

# The 'Other' Chautauqua:

## Examining Race in American Performance

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## **Abstract**

The chautauqua movement in American history was one of informal education, entertainment, and cultural awakening that the United States had not yet experienced on a national scale. From permanent sites, known as independents, to the traveling brown tents known as the circuits, chautauqua was a public platform for showcasing artistic expression and experience of the country's diverse, ethnic communities, including those of African American, Asian American, and Native American lineage. This national cultural phenomenon, garnering labels of spectacle and grandeur, appeared during a pivotal moment in our nation's narrative, as the inclusion of these ethnic performers and groups within chautauqua programming challenged firmly held beliefs regarding race and culture that operated within the political landscape of emancipation, exclusionary legislation, cultural appropriation, and the immigration and migratory patterns of the Western frontier.

## **Keywords:**

**authenticity, chautauqua, community, identity, minority, space.**

## **Note to the reader:**

Chautauqua's use of capitalization is widely varied among writers both personally and professionally. Most agree that *Chautauqua* refers to the founding organization, also known as the Chautauqua Institution (still in operation today), while *chautauqua* denotes the subsequent independent and circuit iterations of the movement.

The Chautauqua movement in the United States was originally a concept born of out the earlier lyceum movement in the United States, in the early nineteenth century (see Gentile, 1989). These lyceums were mainly adult educational programs that flourished in the Midwest and East before and after the Civil War, offering lectures, classroom instruction, and dramatic performances from the likes of Emerson, Thoreau, Poe, and Dickens. These independently operated programs would eventually mount tours by management companies, also known as circuits, that would traverse the country in efforts to reach more Americans. It was lyceum's concept of self-enlightenment through informal education that two Methodist men would latch on to and create their own program, on the banks of Lake Chautauqua in upstate New York in 1874 (see Canning, 2005; Lush, 2013).

Originally built to train Sunday school teachers, Chautauqua's programs would expand to include an array of curriculum for anyone willing to make the trip, including disciplines in literature, science, and theology that were offered during the day and partnered with musical and dramatic entertainment in the evening. It was not long before the word spread and local, independent chautauquas began to appear in communities, almost always sourcing local talent to fill their schedules. Like the lyceum circuits before them, the independent chautauquas would eventually be usurped by lyceum bureaus (now in the chautauqua business) that would extend the reach of chautauqua across the country, boasting more diverse talent rosters as well as 'authentic' programming (to use their language), including such notables as Mark Twain, William Jennings Bryan, Jon Phillips Sousa, and Teddy Roosevelt. Musically this authenticity was realized through both

Western-European high art music as well as the exotic acts, in the form of black Jubilee Singers, Native American princesses, and Chinese/Japanese performers, all presenting lectures and musical concerts with content ranging from light musical travelogues to race relations and foreign policy discussions.

Although chautauqua had a deep seated and lasting history in the cultural education and temporal awakening of rural communities across the United States, the scholarship about chautauqua's legacy and the primary source materials available by way of photographs, seasonal programs, advertisements, field recordings, and correspondence available varied both in scope and tone. Examples ranged from historic contexts of the movement itself to informal, personal accounts from the likes of management bureaus, participants and employees of the movement. Some of the secondary scholarship focused on a singular aspect such as the music of the circuits as Paige Lush (2013) does in *Music in the Chautauqua Movement: From 1874 to the 1930s*, or circuit chautauqua as seen through performance practices in Charlotte Canning's (2005) *The Most American Thing in America: Circuit Chautauqua as Performance*. Other research literature offered a more broad (and oftentimes personal) account, giving firsthand information of the movement as experienced through the lives of participants such as Redpath bureau manager Henry Harrison (1958) in *Culture Under Canvas: The Story of Tent Chautauqua*, or in Gay MacLaren's (1938) *Morally We Roll Along*, a diary-like account of her life as a female speaker on the circuits. Some scholars chose to frame the movement within a socio-historic context like John Tapia (1997), bridging the gap in mass/popular culture between circuit chautauqua and the role of culture in technology through radio, the automobile,

and television in *Circuit Chautauqua: From Rural Education to Popular Entertainment in Early Twentieth Century America*. John Gentile (1989), on the other hand, traced the evolution of the one-man performance in *Cast of One: One-Person Shows From the Chautauqua Platform to the Broadway Stage*, highlighting the lost art forms of elocution and dramatic reading as precursory to the greater body of literature within American theatre through the twenty-first century.

While these and other texts examined chautauqua life, its informal participatory learning environment, and its complicated symbolism of American ‘culture’, little scholarship exists surrounding the ethnic representation of the movement or the practicalities of the spaces they inhabit. This use of public space, its transformation and manipulation under the guise of capitalism, is a concept not directly addressed by chautauqua literature.

While more academic sources like Canning (2005) and Lush (2013) made reference to specific minority troupes and the role identity played, they did not address the social disconnect between these marginalized peoples in relation to their predominantly white, Protestant audiences. Nor did they discuss the role that space plays in attempting to better understand the political and racial implications that chautauqua came to symbolize.

Available scholarship and primary source material has not directly situated these performers with their use of the chautauqua platform as a public vehicle to challenge racial or cultural barriers as anything but ‘authentic’ and enlightening to popular address. While these larger concepts of authenticity and the production of space will be discussed later, it is important to frame their use within public entertainment vehicles like

chautauqua to understand how a national culture came to be assigned by the movement itself as well as the modern implications today that arts administrators face when programming artistic experiences for public consumption.

Even though the available scholarship about chautauqua minorities does not overtly address the issues of space and its meaning within the larger framework of cultural identities, it certainly does not mean these individuals were not exposed to and part of a decidedly racist and exclusionist majority mindset on a national scale. Rather, the literature examining this slice of performance practice lacks in-depth analysis when examining the dynamics between public and shared space and the musical experiences of performers and listeners during chautauqua's lifetime. How can we fully hope to understand the transformative power of artistic expression without first situating the physical and temporal spatial relationships at play within its given experience?

In an attempt to understand how minority performers affected (or were affected by) the communities they served on chautauqua circuits, a localized method of data collection served as a framework to suggest a similar dynamic at the national level concerning identity and ethnicity in America. To this end, evaluating two prominent sites in Oregon, Oregon City and Ashland, including the minority representation that existed therein, was necessary in building context on racial dynamics and identities at the national level. Framing the historical and political processes that contributed to or inhibited American cultural development at the turn of the twentieth century not only gave background knowledge to these geographies within Oregon but also provided a more unified context

for understanding localized cultural identity as a value system within both majority and minority groups.

Cultural geographer Wilbur Zelinsky (1973) suggested four major cultural attributes that inform our understanding of identity within the American diaspora that began in the seventeenth century, continuing through the industrialization period up to the early nineteenth century. While these attributes all derived from European sources and reflect our ongoing relationship to Western Europe (p.41), our distinctly American attributes prioritized a mechanized vision of the world, accompanied by a high value placed on mobility (p.57-59), whereby factors of speed, change, and the obsessive nature to improve and accelerate our legacy contributed to, "...realize the dream of human self-perfection and, in messianic fashion, to share its gospel and achievement with the remainder of the world" (p.61). At the heart of this desire for perfection, I argue, was the incessant nature of American culture to label and value authenticity as an aesthetic judgment. This American cultural attribute, born out of tradition-based value systems, was most clearly evident in what Zelinsky (1973) coins the "frontier myth" (p.42), asserting human being's ever-present, idiosyncratic ability to buck history's tradition-based individualistic values for a self-reliant, upward-mobilizing, heroic lifestyle found only within the Americanist ideology at the personal and collective levels, present since our European founding over four hundred years ago. This ingrained myth, according to Zelinsky (1973), provided clues as to how American cultures, arguably the white, Anglo majority, embraced this self-satisfying drive for perfection that led to contributing factors of racism and exclusion of the Other within new territories, the increased battle for a



“free-labor” ideology among skilled and unskilled laborers, and a push towards a wholly ‘civilized’ and educated society (see Almaguer, 2009).

Understanding the geographic landscape also gave insight as to the conditions and values of the time period in Oregon and the West. William Toll (1998) prepared a detailed account of African American culture in Portland at the turn of the twentieth century, complete with census reports as well as statistics on black employment, household information, and maps outlining the district known as Williams Avenue. Similar evidence was found in Quintard Taylor’s (1979, 1998, 2000) work which outlined not only a chronology of black migration after the Civil War but described cultural capital building within African American communities from the creation of institutions like churches, newspapers, barbers, civic and fraternal clubs and orders among others in the West. Included in Taylor’s (1979, 1998) findings were the names and founders of such businesses like the Colored Immigration Society, Prince Hall Masonic Lodge, and Portland’s *New Age* and *Advocate* newspapers, all of which were ripe for sourcing information regarding minority culture of the period.

Similarly, Elizabeth McLagan (1980) traced African American history in Portland from the founding Williams Ave. district in the eighteenth century up to World War II. Through her work with the Oregon Black History Project (and subsequently, the Black Pioneers Museum in Salem, OR), she provided clear and straightforward evidence of slavery, exclusionary legislation, and discriminatory practices in the state as well as social and cultural capital building within the urban communities of Portland up through

the 1940s. Other scholars like W. Sherman Savage (1928) and Kristofer Allerfeldt (2003) situated African and Asian American migration history from the South to the Midwest, respectively, from a labor relations standpoint, offering the argument that these pockets of societies were increasingly dependent and competitive with one another in securing a sustainable lifestyle among a majority white workforce.

