East. Like several Max Brand Westerns of the thirties, *Vengeance Trail* is cunningly conceived as both a "Western" and a boy's book. I say "cunningly" because I do not think this is accidental: either Brand may have had some notion of marketing some of these stories in hardcover form as "books for boys," or, hungry for literary immortality, he may have written some Westerns in this way in the hope of at least gaining a kind of enduring fame as an author for adolescents.36

However that may be, *Vengeance Trail* is an excellent narrative, both entertaining and fairly accurate historically, with a nice period feel to it.37 The time of the story is the late 1830's or early 1840's, when Cheyenne culture was at its height, before the Plains Indians were threatened by the Westward movement. (Brand almost never dates a novel by reference to historic events, but his narratives— at least from 1925 on—contain references that allow a careful reader to date them within a decade or so: thus, the presence of a movie house in Clayrock in *The Stranger* makes it a modern Western, some time in the period 1915-1929; on the other hand, *Sawdust and Sixguns* is clearly set in the 1870's in the heyday of Dodge City.)38 *Vengeance Trail* contains a revolver, invented by "Samuel Colt," at a time when these are a rarity, thus allowing us to date the book (presumably the gun is a Walker Colt).39

Johnnie Tanner, at the "princely age" of fourteen, lives with his Aunt Maggie, who runs a boarding house in New York City.40 Johnnie's mysterious father is away as a sea captain in the South Seas, and Johnnie amuses himself with daydreams of pirates and Indians. Suddenly the father returns with a fortune and the announcement that his travels are over. As a special prize, the father exhibits the Colt, which almost seems to have a magic quality to it; and inside the Colt's handles are enormous pearls, the linchpins of Captain Tanner's fortune, it seems. which he had taken from a rival Yankee trader in a pitched battle at sea (not impossible in the early period of American trading in the South Pacific). After years of absence, the father wants the son's love, but feels he can't win it immediately; to speed up the process, he lends Johnnie the Colt to play with. The son in turn wants to love the father, but merely
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At any rate, the Colt proves to be a magic talisman for Johnnie Tanner, for it leads him into his adventure with the Cheyennes. The thief who steals the gun heads west with John in pursuit. Following the man to a ferry over the Hudson, John then pursues his quarry to Pittsburgh. Befriended there by some kindly folk, the boy follows the thief downriver on the Ohio. Finally John is taken under the protection of Hank Raney, a mountain man going back to the plains. Raney takes John on the Missouri River to Liberty and then to the Great Plains. The gun, it seems was stolen by "Pawnee Harry," a rascal who had lived with the Pawnees in the past, and was just starting back when the chance to steal arose. Raney and John join the Cheyennes, whom Raney knows of old, and Johnnie soon learns much about Cheyenne life. Since the Cheyennes are constantly at war with the Pawnees, John gets a chance to strike a blow for them; and in a daring raid on the Pawnee camp, he recovers his gun. The Cheyennes look on John as a warriour and "medicine man" or shaman, and at last he feels himself a hero. Regrettably, he and Hank must leave the tribe to return to white life; on their trip back, they meet John's father, with whom the boy is reconciled.

Preposterous as this narrative sounds, in a bald summary, it is a delightful and nearly perfect boy's adventure story. (And what adventure story for boys does not sound absurd in a plot summary?)41 Life with the Cheyennes is presented as an idyllic world. Johnnie Tanner has the kind of hair-raising experiences that adolescent boys dream of; his adventure with the Cheyennes is a perfect Arcadian episode, despite its perils. The book in fact ends with a tone of regret, as though Johnnie were saying farewell to his boyhood, and the reader to Indians in the wild untroubled tribal life.

Thus, in these novels, the Cheyenne are depicted as fierce but noble warriors, living in an untroubled wild state; moreover, they are generally more honorable than whites, though Brand does provide them with one or two weak characters and a villain or two. The image of the Indians in these books is thus a highly positive one, even if somewhat romanticized. Generally, however, Brand has evaded or avoided portraying the darker side of Indian history, and he has tended to avoid the problem of white bigotry and racism, although he has touched on these in \textit{The White Cheyenne} and
Tamer of the Wild. In other books, he was to suggest something of the tragedy of Indian life.

V

A hint of the Indian's tragedy comes out in Brand's treatment of the reservation Indian. Although he generally evades presenting the harsh picture of the defeated Indian, there are two interesting incidents that deal with the Indian on the reservation.

The first of these is in Smiling Charlie (1927), one of Brand's worst novels. The book is largely a collection of twenties cliches of popular romance: the hero is a gentleman outlaw, actually the scion of an Eastern family out on a lark; there are two heroines, one a sentimental ninny and the other a clever and heartless flirt; there is a wealthy cattle baron, supposedly a benevolent despot, but actually a mean spirited manipulator of people; and there is finally a narrator, a brave deputy sheriff with some fighting ability but essentially a naive and stupid fellow. In addition to an inept plot, the novel has characters with whom no reader beyond the age of sixteen could sympathize.

