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# Analysis of the Rocky Boy Reservation's Border Formation 1885 to 1950

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*The University of Montana*

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Analysis of the Rocky Boy Reservation's Border Formation 1885 to 1950

By

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Thesis

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## ABSTRACT

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Geography

Analysis of the Rocky Boy Reservation's Border Formation 1885 to 1950

Committee Chair: Sarah J. Halvorson

The purpose of this thesis is to analyze the border formation of the Rocky Boy Reservation, which was established in 1916 and is the home of The Chippewa-Cree Tribe. This thesis examines how racialized discourse surrounding The Chippewa-Cree Tribe affected the creation and subsequently the geography of the Rocky Boy Reservation, which is located in north-central Montana near the Canadian border. U.S. Native American policies and their affects on the reservation's geography are also examined. It is important to analyze discourse and U.S. Native American policy because both influenced the geography of the Rocky Boy Reservation, which significantly contributed to the poverty of The Chippewa-Cree Tribe.

The analysis of this thesis was influenced and grounded in the works of geographers, historians, and social theorists who have studied race, discourse, and policy to examine the formation of borders. With this grounded framework archival methodologies were then used to examine the historiography of the Rocky Boy Reservation's border creation. Historical documents including congressional records, policies, letters, newspaper articles, and a host of other sources were the primary data sources for this study.

With the use of these documents, this thesis argues that racialized Anglo-American discourse regarding The Chippewa-Cree Tribe and U.S. Native American policies contributed to the Rocky Boy Reservation's establishment in an isolated space with few natural resources. In this location agriculture was expected to be the tribe's main source of livelihood, but it proved to be untenable because the reservation's boundaries were drawn in an area with few resources. The area was not a suitable location for farming. Therefore, the reservation had an economy based on farming in a space that was not appropriate for it, which left The Chippewa-Cree Tribe in a state of dire poverty. Because of this poverty The Chippewa-Cree Tribe were reliant on the U.S. government for subsidies and other assistance. Subsequently, The Chippewa-Cree Tribe had to follow rules and regulations in order to receive this assistance, which left them marginalized and disempowered.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

CPL	Committee of Public Lands
IRA	Indian Reorganization Act
MRWRCC	Montana Reserved Water Right Compact Commission

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# **Chapter One**

## **Introduction**

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the formation of the Rocky Boy Reservation, which is a Native American reservation located in north-central Montana and is home to The Chippewa-Cree Tribe. I am going to examine how racialized discourse regarding The Chippewa-Cree Tribe affected the reservation's formation and subsequently its location. As well, I am going to examine how United State's Native American policies affected the reservation's formation and geography. It is important to examine these factors because both racialized discourse and Native American policy greatly affected where and how the reservation's boundaries were drawn, which created spatial ramifications that have contributed significantly to life on the Rocky Boy Reservation. Specifically, this thesis will address the following questions:

1. How did racialized discourse define The Chippewa-Cree Tribe as a social group and what were the spatial ramifications of that discourse?
2. How did U.S. Native America policy affect the formation of the Rocky Boy Reservation and what were the spatial ramifications of those policies?
3. How did the spatial ramifications created by racialized discourse and U.S. Native American Policy affect life on the Rocky Boy Reservation?

The ways in which the geography of the reservation has affected the lives of The Chippewa-Cree Tribe is evident in the horrendous living conditions on the Rocky Boy Reservation during the first half of the twentieth century. Because of the Rocky Boy



Reservation's geography, poverty on the reservation was widespread. Consequently, most Chippewa-Cree lived in ram-shackled housing which had no floors, dirt roofs, and almost no means of keeping water out of the dwelling. Their homes typically had no stoves; Rather they used upside down galvanized tubs for both heating and cooking. In addition, the poor housing conditions were made even worse by the density of people living in each residence. The average house was, for example, no more than one room, 10 by 12 feet, with low hanging roofs "and it [was] not uncommon to see one of these tiny single-room hovels occupied by eight or nine persons" (McWhorter 1929, 12521). Because of these unsanitary cloistered conditions, sickness on the reservation was rampant. In 1927 the reservation's superintendent estimated upwards of twenty percent of residents had either tuberculosis or trachoma. Trachoma is today more commonly referred to as "pink eye" or conjunctivitis and leads to scarring and even blindness if left untreated (McWhorter 1929).

Most, if not all of these impoverished conditions were the direct result of the geography of the Rocky Boy Reservation, as the reservation was too small and too resource poor to provide Chippewa-Cree families economic well-being. Only 2,316 acres of the Rocky Boy Reservation's 56,035 acres were suitable for farming and each family was only given forty acres of practically useless rocky land, which was insufficient to sustain even a moderate living (Rural Settlement Group 1984; McWhorter 1929).

These geographic problems on the Rocky Boy Reservation persist to this day and continue to affect the lives of The Chippewa-Cree Tribe. Yet, to date there has been little scholarly inquiry into the multifaceted effects of race, policy and racialized discourse on the Rocky Boy Reservation's development and boundary establishment. This project

attempts to fill the gap in our understanding of the historiography and geographical context of the Rocky Boy Reservation and The Chippewa-Cree Tribe, as part of a larger story about the contestation of land and the disposition of tribal people.

### *1.1 Approach*

To analyze the formation of the Rocky Boy Reservation archival methodologies were used. These methodologies gave me the tools I needed to conduct this research in a systematic and efficient manner because archival methodologies use a simple approach to analyze historic datasets. The approach allowed me to organize, categorize, and analyze the enormous quantity of historic data regarding the formation of the Rocky Boy Reservation by outlining procedures for note taking, thematic coding, linking sources, and theorizing sources. I used these archival procedures to analyze congressional records and policies, U.S Native American policies, letters, newspaper articles and a myriad of other historic documents regarding the Rocky Boy Reservation. These historic documents were the major dataset for this study.

The investigation of this historic dataset was ground in a framework of geographic, historic and social literature, which informed my ideas and analysis of this study. The works of Edward Said were particularly influential to this thesis's final analysis. Said's (1979) ideas about narrative and what he calls "orientalism" or "othering" greatly influenced how I viewed border creation and how I analyzed the formation of the Rocky Boy Reservation. With the use of Said's concepts and other geographers who were influenced by his work, both directly and indirectly, I analyzed the formation of the Rocky Boy Reservation. This analysis was grounded in the idea that

discourse can influence how borders are created and can therefore create spatial implications.

### *1.2 Thesis Outline*

Following this introductory chapter, Chapter Two of this thesis discusses the methodology employed during this study. In particular I discuss the archival methodologies that I used to study the Rocky Boy Reservation's historic documents, which were the major data used in this study. I discuss the archive itself and some of the other materials I used during my analysis. I also talk about some of the pitfalls that can occur doing historical work, and how they can be avoided.

Chapter Three of this thesis focuses on discourse theory and how racialized discourse surrounding The Chippewa-Cree Tribe affected the Rocky Boy Reservation's geography. During the chapter I provide a literature review about discourse and analyze racialized discourse regarding The Chippewa-Cree Tribe. Ultimately, I suggest that the negative racialized discourse concerning The Chippewa-Cree Tribe influenced the U.S. Government to create the Rocky Boy Reservation in an isolated area.

Following Chapter Three, Chapter Four discusses how U.S. Native American policy affected the geography of the Rocky Boy Reservation. I analyze and discuss three major U.S. Native American policies: The Dawes Act, the Burke Act, and the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA). I discuss these policies, their effects on the Rocky Boy Reservation's geography and the ramifications of that geography. I also show how the geography of the Rocky Boy Reservation left The Chippewa-Cree Tribe impoverished.

Following this discussion of U.S. Native American policy and its geographic effects, Chapter Five takes up a discussion concerning the poverty and isolation that were used to assimilate and control Native Americans. I suggest that The Chippewa-Cree Tribe were impoverished and isolated in ways that rendered them powerless and marginalized within the existing power and institutional structures of the time.

I follow up Chapter Five with my concluding remarks. I reiterate the purpose, research questions and approach. I discuss some of the major implications of the study: methodologically, theoretically, and empirically. I also discuss the major limitations of the research and suggest some avenues of future research.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Methodology**

Since the analysis of this thesis required historically situated geographic knowledge, archival methodologies were applied to the objectives of this project. Archival methodological strategies provided the necessary techniques I needed for the systematic analysis of primary source documents in the form of government documents, firsthand accounts, census data, and so forth. Archival methodologies allowed for a structural and systematic approach to examine the extensive historic and geographic Rocky Boy Reservation dataset that I used in interrogating the Rocky Boy Reservation's border creation. Without these methodologies my study of the Rocky Boy Reservation's borders would have been haphazard and unfocused, as the history of the reservation is as extensive as the archival material available about its history and geography (Harris 2001).

In light of the vastness of the archival datasets, I faced two major problems that commonly occur during archival research. The first problem arose because the archive is so extensive, which meant there was an "enormous body of relevant information contained in quite different types of documents ... quite inaccessible by means of any formalized analytical procedure" (Harris 2001, 5). The second problem arose because of the proverbial "archival needle-in-the-haystack" problem, which for me occurred near the end of my research when I was attempting to find one final piece of evidence to support my argument (Harris 2001, 5).

In general, each of these common problems routinely leads to two extreme procedures, which I was attempting to avoid during my research (Harris 2001). The first

of these procedures finds the researcher attempting to ingest all that the archives inform. The researcher goes through every article and every government document, and takes painstaking notes about each and every aspect of the archive. This approach usually leads to the postponing of interpretation, which is the whole purpose of using the archival sources in the first place. The results of such archival exaction can, consequently, often be minimal and can lead to “no written product” (Harris 2001, 6). This outcome does not suggest that nothing can come of this style of research, but time and resources are limited for almost any project and this approach may not yield the desired results.

At the other extreme is the method most often used by researchers who arrive at an archive with a preconceived notion about what kinds of documents they desire. In this case the researcher is grounded in an analytical framework and only needs a little more revealing data to support the argument. “As long as they cleave to their initial position,” wrote Geographer Cole Harris (2001, 6) in his article *Archival Fieldwork*, “either they will find the data they need and leave fairly quickly or they will not find them and will also leave.” Harris suggests this may be acceptable for some research questions, but the researcher is then imposing his or her fixed ideas onto the archives. “They have solved the problem of archival research,” writes Harris, “by in effect, denying the complexity of the archives and the myriad of voices from the past contained in their amorphous record”(Harris 2001, 5).

Since both of these problems are common, I used methodologies from several sources to avoid, as much as possible, the common pitfalls of archival research. These sources included chapters from *Archival Methodology* by Cole Harris (2001), *Knowledge is Power: Using Archival Research to Interpret State Formation* by Miles Ogborn

(2004), and *Historical Research and Archival Sources* by Michael Roche (2010). In addition, I followed the guidelines of the historian Jeffery Wiltse at The University of Montana who is an expert in archival research. All of these sources gave me a starting point for data organization and procedure, which is outlined in the following paragraphs.