Finally, authors like Taylor (2000) extended the issues of racial inequity and cultural mobility into the musical realm, citing the role that music played in the expansion of jazz to the West Coast in the 1920s and 1930s. While chautauqua vehemently opposed jazz music on its programs as Lush (2013) pointed out (p.130), it is useful to note the correlation of cultural appropriation concerning jazz, arguably attributed by numerous scholars to African American lineage, yet wholly adopted by mainstream society as an American art form in the later part of the twentieth century. Manifestations of this appropriation were evident in chautauqua programming with regard to the Fisk Jubilee Singers and Maori New Zealand acts on the circuits in attempts to bring American ‘culture’ to the masses, but as I hope to show, were more focused on their authenticity than their cultural identities. As Gay MacLaren (1938), chautauqua performer and author, noted, “Japanese, Persian, Egyptian, and Hindu, in native costume, came from overseas to tell their stories, while from our own land, cowboy, mountaineer, and Indian added their colorful costumes and tales to the scene” (p.171).

To understand the role of musical performance and experience in the chautauqua movement, both Canning (2005) and Lush (2013) took a rigorous look at the ways in

which various artistic disciplines (music, elocution, drama) translated as experience through informal participatory practices and programing. The main question addressed by Canning (2005) was how performance is expressed and explored through the lives of chautauqua performers, agents, audiences, and communities. She used performance as a lens for two particular performance genres, oratory and theatre. Her gap in research fell around the theory of performance, as she cites no research exclusively focused on this aspect, but rather emphasizes education, politics, and community building through the work of Jessie Bernard (1973), Benedict Anderson (1991), and Andrew Walls (1996). Canning (2005) appeared to operate from a realist perspective, suggesting, “The task of this book is to evoke Chautauqua in such a way that those who participated in it would recognize what they knew as Chautauqua” (p.5). Data collection included memoirs of booking agents, performers, photographs, letters, and interviews. Her research was useful for understanding the role of performance in the movement as it explores critical viewpoints of circuit chautauqua as well as its role in shaping American culture. Oddly, she provided no bibliography or reference list other than detailed footnotes, although her work is widely cited in relevant scholarship concerning the movement as well as other performance studies research.

Chautauqua scholarship by Lush (2013) was born out of the author’s dissertation, but focused solely on music from the three iterations of the movement: the founding Chautauqua Institution, the permanent chautauqua sites and the chautauqua circuits that travelled the country. Her main question sought to define music’s role in the balance between education, entertainment, and audience values. Her data collection included

mainly primary sources such as photographs, documents, transcriptions, and audio recordings from the University of Iowa and Fred Crane, a chautauqua historian and collector. Lush (2013) claimed there was little information concerning music's role in the movement exclusively, although at present, there are a few, including Canning (2005), John Troutman (2009), and Melissa Parkhusrt (2014), who seek to identify the role music plays within mass cultural movements. The bibliography provided by Lush (2013) was a fount of information with explicit notes as well as numerous appendices including musical acts, travel itineraries, musician rosters and so on.

While performance theorists (see Schechner, 1934; Sotiropoulos, 2006) placed their practices at the intersection of anthropology and the performing arts, others like Wallace Bacon (1984) proved more useful in this research context for his view of performance theory through the subject of literature since chautauqua programing included elocution and dramatic lectures ranging from the serious to the humorous. Bacon's (1984) viewpoint also hinted at the unconscious relationships and cultural dynamics at play during performance, stating, "...our center is in the interaction between readers and texts which enriches, extends, clarifies, and (yes) alters the interior and even the exterior lives of students [and performers and audiences] through the power of texts..." (p.84). While such theoretical lenses about performance were useful for general understanding, one must dive deeper to the underlying themes of authority, power, and identity within performance experiences to comprehend the larger framework of the performance and its participants. Scholars such as Regina Bendix (1997) and John Troutman (2009) each framed the concepts of identity and authenticity in performance practices as fundamental

building blocks toward establishing an experience, and through the repetition of such experiences, a culture.

Because the management bureaus in the chautauqua movement decidedly used ethnic talent on their programs in efforts to bring ‘culture’ to everyday Americans, understanding the implications of spatial relationships was of paramount importance. I believe this public space, within which chautauqua operated, lied at the center of its claim to promote ‘authenticity’ and ‘culture’. Henry Lefebvre’s (1974) *The Production of Space* was groundbreaking for social theorists attempting to understand the multiple and highly sensitive layers that constitute space and its use as well as its manipulation among those with power. In shifting from a Cartesian methodology of finite particulars to a malleable, shapeable object that focuses on the subject rather than the space it embodies, space is transformed as temporal, not merely physical or social (p.3). This absolute to abstract paradigm of spatial trialectics (p.236) offered a foundation with which to understand values of identity as well as authority when examining chautauqua programing and performance practices, particularly in the later circuits that came to be regulated and overseen by large, capitalist-driven bureaus. These management operatives like Redpath, Ellison-White, Horner and others not only regulated all aspects of the circuit chautauqua but increasingly diversified their rosters to include more ‘exotic’, worldly features, including those of ethnic representation. As Lush (2013) noted, “...promoters seized on the commonly held belief that ‘truly American’ music could be found among African Americans and Native Americans, promoting black and Native American musical groups in opposition to foreign art music” (p.148). This sentiment,

both from the standpoint of managers and audiences, begged for a closer look at the ways in which shared space inhibits or prohibits musical performance practices on public performance vehicles like chautauqua.

In discussing abstract space, two post-colonial theorists should also be mentioned, Edward Soja (1996) and Homi Bhabha (1998). Soja (1996), like Zelinsky (1973), used cultural geography to explore spatial attributes between societies, offering the concept of Thirdspace, explaining, "Thirdspace is a transcendent concept that is constantly expanding to include 'an-Other', thus enabling the contestation and re-negotiation of boundaries and cultural identity" (p.61). This contextualization of Thirdspace aligns with Bhabha's (1998) theory of cultural hybridity, suggesting that "...all forms of culture are continually in a process of hybridity" that "...displaces the histories that constitute it, and sets up new structures of authority, new political initiatives...The process of cultural hybridity gives rise to something different, something new and unrecognizable, a new area of negotiation of meaning and representation" (p.211).

Through the constantly evolving, expanding processes of space, we may begin to think of cultural hybridity not as an object but a subject, better yet, an action. Space becomes a living, breathing entity that, due to its shifting nature by those participating with it, allows for both the creation as well as the manipulation of such a place. This 'lived' space over one that is 'conceived', lies at the heart of spatial production, assuming a representational—not a represented—identity, according to Lefebvre (1974). By this logic, space becomes a breathing entity, a presence, not a product. As we will see, such

markers of cultural identity and the need for generating authenticity by commercialization structures came to be generated by those in power as well as marginalized performers themselves, symbolizing their desires to be heard and recognized among an exclusionist and fear-based majority.

In addition to spatial reasoning and the dynamics of cultural hybridity, an understanding of the shift from participatory to presentational performance practices on chautauqua programs must also be recognized to further situate the role space plays in musical experiences. Thomas Turino's (2008) research on performance practices suggested these shifts occur to refocus attention and authority from the participants who create them to a consumed product, an outward structure whereby music serves as object rather than process (p.52). Because chautauqua was designed for presentational music making, the concept of space and the need to control it became a much more important goal, as will be shown in Native American and African American acts on touring circuits.

The purpose of this research is to explore the ways in which labels of identity and authenticity contributed to the formation of American culture through the concept of space in the chautauqua movement. Due to the nature of this topic and its place within American history, identifying the societal discourses that negatively affected different forms of identity within minority representations allowed me to uncover the truths to these ideologies among biased individuals and their community influence (see Brundage, 1997). The conscious uncovering of these truths were influenced by my research design to include analysis and interpretation of historical texts, artifacts, personal

correspondence and other ephemera. This historical research was reflexive in that it attempted to understand how marginalized cultures represented themselves and were represented, both locally and nationally. Through a local analysis of minority identity and cultural expression, I argue that the issues of racism and exclusion were not isolated to pockets of the Western United States but rather evident across the nation in urban and rural settings alike. As Western historian J.W. Smurr in 1957 so astutely noted, “The pioneer did not solve the problem of minority rights on the frontier...He did not solve the problem in the West because he did not solve it in the East. No American has solved it.” (p.194).

For delimitation purposes, I focused on Oregon’s chautauqua history for data collection, primarily in Ashland and Oregon City, also known as Gladstone (for the park in which the permanent building was erected). Not surprisingly, there were other Oregon chautauquas in Canby, Gearhart, Dallas, Lebanon, Monmouth, Silverton, Albany, and La Grande (see Peterson, 2014), not to mention a plethora of West coast sites over the lifetime of the circuits managed primarily by the Ellison-White Bureau out of Portland and Boise (see Billings 1959). Additionally, I focused on African Americans, Asian Americans, and Native Americans, as these three minorities were represented most frequently on chautauqua platforms, often labeled as exotic or ethnic. I also feel that for the purposes of this study, several definitions be explicit and upfront so as not to confuse the reader or my intentions in conducting such highly subjective research. They are, in no particular order:



**authenticity**: the degree to which someone or something is true to their own character or culture, despite external factors.

**Chautauqua**: refers to the founding Chautauqua Institution in upstate New York, also known as the Mother Chautauqua, for which the subsequent iterations of the movement are credited.

**chautauqua**: the independent and circuit iterations of the movement.

**community**: a group or network of persons that are connected to each other by a shared set of values in a particular area.

**culture**: habits of thought and practice that are shared among individuals.

**identity**: the partial selection of habits used to represent oneself to others and by others.

**minority/ethnicity**: a group of persons outside of the social/cultural majority

**participatory**: the act of voluntary/involuntary participation in an event.

Because history is a retelling of events by the narrator or author (in this case researcher), all historical research is inherently biased one way or another. I assume that my role as researcher in this context will contain some degree of subjectivity, however, I explicitly state that I attempt to make no claim or speak for these groups and their feelings and experiences, minority or otherwise. Instead, I propose to view the existing documentation and scholarship regarding race, ethnicity, and popular entertainment of the time under a new lens, that is, space and the production thereof, in the hopes of drawing modern day implications for those in the arts field, whether performer or administrator or both.