One action sequence stands out from this mess, however. Billy, the deputy, describes the consternation through the mountain range of the "Sierra Blanca" when some reservation Indians escape and go on a tear. Billy himself is a racist, and describes the Indians as a "handful of copper scum," and he remarks "They have educated Indians up into football teams and such civilized kinds of murder these days, but in the old times of the reservations there was no way that they was able to take out their meanness, except by gambling and throwing knives at a line," and so the "meanest" Indians went on a vendetta against whites. Billy's words are confirmed when the three renegade Indians shoot up a posse and later terrorize some mountain ranchers. In a bloody sequence, Billy kills the Indians in a showdown, after some racial slurs have been exchanged on both sides. However, Billy does acknowledge that he was frightened during the shootout, and he later speaks with some sarcasm about the white hysteria over the "red peril."

Since Brand makes it clear that Billy is not especially bright or morally perceptive, one tends to read most of what he says, other than pure description, as unintentional irony. The reader is therefore left to draw his own conclusions about this brutal incident. It is fairly clear from Billy's account that the Indians found
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reservation life to be a humiliating and boring existence, and that
when they revolted violently against it, they were snuffed out
contemptuously, like wild animals who had escaped from a zoo.

In a much better novel Blood on the Trail expect Brand
introduces a reservation Indian as a spokesman, both for the Indian,
and, surprisingly, on behalf of acceptance of life and the human
condition. Blood on the Trail is an interesting novel, despite its
hackneyed title, probably supplied by some harried editor. This
Thoreausque novel deals with Dave Reagan, a young, slow talking,
gentle giant, who leaves civilization in disgust and goes to live in the
mountains with a wolf he has tamed. Reagan has been a poor relation
exploited by his uncle and cousins, shiftless ranchers who let Dave
do much of the work while they fight and drink and condemn him as
a "half-wit" behind his back. When he learns how little they care
about him, Dave takes the only thing he loves, the wolf that he has
tamed, and a knife, and goes into the mountains, where he lives a
hermit-like existence, wholly dependent on his own resources. But
one of the few people he meets is an elderly Indian who also dwells
in the mountains: the Indian, a Cheyenne named Walking
Thunder, had lived in the white world as a school teacher for a time;
he speaks excellent English, thanks to the Carlisle school ("Not that I
learned a great deal."). Walking Thunder counsels Dave that "you
only get out of the world what you pay for . . . ."
The Indian lives in
the mountains because his wife and children were killed in a fire,
but he advises Dave that a young man should not live apart from
human society until he has proved that he can live within it.
Walking Thunder suggests that Dave return to the human world to
find out what happened to a girl he was once attracted to. When
Dave protests about the disadvantages he would face, Walking
Thunder makes the simple comment: "I am a man with a red skin,
and I live in a nation of white people," said the Indian simply.
"What is your curse compared with mine?" Convinced, Dave
returns to civilization, and eventual triumph over obstacles there.

Both Dave and Walking Thunder serve as comments on the
necessity of struggle and acceptance of the human condition. The
message could hardly have been lost on Brand's Depression readers,
many of whom may have had little more than the Spartan fare that
Dave and Walking Thunder lived on in the rimrock. Here, as in the
last white Cheyenne novels, we see the Indian in Brand's fiction
becoming a spokesman for hard won wisdom and enduring ideals.
In 1927, before he had reached the tough wisdom of the thirties novels, Brand had returned to the theme of the white Cheyenne. The second white Cheyenne novel, *Thunder Moon*, describes the childhood, youth, and young manhood of a white boy raised from infancy by the Cheyennes. Stolen by a childless brave named Big Hard Face, Thunder Moon grows up thinking himself to be a Cheyenne, until he realizes that his skin is too fair. To compensate for his lack of Cheyenne blood, Thunder Moon makes an effort to excel at sports and as a fledgling warrior. But he fails to endure the initiation ritual of the Cheyennes, which requires him to submit to a mutilation of the skin of his chest by a knife, and thus brings disgrace on his foster father. (Here Brand is engaging in a curious bit of genetic speculation: He seems to think that Thunder Moon’s “white blood,” or genes, would not allow him to submit stoically to the ritual knife. Obviously, this is highly suspect as biology; but the real point is that the ritual mutilation of the passage into manhood was revolting to Brand, and his implausible explanation of Thunder Moon’s revulsion indicates his own inability to imagine the ritual in positive terms.)

Thunder Moon’s disgrace, though felt strongly by the boy and his father, turns out to be only temporary. Thunder Moon becomes a hero by helping a Cheyenne warrior against the Pawnees, and he and Big Hard Face become rich in horses. Later Thunder Moon, famed as a horseman and hunter, goes to an American outpost, “Fort Humphrey Brown,” and wins a horse race from a white competitor. Most of the whites want to cheat Thunder Moon of his prize, but an idealistic Army officer insists on fair play. Finally, Thunder Moon and another friend win an important battle against the Commanches of the Southern Plains.