### *2.1 Note Taking:*

Note taking was a crucial tool for this thesis research. I was able to photograph or photocopy some of the archival material, but often the archives could not be reproduced in a digital format. Consequently, upon leaving the archive, the only complete record I had of the archive was from the notes I had taken. It was vital, therefore, that the notes accurately reflected the true nature of the archived documentation and that the notes documented specifically where the information came from (Blunt et al. 2004). The Chippewa-Cree Water Rights Archive was not organized in a standard international format; as such it was important to document the protocol for the archive, so other researchers could find the information later if they so desired (Roche 2010).

### *2.2 Thematic Coding:*

While the notes I wrote were a crucial tool, they were usually a reflection of the organizational structure of the archive, whereby they did not have any “analytical structure ... in order to produce an interpretation” (Blunt et al. 2004, 18). The Rocky Boy Reservation archives were not ordered, for example, in a concise subject manner and were instead organized in a chronological order, which was useful but not as succinct as I needed for my research. Organizing the notes and digital copies into specific thematic

categories, therefore, was very helpful in the eventual analysis of the documentation.

These thematic categories focused both the type/categories of the documentation and my ideas about the documentation (Blunt et al. 2004).

The actual organization was simple as I put notes and digital copies into folders with a specific header. This provided me with a fairly organized dataset and a good jumping off point for evaluation. The themes used for this thesis included the following:

1. Government documents granting lands to The Chippewa-Cree Tribe
2. Government hearings that speak to the condition of life for The Chippewa-Cree Tribe
3. Correspondence speaking poorly of The Chippewa-Cree Tribe
4. Correspondence speaking well of The Chippewa-Cree Tribe
5. Newspaper advertisements and full articles

Each of these themes had subsections delineated by years. The first subsection was 1885 to 1916, which spans the time from whence the Cree arrived in Montana to the formation of the reservation. The second time period was from 1916 to 1934, which reflects the period in which the Rocky Boy Reservation was governed under the Dawes and Burke Acts. The third period was 1934 to 1950, which reflects the time period, following the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934, when the final bulk of lands were added to the Rocky Boy Reservation.



### *2.3 Linking Sources:*

Clearly, no one source was going to be used in evaluating the Rocky Boy Reservation's border formation. Instead, a variety of documentation was used as evidence to support my arguments in the eventual synthesis of my conclusions. I used the primary sources to lead me to new discoveries because the documentation rarely existed in a vacuum and often referenced other pieces of archival evidence. For example, the letter I reference from Attorney Elbert Weed during Chapter 3 was part of a series of letters between him and various Rocky Boy Reservation stakeholders. As such, I often felt akin to a detective, as I followed one clue to the next and let the documents lead me, which is the ambition of any good researcher (Blunt et al. 2004).

### *2.4 Theorizing Sources:*

While I was moving from clue to clue, it was easy to move away from the larger picture of the research's purpose, particularly because the amount of archive material was massive. It was important therefore, while I worked my way through the documentation of the archive, to remember the goals of the research and to understand how each piece of evidence contributed to that goal. As such, having a strong grounding in the conceptual framework guiding this inquiry was essential. The conceptual framework kept me focused on the big picture and made it possible to link specific evidence to specific concepts as the research unfolded. Therefore, I continued to read secondary sources and to theorize how the archival material could be used in reference to those theoretical sources (Blunt et al. 2004, 19).

## *2.5 Summary of the Archival Material:*

Now that I have explained my process for examining the Rocky Boy Reservation's archival material, I will list some of the key documents I used to explore the history of Rocky Boy Reservation's boundary creation. These documents include government documents, newspaper articles, and the Chippewa Cree Tribe of the Rocky Boy's Reservation Water Resources Department's Water Rights Settlement Records for the years 1832 to 2002. All of these documents are available in the Mansfield Library at the University of Montana and were used to analyze the Rocky Boy Reservation's border creation.

### *Primary Government Documents:*

- Commissioner of Indian Affairs. 1917. "1917 Annual Report." Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. Washington, D.C. Secretary of the Interior.
- Committee on Indian Affairs. 1934. *Hearings before the Committee on Indian Affairs*. Washington, D.C. United States Senate.
- . 1944. *Hearings before the Committee on Indian Affairs*. Washington, D.C. United States Senate.
- Ickes, Harold L. 1939. *Adding Certain Public Domain to Rocky Boy Indian Reservation*. Washington, D.C. Secretary of the Interior.
- Kappler, Charles J., ed. 1913. "Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties." Vol 3. Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office.
- McWhorter, Lucullus Virgil, 1929. "Survey of Conditions of the Indians in the United States Hearings before a Subcommittee of the Committee on Indian Affairs." United States Senate, Seventieth Congress, Second Session.

Rogers, Will. 1934. "Addition of Land to Rocky Boy Reservation in Montana." Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union. Serial Set Vol. No. 9772, Session Vol. No.A. Washington D.C.

United States House of Representatives. 1949. *Promoting the Rehabilitation of the Chippewa-Cree Tribe of Indians of the Rocky Boy's Reservation*. 81st Congress.

United States House of Representatives. Office of Indian Affairs, and U.S.B.I. Affairs. 1858. *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*.

Wheeler, B.K. 1934. "Senate Report No. 73-1080 to Accompany S. 3645, Senate Indian Affairs Committee, May 22, 1934." *Indian Reorganization Act, P. L. 73-383, 48 Stat. 984, June 18, 1934* 1: 1.

*Summary of the Archive:*

*The Chippewa Cree Tribe of the Rocky Boy's Reservation Water Resources Department's Water Rights Settlement Records* is a massive archive that includes 53 linear feet of documentation regarding the Rocky Boy Reservation's history from the years 1832 to 2002 (Archives and Collections 2011). The collection includes documentation of The Chippewa-Cree Tribe's negotiations for water rights within the reservation- history of those water rights claims and case files for the legal procedures involved. According to the content description the tribe was represented by the Native American Rights Fund (NARF) in the litigation and many of the documents in this collection were used in the research for developing their argument for water rights on the Rocky Boy Reservation. The documentation in this collection, consequently, has a rich history of not only water resource information, but also a direct tie into the land tenure of the reservation. The collection is separated into sixteen series including, but not limited to, the history of the reservation (Series 1 and 2), Land Acquisition (Series 3), and Regional Water Systems (Series 4). This collection offered an immense wealth of

knowledge about the Rocky Boy Reservation and was a tremendous rich resource for analysis of the region.

## Chapter Three

### **Racialized discourse about The Chippewa-Cree Tribe and the Spatial Implications**

In this chapter I am going to discuss how predominantly Anglo racialized discourse was used to define The Chippewa-Cree Tribe as a social group. I will discuss the multifaceted ramifications of that discourse and will show how The Chippewa-Cree Tribe were defined as a wandering rebellious foreign band of Native Americans. I will argue that the negative definitions and perceptions of The Chippewa-Cree Tribe influenced how the Rocky Boy Reservation was created, as it influenced the U.S. Government to place the reservation in a distant and isolated space away from the predominantly Anglo settlement and culture.

To begin this analysis of racialized discourse I will give some contextual background about how discourse can influence geography and the formation of borders. I will discuss the works of Edward Said and the works of a few geographers who were influenced by Said's arguments. Both Said and these geographers have demonstrated how discourse can affect borders (Hubbard, Kitchin, and Valentine 2005).

Edward Said's famous and controversial book *Orientalism* has influenced many geographers to look at the importance of racial difference in the creation of narratives. Said argues that these narratives influence how borders are created (Newman 2006, 172). He calls this process "Othering" or "Orientlasim" (Said 1979, 43–44). "Othering" is a process in which "terms like "we and they" or "us and them," become a common method for individuals, groups, politicians and societies, to quickly define their beliefs systems in juxtaposition to an opposing view. Explicitly, othering can be thought of as a dichotomist

relationship of defining western society in opposition to non-western society. Said (1979, 43-44) wrote:

For Orientalism was ultimately a political vision of reality whose structure promoted the difference between the familiar (Europe, the West, “us”) and the strange (the Orient, the East, “them”). This vision in a sense created and then served the two worlds thus conceived. Orientals lived in their world, “we” lived in ours. The visions and material reality propped each other up, kept each other going.”

Othering, argues Said, influences decision-making. As an example, the formation of Israel after World War II occurred because the British and the American governments wanted to create a “western” ally in the Middle East, which would allow the U.S. and England to have more control and influence over the region (Said 2000). To achieve that goal, suggests Said, the British and Americans used the increasing popularity of the Zionist movement and the outpouring of sympathy for Jewish people following the Holocaust, as rationalization for the creation of the Israeli state. Said argues that this was an intentionally misleading and fabricated historical narrative used to unify Jewish people and the western world against Palestinians, which eventually led to the displacement of Palestinians and the creation of the Jewish Israeli state (Said 2000).

And while Said posits that the Palestinian/Israeli conflict was particularly influential in his own life, the process of Othering during that conflict was not unique because the creation of histories, narratives, and traditions have been a powerful tool used time and again by states, people, and institutions to justify policies and procedures. Particularly when those groups or people need to justify immoral actions (Said 2000). “The invention of tradition,” wrote Said (2000,179) in *Invention, Memory, and Place*, “is

a method for using collective memory selectively by manipulating certain bits of national past, suppressing others, elevating still others in an entirely functional way.” History and traditions, argues Said (2000, 179), are “used, misused, and exploited, rather than something that sits inertly there for each person to possess and contain.” Consequently, narratives are something that can be used for specific motives and purposes

### *3.1 Geographical Research on Othering*

Influenced by the works of Edward Said and other post-colonialist theorists, such as Stuart Hall and Frantz Fanon, geographers have been dissecting colonial spaces through the lens of historical narrative and Othering. At Queens University in Kingston, Ontario, Canada, for example, Geography Professor Katherine McKittrick has been examining the role of memory and narrative in the life of black Americans. In particular she examines how the narrative of the dangerous black American has come to create social borders and a sense of placelessness for African American culture. She says that a “black sense of place can be understood as the process of materially and imaginatively situating historical and contemporary struggles against practices of domination and the difficult entanglements of racial encounter” (McKittrick 2011, 949). Essentially the history of racism, slavery, and domination of black people within the United States has placed black people on the outside of society, where being black in America is and has been “predicated on struggle” (McKittrick 2011, 949). Black Americans remain, McKittrick (2011) argues, outsiders in American society because of the history of colonialism, the plantation, and the historic narrative of the violent black person.

This violent narrative suggests that too many urban “black bodies” are not economically appealing for middle-class neighborhoods. Neighborhoods filled with many

black people suggests degeneration of the space because of “the seemingly natural link between blackness, underdevelopment, poverty and place...” (McKittrick 2011, 949). Consequently, because of this narrative, the black American’s ability to move freely within American society has been limited, forcing them to live in the spatial fringes of society.