Understanding the role that space plays in creating artistic experiences for all people, regardless of background, is critical for the survival of the form as well as realizing its transformative powers on those who participate in it, as did for over twelve thousand communities across the country one century earlier (Harrison, p.99).

The main research question of this critical inquiry study is: What was the relationship between space and concepts of identity and authenticity when examining minority performance practices in chautauqua during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries? This qualitative research aligned with historical research, traveling back in time to examine the records and accounts from people who witnessed the movement firsthand as well as those who have curated collections of artifacts and other documentation that were created during this period in American history. Historical researchers, according to Schwartz (2003) must have, "...a familiarity with historical trends, patterns, and general knowledge of education history...and access to a substantial amount of information or sources, both primary and secondary" (p.106). In supporting this research question, main strategies of inquiry were document and historical analysis with supporting areas of theoretical concepts of space (see Lefebvre, 1974; Soja, 1996; Bhabha, 1998), authenticity (see Troutman, 2009; Bendix, 1997; Bauman, 1992), and identity (see Turino, 2008; Blumer, 1958; Blacking, 1995).

Understanding that secondary source material provided the bulk of background research data, primary source documents and other artifacts did not go overlooked. Using a triangulation method, both primary and secondary data sources provided sufficient evidence to confirm as well as contradict facts within the movement as well as this specific research scope of minority representation. The process of synthesizing text as object to text as pre-understanding was just as important as placing that singular understanding (the current document) across the landscape of negotiated meaning within the rest of the researchers material for credible and historically accurate data (see Ettinger

& Maitland-Gholson, 1990). They state: “Operating on the basis of a framework rather than simply structuring a dichotomous perspective allows for research choices which are not bound by rigid, discrete categories but rather take advantage of the rich and rigorous opportunities for deriving meaning in our world” (p.97). Another important aspect of analyzing documents was the internal/external process that researchers must exercise. Establishing both the credibility and authenticity of a document (external) and its deeper meaning or interpretation across the greater literature (internal) needs to be done with every data source in one’s research (see Robyns, 2001). By determining this credibility, or authenticity, the researcher is able to exercise voracity and rigor within the greater body of literature and the subsequent research at hand.

There are several institutions worth noting here that provided great documentation for this research. The Oregon Shakespeare Festival in Ashland sits on the old chautauqua grounds and contained an archival collection of primary and secondary-source documents and artifacts. The Gladstone chautauqua documentation is primarily housed at the Oregon Historical Society in Portland. The Willamette Valley Chautauqua Association and the Southern Oregon Chautauqua Association, established in 1899 and 1892, respectively, also contain primary and secondary-source materials, including memoirs, photographs, transcripts, and other memorabilia. Their collections have gone to the Southern Oregon Historical Society in Medford, the Oregon Historical Society in Portland, and to private historians such as Terry Skibby in Ashland. Additionally, the special collections department at the University of Oregon included chautauqua-related material through periodicals like *Salem Statesman*, *New Northwest*, *Pacific Monthly*, and *The Portland*

*Advocate*, a black newspaper in print at the turn of the century. Special Collections at Knight library has digitized most of Oregon's historic newspapers, including *The Oregon Spectator*, *The Oregonian*, *West Shore*, and *Ashland Tidings* through the Historical Newspaper of Oregon Project website. These types of publications were ripe with information relating to chautauqua programming, talent, reviews, and advertisements. Additionally, periodicals like *The Crisis: A Record for the Darker Races* and bureau-sponsored publications *Lyceumite*, *The Chautauquan*, and *Talent* were also useful in providing context for such larger issues of race and identity on chautauqua.

Additional coursework through the University of Oregon also aided in further understanding of the physical, social, political, racial, and cultural dynamics at play during this time period. Race & Ethnicity in the American West (HIST 549) looked at the racial hierarchical structures in American history from Spanish settlements through Westward expansion and the Civil Rights movement, the political legislation enacted upon minority cultures that instilled repression and racist mentalities among whites, and the imperialistic-driven ideologies of the American frontier at the turn of the twentieth century. Intro to Ethnomusicology (MUS 551) helped to situate the function of music and dance within a society, stemming from the old-world views of music as culture by comparative musicologists to layering more modern theories of music in culture, as well as participatory and presentational performance practices of indigenous peoples and the implications of capitalist influence therein. It is my hope that by bringing new light to these relationships of spatial processes and minority performance practices in the arts, the findings may be situated within the greater body of scholarship regarding equitable

access and the inclusion of arts participants from all backgrounds and nationalities in today's creative cultures.

Before we can attempt to understand the spatial dynamics at play on such a mass cultural movement as chautauqua, we must first come to terms with chautauqua's place in the larger societal arena. Understanding the political and social processes that underscored the movement's viability and commercial success begins with a look at American history at the turn of the twentieth century. Scholars such as Taylor (2000) have cited that this period, between the end of the Civil War and the Emancipation Proclamation through the stock market crash of 1929 as one of tumultuous change, centered around the purpose and repurposing of community. As the United States was undergoing mass immigration from Europe, shifting from agrarian to mechanized forms of labor, and advancing their claims of Westward territories from Mexico, England, and France, the meaning behind community in America was also shifting.

No longer did John Winthrop's *City on a Hill* sermon, delivered in 1630, provide inspiration to white settlers who were now forced to compete for employment, wages, and land with African Americans, Asian Americans, Mexican Americans, and Native Americans. Winthrop's message of American exceptionalism, based on The Sermon on the Mount, promised Puritans the prosperity they sought. However, a rapidly shifting American landscape, marked by Westward expansion and emergent technologies, defined new challenges for American settlers. The imperialistic nature of frontier-driven Americans, according to Gray Whaley (2010), revolved around "...an abstract ordering of power", exacerbated by the politics of land legislation and partnership treaties that "...systematize expansion" (p.ix), centered around a growing capitalist society that wholly embraced "...economic individualism" (p.13). This individualistic, growing

capitalist society, known as “free-labor” ideology by historian Eric Foner (1970), promoted the notion that “today’s laborer would be tomorrow’s capitalist” and instilled in many immigrants the hope that their hard work and perseverance would pay off, but only in a society void of nonwhites (p. 20).

These beliefs, coupled with the migratory patterns emerging from both whites and minority groups to the North and West, reshaped the physical as well as social and cultural sentiments around the country. As African Americans left the South in favor of Northern states and better opportunities, a small percentage of those set their aim on the West Coast, ultimately, Los Angeles and Seattle during WWII (see Almaguer, 2009). Taylor (1979, 1998) and Toll (1998) suggested the pivotal role community played in African American groups in Portland, Oregon between the 1880s-1930s as integral to their ultimate survival, for minority legislation in Oregon at that time did not favor or for that matter recognize these aliens as citizens, and certainly, as Americans. Taylor (1998) and Toll (1998) each made note of the role social organizations played in establishing such communities in the Western United States, examples ranging from the church to the YMCA and other fraternal clubs such as literary circles and advocacy groups like the NAACP. The formation of black newspapers like *Pacific Appeal*, *Elevator*, and *The Advocate*, the latter based in Portland (Taylor, p.85), represented a unified voice in burgeoning black communities, encouraging support for common goals and ambitions, publicizing oppressive acts, and building support for black rights and liberties from other larger publications back East such as *The Chicago Defender* and *The Crisis: A Record for the Darker Races*.

Additionally, a distinctly Western phenomenon, according to Taylor (1998) were the presence of black women's clubs (p.219) that, not unlike chautauqua, also cited uplift through self-education and intellectual improvement as their primary objective (see Canning, 2005; Tapia, 1997; Lush, 2013). First established in Lawrence, Kansas, black women's clubs went on to support missions involving fugitive slaves from Missouri and Arkansas Indian Territory and exposing repressive acts (such as lynching) around the country to maternal causes like infant care and wellbeing (p.220). These mostly small, individual groups eventually united themselves under federations spanning state and party lines. The Oregon Federation was created in 1912 and included Portland's most active and outspoken black women at the time (see Taylor, 1998).

Through the later circuit years, chautauqua came to embody these traits of uplift and self-education in its programming and ultimately, its mission, but in turn reinforced them through the education and entertainment programming on platforms in rural towns across the country (see Canning, 2005). "For over a hundred years scholars, politicians, clergy, talent, and public figures generally have been characterizing Chautauqua as the place where the elusive and abstract qualities that define what it is to be 'American' are made concrete and tangible" (p.35). As such, the concept of a community was no longer an isolated and autonomous entity; the ubiquitous "melting pot" moniker became more of a reality due to emancipation, migration, and continued immigration to the United States. As Troutman (2009) notes, these communities, in reaction to the above processes, began to assign binary cultural labels such as 'savage' versus 'civil', 'safe' versus 'dangerous', and 'American' versus the 'Other'. This also broadened the ways in which music and



musical performance would be interpreted and eventually managed and promoted by chautauqua producers and other tourist-driven enterprises like Buffalo Bill Wild West Shows and Vaudeville, often billing minority acts as ‘attractions’ (see Gentile, 1989).

Interestingly enough, what transpired on chautauqua platforms was a desire, a fascination, for the exoticized Other. Subsequent programming included these minority ensembles from non-Anglo backgrounds, oftentimes commanding the greatest attendance on circuits, as did the jubilee groups (Lush, p.99). At the same time, the shift away from independently managed programs to that of the bureaus like Redpath and Ellison-White meant less local, community-programmed acts and talent in favor of a more diverse cultured sensibility (p.17).