Most of this episodic novel, it will have been noticed, takes place within Indian society and in clashes between the Cheyennes and other tribes. The setting is the timeless Great Plains before the Civil War; white society exists only in the fort, which is distant from the main centers of white civilization. There is no pressure on the Indian world to yield its land to whites, or to endure the presence of white settlers. While we are given a glimpse of white chicanery, bigotry, and greed at the fort, this is balanced out by some whites who believe in fair play. In short, Brand preserves the romantic and idyllic tone of the novel by setting it in the high tide of Plains Indian culture, and carefully evading the wars that were to come, and the
the tough wisdom of the thirties theme of the white Cheyenne. Thunder Moon, describes the ordeal of a white boy raised from birth by a childless brave named Big Put up thinking himself to be a redskin is too fair. To compensate Thunder Moon makes an effort to become a warrior. But he fails to endure the which requires him to submit to a cut by a knife, and thus brings a farewell to his world. Thunder Moon becomes a warrior against the Pawnees, and he wins a horse race from a white man to cheat Thunder Moon of his prize. The boy insists on fair play. Finally, Thunder Moon wins an important battle against the Pawnees.

It will have been noticed, takes place in the time before the time of the Cheyennes. The Cheyennes are portrayed as noble warriors who seldom go hungry, live a life of manly combat with other tribes, and live by religious ideals of honor. Brand shows himself to be fascinated by Cheyenne myths, and recreates something of their substance through Thunder Moon's reverence for the "Sky People," and the "Underwater People," that is, the gods and spirits that the Cheyennes created mythopoeically to identify with their environment. In his adult years, Thunder Moon becomes both a warrior and a shaman, a man singled out for special blessings by the "Sky People."

Although Brand avoided the problems of Thunder Moon's relationship to white society, and the coming clash of the whites with the Cheyennes, he apparently did arrange in a sequel for Thunder Moon to enter white society and to fall in love with a white woman. Unfortunately, this sequel is not readily available to scholars: it appears to exist only in the pulp magazine of fifty years ago, for unlike Thunder Moon, it has not yet been issued in an accessible book. 49

VII

More impressive than the earlier novels about the Cheyenne is the Red Hawk trilogy. These novels, War Party (1934), Frontier Feud, (1934), and Cheyenne Gold (1935) were written near the end of Brand's career as a pulp Western author. Brand was at the peak of his powers in 1933-1936, and produced many of his best Westerns, including the Silvertip series and the Montana Kid trilogy in this time, while also shrewdly working at a conquest of the "slick" magazines. Just when his efforts to escape the pulps and to pay off chronic debts were being crowned with success, Brand accepted an offer to go to Hollywood and work on the Dr. Kildare movies, which grew out of a story he had written. Perhaps Brand was exhausted by the gigantic expense of energy required in these years; but after 1937, he wrote few Westerns or other kinds of adventure stories, devoting his energies mainly to films and to the Dr. Kildare novels which seem today to be only period pieces. 50

Composed in this great fecund period of the middle thirties, the Red Hawk trilogy represents Brand's definitive statement on the Indian and his clash with white culture. In the Red Hawk novels,
Brand treats frontier life in a more tragic tone. War between Indians and whites is nearly always on the verge of eruption, with the uneasy peace threatened by bitter hatreds and bigotry, especially white racism. Moreover, Brand portrays Cheyenne life as much more than merely a warrior culture devoted to hunting and tribal wars. It has a highly ritualized and religious vision of the world, which Red Hawk responds to profoundly. Through Red Hawk's mysticism, Brand is able to describe the Cheyenne myths and their religious consciousness much more fully than before. Red Hawk is more a shaman than a warrior, and his visionary experiences play a large part in the trilogy. It is hard to read the books today as anything but a clearcut indictment of white society, and a defense of the Indian's poetic vision.

To be sure, the Indians are not presented as guiltless: the first chapter of *War Party* describes in harrowing style the Cheyenne raid on Kate Sabin's cabin, and the reaction of three year old Rusty, who will become Red Hawk, to his mother's death: "What instinct told the boy that she was going away beyond eall—forever?" Thus the framework of a bitter and relentless hatred between Indians and whites is established, unlike the humorous and idyllic moods that dominate the earlier Cheyenne novels.

The themes of *War Party* are Rusty's initiation into young manhood and his discovery of his identity. As in most popular romances of this kind, a birthmark or an identifying piece of jewelry plays a role: Rusty carries his mother's green scarab necklace with him into his life as a white Cheyenne. In addition, Brand uses a romantic variation on the Sohrab and Rustem motif by building to a climactic battle between Red Hawk and his white father, the embittered Marshall Sabin, whose hatred for the Cheyennes has turned him into a white ally of the Pawnees. Unlike the usual Sohrab and Rustem tale, the novel concludes with a formula happy ending. Recognizing the scarab, Marshall Sabin is re-united with his son and Rusty becomes engaged to a white girl. This ending is really only a suspension of action, and is altered by the next novel. Despite the conventional framework of *War Party*, there are a number of memorable sequences.