Similarly to McKittirck’s study, geographer Jonathon Crush has examined how Othering was used in South Africa. Black South Africans, says Crush (Crush 1992, 828), have historically been described as unfit for “good society.” Consequently, because of this racist narrative, apartheid followed, which left an indelible imprint on the country’s spatial geography. Subsequently, like African Americans in McKittirck’s study, Black South Africans have been bound to the geographic fringes of society, where they have been subjugated (Crush 1992, 828). For example, the South African gold mining industry during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century predominantly employed black laborers, but for all intents and purposes these black laborers were enslaved by the employment contracts they signed with the mining companies (Crush 1992). “From the moment a worker put his name to a mine contract at a rural recruiting office,” wrote Jonathon Crush, “he was caught in a web of bureaucratic and physical controls over his movements, his behavior, and his body” (Crush 1992, 828–830). But even though they were essentially enslaved, black South Africans had little choice but to sign these contracts because they had almost no other way to make a living. Because of the negative narrative surroundings the black South African culture, they were subjugated and placed on the geographic fringes of society (Crush 1992).



### *3.2 Othering The Chippewa-Cree Tribe*

Similarly, Native Americans in the United States, like African Americans and black South Africans, have been forced to live on the fringes of society in isolated geographies because of the narrative of the savage dangerous “Indian” (Hannah 1993). The Chippewa-Cree Tribe, for example, were placed in an isolated reservation in north-central Montana because of the negative narrative surrounding them.

The predominant discourse defining The Chippewa-Cree Tribe is best illustrated by what appears to be an innocuous description of the Tribe. This prominent racialized discourse described The Chippewa-Cree Tribe as the “homeless and wandering Indians of Montana” (Rogers 1934). To be both homeless and wandering was and is distinctly different than what is considered “normal” in European and American society. Wandering suggests being lost, having no rational direction or aim (Hannah 1993). By describing The Chippewa-Cree Tribe as wandering was to define them as non-conformal, as non-western, as unstructured, as something “other.” Their movement, though perhaps purposeful in aim in terms of resource access and livelihood systems, was not predicated on moving from point A to B to C and then back again like most western people, whose days and movement are usually predicated on home and place of employment (Deleuze 1987; Woodward and Jones III 2005; Olund 2002; Hannah 1993). Instead The Chippewa-Cree Tribe might move from point A to B to C to B to C to F to wherever, without a constant pattern, without predictability, or perceived rationality. The French philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari’s as cited in Woodward and Jones 2005, 236, who many geographers have turned to because their “work bears directly on the theoretical

status of borders,” explain the difference between western movement (striated) and non-western movement (smooth) in this way:

In striated space, line or trajectories tend to be subordinated to points: one goes from one point to another. In the smoother, it is the opposite: the points are subordinated to the trajectory. This was already the case among the nomads for the clothes-tent-space vector of the outside ... There are stops and trajectories in both the smooth and the striated. But in the smooth space, the stop follows from the trajectory; once again, the interval takes all, the interval is substance (forming the basis for rhythmic values) (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 478).

While the language of the above passage is a bit confusing, the idea is fairly simple. Deleuze and Guattari are arguing that for non-western people, whom they refer to as nomads, the aim is not the point, but instead the aim is the line. The destination is not the goal, instead the journey is the purpose. In contrast, in western society the journey is rarely the purpose, there is always an end and the journey is only the means to it – in science, in economics, in religion (Borgmann 1992). In some ways this discussion of movement is semantics. If one is hunting, for example, the ultimate goal is to catch prey. However, the predictability of movement is not based on a concrete structure like that in cities and western societies (Hannah 1993; Pile 2006).

Consequently, this difference in movement has been reflected in the different values of western and non-western societies. As a result western society views spaces where non-western movements occur as potential sites of “resistance” against the state (Woodward and Jones III 2005, 241). It is and was important, therefore, to quash potentially subversive people who were moving around with no discernible or predictable purpose (Hannah 1993). Therefore, the continual description of The Chippewa-Cree

Tribe as “wandering Indians” was meant to mark them as different and non-conforming to western society.

While reading the documentation, particularly the government laws and hearings regarding the history of The Chippewa-Cree Tribe, I first had the impression that the use of the term wandering conveyed a sense of compassion for The Chippewa-Cree Tribe. However a fuller examination of the connotations associated with the term “wandering” reveals an alternative picture. The term wandering was used for the purposes of reifying The Chippewa-Cree Tribe’s differences from western society. The following passage, which was taken from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs *Annual Report* in 1917, the year which followed the Rocky Boy Reservation’s founding, illustrates the importance placed on The Chippewa-Cree Tribe’s wandering and how it was a “burden” for white society:

The notable change brought about among the Rocky Boy Band since they have been permanently located presents in contrast a demonstration and emphasizes the importance not only of a fixed habitation for Indians but the probability of self-support when given opportunity and encouragement. For years a wandering band, they necessarily relied upon odd jobs and charity for subsistence, frequently a burden upon the white citizens of the localities in Montana where they roamed (Commissioner of Indian Affairs 1917, 65).

In the above statement we see a dualism of describing The Chippewa-Cree Tribe as wandering. On the one hand there seems to be a sort of concern for The Chippewa-Cree Tribe and their ability to care for themselves. This concern is illustrated in the first sentence of the above passage when the author says “The Chippewa-Cree Tribe were fully capable of “self-support when given the opportunity and encouragement ”

(Commissioner of Indian Affairs 1917, 65). That first sentence suggests because the government was able to prevent The Chippewa-Cree Tribe from wandering, they have since been able to care for themselves. However, which I will demonstrate in great detail later in this thesis, during the years that followed the writing of the above passage, the area to which The Chippewa-Cree Tribe were bound would not lead to self-sufficiency. Why does the 1917 *Annual Report* suggest an optimistic expectation for the future? I argue the answer can be found in the second sentence of the passage, where the report describes The Chippewa-Cree Tribe's wandering as "frequently a burden upon the white citizens..." (Commissioner of Indian Affairs 1917, 65). This sentence reveals the true motivations of fixing The Chippewa-Cree Tribe to one space. The positive rhetoric of self-sufficiency was in this case nothing but a pretext to allow for the justified quarantine of The Chippewa-Cree Tribe, to prevent and curb their mobility from burdening the white citizens.

However, one must ask why there was the need for such duplicity? Simply, it was no longer tolerable during the early twentieth century to arbitrarily remove Native Americans from their homes. There must be justification for their removal because of the reform movement, which had taken up the cause of "freed slaves, immigrants and, of course, Indians ... all of whom needed to learn the appropriate American habits of moral acquisitive individualism" (Olund 2002, 133). In the case of The Chippewa-Cree Tribe, it was necessary for those who wanted to remove them from white spaces, to justify their expulsion as beneficial to the tribe. Quarantining The Chippewa-Cree Tribe to the Rocky Boy Reservation was justified because it would teach The Chippewa-Cree Tribe the necessary moral habits of American society. The 1917 Commissioner of Indian Affairs

(1917, 65) *Annual Report* explains:

The industry displayed and their accomplishments within the last two years present an object lesson and a warning of the conditions invited when Indians are relieved of their lands and no longer have means of support. These Indians [Chippewa-Cree] are now doing things worthwhile, showing initiative and purpose not heretofore apparent.

The narrative created by statements like the above passages was simple. The Chippewa-Cree Tribe were wandering, lost, and had no place to call their own. The government of the United States set aside a piece of land for them. This piece of land would, eventually, allow The Chippewa-Cree Tribe to become self sufficient and also part of western society, which in turn would benefit both cultures. The narrative described a world where The Chippewa-Cree Tribe would have their own land, and the whites would no longer have to worry about native people being a burden on their lands. The Chippewa-Cree Tribe might not yet be part of American culture, said this narrative, but “with the proper policies [they] would be assimilated into the melting pot of American society” (Olund 2002, 141). “Indians were still problematized,” writes Geographer Erik Olund (2002, 141) “but now as potential American citizens rather than as threats to American civilization.”

But the wandering narrative about The Chippewa-Cree Tribe was not the only story that contributed to the Rocky Boy Reservation’s formation. The narrative of the Cree’s Canadian origin would also play a central role in the Rocky Boy Reservation’s development. This narrative would further be used to justify the removal of The Chippewa-Cree Tribe from white spaces. The Cree’s foreign origin was viewed as an objectionable offence to the clamorous feelings of Romantic Nationalism, which

suggested shared spaces needed “some common origin or shared characteristics ... with the natural closure of solidarity and allegiance” (Hall 2000, 6).

The nationalistic narrative centered on two ideas. First, the Cree were not from the United States, and second, they were renegade Indians fleeing from Canada because of their involvement in the Riel Rebellion. The Cree were branded, therefore, as illegal aliens and secondly as enemy combatants due to their involvement in the rebellion (Archives and Special Collections 1896).

The Riel Rebellion, sometimes referred to as the Northwest Rebellion, was an uprising by the Métis people in Saskatchewan against the Canadian government because of the government’s continual unwelcomed involvement in Métis life. The revolt was led by a white-man named Louis Riel who was a proponent of Native American sovereignty. He wished to protect Native American culture and rights by revolting against the Canadian Government. But the rebellion would be stopped and subsequently Riel would be tried for treason and executed (Siggins 1994). Evidence confirming that the Montana Cree were part of this rebellion was tenuous. That the Cree had “been roaming about the country in Montana, ever since the Riel Rebellion of 1885” seems to be the only proof that they were involved (Archives and Special Collections 1896). But white Montanans seemed more than willing to suggest this new band of Indians living in their territory were rebellious, dangerous, and outsiders that needed to be removed. The following passage from a U.S. Attorney Elbert D. Weeds (Archives and Special Collections 1896), in a letter to the secretary of war, expresses the sentiments shared by many Montana citizens:

These Indians are renegade Crees from the British Possessions. They belong across the border, and should be under the charge of the officials of the Canadian Government. They are mere trespassers, within the United States. Their presence here is very offensive to all settlers who are unfortunate to live in the vicinity of their camps. It is the habit of these renegade Indians to wantonly destroy all game, without regard to local law or regulations, to steal the stock of the settlers, and, generally to subsist by larceny and plunder. They have no business whatever here, and should be immediately removed to British Possessions, where they belong.”

Elbert Weed’s statement contains the two charges that would be used time and again in almost every discussion about the Cree. Invariably those who did not want to the Cree living in Montana would cite the Cree’s foreign origin and their participation in the Riel rebellion as rationales for the removal of the Cree from the state. Usually those common allegations would then also be followed by more ambiguous charges and one particularly harsh and stereotypical passage said that the Cree “whenever they can prevail upon some unscrupulous gin seller to give them liquor, hold high carnival” (Archives and Special Collections 1896). Yet, when U.S. officials were asked to evaluate some of the charges against the Cree, they found it was “altogether probable that the alleged depredations, if committed by these Indians from Canada at all, have been greatly exaggerated” (Archives and Special Collections 1896).

It mattered little, however, if the Cree were involved in the affairs described by white Montanans. It only mattered that white Montanan’s believed the narrative, as the dangerous and rebellious narrative surrounding The Chippewa-Cree Tribe gave white Montanans justification to remove the Cree from white-spaces (McWhorter 1929; Archives and Special Collections 1896). And removing The Chippewa-Cree Tribe from white-spaces was of paramount importance because they continually lived near and in

some of the largest Anglo cities in Montana (Archives and Special Collections 1913).