The chautauqua movement that most Americans came to know was birthed out of the commercial viability that lyceum managers and booking agents seized upon in the late nineteenth century (see Gentile, 1989). Prior to 1904, communities that recognized the opportunity to host one of these independent chautauquas did so at their own risk. They usually fell under the careful watch and planning of a religious or social organization to mount such an event, secure the program and its acts from whatever local source was possible, and often emphasized more educational aspects than they did entertainment as was evident in the later years (see Lush, p. 24). Interestingly, the Western communities of California, Oregon, Washington, Colorado, and Idaho embodied an ecumenical and community-focused approach to chautauqua and its programming, marketing, and

performance during the independent movement and subsequent circuit iterations (see Tapia, p.22).

This community-focused goal of local chautauquas was expressed in an informal essay written by Homer Billings (1959), son of Southern Oregon Chautauqua Association president G.F. Billings, entitled *The Story of Chautauqua in Southern Oregon*. As a young boy growing up in Ashland, Billings (1959) was accustomed to attending these independent summer programs, often at the complete discretion of local chautauqua community associations. It would be several years before the circuits, popularized by bureaus like Redpath and Ellison-White took over all aspects of the yearly chautauqua. Billings (1959) recalled the identity that local, independent chautauquas held prior to commercial takeover in Ashland prior to 1913, specifically in regards to the musical programming of community ensembles such as the Ashland Ladies Quartette, the Ashland Girls Quartette, the Medford Ladies Quartette, and the Roseburg Girls Quartette (p.14). Here musical selection was based on availability, more importantly, proximity to the location. Underneath this logistical feature lies a deeper value in the promotion and communal value these groups held within their localities and social circles, for such an invitation to perform publicly in front of hundreds of patrons would most certainly have been highly regarded by these musicians among peers and family members.

Oregon in particular stood out from the independent (and circuit) chautauqua movement as two permanent structures were built to house the yearly programs. These buildings, also known as “beehives”, often included lyceum events in the winter and chautauqua in

the summer months to cover their costs, as local Oregon authors Victoria & Robert Ormond Case (1948) have mentioned. Ashland and Oregon City communities each established their own chautauqua associations and, subsequently, their own permanent structures, the Southern Oregon Chautauqua Association in 1892 and the Willamette Valley Chautauqua Association just one year later (Epstein, p.393-94). These two chautauqua associations, like other independents, were responsible for securing the necessary funding for the construction of the buildings as well as the yearly summer programs (see Lewis, 1987). Eventually, in 1913 the Ellison-White bureau out of Idaho brought the chautauqua circuits to Lodi, California (see Orchard, 1923). Soon after, the management company would spread up the entire West Coast (and eventually Canada and New Zealand), usurping the independent festival framework in favor of better and more diverse speakers, performers and entertainers.

This expansion was something that most local chapters could not compete with, and to Billings (1959), did not go unnoticed. While many historians cite emergent technology (radio, automobile, motion pictures) as the root cause of chautauqua's decline (see Canning, 2005; Lush, 2013; Tapia, 1997), Billings (1959) argued that the bureaus themselves were responsible for chautauqua's demise, stating, "...the circuits spelled out the ruin of chautauqua; the circuit managers, in their desire for more and more money, killed their own goose" (p.14). He stated that the independent chautauquas created the community identity and values that comprised Ashland to this day (p.14), noting that Ashland's nascent community ethos was formed *prior* to 1913, before the Ellison-White bureau assumed control. This same sentiment was echoed by Case & Case (1948),

suggesting, “The Pacific Northwest had three outstanding assemblies, all of them in Oregon. They gained in prestige as the years passed and did not compete until Ellison, against the judgment of his fellow managers, entered the territory and managed to make the circuits pay” (p.200-01).

In the above example, the concept (and subsequent reshaping) of community took on an entirely new set of meanings; community as a ‘place’, or object, is replaced with community as an ‘experience’, or subject. Location-based space, termed by Lefebvre (1974) as absolute space, was moved to the background by its transformation to abstract space, whereby the ‘possible’ is imagined. It is here, argues Lefebvre (1974), that abstract space assumed dynamics of ‘lived’ as opposed to ‘conceived’ qualities, a place of activity where “...social energies and natural forces” can be realized (p.236). This ‘lived’ (abstract) space by design allowed for representation of its participants, versus a conceived (absolute) space, which mimicked representation, a carbon copy of something else (p.38). As I will show later, it is this production of abstract space that allowed for manipulation and influence over it and its inhabitants, a process that minority performers utilized, while chautauqua bureaus were incessant on conceived space, whereby ‘authentic’ reproductions labeled as experiences were common and by firsthand accounts, believable and favored.

Community theorist Thomas Bender (1978) identified this experience-based community as tying together the social and geographic values as not simply referring to a time or place but, “...an expectation of a special quality of human relationship in a

community...” evidenced through the experiential dimension of the participants (p.6). On a meta level, Benedict Anderson (1991) argued the ideal community as temporal, asserting that the individual is responsible for creating their own community, tied to other like-minded citizens and magnified across state lines, boundaries, and other shared value systems (p.6). Through the processes of spatial production, known by Anderson (1991) as ‘continuities’ we ourselves create, Canning (2005) suggested that there is also a divergent process, ‘discontinuities’ (p. 78), whereby cultural labels of savage, Other, and authentic were simplified and packaged for public consumption and regeneration, all markers of the larger concept concerning identity.

Race and racism was one such area of discontinuity for whites during chautauqua’s lifetime. Just as the movement prided itself on educating the moral conscious of its followers (Lush, p.174), it also, at the same time, allowed visible examples of exclusion and selectivity from its speakers, their content, and the logistical processes that both managers and touring companies firmly adhered to (Canning, p. 80). Senator Benjamin Tillman of South Carolina was quoted by *Success* magazine in 1924 as prefacing his speech to a chautauqua audience with black attendees: “Down in South Carolina we don’t allow ‘niggers’ to sit on the front benches. You go to the back seat and then I’ll speak” (Holcomb, p.108); likewise, Senator James K. Vardaman of Mississippi was notorious for waxing eloquent on ‘the Negro problem’ on platform lecterns (see Harrison, 1958), battling to prevent blacks from receiving education in his home state of Mississippi (p.73). While these two examples are very blatant, chautauqua would continue to utilize

more subtle forms of racist tendencies in regard to their programming and scheduling decisions regarding minority acts.

As Canning (2006) and others have noted, chautauqua circuits in the later years of the movement did not take a clear position on such issues of racial intolerance or exclusion, citing only modest pushback with the Ku Klux Klan and its support of openly racist speakers and politicians as evidenced above (p.80). Although the Klan, according to Lay (2004), thrived in conservatively-minded states like Oregon, Michigan, and Ohio (p.9), its numbers rose to the millions by the 1920s (p.3), and ironically, preached almost identical values as chautauqua at the time: “One hundred percent Americanism...and moral uplift” (MacColl, p.164-165). It is this same Americanism that in turn bred the binary terms of civil/savage and safe/dangerous throughout the musical realm of popular entertainment vehicles like vaudeville, Buffalo Bill Wild West Shows, rodeos, and chautauqua stages as well as in the homes of white Americans. In an era of Roosevelt Square Deal politics, frontier-myth ideology evidenced in the Panama Canal project and trust-busting rhetoric, Americanism took a step further towards establishing a national culture, one that hinged upon the believability and perception of its form and subject, that is, its authenticity, serviced by markers of identity.

A holistic discussion of marginalized societies and their identifiers in and from American culture cannot exist without also understanding this role of identity, and specifically, the cultural habits and formations that occur either in favor of or in reaction to the physical, social, political, spiritual, and cultural landscapes that surround them (see Troutman,

2009; Turino, 2010; Parkhurst, 2014). Whether minority groups used their own identity as indices for 'authentic' in the face of exclusion or reinterpreted those identities given to them through Americanized values and assimilationist policies is important to note here. Secondly, self-education and uplift was an overarching concept, viewed as both an internal and external vehicle for social/cultural movement and mobility. While those behind the scenes such as Redpath manager Henry Harrison (1958) and the Ellison-White Chautauqua Bureau were explicitly programing minority acts as morally and spiritually enlightening to white audiences, the performers themselves often gained an insightful lesson about the politics of race and equality on chautauqua circuits (see MacLaren, 1938; Orchard, 1923). Finally, themes of opportunity to express this authenticity through cultural markers of identity were evident in the programing choices made by bureaus to promote and market ethnic acts, often labeled as exotic (always packaged as educational), however, evidence of resistance surfaced from these very same programing choices explicitly made by administrators and performers alike.

One way to examine identity is through chautauqua doctrine as well as the personal narratives of patrons, managers, and performers alike who bore witness to its ethos and its mechanism. Henry Harrison's quasi-memoir *Culture Under Canvas* (1958) discussed the shift in popular attraction of African American musical material towards the end of the circuit movement in the late 1920s. As a manager of the most successful chautauqua bureau, the Redpath-Vawter out of Iowa, he noted the waning interest in black plantation songs and jubilee programs like those offered and popularized by Fisk University troupes. As bureaus struggled to keep up with public tastes of black and Other musical

acts, "...directors tried to keep the idea alive by expanding a program from a group of simple songs of the South into a pretentious epic" (p.105). This was consistent with the increasing role theatricality and, specifically drama, played on circuits (see Canning, 2005; Lush, 2013; Gentile, 1989), but also suggested that public appetite for once revered performances were regressing back to cultural stigmas of blacks as savage, uneducated, and dangerous. Harrison (1958) continued, "In one of these attempts the talented Dixie Chorus of eight men carried a thousand-dollars' worth of costumes and settings that ranged from an African jungle to a Southern cotton field" (p.105). While performance attire was not uncommon of such groups like the Dixie Chorus or Jubilee Singers, going to such lengths and financial obligations to implement such technical aspects in these large-scale productions is telling of changing tastes among white audiences. Bureaus like Ellison-White and Redpath sensed this aesthetic shift and compensated accordingly to favor public tastes.