Rusty's initiation into manhood begins with his failure to endure the ordeal of mutilation. After disgrace, he leaves the tribe to enter white society, but except for the kindness of Maisry Lester and her gentle and ineffectual father, he finds nothing but hatred and contempt in the frontier town of Whitherell (suggesting "wither all"). An agonizing year of labor in the blacksmith shop of the brutal
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Sam Calkins hardens Rusty Sabin physically and mentally. In vivid
imagery, Brand portrays Rusty toiling secretly at night to forge a
great knife as a weapon. After beating the hulking bully, Calkins,
in a fist fight, to the joy of the course Mrs. Calkins, Rusty takes his
leave of the white world by ritually washing off the grime of the
blacksmith's trade: "... He was washing himself clean of all his
days among the whites, of all the humiliation, the shame, the sorrow
and the foulness that comes out a brooding mind ... "52 Although he
chooses to be an Indian once more, Rusty is still involved with the
white world. Seeing Maisry Lester courted, unwillingly, by two
crude and quarrelsome brothers, Rusty pledges himself to win her
by tracking and capturing the legendary White Horse, or medicine
horse.

Christianity has never made much of an impression on Rusty,
for when younger, Rusty had received a sacred sign from the
Cheyenne god, Sweet Medicine. He had undergone a purification
ceremony at the entrance to the Sacred Valley in the Black Hills, the
legendary holy ground where Sweet Medicine "dwells," and now in
his pursuit of the wild stallion, Rusty, under his Cheyenne name of
Red Hawk, returns to the worship of Sweet Medicine. His Indian
mysticism gives Rusty the inner strength to pursue the famous horse
on foot, and the quest becomes an epic one:

Many people have heard of the hunting of the White Horse. The two
names come ding-dong into the memory, like sound and echo: Red Hawk and
the White Horse! It is generally known, also, that the hunt ran from the
Canadian River on the South, to the Milk River on the north; up to the
Yellowstone and the Powder Rivers, and up the forks of the Platte, both North
and South. It is also known that the drama was concluded among the Blue
Water Mountains.53

By this time in his career, Brand has learned to make invented
legend sound like authentic and credible folk tale and oral myth, as
the quotation indicates with its use of phrases like "Many people
have heard..." Brand also cleverly mixes actual place names with
the invented one, the "Blue Water Mountains," the mythic branch
of the Rockies where the Silvertip novels also have their setting in
the post-Indian West. Such narrative skills make the Red Hawk
novels take on the tone of an Indian legend retold.

After killing a vicious white hunter who proposes to kill the
White Horse, Rusty tracks the stallion relentlessly on foot until he
wears down the horse's resistance. He tames the horse for riding, in
much the same way, using the mixture, of gentleness and strength in
his personality. But after returning to the Cheyennes, Rusty feels
that he must erase the memory of his failure at the initiation rite. With his horse, he rides into the Sacred Valley of Sweet Medicine, and passes through an ordeal of silence and hunger there for three days. On the third day, he receives a blessing in the form of an omen from Sweet Medicine: he also discover gold, a fateful act, but he returns from the valley to great honor among the Cheyennes, who hail Red Hawk as a great shaman and prophet. It will not have escaped Christian readers that Rusty's passage through the holy valley parallels the three days of Christ's death and resurrection, when according to Christian tradition, Christ passed through the underworld and "harrowed" hell. Brand thus transforms Red Hawk into a kind of archetypal hero/redeemer figure.

From triumph among red men, Rusty returns to the white world, where his small cache of gold arouses greed in the Bailey brothers who have been courting Rusty's sweetheart. Rusty survives their greed when, after guiding the brutal Baileys to the Sacred Valley, he sees them kill each other in a quarrel. After his climactic fight with Marshall Sabin, the hero of the Pawnees, Rusty is recognized by his father and re-united with him. He also gains Maisry's love, and so appears to have triumphed over white bigotry and intolerance at the end of War Party.

In the second novel, Frontier Feud, (also known as Brother of the Cheyenne) Rusty's life among the whites is nearly turned to tragedy by the malicious Major Marston. In this book, the Sabins and the Lesters move to the Southern Plains and take up residence at Fort Marston, commanded by the ambitious major of that name (he has had his political friends in Washington name the fort for him.) Marston cannot bear to see so much apparent good fortune bestowed on a mere white Indian and blacksmith like Red Hawk, and his envy prompts Marston to plot a way to humiliate Rusty and to steal his fiancee.

A more villainous army officer than Marston would be hard to imagine; Brand comments sardonically:

... The motto of Major Marston, when it came to Indian warfare, was "Be thorough." He believed the old adage that the only good Indians are the dead ones, and he lived up to his belief. Midnight attacks on Indian villages were his forte; and like the redskins themselves, he counted all scalps, no matter of what origin.