The Chippewa-Cree Tribe had begun living in and “around Helena, Havre, Butte and Anaconda,” during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century (Archives and Special Collections 1913, 30). These cities were the major economic centers of the State during that time and The Chippewa-Cree Tribe’s presence was not welcome in these places (Malone, Roeder, and Lang 1991). Because the Chippewa-Cree were not welcome in these spaces in the summer of 1896 the U.S. Congress “appropriated the sum of five thousand dollars, by employment of the Army, to deport from the State of Montana all refugee Canadian Cree Indians” (Archives and Special Collections 1896, 150).

Following their deportation, however, the Cree would return to Montana and would once more take up residence near Montana’s largest cities. Again the description of The Chippewa-Cree Tribe as wandering rebellious foreigners would be used as justification for their removal and again the Cree would be extradited to Canada. The Cree would then again return to the United States. This cycle continued for a time, but because of The Chippewa-Cree Tribe’s “wandering habits” continually “collecting and removing them” proved to be a difficult task (Archives and Special Collections 1909, 212). Consequently, another solution to The Chippewa-Cree Tribe problem was considered. “I am of the opinion,” wrote the Commissioner of Indian Affairs on March 2, 1912, “that these Indians that may belong to Canada will never go back there to live, and it appears to me that the only solution . . . is to have each allotted a tract of land of such quality and in a locality where they can make a living” (Archives and Special Collections 1913, 69).

In 1914, instead of once again deporting the Cree, The Chippewa-Cree Tribe were



sent to Fort Assiniboine, which was an old military reservation near the Canadian border (Sniffen 1923). In 1916 some of the land there would become the Rocky Boy Reservation, which would be the permanent home for The Chippewa-Cree Tribe. The location of the new reservation was very remote and was distant from most of the white population. By describing The Chippewa-Cree Tribe as both wandering and foreign rebels the white citizenry had asked for the “justified” expulsion of the tribe from Montana cities. Removing the Cree to Canada had proved to be only a temporary solution. Eventually a more permanent solution was enacted with the creation of the Rocky Boy Reservation.

While racialized discourse greatly influenced the geography of the Rocky Boy Reservation, it was not the only major factor that contributed to its geographic problems. The next chapter shifts the focus from discourse to United States Native American policy and the implications of that policy for The Chippewa-Cree Tribe.

## **Chapter Four**

### **U.S. Native American Policy and its effects on the Rocky Boy Reservation**

In the above chapter I discussed the role discourse has played in defining groups and how those definitions and narratives can have spatial implications. I demonstrated how negative racialized discourse about The Chippewa-Cree Tribe influenced the U.S. Government to create the Rocky Boy Reservation in an isolated area away from Montana's largest cities. And while this negative racialized discourse greatly affected the geography of the Rocky Boy Reservation, it was not the only factor that contributed to the reservation's geography. U.S. Native American policies also greatly affected the Rocky Boy Reservation's geography. Synchronously those policies were also greatly influenced by racialized discourse. In particular, the widespread discourse of the "savage Indiana" influenced how U.S. Native American policies were written and subsequently administered (Hannah 1997; Olund 2002).

Since the Rocky Boy Reservation was governed under U.S. Native American policies, it is important to understand how those policies affected the confinement of The Chippewa-Cree Tribe to the reservation space. Consequently, during this chapter I will examine U.S. Native American policy and subsequently how that policy influenced the geography of the Rocky Boy Reservation. To begin that analysis I will discuss the major United States Native American policies that influenced the lives of The Chippewa-Cree Tribe. Then I will examine how those policies affected the geography of the Rocky Boy Reservation and some of the ramifications of that geography for The Chippewa-Cree Tribe.

#### *4.1 The Dawes and Burke Acts:*

The first policy which greatly influenced the geography of the Rocky Boy Reservation was the Dawes Act, which became a law in 1887. Although the Dawes Act was not the first national U.S. Native policy, it was one of the most influential to how Native American spaces were created and governed after the 1850s. After 1850 U.S. Native American policy was quite different than it had been previous to this time. Before the 1850s the U.S. Government dealt with tribes individually, which meant negotiations of land rights were imposed through individualized treaties (Kilpinen 2004, 484). Owing to continued westward expansion during the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, conflicts between whites and Native Americans increased significantly. Consequently, these conflicts increased the white settlers' fears of tribes. Furthermore, because of this fear, the rhetoric and hyperbole surrounding the "Indian Problem" became even more hateful and severe (Kelly 1975, DiMatteo and Meagher 1997). "The more [Indians] we can kill this year," said General William Tecumseh Sherman illustrating the severe hatred many white's felt, "the less will have to be killed in the next war, for the more I see of these Indians, the more convinced I am that they all have to be killed or be maintained as a species of paupers" (Place 1970, 48). Because of this cruel rhetoric and because of the increased fights between homesteaders and Native Americans, the U.S. Government moved away from single treaties and toward more comprehensive national Native American policies.

From the 1850s to the late 1880s these new comprehensive policies were ones of "displacement and segregation," by which Native Americans were removed and relocated

to areas unused by whites (Olund 2002, 133). However, as the turn of the twentieth century approached a transition occurred in Native American political discourse. This transition rhetorically moved away from displacement and segregation and toward “governance and individuation,” which was intended to help assimilate the individual Native American to the westernized world for the betterment of both races (Olund 2002, 133; Hannah 1993). This shift in racialized discourse occurred as part of the reform movement that had begun before the Civil War, as abolitionists “lobbied Congress to hasten assimilation, with the ultimate goal of making Native people citizens of the United States [...] and granting ‘security’ to Natives while opening ‘surplus’ reservation land for settlement” (Olund 2002, 133).

The 1887 Dawes Act was one of the first assimilation acts. It assigned tribal families to “farming plots” with the deceptive goal of aiding Native Americans in economic independence by granting them ownership of their allotted land (Kilpinen 2004, 494). Though the Dawes Act allotment program was ultimately awful for tribes, it was suggested that “Indian fortune and status would rise as they enjoyed the benefits of private property” (Kilpinen 2004, 494). The policy was meant, said Nathaniel Taylor Commissioner of Indian Affairs, “to protect and secure the rights of the Indians, and at the same time promote the highest interest of both races” (DiMatteo and Meagher 1997,32).

This kind of altruistic optimism was misleading as most support for the Dawes Act came because the act “opened surplus lands to white settlement” (Kilpinen 2004, 494). As well, due to a provision in the Dawes Act which granted “allottees” citizenship, Native Americans were allowed to sell their lands (Wiget 1994, 154). Because many

Native people were unused to the concept of land ownership, they were unaware of their rights and were often defrauded into selling their lands. Usually they would sell their land for less value than the land was worth. Consequently, the Dawes Act led to the dispossession of more than 86 million acres of reservation lands (Kilpinen 2004, 494).

As a consequence to this immense land dispossession, the U.S. Congress in the spring of 1906 passed the Burke Act as a means to offset the land loss problem created by the Dawes Act. The Burke Act amended the Dawes Act by withholding citizenship to Native Americans for a period of twenty-five years or until “whenever the secretary was convinced that the Indian allottee was competent and capable of managing his or her affairs” (Kappler 1913). While this aspect of the Burke Act was supposed to benefit Native American tribes, it further limited tribal power and autonomy because the Act forced native people to “act like whites” if they wished to own land (Kilpinen 2004). “Every Indian born,” says the Burke Act, “within the territorial limits of the United States who has ... adopted the habits of civilized life, is hereby declared to be a citizen of the United States, and is entitled to all the rights, privileges, and immunities of such citizens” (Kappler 1913,182).

#### *4.2 The establishment of the Rocky Boy Reservation*

Of Montana’s seven reservations, the Rocky Boy Reservation was the last to be established and was the only Montana reservation established under the guidance of the 1906 Burke Act. The Rocky Boy Reservation was established in 1916 and its boundaries were delineated around surplus segments of Fort Assiniboine, a military outpost that had been created in 1886 by President Grover Cleveland to monitor Montana’s Native

American reservations. This site was chosen for the reservation because the Fort had been abandoned by the military since 1906 and it was located in a remote area away from most white people (Archives and Special Collections 1934).

However, before the Rocky Boy Reservation was established, Fort Assiniboine's lands were first divided and sold to white citizens in 1915. The Fort's 93,606 acres of agricultural land and its 2,180 acres of coal fields were surveyed and divided into 160 acres plots and sold to the first bidder (Archives and Special Collections 1934). The first plots of land that were sold were the best agricultural lands in the area and cost the new owner \$2.50 per acre. The remaining plots, which according to surveyors were not as good for agriculture, were then sold for \$1.25 per acre (McWhorter 1929). Any acreage that was not sold was then used for the Rocky Boy Reservation.

As a result of these sales, the Rocky Boy Reservation's boundaries were drawn around the leftover segments of the leftover acreage of Fort Assiniboine, which makes it difficult to suggest the U.S. government was offering The Chippewa-Cree Tribe the best geographic location. This is especially true since there were many other locations where the boundaries of the Rocky Boy Reservation could have been drawn, which may have offered The Chippewa-Cree Tribe better geography. For example, there were millions of acres in the region where a homesteader could acquire a "160 to 320 acre farm" that produced great crop yields. Ironically a Great Northern Railway advertising the lands described them as "Rocky Boy Indian Lands, 1,400,000 acres-very fertile" (Figure 1) (Great Northern Railroad 1910).



## Your Chance Is West—

You can get a 160 or 320 acre farm free in Montana—but you'll have to hurry. Along the Great Northern R'y are several million acres of government land available under the homestead laws. The soil has proved remarkably fertile, producing 30, 35 and 40 bushels of wheat to the acre—proportionate yields of other grains and root crops.

**MONTANA** ranks first among the states in the yield per acre of wheat, oats, rye, barley and potatoes. In Eastern Montana, the Milk River Valley, Judith Basin Country, Great Falls District and Fertile Platehead Valley you can get free land, cheap land, irrigated land, fruit land and grazing land. Rocky Boy Indian Lands, 1,400,000 acres—very fertile—soon to be opened. The rush is on—thousands are going this Spring. Don't delay. *Send for Free Montana Opportunity Bulletin.*

**Special Fares** Round trip Home-seeker tickets on sale March 15, April 5-19. One way Settlers' tickets March 8-15-22-29, April 5-12.  
Send for Colonel Foldere

C. W. PITTS, General Agent,  
270 So. Clark Street, Chicago, Ill.



Figure 1: Great Northern Railroad advertisement (Great Northern Railroad 2010).

In addition to these advertised lands, the occupied space where The Chippewa-Cree Tribe were living, from 1914 to 1916 before the Rocky Boy Reservation's creation, was a more suitable location for the reservation. The Chippewa-Cree Tribe were, for example, having great success growing a "considerable quantity of vegetables" in that space (McWhorter 1929, 15251). In fact, The Chippewa-Cree Tribe were having such great success in that occupied space, Andrieus. Jones, the Chairman of the Committee of Public Lands (CPL), argued that the occupied space should be used for the reservation. He said those occupied lands would put The Chippewa-Cree Tribe on a path to self-sufficiency and would allow the U.S. Government to be finished with the question of The Chippewa-Cree Tribe's location (McWhorter 1929).