By the same token, the use of costumes and dress were deliberately influenced by performers and managers to promote values of authenticity on chautauqua. The Indian String Quartet, born out of the Chemawa Indian School in Salem, Oregon, and under the direction of faculty member Ruthyn Turney, were well known for utilizing costumes and other markers of authenticity to express Native American identity on circuits in the early twentieth century (see Troutman, 2009; Parkhurst, 2014). A popular attraction on the Meneley and Redpath circuits, the Indian String Quartet often played two sets during their performance; the first comprised entirely of Western classical music while dressed in suits and ties; the second set was built around Indianist compositions with the players



dressed in ‘authentic’ regalia (Troutman, p.223). The group was also known to begin their performance with *The Star Spangled Banner* after 1917, perhaps as a nod to their enculturation of American ideals as well as a testament to their assimilationist indoctrination as federal boarding school pupils. This example of patriotism was not uncommon on chautauqua programs throughout the country, particularly with larger musical ensembles, brass bands, and vocal groups. In this example, it served to show the need to express one’s loyalty and affirmation of Americanism on a public platform like chautauqua.

While a “capitalist-cosmopolitan” mentality, to borrow from Turino (2008), might be to associate musical genres with cultural markers of dress (European to tuxedos, Indianist to headdresses and beaded shirts), Indian String Quartet manager (and non-Native) Richard Kennedy expressed an emphasis on quality programing independent of such markers of appearance in 1917: “We could give some Indian songs and dances and a hip hip hooray entertainment that would raise the roof, but there would be nothing to it. We prefer to give one that leaves a good taste in the mouth and a pleasant memory that will last” (p.224). We do not know whether this programing choice to dress the group to match their musical styles was his, their leader Ruthyn Turney or the management at Chemawa, but the evidence suggested their intent was on musical competency and authenticity, not on the association between forms of dress and indices of ‘savage’ and ‘civil’. The desire for authenticity through cultural identity was also apparent in the group’s decision to memorize their program, a feature that Indian String Quartet violinist Fred Cardin stated “...a natural, racial authenticity” (p.223). What remains to be understood was whether or

not this explicit decision was translated and understood as such by audience members. It does show, however, the value placed on competency and musical intelligence by Native American musicians, perhaps one that the Indian String Quartet found in the form of acceptance from mainstream society.

Issues surrounding authenticity were also noted by chautauqua performers. In her autobiography of life as a circuit performer and elocutionist, Gay MacLaren (1938) remarked about the use of Indian costumes on tour with her and her company in 1915. She was traveling with the Jennie Bliss Concert Company, a non-Native American performance troupe on a stop in Chicago. She described the scene: “Heaped up on the bed, which has been pushed back against the wall, are five Indian costumes fresh from their boxes – white imitation leather brightly decorated with colored beads and fringe, bead-studded moccasins, and feathered headdresses” (p.214). This was striking since Jennie Bliss nor the rest of her company were of Native American descent, yet they were performing Native material in their act, Jennie herself exclaiming during a rehearsal before the show that evening, “Come on, Lucille, let’s take ‘Sky-Blue’ through again!” (p.214). “Sky Blue” referred to a famous composition by Indianist composer Charles Wakefield Cadman titled *From the Land of the Sky-Blue Water*, often performed by Native Americans and non-Natives alike. In other instances, Native American audience members were taken aback with the use of Native cultural monikers on popular programs. Henry Harrison (1958) described a performance of Princess Watahwaso as “beautiful and aristocratic” who “...sang tribal songs, told tribal legends, and danced in

tribal costumes, including a feathered war bonnet, to the astonishment of the Chippeways...who always sat huddled together in the rear of the tent” (p.7).

Extremely little information about minority attendance at chautauqua events was available, the preceding quote being a rare exception. Beyond the evidence that Native Americans did indeed attend chautauqua, it was the use of Harrison’s (1958) wording that lacks clarity. Was the disbelief from the Chippeway due to the fact that a Native-born woman performed in sacred regalia for a white audience? Or, were they impressed by the social mobility and opportunity provided to her through the likes of agents and bureaus hungry for Other representation on the platforms? However these audiences interpreted Princess Watahwaso’s performance, the identity traits she embodied on chautauqua platforms, as was the case with the Indian String Quartet and others, came from the desire to display authenticity through her enculturated identity and the practices ingrained within.

Education was the cornerstone of chautauqua doctrine since its inception until the later circuit years and the commercial viability shifted the focus to more entertainment and diversion tactics than moral uplift (see Canning, 2005). While the opportunities for enlightenment were often met with economic and geographic barriers, minorities were well aware of the mass movement traveling the United States. Founded in 1910 as the national publication of the N.A.A.C.P., *The Crisis: A Record for the Darker Races* promoted chautauqua frequently over a period of thirty years. In the October 1911 issue was the section *What To Read* with suggested titles for self-improvement concerning

African American relations in the United States, including *The Negro in Canada*, also published by *Chautauquan* magazine in July of the same year. Rarely did a publication from a chautauqua-sponsored periodical make this list in *The Crisis*, yet it appeared alongside a plethora of additional articles authored by venerable writers such as *The Crisis* founder and editor W.E.B. Du Bois. Just one month earlier, September 1911, under the same section was the title *Negro Segregation in Cities*, which appeared in *Chautauquan* in March 1911.

The importance placed on such an article was consistent with scholars' attention to the migration of blacks to urban centers at this time (see Taylor, 1998), beginning in Western cities like San Francisco as early as the 1850s (p. 85). In the December 1911 issue was a full-page advertisement for the National Religious Training School and Chautauqua in Durham, N.C. Targeted towards ministers, this one-week session covered such topics of public crime rates, sanitation, religion, and overall morale of black communities in the region. Of particular note was the focus on the YMCA and YWCA activities in these black communities. According to the copy, the effectiveness of these institutions was to be discussed, as was the reception of such organizations by black members of the community. Scholars such as Taylor (1979, 1998) asserted that community institutions like churches and social organizations like the YMCA and YWCA were the founding blocks for burgeoning African American community identities at the turn of the twentieth century. If logic follows, preachers and religious leaders would be incentivized to attend such an event as the National Religious Training School and Chautauqua, given the prominence placed on their role in these fledgling communities and the citizens they

aimed to empower. The significance of placing a full-page advertisement with such phrasings as, “The *most complete* and most-up-to-date summer school for the colored race in the United States” spoke of its importance to black leaders in these urban communities during this time.

On chautauqua circuits, evidence of African Americans and Native American attendance suggested that values of education and moral uplift were not exclusive to white, Anglo audiences. Originally a lecturer on the circuits as well as a publicity agent and superintendent for Redpath-Vawter, H.A. Orchard (1923) provided a firsthand account of a Cherokee woman approaching Horner bureau manager Charles F. Horner in Chelsea, OK. After the concluding act one evening, the woman met and presented him with Horner bureau program books from his circuits over a period of ten years, those that she attended and preserved with great care. This incident clearly symbolized the pride and value that participants of chautauqua received and relished over the many years of their lives. As Orchard (1923) recalled the story, he mentioned this pride specifically, the Cherokee woman “beaming” as she confessed to only missing one year since attending (p.288). While Orchard (1923) assumed his narrative role as historian in this memoir, he also left us with the following observation regarding the story of the Cherokee woman: “Incidents of a character similar to these are sufficiently numerous to make up a volume by themselves, and are cited here to furnish a hint of the far reaching educational contribution of the chautauquas” (p.291).

If Orchard (1923) was referring to the general theme of education, perhaps this statement held weight. If, rather, he suggested that these examples of pride from the shadows of American society were plentiful, where is the remaining evidence within the larger research of chautauqua to support such a claim? Further, why were they not considered or included in the memoir? Narratives such as this are rare slivers in the rich history that makes up the chautauqua cultural movement and the many communities it employed and educated during its lifetime.

White chautauqua performers, like many Americans at that time, also held deeply seated prejudices against ethnic groups. Gay MacLaren (1938), a well-known speaker on circuit platforms, shared an unbelievably humbling story involving her own racial biases and the learning experience it brought her one night in rural Pennsylvania. As she frantically attempted to signal her connecting train by lighting matches alongside the tracks, she ended up missing her connection to Pittsburgh and sought refuge in a station shed for the night. It wasn't before long that she noticed dim lanterns in the distance and heard "...the sound of voices – the soft, mellow drawl of Negros...it looked as if this were going to be the end of my Chautauqua career" (p.267). It was the sound of the black miners singing, however, that exacerbated this innate fear, foregrounded by the fact that she was indeed alone and without assistance of any kind. As a conversation ensued between two black men and MacLaren (1938), this fear intensified to the point where she no longer thought clearly. She wondered when her connecting train would arrive, where to rent a car at this hour or where the nearest hotel was for her to bed down. The two men offered to take her back to their home for shelter. Surprisingly, she took them up on their offer, adding, "I

had a good many night-prowling experiences on Chautauqua, but nothing like this before. I knew that I was going to be murdered or worse” (p.269). As they neared the house, they were greeted by an outspoken woman, a mother of one of the men, who through MacLaren’s (1938) sobbing from fright, exclaims, “Lawdy, Lawdy, chile, yo-all one o’ dem Chautauqua folks. Whah, me an’ Sammy use to go to Chautauqua ev’y summah fo’ we come up heah – yes, ma’am, Ah wanted my boys to git cultu’e!” (p.270).