If the hail of bullets which the major directed happened to strike down women or children, he expressed regret for the moment, but he was sure to include all the fallen in his list of "enemy killed."

His troops hated him with all their hearts, but they respected him because he was always successful in whatever he set out to do."
Marston flogs Bill Tenney, a thief from Kentucky who had saved Red Hawk from drowning in the “Tulmac” River, and then outlaws Red Hawk when Rusty and two Cheyenne friends help him escape. Using a forged letter and lies, Marston manages to destroy Rusty’s engagement, and then he plots his biggest coup: to fall on the nearby Cheyenne village and ambush them, killing all the Indians as well as Rusty. Though there is no official war, Marston believes he can easily persuade Washington that his attack was justified because the Cheyenne had moved southward.

Marston is a melodramatic villain, but he is a very cool and plausible creation for all that, and his actions are uncomfortably close to the historical truth about such officers as Fetterman and Custer. Marston’s plot to destroy a peaceful Cheyenne village is a precise parallel to Custer’s actual destruction of Black Kettle’s village on the Washita. Brand’s villainous major is a harshly satirical caricature of the military mind, and at times seems to be modeled on an imaginative conception of Custer.

Marston’s plot to burn the village is thwarted by Red Hawk; and under Rusty’s leadership, the Cheyennes force a humiliating truce on the cavalry, depriving them of their horses and making them walk home. Believing that his career is ruined, Marston calls Red Hawk to a private duel in an isolated valley nearby. Although Marston hires the Laviers, three frontier toughs, to ambush Red Hawk at the showdown, the white Indian survives with the help of Bill Tenney, his friend and professional thief. Whereas Red Hawk’s sense of honor and simplicity arouse malice in Marston, Red Hawk’s nobility of character works to change the dog-eat-dog morals of Tenney into a more humane level of moral action. But even in death Marston does not change; mortally wounded by Rusty’s huge knife, he cries in anguish, “A—a damned—a white—Indian . . .”

If in the first two books, Rusty faced white bigotry and the malice of the military mind, in the third book he has to deal with white greed and red resentment. Cheyenne Gold, the conclusion of the trilogy, returns to the Black Hills, where Rusty goes after ending his engagement with Maisry, and then quarreling with the Cheyenne, thanks to the malice of an envious medicine man (a cliche villain who mars the book). Rusty is torn between his white and red loyalties here, and he is equally torn between two women, Maisry, the white girl, and Blue Bird, the half white and half Cheyenne girl he has known all his life. In his exile from both the white and the Indian worlds, Rusty returns to the Sacred Valley and lives for a time in lonely serenity: he may leave the Cheyennes,
but nothing can shake his faith in Sweet Medicine. When Blue Bird joins him by accident, it appears that the two will settle down for a romantic idyl. But they are not allowed this private happiness: white greed spurs the people of Whitercll to seek the source of Rusty's gold in the Black Hills, and one ruthless scoundrel murders Maisry's father with an axe, hoping to find a map. Whites and reds are about to fight a pitched battle over gold and territory, when Rusty intervenes and brings about a temporary peace. But the peace is shaky, and Rusty cannot finally decide whether he is white or red. Nor can he choose whether to marry Maisry or Blue Bird; his confusion over the two women indicates his inability to choose between races. Either choice seems to be a tragic forfeiture of part of his being. Instead, he decides to ride away to the west to "tall, blue mountains, and blue is the color of heaven and of peace," as he says in his farewell note. He concludes that the conflict within him is too deep to allow easy solution:

Farewell. My heart aches. My heart is colder than a winter morning. To die is not great sorrow; but it is not the will of the god that I should live among you. The red of my heart and the white of my skin have cursed me.

Pray for me. Offer sacrifice. Love one another. Farewell.

Obviously, Brand had brought his character too close to the reality of white and Indian strife, and no conventional happy ending would satisfy him or convince any but the most naive of readers. Although he worked within the limitations of popular romance, Brand's trilogy deals with the main causes of the Indian and white conflicts, and the books make a serious indictment of white treachery, malice, greed, and racism. In Red Hawk, or Rusty Sabin, Brand created a hero with touches of Christ and St. Francis of Assisi, a mythic figure whose visionary response to red culture made him far superior to any whites in the novels. Although the trilogy is flawed, it is strong enough as a literary work to make one wish that Brand had forgotten all commercial considerations and written for once with high art as his only aim. It is said that even his agent, Carl Brandt, was deeply disappointed when he thought about what could have with War Party with just a little revision.

Max Brand was a romantic living in a time when serious art claimed to be "classicism" or "anti-romantic," and the only market
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for romantic fiction was a popular one. In addition, Brand needed the self-esteem of being tremendously prolific and of living in a princely life style. But perhaps under any circumstances, he could not have written a "great" book.