In addition to the land The Chippewa-Cree Tribe occupied before the Rocky Boy Reservation's establishment and the millions of "fertile" acres near the reservation's eventual location, other potential reservation lands existed. For example, The Chippewa-Cree Tribe might also have been given 8,800 acres near a creek in the reservation. This land near the creek would have made ideal agricultural lands because it had rich soil and was in proximity to an easily accessed water source (Archives and Special Collections 1934, 45). Instead of using this land for the Rocky Boy Reservation, the Congressional bill which established the Rocky Boy Reservation's boundaries set aside the land on both sides of the creek for a white campground, which was rarely used and "kept and maintained at no cost to the Government of the United States" (Archives and Special Collections 1934, 45). "We have not got enough land," said Charles Mowery about this land to the panel of visiting Senators in the summer of 1929, "and the people are holding



a piece of land for a park, and we don't see why we can't make our homes in there on Beaver Creek?"(McWhorter 1929, 12504).

In spite of protestations by Chippewa-Cree and the fact that the campground was rarely used, the Beaver Creek land was never added to the reservation. Similarly none of the other more habitable options were used for the Rocky Boy Reservation. Instead, the Rocky Boy Reservation was created in an isolated space of left over segments of Fort Assiniboine, which were not quality agricultural lands (McWhorter 1929).

Instead the quality agricultural lands of Montana were being taken by white homesteaders, as the creation of the Rocky Boy Reservation coincided with one of the largest homesteading booms in Montana's history (Malone, Roeder, and Lang 1991). Consequently, The Chippewa-Cree Tribe were competing for land with these white settlers. Had the reservation been created ten years earlier or perhaps even ten years late, the location of the Rocky Boy Reservation might have been quite different. But because the Rocky Boy Reservation was created during the height of the Montana homesteading boom, it was created in a location that was not wanted by white settlers. Charles Mosney of The Chippewa-Cree Tribe described, for example, the reservation's land as "good for nothing" (McWhorter 1929, 12504). "It is all right," continued Charles Mosney, "if you get enough for grazing land but you can't farm. There is no man that can make a living on this reservation. Even no white man can make a living, so how do you expect and Indian to make a living on it" (McWhorter 1929, 12504).

**CHARLIE MOSNEY.** Before the tribal council you told us you would help us all you could. Read this and see how much it would help us. [Hands Shotwell letter, which Shotwell reads.] I wouldn't give a dollar for all the land you can give me on this reservation. It is good for nothing. It is all right if you get enough for grazing land but you can't farm. There is no man that can make a living on this reservation. Even no white man can make a living, so how do you expect an Indian to make a living on it.

Figure 2: Excerpt from 1929 Survey of Conditions at the Rocky Boy Reservation (McWhorter 1929, 12504).

Charles Mosney was quite accurate in this assessment of the land, as most white people would “abandon efforts to farm” in the area (McWhorter 1929, 15522.) Following the boom of homesteading in Montana the state faced a harsh drought during the 1920s. Consequently, 11,000 Montana farms were abandoned, including most white owned farms in the area of the Rocky Boy Reservation (McWhorter 1929; Malone, Roeder, and Lang 1991). Still the Rocky Boy Reservation’s white Superintendent suggested the reservation had enough resources to offer the people a suitable place to make a living. He cited the neighboring homesteads as proof a “moderate size family” could support itself on lands in the area (McWhorter 1929, 15522). However, the Superintendent neglected to mention the homesteaders had 320 acres of land and that they had still failed to attain economic well-being (McWhorter 1929). The Chippewa-Cree Tribe were meant make a living on 40 to 80 acres of land that was even less suitable for farming (McWhorter 1929).

Historically quality land has been the greatest determining factor for economic well-being, particularly for people living in rural areas (Tickamyer 1990). In fact, for Native American society the diminution of their land was one of the most devastating legacies of the colonial and post-colonial period because land was important to almost every aspect of Native American life. “The Greatest threat,” wrote Janet Gritzner, who

studied food shortages for the Nez Perce, “to the continuance of traditional Native American subsistence practices during the pre-modern era was loss or diminution of essential natural resources because of over-exploitation” (Gritzner 1994, 34). Over-exploration had resulted in tribes losing their once immense tribal ranges and therefore their access to natural resources; resources that were essential for food production and other subsistence practices. This loss of land forced most Native American societies to shift from their traditional practices- culturally, socially and economically - because those practices were no longer sustainable without abundant amounts of land. Hunting was, for example, the customary way tribes fed and clothed their families, but it became less viable once competition with Europeans made game and other animals scarce (Barr 2011). Consequently, most tribes were forced to turn to farming as a new means of support (Gritzner 1994).

And while many tribes by the 19<sup>th</sup> century had become accustomed to agrarian life, particularly those tribes located in the eastern parts of the United States, for most it was still a tremendous change from their historic practices (Gritzner 1994). Tribes located in Canada and the northwestern United States in particular had trouble with this new lifestyle because they had built their societies around hunting and trading with the necessity and principal “that appropriate trade goods ... were reflective of a mutual concern, a respect for what the other person or tribe needed” (Holland 2003, 59). But as the 19<sup>th</sup> century grew to a close, even northwestern tribes were forced to adopt a more agrarian Eurocentric model of society because without farming these tribes faced long periods of starvation due to the increased westward expansion of European settlements, the fur trade, and shifting tribal ranges (Bishop 1976). However, farming rarely offered

economic betterment for Native Americans because of the aforementioned rampant expansion of white settlers who continually and forcefully removed tribes from their lands, requiring Native Americans to relocate to increasingly remote areas with inferior land quality, which was tremendously detrimental to their lives because tribes depended almost solely on resource extraction for subsistence (Gritzner 1994).

And so without quality land Native Americans had almost no safeguard against extreme poverty, as farming on poor land almost never met the economic needs of a family, which meant most Native American families needed outside sources of income (Tickamyer and Duncan 1990, 80). But American colonialism had created “dramatic geographic variations in life chances for different people” and other sources of income were rarely available to native people because most reservations were in geographically isolated areas (Kodras 1997, 68). So, because of U.S. Native American land policy and because the United States had “the problem of acutely unequal land distribution, [which] had impoverished some and enriched others in ways that did not seem random” most tribes lived in a state of dire poverty (Kodras 1997, 68; Geisler 1995, 20; Kilpinen 2004).

#### *4.3 Ramifications of the Rocky Boy Reservation's Geography*

For The Chippewa-Cree Tribe, the Rocky Boy Reservation's physical location practically predestined their poverty. The reservation was created in an isolated place and so there were not sources of income available beyond those on the reservation. And on the reservation there was little industry beyond farming. However, farming on the Rocky Boy Reservation was nearly impossible, as the reservation sits inland as 5,000 feet above sea level and consequently has cold long winters and hot dry summers. As result the soil

is not fit for farming and so the economy based on farming has largely failed. And to make matters worse, when the United States Congress created the Rocky Boy Reservation in 1916, they detrimentally amended the first draft of the bill (U.S. House 1916). The original Congressional bill gave four townships to The Chippewa-Cree Tribe with 21 tillable sections, 80 grazing sections and 12 timbered sections. However, when the congressional act passed, it carried an amendment removing one of the townships from the reservation, which was the township with the best tillable lands (Juneau 2010). Consequently, when The Chippewa-Cree Tribe moved onto the reservation, sustainable farming was difficult and economic hardship followed.

When the reservation was created it was almost six times smaller than any other reservation in the state. It was a paltry 56,035 acres when it was formed and there was not very much land available for each Chippewa-Cree family (Figure 3) (Juneau 2009; Archives and Special Collections 1934, 42).

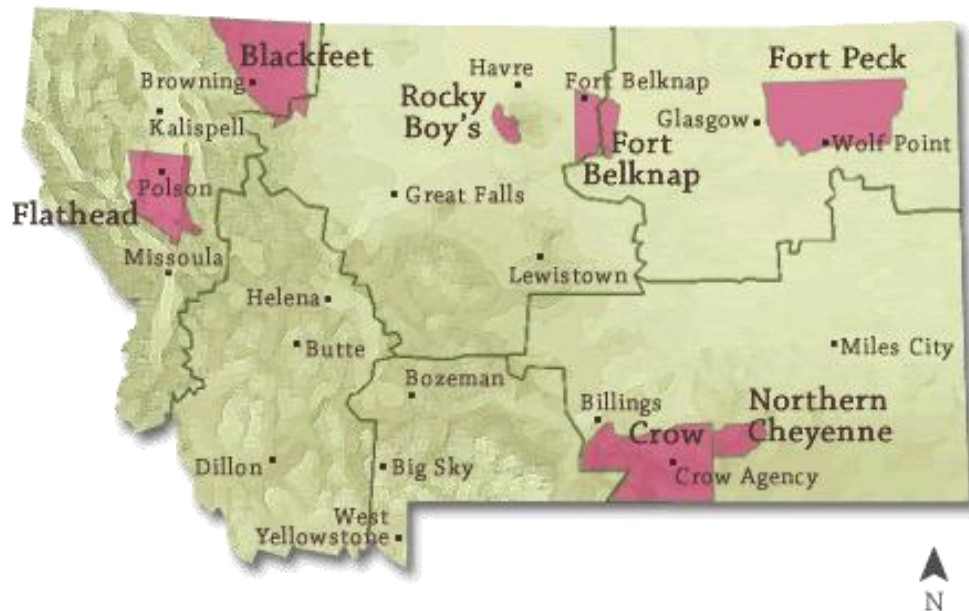


Figure 3: Fort Belknap, the second smallest reservation in Montana, is almost six times larger than the Rocky Boy Reservation (Montana.gov 2013).

The little acreage that was available was divided into leases of forty acres, to which Chippewa-Cree families were assigned. However, as I mentioned earlier, the Burke Act was law when the Rocky Boy Reservation was established. Accordingly, the reservation's land was not allotted because The Chippewa-Cree Tribe did not meet the capability criteria described in the Burke Act (U.S. House 1949). As a result, The Chippewa-Cree Tribe did not have the benefit of land ownership, which can guard against extreme poverty because in the worst economic cases land can be sold (Tickamyer and Duncan 1990, 80).

Even without the benefit of land ownership, these 40 acre plots offered Chippewa-Cree families a potential space to support themselves. The amount of land leased to each family was not nearly enough space for a family to support itself. To ensure economic viability a farm had to be large enough to produce substantial crop

yields (Rural Settlement Group 1984; McWhorter 1929). According to the Rural Settlement Group farming plots have to be at least 160 acres for a family to earn a moderate living. Since Chippewa-Cree families had access to only a quarter of that amount of land, they could not even produce enough food for subsistence (Rural Settlement Group 1984; McWhorter 1929). Because of the reservation's small size, The Chippewa-Cree Tribe were living in a state of abject poverty and were dependent on government rations and subsidies (McWhorter 1929).

In addition to the problems caused by the small size of the reservation, the lack of resources available on the reservation was also damaging to The Chippewa-Cree Tribe's livelihood. Two of the townships that formed the Rocky Boy, for instance, were completely unusable for farming or grazing. "There is no place on these two townships," said Chief Rocky Boy describing this land, "where we could make a field or even a good-sized garden" (Archives and Special Collections 1909, 30). "I do not think it would be possible for these Indians," said Andrieus A. Jones, Chairman of the CPL reiterating Chief Rocky Boy's sentiments, "to support themselves on these two townships" (Archives and Special Collections 1909, 30). Because these two townships were unusable for farming, Andrieus Jones estimated that only 1,280 acres of the entire Rocky Boy Reservation were suitable for farming, which was less than five percent of the reservation and only 2.5 acres per person. 2.5 acres was well below what would be "necessary for the proper support of each individual" (Archives and Special Collections 1909, 30).