Quite the contrary to what one imagined Gay MacLaren’s (1938) thoughts were upon following the black miners and entering their house, however, the stark contrasts between fear and safety were only a part of a larger racialized value structure at that time, even for someone like MacLaren (1938), who was exposed to and interacted with minority performers for a large majority of her time on the circuits. Her memoir did not reflect on the incident afterward so it cannot definitively be said whether or not a life-changing experience took place that night. What can be drawn is yet another example of the desire for self-education and betterment through chautauqua’s message of uplift by its patrons.

The opportunities that all Americans sought for themselves in chautauqua were perhaps even more imperative for marginalized cultures to actualize, where performing on a national platform gave heightened exposure to the injustices being waged or from citizens seeking out any available resource to increase their odds through education. *The Crisis* magazine included numerous advertisements for chautauquas, often placing them in concurrent issues leading up to the chautauqua that season. In 1911, chautauqua ads for the July schedule ran in February, March, April, May, and June. Subsequently, the same

copy ran post-chautauqua in the August through December issues of 1911 and February through June for 1912. Why November 1911 and January 1912 were omitted in these years was not known. These identical advertisements included nuts and bolts information like dates, times, and locations. This was significant for two reasons. First, the marketing phrase "...attractions and advantages are unsurpassed in the country for colored young men and women" suggested the chance to commune with other like-minded black citizens as well as the opportunity to take this newly learned information back to their respective communities. Secondly, the claims of scholarship funding for those deserving it suggested that there were benefactors who clearly believe in the educational advancement opportunities for men and women of color. No information was given as to the source of this funding, however, it was clear that incentives were made public through publications to attract African American youth to these types of events.

*The Crisis* also offered insight into the larger opportunities afforded to black communities at this time by black organizers. Known as Black Chautauqua, these largely undocumented iterations of chautauqua life seemed to proliferate in national minority publications like *The Crisis* in the early twentieth century. The only documented incident of such a variation on chautauqua existed in Owensboro, KY in 1910 as cited by Canning (2005), whereby the main purpose of holding such an exclusive program was to serve as "...arenas for discussing community problems and searching for political solutions" (p.90). However generic this sentiment seems to describe, it plainly echoed earlier postings in *The Crisis* regarding the religious and summer school chautauqua sessions that focused on community engagement and awareness through social and religious



institutions (see *The Crisis*: December 1911; Taylor, 1998). While this particular Black Chautauqua was thought to have occurred only once, *The Crisis* made note of its reoccurrence in the August 1916 issue, citing the event a month prior, under the *Meetings* section of the classifieds. Years later, Bordentown, NJ began to appear as another chautauqua notice was printed in the November 1917 issue. Billed as the second annual, it included appearances by African Americans Judge R.H. Terrell (speaker), and Cleota Collins-Lacy (soprano). Additionally, in April, May, and June 1923 the back cover of the issue displayed the chautauqua advertisement in Bordentown, although under the new name *The State of New Jersey Manual Training and Industrial School*. It was not clear whether or not these chautauqua programs were manifestations of the Black Chautauqua billed in Owensboro, however, their recurring placement in such a publication as *The Crisis* as well as their identification of black performers on such an event suggested they could be.

In the February 1912 issue, the black community of Chicago placed a classified ad under the *Along the Color Line* section, a classified area where blurbs of educational, social, religious, and activist information appeared. Under the *Social Uplift* column, Chicago's black community leased Mount Glenwood Grove for fifty years with the intention of holding a yearly chautauqua on its grounds. No further information in *The Crisis* produced any information relating to this claim, nor to the group or organization spearheading the project. Two years later, in the October 1914 issue, The Citizens Union was credited with producing the program on August 18, 1914 for the Richmond, Indiana chautauqua. Two prominent speakers, Dr. A.J. Carey of Chicago and Reverend F.M.

Ovelton of Grand Rapids, gave the main addresses while a quintet of black singers sang folk songs (p.268).

Evidence of blacks programing white chautauquas was unheard of. In the independent chautauqua movement, local councils like the Willamette Valley Chautauqua Association were responsible for the programing of yearly sessions; later in the circuits, bureaus like Redpath and Ellison-White took on this task. While we can assume black chautauquas operated internally by the communities who sponsored them, there was no accompanying evidence in the scholarship to suggest minority groups had any part in the deliberate decision making processes within the circuits that operated externally from the jurisdiction of the managing bureaus. These recently discovered examples serve to remind us that black communities were heavily involved with not only the presence of black speakers, musicians, and performers on national circuits, but in the production and marketing of the opportunities to be actualized by black citizens at a time when little else was afforded to them legally, economically, or politically.

Those directly involved with chautauqua's programing as well as its participants were eager to praise and qualify the substance of minority representations on their platforms. Ng Poon Chew, founder of the Chinese newspaper *Chung Sai Yat Pao* in San Francisco in 1900, was a popular speaker on Chinese-American relations, particularly on West Coast circuits according to historians Billings (1959) and performers MacLaren (1938), the latter of which regarded Chew as "...the first [to bring] authentic information about the Chinese Empire" (p.171). While assigning authenticity can be extremely subjective,

the fact that MacLaren (1938) mentioned Chew by name as an authority figure on Asian-American relations and his knowledge of the content among the greater populous of chautauqua performers was important to note. Redpath manager Henry Harrison (1958) briefly compared Chew's popularity on circuits, referring to him informally as the "Chinese Mark Twain", continuing that his, "...discussion of China was one of the dozens of lectures on the growing problem of the United States and the Orient. The public liked Chew as a personality, but only the [West Coast] was interested politically in the Pacific, and in Japan, not China" (p.240). Harrison's views here are complex and multi-layered; he seemingly took pride in the fact that Chew's reception on lecterns was positive, but labeled him as a personality, not as a speaker, elocutionist or reader, as was often the case with spoken acts.

To use the term 'personality' seems to diminish Chew's respectability, as if to be compared with other acts and novelties on the programs. Harrison's (1958) point regarding West Coast programs and their interest in such a lecturer was consistent with playbills from Oregon chautauqua seasons; Chew was billed in 1913 as part of the twenty-first annual chautauqua association's program in Ashland, Oregon. In this condensed program, Chew was given a full page (half page formatting), including a brief biography as well as a picture. His credentials marketed him as a native Chinese entrepreneur, who spoke English fluently, and had been very successful here in the United States as "...a great influence for the uplift of his people" and a "...prominent leader in all movements of this character".

Given that Chinese-American sentiments were highly charged at the time due to legislation like the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 (see Almaguer, 2009), marketing Chew as a native from China (read: ‘authentic’) and successful entrepreneur would appear to suggest the anticipated lag in attendance for such an event. Ng Poon Chew’s lecture was scheduled for Monday evening, July 14 at 8pm. This scheduling consideration was consistent with other programs in Oregon that often billed ethnic acts, particularly lectures, on off-peak days. The Willamette Valley Chautauqua Association brought Chew in 1914 to Oregon City, billed on Friday, July 17 at 8pm. His lecture was titled *The New China* and was packaged alongside the Dixie Jubilee Concert Company, performing two sets, 2pm and 8pm on Saturday and Sunday, the same weekend as Chew. Receiving prime billing for any minority performance was revered, and in most cases, reserved for the musical acts as the original Chautauqua model was built around entertainment in the evenings and weekends (Lush, p.96). Nonetheless, it showed the importance placed on Chew’s lecture that year and the financial returns the producers of the Gladstone chautauqua hoped to gain by programing Asian speakers on big nights.

The Ellison-White bureau did in fact program many minority acts on prime billing nights in Oregon after 1913, including African American, Pacific Islander, and Native American troupes. Kekuku’s Hawaiian Quintet received a Saturday night slot on the Grants Pass 1916 Chautauqua playbill, with an admission price of seventy-five cents, the highest of the week. In addition, the group also received a three-quarter billing on the back cover, usually reserved for the showcase or highlighted events that week. In the Dallas, Oregon playbill from 1917, the famous Ongawa Company presented their staple piece *Along the*

*Road to Tokyo* on Saturday night, complete with a full-page advertisement in the playbill offering ticket holders "...a delightful Japanese fantasy". Earlier that same week, on opening night (Tuesday, July 9), The Wonderful Manikins performed their usual fare of puppetry and fantasy storytelling to the delight of both children and adults alike.

These and other acts billed during the week were given a small photograph on the accompanying poster that appeared at each year's chautauqua session. These marketing materials by bureaus acted as a way of building support and ticket sales for the upcoming weeks, unfolding to reveal a tapestry of culture about to descend on these rural communities. Oregon chautauquas under the Ellison-White bureau included minority performers on these posters alongside whites and other Euro-descendants. One in particular stood out: the Dallas, Oregon playbill from 1916. The heading read, "A season ticket brings you this great program", under which were photos of performers to appear that week. Dead center was a photograph of the Kaffir Boy's Choir, a very popular African children's troupe that toured the circuits, complete with costumes, sets, and native instruments from Africa. They were billed on Tuesday night (closing performance) at the highest ticket price of seventy-five cents, not surprising for the billing consideration given here. What was striking about the photo was the white man (presumably Mr. Balmer, their director) and woman seated with them. Photographs of interracial groups or performers were not common in chautauqua literature and no caption confirmed their identities.