Yet Brand had a remarkable talent, and his treatment of the Indian in his Western fiction was strikingly fair and truthful, given the time when he wrote, and the sources he used. Of course, Brand was guilty of romanticizing the Cheyennes a good deal, but even more than Zane Grey, he attacked stereotypes of Indians in Western fiction. In the twenties and thirties, the cause was a good deal less popular than today, and he may have run some commercial risk in the process. This explains the necessity of the "white Indian motif"; readers could identify with an Indian hero more readily if they thought of him as "white" by birth. There was a spirit of reform in the thirties, and a willingness to look with favor on outsiders and defeated races in America. But it was many years before any of the Red Hawk novels except the second one found a hardcover publication; and only recently were the first and third Red Hawk novels given exposure to a large paperback audience. 48

Brand portrayed the American Indian as a great warrior, a man of honor and truthfulness, and through his device of the "white Indian" he was able to show the religious side of the Cheyenne culture in great depth. Brand was clearly ahead of his time as far as popular fiction goes anyway. It was not until 1950 that Will Henry published a Western novel in which Crazy Horse was a hero and Custer a villain; and it was not until 1953 that Henry's Yellow Hair (published under the name of Clay Fisher) described Custer's treachery in massacring the Cheyenne on the Washita. By 1959, with Frederick Manfred's Conquering Horse, more serious novelists had taken up the cause of the Sioux. In 1964 Thomas Berger, probably using some of the same sources as Brand, gave a magnificent picture of the Cheyenne way of life in Little Big Man. In 1966, Richard Brooks' film Hombre based on a novel by Elmore Leonard, told a grimly tragic story of a white man raised by Apaches, who was forced to defend stagecoach full of greedy and bigoted whites. That was three decades after the publication of the Red Hawk trilogy. Max Brand may have squandered a great literary gift on pulp writing, but he managed to tell Americans a good many unpleasant truths about the conflicts between white and Indian.
NOTES

"Owen Wister's The Virginian was published originally by The Macmillan Company in 1902. Since then, there have been some editions. For this paper, I have used the paperback edition published by Washington Square Press, New York in 1986. Subsequent references are to this edition.

Wister tells us in the 1902 preface that the novel takes place in the period between 1874 and 1880, although it is worth remembering that Wister's own experience with Wyoming and the West did not begin until 1885. At any rate, the Indian attack occurs near the end of the novel, after the narrator and Molly Wood have left the Virginia for several years. Molly's care of the Virginia leads to their engagements, and the denouement of the novel, their marriage and the gallowgash with Trumpass, follows within a year or so.

The 1902 preface is on page vii of the Washington Square Edition. Wister's explanation of the attack by the Indians occurs on page 84.

Wister does not stress Cooper as the done novel by his predecesor, nor does he mention the Wild West show. His main acknowledged literary precursor is Scott's historical romances, which the narrator and the Virginian discuss on one of their rides. Molly Wood also introduces the Virginian to other Romantic English writers, like Browning.

Wister's explanation of the Indian attack (see page 244 of the Washington Square Press Edition) includes an ironic comment about the way newspapers relate stories with incident: "Editors immediately raised a small war of it; but from five Indians a guard house waiting punishment or even an edict on supply was more than two editions. . . . " Yet Wister himself is guilty of using this Indian attack in a dramatic plot device. Indians are simply seen as agents.

The Virginian, p. 243. Wister actually wrote: "Nor did the delirium run into the ultimate, extreme matter that she dreaded. The cow-puncher had fixed to his breast; his heart daily thoughts were clear; and came from the untrained but incident mind of a man."

This is quoted from a collection of excerpts from The Police Gazette, The Police Gazette, edited by Geo. South and Jayne Gary Smith (New York: Simms and Schuster, 1891) p. 17. The original story is dated January 17, 1891. The story is charity and short on details, and Wounded Knee is not mentioned by name. The story refers merely to South Dakota and the Sioux. Big Foot's ragged band of Sioux were massacred at Wounded Knee, about four days after Christmas, 1890. More than 300 Sioux, men, women, and children, were killed or died from wounds inflicted by the Army's private and Indian troops. Also dead were twenty-five soldiers, probably most of them due to wild shooting by the whites.

Howard's The Misérable Alcino (1900) and Continental Op stories appeared in the late twenties and early thirties. Chandler's fiction appeared in pulp of the thirties, especially Beat Street, by 1930, as the local publication of the Beat Street revolution in detective fiction had taken place in America. Similarly, John W. Campbell introduced a more restrained and intelligent kind of western fiction in the thirties, writing under the name of Ross A. Stewart. In 1930, Campbell took over the editorship of Amazing and had a great influence on the field for over twenty years, developing many writers of "hard" western fiction including Hendlein and Isaac Asimov.