#### *4.4 The 1934 Indian Reorganization Act*

The Rocky Boy Reservation was not the only reservation facing the range of problems described above. In fact having little acreage and having poor resources was quite common for Native American tribes on reservations (Kelly 1975). Consequently, because the Dawes and Burke Acts had placed Native Americans in such tenuous economic straits, Congress was compelled to reconsider the effectiveness of those Acts. Consequently, on June 18, 1934, Congress passed the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA), which rescinded the laws of the Dawes and Burke Acts and gave tribes the right of self-governance (Kelly 1975). The IRA ended the powers enacted by the Dawes Act and returned to Native Americans the management of their own assets, which was meant to improve conditions on reservations (Kelly 1975).

The author of the IRA, John Collier head of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) under Franklin D. Roosevelt, had seen firsthand the destructive nature of the Dawes and Burke Acts. He crafted the IRA to end the process of allotment and leasing for the purpose of reducing the amount of tribal lands that were sold to outside interests. Collier's goals were to "conserve and develop Indian lands and resources," and to offset the years of "despotism" by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (Kelly 1975; Wheeler 1934). Specifically, Title III of the IRA discontinued the land allotments actions of the Dawes Act and immediately returned to Native Americans some of the allotted lands purchased by non-Native Americans between 1887 and 1934 (Kelly 1975, 295) (Figure 4).



**Section 3.** The Secretary of the Interior, if he shall find it to be in the public interest, is hereby authorized to restore to tribal ownership the remaining surplus lands of any Indian reservation heretofore opened, or authorized to be opened, to sale, or any other form of disposal by Presidential proclamation, or by any of the public land laws of the United States; Provided, however, That valid rights or claims of any persons to any lands so withdrawn existing on the date of the withdrawal shall not be affected by this Act: Provided further, That this section shall not apply to lands within any reclamation project heretofore authorized in any Indian reservation:

Figure 4: Excerpt from Section Three of the Indian Reorganization Act (Kelly 1975, 295).

Opponents of the IRA argued the IRA dispelled the historic culture of Native American tribes because it was “not in accord with Indian clan, band, family, and other sub-tribal group structures” (Washburn 1984, 280). Collier disputed this claim, however, and said those structures had been changed forever and were no longer helpful to Native American interests. Collier chose an organizational structural unit he considered more beneficial to Native Americans. He chose the “tribe” as the organizational unit because the term would engender “a favor-able historic and romantic image to justify the preservation of Indian cultures and group organizations to a potentially unsympathetic Congress” (Washburn 1984, 280).

Even with Collier’s sympathetic ideals and goals aimed at improving Native American life, the IRA was largely lambasted by Native Americans because Native Americans were skeptical of all U.S. Native American policies since the Dawes and Burke Acts had been so damaging to their interests. Because of this skepticism and because Collier mistakenly consulted few Native Americans when he wrote the IRA, many tribes attempted to derail the passing of the IRA by lobbying against the bill in front of Congress (Kelly 1975).

Collier's vision for the IRA, however, was most effectively derailed by Congress itself. Collier's first draft, for example, had emphasized the retention and repair of Native American cultures, but that section was deleted from Congress's final draft. Further, the mandatory transfer of allotted lands was made voluntary (Kelly 1975). Even more damaging was Senator Burton K. Wheeler's insistence that tribal self-governance be approved by the Secretary of the Interior, which greatly limited tribal power and organization. Consequently, tribes had to be recognized by Congress and Native Americans not included within a recognized tribe were unable to benefit from any aspect of the IRA. To this day this provision of the IRA has been a problem for the Little Shell Tribe in Montana because they have not received official tribal recognition from the U.S. Government (Juneau 2009, Kelly 1975, 297) .

Wheeler was motivated to change the IRA because of powerful and politically influential Christian groups that were promoting the "missionary point of view," which ultimately led to a fifty percent reduction in the IRA's funding. These Christian groups influenced the writing of new IRA provisions that included credit loan and school subsidies that were meant to further promote Native American assimilation into white society, rather than to aid them in autonomy and economic well-being (Kelly 1975, 297).

Senator Wheeler explained the missionary view when he questioned:

"whether all that has so far been accomplished shall be scrapped, ... instead of fitting the Indians for the responsibilities and privileges of Christian citizenship, shall [we] be made to turn them back to tribal Communism and to make each reservation a self-contained enclave with no effective participation in American life?" (Wheeler 1934, 347).

#### *4.5 New Rocky Boy Reservation Lands under the IRA*

While these Christian groups greatly influenced changes to the IRA from Collier's original vision, the Acts passing in 1934 did empower Congress to add new lands to tribal reservations. Those lands came from areas that were undeveloped near reservations and from repurchased lands that had been sold to whites under the Dawes Act (Kelly 1975). At the Rocky Boy Reservation formerly undeveloped lands near the reservation were added almost immediately upon the IRA's passing. In particular a previously unused 685 acre plot of land, which was nine miles long by one eighth of a mile wide, was added to the reservation in 1934. This plot of land was the first addition to the reservation since its formation in 1916 (Committee on Indian Affairs 1944). Additionally a 35,500 acre plot was added to the reservation in the spring of 1939. As more lands were purchased from white homesteaders during the subsequent decade the reservation would almost double in size and would be 105,472 acres by 1950 (Ickes 1939; U.S. House 1949).

The additional lands did little, however, to alleviate the geographic problems of the reservation. As a caveat to new lands being added to the Rocky Boy Reservation, the U.S. Government forced The Chippewa-Cree Tribe to house twenty-five new families within the Rocky Boy Reservation borders. Consequently, the reservation's lands were being used by more families. So, while the reservation almost doubled in size from 1934 to 1950, the reservations functional acreage was relatively unchanged because by 1950 the Rocky Boy Reservation population had also doubled (Stamper, Windy Boy, and Morsette 2008).

As some problems persisted, the IRA also created new problems. For example a problem found on many other U.S. reservations surfaced at the Rocky Boy Reservation, as the reservation was no longer a single large section of land. The reservation was instead “checker-boarded, scattered, and divided” because of the geographic location of the new land additions (U.S. House 1949, 2). This checkerboard pattern occurred because lands reacquired from whites under the provisions of the IRA were not always centralized. Instead the new lands were often scattered throughout the area, which made them functionally useless because where the tribe might own a piece of land, there could be lands in between not owned by the tribe, which made it almost impossible to create farming plots from these lands (U.S. House 1949, 26). When John Collier argued for the ratification of the IRA, the checkerboard problem was something he had hoped to avoid (Committee on Indian Affairs 1934, 58). “Sometimes the majority of the land,” said Collier, “will not be Indian owned. Sometimes more than 90 percent of the area will be white owned, [which] makes it impossible to either rent them or use them economically” (Committee on Indian Affairs 1934, 58).

ROCKY BOY'S RESERVATION

PROPOSED LAND EXCHANGE: INDIAN LANDS - A. FRAME LANDS

Scale: 2 inches - 1 mile

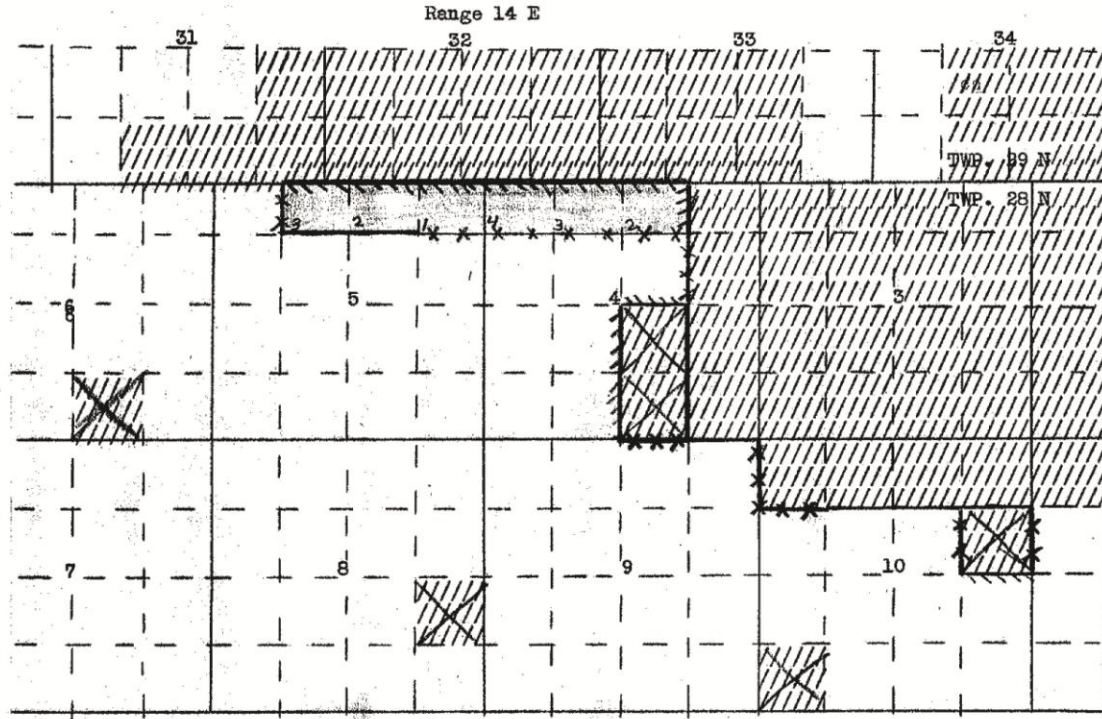


Figure 5: Checker Boarded Lands from Archie Frame's Farm (Archives and Special Collections 1934.)

And while the size of the reservation continued to be a problem and the checkerboard configuration created new difficulties, the lack of resources was also still a problem. It was hoped that with the addition of new land the overall quality of the resources on the Rocky Boy Reservation would improve. “Although this land is mountainous and timbered,” said the Secretary of the Interior about these new additions to the Rocky Boy Reservation, “it can be used beneficially for Indian use” (Rogers 1934, 2). Unfortunately however, similar transgressions like those that had occurred during the Rocky Boy Reservation’s establishment occurred again, as the new lands added to the

Rocky Boy Reservation were from areas not wanted by white society, “no doubt,” admitted the Secretary of the Interior, “due to the [lands] character and location” (Rogers 1934, 2).

Similarly, the land being purchased from white farmers was also of poor quality. Most homesteaders were very willing to sell their land to The Chippewa-Cree Tribe because “much of the land was marginal for agricultural purposes” (Cosens 1997, 17). Beginning in the fall of 1944, for example, The Chippewa-Cree Tribe began negotiations for 425 acres of land from a Mr. Archie Frame of Big Sandy, Montana. After a year of debate and costly legal fees, his scattered lands were added to the reservation (Figure 5). However, Frame’s land would not benefit The Chippewa-Cree Tribe in any manner because they were checker-boarded and relatively worthless, which made “Indian use ... not possible” (Archives and Special Collections 1934, 79).