However progressive this type of billing may have appeared, their program bio told a slightly different story. Promoted as “real, native Kaffir boys who have been taught...to think, to talk, to do stunts...”, the markers of spectacle and exoticism are foregrounded here. Their credibility was substantiated by royalty performances across Europe as well as critical review of their authenticity as ‘native African tribesmen’, engaging the audience in ‘real’ war dances, culturally specific singing styles, and props from their hunting expeditions. While bureaus recognized the educational aspect of such performances to rural, white Americans, there was an overt commercialism in these programing choices like the Kaffir Boys and various Jubilee Singers that placed the focus on financial gains for managers more than the cultural possibilities for communities deeply entwined in racial tensions the remaining weeks of the year.

The popularity and direct promotion of ethnic performers and groups also came from influential figures in American history at that time. President Theodore Roosevelt was quoted as proclaiming, “Chautauqua is the most American thing in America!” (see Hightower, 2004) and was also instrumental in the commercialization of the Hopi Snake Dance, once vehemently outlawed by federal assimilation policies of the Office of Indian Affairs as ‘dangerous’ and ‘savage’ (see Troutman, 2009). Originally performed by Hopi tribes for securing rains for corn crops, the Wild West Buffalo Bill Shows in the 1920s found a market for the Snake Dance and other forms of ceremonial native practices to white audiences in the American Southwest, often earning Hopis a better wage in these extrapolated representations than was possible on the reservations from agriculture labor at that time (p.83). Teddy Roosevelt, upon seeing one of these Wild West shows,

documented his ‘authentic’ experience, precipitating a groundswell of public demand for such dances and ceremonial practices to be promoted through tourist vehicles such as hotels, chambers of commerce, and communities promoting it as “...an essential [Southwestern] tourist experience” (see James, p.83). This reaction from white audiences was not uncommon and was plausible, given the fact that bureaus assigned these values of ‘real’ and ‘authentic’ to the Other that they financially capitalized on.

Even still as African Americans, Asian Americans, and Native Americans found themselves thrust upon mainstream culture in these types of public performances, the subtle and yet implicit displays of discrimination they witnessed were evident and documented. The economic consideration ethnic groups held to bureaus like Ellison-White was apparent in their bookkeeping records and other financial documents. The Ellison-White financial records and organizational bylaws from 1912-1928 confirmed that the bureau made a conscious effort to “...employ and manage...talent of all kinds”. This was consistent with their programming practices as shown above, however, the wages paid to these ethnic performers were telling of the value these groups held within the bureau’s roster as ethnic or exotic offerings.

The Ellison-White performers fee sheet in 1913 (their inaugural year on the West Coast) highlighted some of these values. Simply comparing the “reasonably valued” ensemble wages from this year was striking. The White City Band earned \$1,000 a week for twenty-six members, including railroad fares, which came out to approximately \$39 dollars each per week. The Chicago Male Quartet earned \$180 a week for four members,

including rail fare, giving each approximately \$45 dollars per week. By contrast, Carter's Jubilee Singers earned \$105 weekly plus rail fare for six singers, giving each approximately \$17.50 per week, less than half that of other ensembles listed that year. Perhaps the Jubilee Singers contract was considered reasonably priced by Ellison-White, but when compared to the billing and admission rates charged for these specialized, exotic groups, the profit margin was substantially higher for the bureau than that of other acts.

In the same ways that bureaus programmed minority groups on prime chautauqua days, they were also programmed opposite performances that contained contrasting racial themes. In the Mansfield, Oregon chautauqua program of 1918, Japanese lecturer Minoasku Toshi Yamamoto was billed to deliver a lecture entitled *American and Japan* on Monday afternoon for a low-priced admission rate of thirty-nine cents. Yamamoto, promoted as "eminently qualified to discuss the vital question of the relations of the two countries...who have become our customers, our allies, and our commercial competitors", was paired with a white speaker, Mrs. A.C. Zehner, on *American Ideals*, including "...a message of national desires and activities" for fifty-five cents. Both of these lecturers were described as "qualified" and "experts" in their respective subjects, yet, there appeared to be a deliberate attempt in positioning these two acts on the same day. While management intent cannot be ascertained in any certain way, it does encourage closer examination in light of such racialized views from chautauqua audiences and the bureaus crafting these programs.



In a similar programming choice, the 1919 Dallas, Oregon chautauqua playbill included The Regniers, a white duo that entertained audiences through a variety of talents, including impersonations of Negro cooks (in blackface), Irish janitors, and Italian workers, all neatly packaged as “something clean and refined and elevating and at the same time lively, entertaining, and full of pep”. Racial monikers of blackface on circuits were documented and somewhat received by white audiences and military troops alike, but the placement of The Regniers’ act within the Dallas, Oregon schedule was even more distressing. Programed on Sunday directly after church services that chautauquas often sponsored, this scheduling suggested a disjointed aim between the movement’s doctrine of culture as well as the educational aspect of its programming choices concerning white and non-white acts. Their afternoon performance was then followed by Dr. W.L. Mellinger’s lecture titled *Misunderstood Mexico*. Again, the apparent focus here was one of financial opportunity, not of cultural or ethical consideration. Prime scheduling days during the 1919 Dallas chautauqua week were reserved for the Lewis Military Quartet and the Cimera’s Czecho-Slovak brass band, charging the highest ticket price of the week at fifty-five and eighty-three cents, respectively.

Chautauqua as fervently as it promoted self-education and betterment for the masses, was not above programming acts with racially slanted opinions and firmly held beliefs regarding ‘the Negro problem’. Governor James K. Vardaman of Mississippi, known as The Great White Chief for his white supremacist views, was a frequent speaker on platforms across the country. Vardaman, according to bureau manager Henry Harrison (1958), came from a sordid political past and was very skilled at retelling it for those

filling the tent at every town along the circuit route. Claiming liberal elements of the Southern Democratic party of that time, Governor, later Senator Vardaman, was openly racist towards blacks, even battling to prevent Negro education in his home state of Mississippi for fear that "...the educated Negro would threaten the political dominance of the White Man" (p.73). This example, however isolated among the larger body of racially tinged chautauqua programming, did not go unnoticed among black communities and advocates. *The Crisis* in August 1915 included a brief mention of Senator Vardaman speaking on Western chautauqua circuits, noting, "His subject is always the race question" (p.168). As readership of *The Crisis* publication was wide among African American communities, perhaps the inclusion of such a derogatory entry was used to warn black communities planning to attend their local programs of Senator Vardaman's speeches and racist sentiments. In the subsequent issue, September 1915, a stern response to Vardaman's appearance on the platform was cited, documenting the protests that occurred throughout Denison, Iowa in reaction to Senator Vardaman's "biased utterances" on public lecterns and cultural entertainment vehicles like chautauqua.

The symbolism of where these entries appeared in *The Crisis* magazines was of particular significance, primarily because the section *Along the Color Line* contained various subheadings that grouped likened entries reflecting the black community's slant on such issues. Similar to the classifieds section found in newspapers, *Along the Color Line* included such groupings as *Music & Art, Education, Meetings, Economics, The Church, Personal, Foreign, and Crime*. The August 1915's warning of Senator Vardaman's platform appearances were contained under a section called *The Ghetto*, alongside other

entries of a similar nature at excluding and discriminating against blacks, black organizations, black communities, and black cultural identities as recorded by the magazine. The protests in response to Vardaman just one month later appeared under a section entitled *Social Uplift*. Why these two categories were chosen for this specific incident and its reaction among African Americans was unknown, however, it can be stated that given the social and cultural nature of where this exchange took place, chautauqua, it was chosen to not be included among the *Music & Art, Education*, or *Personal* categories as outlined above.

The Ku Klux Klan, although not as prevalent in Oregon until the latter part of the 1920s (as the chautauqua movement was dwindling), attempted to gain access on chautauqua programs to spread its message of bigotry and exclusion of blacks among other targeted minorities. Scholars like Lay (2004) suggested Oregon was ripe for a Klan infusion based on its hyper-conservative ideologies and legislative practices in place even prior to its statehood in 1859. Dubbed as a “...prominent jewel in the Imperial crown...”, however, the Ku Klux Klan in Oregon only constituted approximately seven percent of national membership at the height of its influence nationwide (p.11). Nonetheless, the organization still used blatant forms of discrimination and segregation among the local communities of Eugene through the power of speech (p.155). On January 8, 1922 the Eugene Theatre booked a local Klan faction to deliver a speech titled *The Truth About the Ku Klux Klan*, charging fifty cents admission, comparable to a single ticket price to see one of many esteemed minority acts on local chautauqua circuits. The content of such a lecture is not important for this discussion; however, the strikingly identical language

used by local Klan chapters of “...one hundred percent Americanism...” and “...moral uplift...” cannot go unnoticed in this context for these are the same values that the chautauqua movement was built upon and carried through its tenure (see Canning, 2005; Lush, 2013; Tapia, 1997).

Redpath manager Henry Harrison (1958) provided an account of the Klan’s requests to speak on circuit platforms, noting their consistent denial by bureau managers on account of their extreme practices and beliefs (p.233). These groups, although powerful within their own right, did not interfere with talent, white or otherwise, or the chautauqua audiences who came to see them. Threats of boycotting local chautauquas were evident among Klan-populated localities, although Harrison (1958) noted, “...[they] failed, chiefly, because the people who flocked to the programs were an intellectual cut above the Klan membership lists” (p.233). Even if this assumption was tied to popular belief, it did not mean that Klan groups were unaware of chautauqua’s popularity and its symbolism of social mobility among rural communities. Evidence of a Klantauqua appears in multiple sources, both primary and secondary, all without much context of these splinter events in relation to the larger, ubiquitous machine that is circuit chautauqua, except to say they were “...meant to spread bigotry and hate” as Harrison (1958) points out (p.79).