The Ohio River trilogy includes Betty Zone (1941), published at Grey's expense and not successful; The Spirit of the Border (1961), published by an independent house; and The Last Trail (1967) also published by a minor house. Grey's success after Heritage of the Diab weighted the Purple Sage with Harper and Brine eventually made these books available, although only in The Last Trail does Grey really begin to hit his stride.

This is not to deny those who was weapons to the Indian for profit, but the blond gunfighters for a war was a simple mistake. With the public mind has begun to recognize as a fraud that is, blaming a symptom of conflict for the conflict itself. Yet this is the view of many Western films before spaghetti (1968) and soon afterward.

Grey claimed to be a marshal by Calamity Edmister Zone. However, as a source for his books on the Ohio border conditions, according to Calvin Jackson in Zone Grey (New York: Twayne Press, 1973), there was no actual, only family tradition and folklore for Grey's source (pp. 82-83).

?Grey was born in Philadelphia, attended Harvard, and was a friend of Theodore Roosevelt. His writing about the West developed out of a trip there, after he failed in a music career, and made little headway as a lawyer. Wister's hero, The Virginian, is a kind of natural gentleman, and Grey stereotypes his qualities, supposedly the product of his Virginia origin. By contrast, Grey was really in the East. Grey always liked to hunt and fish, and was considered an adventurer before going West. Also, Grey wrote a good deal of his time as a successful novelist in hunting, fishing, and camping out. There is quite a difference in character here.

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The novels referred to are Clare (1926) and The Outlaw of Bloody Bill (1930), both about a white man as a
Chinese Outlaw (1924) and Outlaw Trail (1930) are about an outlaw's exploits, and Seven Thieves (1932)
not only were an outlaw's exploits at heart, but in the first of many novels about a hero who was the
engineer of the booster to find acceptance in Montana, the hero of these being the Montana Kid novels in the series. All these refer to magazine publication, rather than book publication. Read more on the novels and published as
quickly that Dodd, Mead, and Co. and other publishers took only two or three of the
novels that Brand novels have been published in hardcover, some of their pulp novels have yet to be reprinted, and some of the
Clash of Clans Westerns, Ten of them at least, are known to absolute authority that there is the first Brand Western about Texas. It is in this last, chronologically, that I have read, and my knowledge of Brand's output includes a reading of 131 novels. The White Chaplain was bought as a book by
Dodd, Mead, in 1920.

Library, 1974, p. 221.

"The White Chaplain, p. 222.

Speake, p. 83-84, tells of the beginning of the married life that grew to considerable proportions in the
marriage of Ernest and Dorothy. Part of Ernest's problem with marriage was that he expected his wife to share his
ferocious energy, and to strive to be a literary giant. Another problem was that he was always looking for
adventure, both in travel and with women.

Paperback Library, 1975, p. 11. This novel was published by Harper and Bros, with the name of Evan Evans, a
late pseudonym developed in 1937 for the Montana Kid novels. The third Montana Kid books were written by the
same editor, Carl Carlin, of Harper's, Carlinfield made Dostoevsky to seem entirely remote, and as a result, the three
Montana Kid novels, however, stand quite up to that standard-they are merely
innovative novels that Harper editors chose as being close to the standards of the Montana Kid books. Though few of
these were very good, butrown in time may be accepted as classics.

"Sanford and Simpson (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1940) is another "Evan Evans" novel. Its theme is
much the same as The Border Bandit, although it is not quite on the grandiose scale. However, publishing has been
confounded here by Warner Paperback Library, which issued the novel under a new title, Tenderness, in 1967. This
act was more than unusual, because a 1954 novel had been published by Dodd, Mead as The
Tenderness in 1954, and published under that name by Pocket Books. Warner Books has recently issued a new
paperback version of The Tenderness under the title Outlaw's Gold. Such actions make Max Brand a writing author
for a writer's attention.

"Lucky Lomber was turned as a hardcover book by Dodd, Mead, in 1967. It is a period in the mythic
world of the Great Plains.

"Broken Arrow, tells of the friendship between Tom Joad and Curly, both novel and film are based on the
story. The film, directed by Delmer Daves, renewed James Stewart and Jeff Chandler.

"Another "Evan Evans" novel, published by Harpers in 1948...


"This was published in book form by Dodd, Mead, and Co. in 1941.

"This point of view is highly speculative, and based on no external evidence. But it would argue that the
"Western" label has been harmful to the reputation of many Brand novels, which just as well could have been
marketed as "Evan Evans", or "wild animal" stories. Such Brand novels as Abilene (1920) and The White Wolf
(1921) fit into the category of the "wild animal", and would make excellent reading for older children and
adults. Although Abilene was an influence on the wild animal stories of many Brand novels, Jack London seems to be an obvious influence on the dog and wolf novels and on the novels about Alaska and the
Northward, like Moby Dick (1920) and Son of the Wolf (1921). Their are many interesting parallels between Brand
and Jack London, aside from the fact that both were from impoverished backgrounds, and both were from
California (Brand, though born in Seattle, grew up in California).
Wood, who had called her "the best of the breed" and had recommended her to Colonel Blood, had written about her in several novels. Blood had also written about her in his own books, which were full of romantic adventures and thrilling stories.