#### *4.6 Additional Ramifications of the Rocky Boy Reservation’s Geography*

Even with the passing of the IRA, the circumstances of poverty and hardship on the Rocky Boy Reservation had not changed. The Secretary of the Interior during the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, for example, still described The Chippewa-Cree Tribe as “one of the poorest Indian Tribes in the Northwest” (U.S. House 1949). Their housing continued to lack the basic necessities for sanitary living, which contributed to the continued problem of trachoma and TB. Similarly, the school system on the reservation remained poor and the educational training for Chippewa-Cree adults persisted to be negligible. Therefore The Chippewa-Cree Tribe lacked many of the vital skills needed to reach economic viability, despite the IRA’s claim that it would “make suitable provisions

... for the training of Indian members (Wheeler 1934, 6).

As a consequence of these poor conditions, most Chippewa-Cree men left the reservation to find work because Rocky Boy Reservation employment was almost non-existent. The isolated location of the reservation was still making it difficult for The Chippewa-Cree Tribe to make a living do anything beyond farming. However, the Rocky Boy Reservation's poor education system had taught The Chippewa-Cree Tribe little, and they were only eligible for intermittent, low-wage, labor-intensive employment, which was often more than a reasonable daily commute from the reservation (U.S. House 1949). And because these jobs were too far for a daily commute, off-reservation housing was needed, which cut into the already small profits The Chippewa-Cree Tribe were earning off the reservation. As a result, the amount of support that off-reservation workers sent home was modest and did little to alleviate the suffering of their families (U.S. House 1949).

Even with these modest earnings The Chippewa-Cree Tribe continued to work away from the reservation because they really had no other choice, much like black South Africans had little choice but to work for gold mining companies. A "de-facto reservation" called Hill 57 formed on the outskirts of Great Falls, Montana, which was near a Heinz 57 factory where many Native Americans found employment (Thompson 2006). But while Hill 57 offered The Chippewa-Cree Tribe and other "landless Indians" some employment opportunity, they still did not escape the torments they experienced on the Rocky Boy Reservation. Living conditions at Hill 57 were, for example, similarly horrendous to those on the Rocky Boy Reservation because landlords there did not trust Native Americans and so consequently rented only their worst rooms and houses to them

(U.S. House 1949). One Hill 57 resident recalled growing up in “a two-room shack that sheltered eight other people and had no indoor plumbing” (Thompson 2006). The conditions at Hill 57, says steps to which they are obliged to resort in order to exist” (U.S. House 1949, 2).

New lands had been added to the Rocky Boy Reservation because of the IRA. Nevertheless, the reservation remained small and deprived of sufficient resources to offer The Chippewa-Cree Tribe the necessary economic benefit needed to improve their horrendous conditions. Hence, a sort of continuity existed for The Chippewa-Cree Tribe, their land was poor, their lives were hard, and no new U.S. legislation had changed those conditions. Because the Rocky Boy Reservation had been created in an isolated space, where farming was the only means of economic support, but the land that was not fit for farming, The Chippewa-Cree Tribe were and have been “impoverished” ever since their bounding within the Rocky Boy Reservation (Archives and Special Collections 1934).



## Chapter Five

### Ramifications of the Rocky Boy Reservation's Geography

During the previous two chapters I have demonstrated how racialized discourse and U.S. Native American policies have affected the geography of the Rocky Boy Reservation. I have also discussed some of the ramifications that occurred because of that geography. I have discussed how racialized discourse surrounding The Chippewa-Cree Tribe led to the Rocky Boy Reservation's creation in an isolated place. I have suggested the policies of the U.S. Government contributed to the Rocky Boy Reservation being a geographically small reservation with few resources and taken together the problems of isolation, poor resources, and little land left The Chippewa-Cree Tribe impoverished. In this chapter I to take this discussion further, to show how these factors made it possible for white officials to more easily control The Chippewa-Cree Tribe.

Before I begin the specific analysis of how the factors of poverty and spatial isolation allowed for the control of The Chippewa-Cree Tribe, I will give some contextual background on how poverty and isolation were used to control Native Americans collectively. I will be drawing from geographers who have studied Native American borders and have taken Edward Said's ideas about Othering to show how "others" could be more easily watched, controlled, and managed once Native Americans were impoverished and spatially fixed within a designated area or border (Hannah 1997, 174). These geographers argue that rules and laws were "carried out... in ways that allowed preexisting racial stereotypes and race-based disadvantages to produce large cumulative disadvantages" (Schram et al. 2009, 415). The rules and laws used the

perceived identity of the Native American people as dangerous heathens, based on Othering and arbitrary racial discrimination, to subjugate and disrupt Native American culture (Olund 2002; Hannah 1997; Erickson 2010).

A subjugation and disruption of culture that had to occur, suggests the underling logic of Manifest Destiny and Romantic Nationalism, based on the assumption that it was natural for western ideals to spread throughout the continent (Hannah 1993; Olund 2002). Within this framework or logic, the spreading of western ideals created a conflict between white settlers and the native people for which two solutions were considered (Hannah 1993; Olund 2002). “[Native Americans] either had to be exterminated (not an acceptable alternative to Eastern policy makers),” wrote Matthew Hannah (Hannah 1993, 413) in his study of the Lakota, “or assimilated, given all the gifts of Western culture and taught how lead to lead civilized lives.”

The assimilation option was not simple, however, because Native Americans were so technologically and culturally “behind” (Hannah 1993). To just set them lose in civilized society might make them vulnerable to the vices of gambling, alcohol, and “other species of debauchery” (Hannah 1993, 413). It was argued, therefore, that for the best interests of all involved, Native Americans should be quarantined, isolated into colonies or reservations, so they could begin to cultivate the necessary skills needed to integrate into civilized society. The Commissioner of Indian Affairs’ *Annual Report*, presented by Commissioner Mix in 1858, gives a summation of the envisioned plan:

Great care should be taken in the selection of the reservations, so as to isolate the Indians for a time from contact and interference from the Whites. They should embrace good land, which will repay the efforts to cultivate them. No white person should be suffered to go upon

reservations, and after the first year the lands should be divided and assigned to the Indians in severalty, everyone being required to remain on this own tract and cultivate it, no persons being employed for them except the requisite mechanics to keep their tools and implements in repair, and such as may be necessary, for a time, to teach them how to conduct their agricultural operations and to take care of their stock. They should also have the advantage of well-conducted manual labor schools for the education youth in letters, habits of industry, and a knowledge of agriculture and simpler mechanical arts... But it is essential to success of the system that there should be a sufficient military force in the vicinity of the reservation to prevent the intrusion of improper persons upon them, to afford protection to the Agents, and to aid in controlling the Indians and keeping them within the limits assigned to them (United States. Office of Indian Affairs and Affairs 1858, 10; Hannah 1993, 413–414).

Reservations were accordingly rebranded not as spaces to remove the unwanted native people, but as spaces where the Native American could learn the beliefs of western society. Citizenry was not the first step in civilizing the Native American, but the terminus step once they had been fitted for citizenry (Schurz 1881, 8). Secretary of the Interior Carl Schurtz (Schurz 1881, 9; Olund 2002, 139) laid out a step-by-step plan of how western beliefs were to be imbued into Native American society:

To fit the Indians for their ultimate absorption in the great body of American citizenship, three things are suggested by common sense as well as philanthropy:

1. That they be taught to work by making work profitable and attractive to them.
2. That they be educated, especially the youth of both sexes.
3. That they be individualized in the possession of property by settlement in severalty with a fee simple title, after which the lands they do not use may be disposed of for the general settlement and enterprise without danger and with profit to the Indians.

Before Native Americans could be “civilized” they had to be bound and territorially fixed in the aforementioned quarantined area because fixation and bounding

gave order and so was hoped confinement would beget order (Hannah 1997; Koolhaas 1994). The idea was that the bounding of a once unbound people would force them to take up the practices of the western world (Koolhaas 1994).

Additional steps were taken to impose order within the reservation. If there was any question that native people would be slow to take up western practices, the U.S. made sure Native Americans were thrust into westernism by further creating structure within the reservation. The U.S., for example, made it almost universally mandatory because of the geography of most reservations, that Native American's become farmers, which invariably begat domination of nature. Furthermore, they allotted the reservation lands and gave Native Americans ownership, which created and imbued the values of individualism into their society and in so doing created economic competition and the disproportionate control over assets that follows financial rivalry (Hannah 1993). As geographer Matthew Hannah (Hannah 1993, 414) suggests, "Spatial fixation and restriction were of central importance to the plan for civilization. Fixation necessitates agriculture, which in turn fosters habits of industry and thrift, and instilled an appreciation of private property." By bounding and promoting western ideals U.S. law makers had disrupted possible dissidences that might have occurred because of the influence of Native Americans' non-western practices.

To control The Chippewa-Cree Tribe, officials on the reservation make it clear that certain rules had to be followed, otherwise The Chippewa-Cree Tribe would face dire consequences like imprisonment or being stripped of their land (McWhorter 1929). Even though the reservation was completely unfit for a western life - farming was almost impossible, there was only schooling up to the 5<sup>th</sup> grade, there was little medical attention

- the white officials made it mandatory that The Chippewa-Cree Tribe become farmers. Because farming would foster the habits of western society (McWhorter 1929).

Farming was used as a strategic tactic to indoctrinate Native Americans to western beliefs because farming necessitated fixation of place, domination of nature, and it promoted individuality, all of which are major tenants of western life (Borgmann 1992; Olund 2002; Hannah 1993). The Dawes and Burke Acts, for example, were designed specifically to place Native Americans on individualized farming plots to promote these ideals (Olund 2002; Hannah 1993). However, these Reform Era laws, unlike the laws of the Isolation Era, were also designed “for Indians to become individuals, their actions ... describable and actionable in legal terms” (Olund 2002, 143). Writes Geographer Eric Olund, “Indian Country became governable space in the sense of formal, legally defined juridical space that produced isomorphic self-regulating subjects of protected individual rights” (Olund 2000, 134). Since Native Americans under these laws were now individuals, there was less ambiguity about governing them as citizens. As a result, these new Reform Era laws gave white officials a more formal means of control that had not been present during the Isolation Era (Olund 2002; Hannah 1993). With the passing of the Reform Era bills Native people were now subject to formal laws and could consequently face retribution if they did not follow those laws (Olund 2002).

At the Rocky Boy Reservation, the Superintendent and the Rocky Boy Reservation judge, who was “simply the mouthpiece of the superintendent,” implemented and made “official” rules that forced The Chippewa-Cree Tribe to farm (McWhorter 1929, 12526). If a tribal man was assigned a farm plot, for example, and he did not work his land, he could be jailed, stripped of his land, and essentially starved as he would be

ineligible to receive rations. To make these laws official, the Rocky Boy Reservation's Superintendent forced The Chippewa-Cree Tribe to sign ration agreements. For example, a 1927 agreement (McWhorter 1929, 12526) reads as follows:

“I hereby agree to use the above ration for farming my place of \_\_\_\_\_ acres and to store grain in the Government granary this fall to purchase rations to put in my crop in 1927. I further agree that should I use these rations and not farm my place, I accept sentence in the agency jail for a term of 30 days at hard labor.”