Blood was an expert on the Brand Western genre, which was so popular in the 1920s. He had written several novels about the Brand family, and his works had been published by several publishers, including Dodd, Mead, and Co.

In "Blood on the Brand," Blood tells the story of a young man named Jack, who is adopted by the Brand family and becomes a ranch hand on the Brand ranch. He falls in love with Susanna, the daughter of the rancher, and they are married after a brief romance.

Blood's novels were well-received by readers and critics alike, and they continue to be popular today. Other writers, including Zane Grey and Elmer Kelton, have written about the Brand Western genre, and their works have been published by several publishers, including Dodd, Mead, and Co.

In conclusion, Blood was a master of the Brand Western genre, and his works are still popular today. He was a master of the romantic adventure novel, and his works continue to be enjoyed by readers of all ages.
"Thunder Moon, pp. 45-46. Brandi didn’t put the matter as crudely as I have of course. But he makes Thunder Moon immediately sensitive to pain, to contrast to the Indian here as he grows up, that Brandi tries to attribute to innate sensitivity in Indians rather than one developed by discipline and ritual. It is hard to believe that a white boy raised among Indians would have a different attitude toward pain from the Indian.

"Eastern’s bibliography of Pauz’s writings lists two novels and one book-length work about Thunder Moon in addition to the first novel. Hence, there is a material but not on two new Thunder Moon books. But the publisher has not brought them out. Acquiring pulp editions of Max Brand stories at this late, fifty years after publication, is a case as easy as finding an unpublished novel by Herman Melville.

"As Max Brand acquires a basis of scholarship and criticism, there will probably be more arguments about whether his decision to have the world of magazine fiction pale for Hollywood in 1927 was wise or not. Max Brand, felt that Brand was making a serious mistake, for he seemed to be on the verge of conquering the "slick" magazine market, and perhaps had a chance to win a broader audience. (Eastern, p. 231-232). On the other hand, Brand thought that this was a natural evolution and developed an antithetical character in popular literature and film in Dr. Kildare.

Brand’s decision seems to me to have been a bad choice, both for his popular fiction and for his serious literary ambitions. As the time of the middle decades, Brand was writing to best Westerns and novel adornments on the Golden Knight, 1928, about Napoleon the Lion Hunted in Austria, the year. While the Dr. Kildare stories were the basis for some excellent films—popular films of the thirties of it’s best—are are seen today, because their medical technology and knowledge has been surpassed. The Kildare films, however, are better than the television shows that came on the television in the sixties, because Kildare was more of a rebel and less an establishment figure in the films and books. But Brand was capable of doing much better work than the Kildare books.

Perhaps, it might be argued, the move to Hollywood was necessary for Brand’s health and emotional stability. He spent more money everywhere in the period 1932-1940, writing Westerns and adventure stories of a charming rail, and acting as the "slick" Nov. One suspects that Brand found writing for the "slick" magazine, with the demands of careful planning and writing, and with the limitations imposed by the "slick," a rather nerve-wracking business, even though the Saturday Evening Post and Collier’s had not yet reached the order of humanity they achieved in the middle fifties.


"War Party, p. 71. Red Hawk sets for his apprenticeship at the blacksmith shop as part of a vow to himself, even though both the kindly Albert Lacey and some Cheyenne friends plead with him to leave.

"War Party, p. 91. Rusty tracks the White Horse on foot because no horse can catch the famed stallion. Rusty feels however that persistence will wear the horse down; Brand was borrowing from himself here. Schuyler, at a later date, in the books of the West, tracks his own horse, Farad, on foot through the wilderness of the Sierra Nevada (a fictional Sierra Nevada). See the 1923 novel, The Idaho Jailer, the time of the Silverton stories.

"Frontier Fraud (New York: Dodd, Mead, Co., 1874, paperback reprint, New York: Warner Books, 1979). This novel was panned by the Marlowe Company in 1845 in hardcover as Brother of the Cheyenne, the author was identified as "George Owen Warner," Brand’s second most common penname for Western magazine fiction, and the name he had used in the twenties for a number of Westerner of Cheyenne House. The novel was also published by New Library in 1940 and 1941 as Brother of the Cheyenne. Dodd, Mead, and Co. changed the title on reissue. This sort of thing makes study of Brand a little confusing at times.

"Frontier Fraud, pp. 19-20. Magneto’s name probably was suggested by the Greek Roman god Magnes, who is a rather unconventional fellow in classical poetry. Magnes who steals Venus, the wife of the blacksmith god Vulcan, as Magneto tries to steal Betsy’s fiancée. However, as I suggest in the text, Marston has certain analogies with George Armstrong Custer.

"Frontier Fraud, p. 184.


"Cheyenne Gold, p. 158.

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