Although this agreement was a “grotesque promissory note” and likely illegal since debtors' prisons had been abolished in the U.S. since the early 1800s, two Chippewa-Cree were jailed when they were found to be non-compliant. The jailings made other Chippewa-Cree fearful, and more apt to farm as the Rocky Boy Reservation jail was a horrendous place (McWhorter 1929). One incarcerated Chippewa-Cree man, for example, faced inhumane conditions in the jail, “as the jail was not heated and he was insufficiently fed while imprisoned” (McWhorter 1929, 12526). “The whole procedure was” wrote journalist Walter Ligget, “a plain denial of constitutional rights and a farcical perversion of justice. The Indian judge, of course, knew little or nothing about law and was merely carrying out the wishes of Superintendent Shotwell” (McWhorter 1929, 12526 - 12527).

Furthermore, beyond the fear of imprisonment, the Superintendent also controlled The Chippewa-Cree Tribe by threatening to take their land when The Chippewa-Cree Tribe did not farm. For example, a young man named Bill Small had his property stripped from his possession even though “he had a nice place and was a good worker” (McWhorter 1929, 12512). “He has a good place,” agreed Superintendent

Shotwell, “but he makes no effort to farm it; and I have told him if he did not farm the place that I would take it away from him and give it to some one [sic] who would make use of it” (McWhorter 1929, 12512). Even though Mr. Small’s “nice place” suggests he was able to support himself, he was stripped of its possession because he was not farming. This example clearly shows the Rocky Boy Reservation rules were created not to help The Chippewa-Cree Tribe per se, but to instill farming into their culture. As Superintendent Shotwell himself said, he and the other white officials “were not there to help the Indians” (McWhorter 1929, 12519).

In fact nothing Shotwell did seemed to help The Chippewa-Cree Tribe. For example, during the 1920s Superintendent Shotwell would lease unused lands at the Rocky Boy Reservation to white men and The Chippewa-Cree Tribe had no control or power to either approve the leasing of the lands or to receive any funds from the lease. In fact the tribe was usually unaware the land had been leased until they “saw the white man working it” (McWhorter 1929, 12519). Shotwell and other superintendents had access to government machines that could assist with fencing and other hard labor duties, which they often they often lent to white workers, but these machines were never provided to The Chippewa-Cree Tribe or “used to help the reservation” (Committee on Indian Affairs 1944, 362).

It could be argued that the actions of Shotwell and his associates were merely the dealings of a few men acting on their own interests. However, there were numerous broad discriminatory policies set up by the government that hindered The Chippewa-Cree Tribe’s livelihood and cultural survival. For example, the U.S. Government had set up loan policies to lend The Chippewa-Cree Tribe funds to start farming and ranching, but

these policies actually did more harm than good. These loan policies, said one Chippewa-Cree tribal member, were “sufficient to tie a man to his home place, but [were] not sufficient to afford him a good standard of living” (Committee on Indian Affairs 1944, 366). Fred Nault (Committee on Indian Affairs 1944, 361) of The Chippewa-Cree Tribe explained the problem:

“The reservation loan fund has been a main source for Indians to obtain funds in getting a start. Yet the schedules of repayment are over a small number of years wherein the result is that receipts for cattle sales must go largely toward the repayment schedule each year and by the time the loan is paid off there has been little if any advancement.”

The Chippewa-Cree Tribe could borrow \$3,000 to begin a farm, yet they had to pay off the loan within five years. Conversely, whites who lived in the area were allowed forty or fifty years to pay off the same loan (Committee on Indian Affairs 1944, 366–367).

Furthermore, while the boundary delineation of the Rocky Boy Reservation made the reservation unsuitable for farming, the area might have been appropriate for cattle grazing because the land could produce a significant amount of hay. There were six Chippewa men, for instance, who had bought cattle via a reimbursement plan provided by the U.S. Government, and these men were able to support themselves (McWhorter 1929). While cattle ranching may have eased some of the economic hardships on the Rocky Boy Reservation, the U.S. Government did not promote this program and instead seemed set on “wasting efforts and money to encourage the Indians to farm” (McWhorter 1929, 12523). Instead of encouraging ranching, for example, the U.S. Government leased, at ten cents an acre, 33,000 acres of the best Rocky Boy Reservation grazing lands



to a private company called The MacNamara & Marlow Cattle Company (McWhorter 1929, 12523). This lease grossed \$3,330, but was used for administrative costs and was not given to the tribe (McWhorter 1929, 12523). Worse yet, these grazing lands were much more valuable than the amount the U.S. Government had leased them. Just ten years earlier these grazing lands had been leased for \$8,400 and during the previous decade cattle ranching had become markedly more profitable in Montana. Lands at Fort Peck, for instance, were being leased for considerably more money than the grazing land at the Rocky Boy Reservation, even though the lands at “Rocky Boy [were] worth at least twice as much” (McWhorter 1929, 12523).

Given the problems discussed above, terrible socio-economic and health conditions on the Rocky Boy Reservation persisted. The preponderance of TB on the reservation was, for example, still estimated to be twenty-five percent and deaths by TB were 9.5 times higher for Native Americans than for whites (Committee on Indian Affairs 1944, 368). In 1944 there was still no permanent doctor or hospital on the reservation. The closest hospital was 85 miles away. “We have witnessed appalling conditions,” said James F. O’Connor Chairman of the Committee on Indian Affairs during a 1944 hearing, “where we found Indians living in squalor, despair, and in despondency that you would not even believe until you saw it” (Committee on Indian Affairs 1944, 374).

The “squalor, despair, and despondency” were the effects of the Rocky Boy Reservation’s rampant poverty. And the poverty had occurred because of the reservation’s geography, which was the result of both U.S. Native American policies and Anglo discourse about The Chippewa-Cree Tribe. These conditions of poverty allowed white U.S. officials to control the lives of The Chippewa-Cree Tribe. Because it possible

to instill rules and laws to disrupt The Chippewa-Cree Tribe's economic and cultural lives, for the purpose of instilling western ideology into their culture. During the next chapter I will summarize my findings about the Rocky Boy Reservation. I will discuss some of the limitations of that research and I will suggest future avenues of study about the Rocky Boy Reservation and The Chippewa-Cree Tribe.

## Chapter Six

### Concluding Remarks

The purpose of this thesis was to dissect the historiography and geography of the Rocky Boy Reservation's border formation. The goal was to increase our understanding of dispossessed Native people in the United States by analyzing the history and geography of a people and place that has been largely ignored by Anglo-American scholars. In Particular, the goal was to answer several questions about the Rocky Boy Reservation and The Chippewa-Cree Tribe. Those questions were:

1. How did racialized discourse define The Chippewa-Cree Tribe as a social group and what were the spatial ramifications of that discourse?
2. How did U.S. Native America policy affect the formation of the Rocky Boy Reservation and what were the spatial ramifications of those policies?
3. How did the spatial ramifications created by racialized discourse and U.S. Native American Policy affect life on the Rocky Boy Reservation?

The systematic model I used to answer these questions was based upon archival methods as discussed in Chapter Two. I used theories and practices set forth by geographers and historians who have used archival materials to answer questions like those described above. I used the methods described by these geographers and historians to organize and dissect the massive amount of historic data about the Rocky Boy

Reservation. These archival methods were invaluable in assessing and forming the arguments that comprise the analysis of the above chapters.

While I was using these methods, I also applied them to the theoretical concepts and framework that informed my investigation of the Rocky Boy Reservation. I began with the broad ideas of the social theorist Edward Said, who described the importance of discourse and narratives in the creation of boundaries and geographies. Said (1979, 43-44) called this process “Orientalism” or “Othering.” I then examined how geographers have used Said’s ideas to dissect certain spaces. Informed by the examinations of these geographers, I then examined the history and geography of the Rocky Boy Reservation’s formation.

During Chapter Three I addressed the first question above and described how Anglo-discourse described The Chippewa-Cree Tribe and how that affected the Rocky Boy Reservation’s geography. I then discussed some of the ramifications of that geography for the Indigenous people. I argued The Chippewa-Cree Tribe were marked as different in a culture that had long degraded those who were racially and culturally different. As a result of this difference, The Chippewa-Cree Tribe were “justifiably” removed from white-spaces to an isolated area that was supposed to allow them to become self-sufficient (McWhorter 1929; Rogers 1934).

Following the analysis of Chapter Three, the ideas about racialized discourse and narrative then informed my analysis of United States Native American policy. I examined how those policies affected the geography of the Rocky Boy Reservation. In particular, in Chapter Four, I discussed how United States Native American policies affected the Rocky Boy Reservation’s geography. I argued that Anglo-discourse of the

“savage Indian” greatly influenced how policies were written. And despite changes during the first half of the twentieth century in that Anglo-discourse, and the resulting changes in United States Native American policies, the Rocky Boy Reservation remained a small reservation and lacked the resources that would allow The Chippewa-Cree Tribe to be self-sufficient. Consequently, The Chippewa-Cree Tribe were impoverished due to the Rocky Boy Reservation’s geography.

As a result of their poverty, The Chippewa-Cree Tribe were reliant on rations and other government subsidies for subsistence, which I discussed in Chapter Five. Once The Chippewa-Cree Tribe were reliant on these subsidies, officials were able to create strict rules and regulations with grievous consequences like imprisonment and starvation. Accordingly, to avoid these consequences, the majority of Chippewa-Cree adhered to the rules and regulations, which allowed white officials to more easily control The Chippewa-Cree Tribe.

Arguments like the one I have referenced in the preceding paragraph will contribute to the understanding of the Rocky Boy Reservation’s history and geography. However, there were limitations to the research I have conducted. For example, the Rocky Boy Reservation was founded less than one hundred years ago. There are many Tribal Elders who would remember much of the history of the reservation from personal experience. Because of both time and resources I was unable to interview any of these elders. Similarly, I have not had much contact with many of the tribal members themselves or the place itself. My lack of personal experience with The Chippewa-Cree Tribe people and the Rocky Boy Reservation itself could be viewed as either a positive or a negative matter. On the one hand I do not have the firsthand experience that could

allow me to fully understand this place and its people. However, by not having personal experience with this place and the people I am not clouded by personal knowledge and assumptions. In fact, before this study of the Rocky Boy Reservation, I had almost no knowledge of the Rocky Boy Reservation and The Chippewa-Cree Tribe. My analysis of this place is based completely on the archival material and not the judgments of myself or other people. I was not influenced by any personal agendas or motives. My analysis is an impartial and composed examination of the Rocky Boy Reservation's history and geography from the perspective of an outsider with no personal motive beyond an academic understanding of the place.

While there were limitations to this study, some of the limitations could offer other avenues of study. For example, The Chippewa-Cree Tribe elders have a rich source of historic and geographic knowledge about the Rocky Boy Reservation that I or another investigator could examine. Their knowledge could continue to inform and reveal our understanding of the Rocky Boy Reservation's history and geography.

## Chapter Seven

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