Why would chautauqua not permit the Ku Klux Klan to spread its message on platforms, yet program celebrities like Senator Vardaman of Mississippi who explicitly spoke on racial segregation and inequality? According to Canning (2005), it was out of fear that

chautauqua aimed to steer clear of taking any definitive position involving race and race relations, quoting *Lyceum Magazine* that chautauqua "...is out for the best interests of all" (p.32). Such a generalized sentiment regarding race and minority cultures was intriguing, considering the fact that so many of its circuits prided themselves on bringing ethnic and exotic musical experiences to American communities in the wake of emancipation and assimilation policies at the federal governmental levels during this period in United States history.

Although further research is required to help substantiate these issues of discrimination and exclusion wrapped up in subjective markers of identity, it should not come as a surprise to learn that even in the face of overt and hidden racist practices, the stories of survival speak loud and clear some one hundred years later. Faced with battles of oppression from every angle, these performers armed themselves with their truth, their histories and their identities to challenge the beliefs and stereotypes from the platform that promised culture to the masses.

**A**s a starting point, many scholars agree that music acts as a fundamental and individual truth, placing individuals and groups of individuals within a community at the heart of that truth through a shared, lived experience (see Turino, 2008; Blacking, 1995; Feld, 1984; Locke, 2004; Kwakwa, 2000).

Ethnomusicologists Blacking (1995) and Turino (2008) attempted to understand the reflexive and generative aspects of musical practice by the cultural structures and references music holds in culture, why it was valued, what it stood for and what it implied. These academics and others in the field today agree, for the most part, that we have moved beyond the understanding of music as culture (see Arnold, 1869) (read: object) to a more nuanced view of what music symbolizes in culture (see Rice, 2014) (read: subject). It is within this modern framework of music in culture that scholars seek to understand music's function(s) among other cultural markers of a particular people. While chautauqua operated within this old theory of music as a symbol of refinement or being 'cultured' through exposure and appreciation alone, I believe that utilizing a more modern lens of performance studies to look *within* a specific culture allows for interpretation and consideration of today's arts programming and its experiential dimensions to participants.

Regina Bendix (1997) framed the meaning of music and performance practice through the lens of authenticity, a fragile and highly subjective concept equally acknowledged by ethnomusicologists (see Troutman, 2009; Locke, 2004). Exacerbated by concepts of colonialization and imperialism in the West (p.6), Bendix (1997) asserted that authenticity was originally the label through which we attained cultural knowledge or

culture (object), a point that harkens back to Matthew Arnold's (1869) *Culture and Anarchy*. In his book, Arnold (1869) suggested that culture came from exposure to high art, a process whereby we become "cultured" through refined Western-European music, a similar method chautauqua employed at the outset with its deliberate programming of Western-influenced musical compositions and performers (see Lush, 2013). By using authenticity as a marker for performance quality, we are quickly faced with opinions of what is and is not authentic; ultimately, this behavior separated the experience from the participants, something Jean Baudrillard (2001) cited in relation to mass culture and consumption-based economics. As Browner (1997) and Bendix (1997) have concluded, this slippery concept of authenticity suggested that the underlying power dynamics between those with the authority to create this authenticity were of a much greater importance than simply the marker itself. Labeling authenticity or inauthenticity is not the question we should consider. The greater question is who needs this authenticity and why (see Kirshenblatt-Gimblett & Bruner, 1992)?

Through the examination of chautauqua souvenir programs, playbills, photographs, memoirs, critical reviews, advertisements, and ethnographic fieldwork, themes of authenticity continued to crop up across the varied forms of documentation. Through these sources and the literature published by those in positions of power as well as those seeking to attain it, examples of praise hidden beneath a cloak of discrimination and racism continued to resurface. Troutman (2009) argued that music and performance practices are viable, cunning, and complex, nodding to anthropologist James Scott's (1990) "hidden indices" for discrimination and resistance in music, neatly and succinctly

packaged as entertainment through popular vehicles with which to profit (p.13). Scott (1990) suggested music that is, "...blatant in the public nature of performance, yet hidden in the sense that music could be considered an innocent social entertainment as much as it could represent an assault..." (p.xi-xiii). Through his research, Troutman (2009) asserted that music and musical performance of Native Americans functioned as a political weapon in two ways, as a force for liberation and as a means of containment (p.xiii) by those in power and those who sought to dismantle those power structures. It is within the intent and the cultural identities these minorities assumed when placed in front of a public entertainment vehicle that such forces of change served to act upon those willing to listen and those who subconsciously choose not to (p.11).

Why and how does music becomes political? How does music act as a vehicle of liberation or a means of containment (Troutman, p.xiii) concerning minority performance practices? Troutman (2009) stated that music served to act as a weapon, an agent of change through the device known as authenticity, known as the display of Indianness in reference to Native American cultures. Originally labeled by Americans as reacting to cultural habits and Anglo values and norms in the wake of an urban, modern society (p.14), the markers of Indianness pervaded Native and Anglo cultures alike, serving as both an outlet for cultural freedom and expression as well as containment and manipulation by those in power structures, primarily evidenced in mass media and entertainment vehicles of the period and present day. At the turn of the twentieth century, Wild West shows initially popularized the label of Indianness, staging tribal dances, battle reenactments, and appearances by Indian princesses and chiefs in full regalia on



their programs (p.14). As noted earlier, President Theodore Roosevelt documented his experience with the Hopis as ‘authentic’, sparking a national move to program the Snake Dance and other reenactments throughout various tourism industries such as hotels, railroad depots and other Wild West Shows (p.83). Junior Chautauqua, a children’s extension of the larger movement usually held in the mornings (see Canning, 2005), was also fascinated with the display of Indianness, as evident in the Seyton Indians program by naturalist and founder of the Boy Scout of America, Ernest Thompson Seyton (see Schultz, 2002). On the Ellison-White circuits of the West Coast, young women, known as junior girls, dressed in ‘authentic’ Native American clothes and assumed identities of Native American squaws. This attempt to display Indianness even led to their labeling as “Indian princesses” by chautauqua stagehands and tent crews on behind the scenes (p.144).

Native Americans performers recognized this marker of authenticity early on, allowing them to express their own cultural identities and performance practices that directly undermined the Office of Indians Affairs (OIA) and its federal policy goals of assimilation at the time (p.15), all the while earning wages that often surpassed those made by agrarian methods through land allotments by the federal government (p.35). Most media outlets were critical of federal assimilation initiatives to suppress Native American dancing through OIA circulars and superintendent enforcement of the early 1920s, particularly because these entertainment vehicles like chautauqua and Wild West shows relied heavily on Indianness values and interests to *preserve* dancing (p.81) in the American Southwest, where performances of the latter proliferated in towns like Santa

Fe, Phoenix, and Flagstaff. Native Americans exacerbated this demand for Indianness by partnering with local media outlets to defend their validation (p.87), giving interviews to reporters and often pitting these performances against other white, popular forms like jazz, citing ‘dangerous’ values for identical reasons (p.98). This mentality spread back to reservation life, where local superintendents cited an *increase* in dance practices, further dividing the OIA strategies to civilize Natives and unfortunately, losing the support of mainstream cultural attitudes towards these performances on public entertainment outlets (p.101). Native Americans continued to use Indianness as an index for authenticity in the following years as more groups began touring engagements to prove their ‘safety’ to town citizens (p.124) as well as national platforms like chautauqua as Tsianina Redfeather Blackstone and Princess Watahwaso did, allowing them to utilize music and performance to their advantage (see Lush, 2013).

Native Americans also used other public entertainment vehicles to challenge OIA initiatives as well as to assert Indianness in the public eye. This was the case with popular entertainment platforms like Buffalo Bill Cody’s Wild West Shows, rodeos, and even within federal Indian boarding schools. Considered ‘dangerous’ by OIA officials, Wild West Shows proliferated in the 1880s, particularly in the American Southwest; these outfits were known to hire Lakota men, sometimes upwards of two hundred or more, to perform what was packaged and billed as the War Dance for popular consumption—all under the ‘safe’, contained frame of the spectacle (Troutman, p.34). In this case, ‘safe’ was an index for ‘authentic’ by promoters of such shows, particularly because of their cultural indices of dress, environment, language, and content independent of the

reservation, where such practices were not as strictly regulated by the federal government.

Other vehicles like rodeos and local festivals were also fair game for Native Americans to express their musical practices, even if taken out of context and reframed for popular consumption (p.20). Besides this process of reframing participatory to presentational experiences (see Turino, 2008) on these outlets, music also served as a way out, acting as a vehicle for liberation (see Troutman, 2009), even if under the repackaged and reimagined constructs of popular entertainment operations. Interestingly enough, labels of ‘authentic’ and ‘real’ were analogous with this reframing of musical practices as presentational and sold as popular entertainment by bureaus and management companies as well as larger entities like political policies of the United States government. This reframing concept was evident in other non-Western cultures like Zimbabwe concert music some years later, as cited by Turino (2008). As British colonial powers infiltrated and supposed Western themes and indices of ‘culture’ to indigenous African tribes, they sparked new interpretations and representations of Zimbabwe performance culture, leading to the popularization of groups like De Black Evening Follies, The Mills Brothers here in America, and others (p.139-40).

Cultural objectification, a concept developed by Richard Handler (1984), involved use of the ‘authentic’ label by those who had the power to represent others and determine which representation is ‘authentic’. In this manner, authenticity was replaced with authority.

Within chautauqua documentation as well as minority publications like *The Crisis: A*

*Record for the Darker Races*, authenticity was decidedly used both by Redpath to promote and secure attendance for minority programming as well as the performers themselves, a concept that Troutman (2009) uncovered in regard to authority versus authenticity among Native American musical practices at the turn of the twentieth century in boarding schools and entertainment vehicles.

Both Native Americans and whites alike used authenticity as a political tool, leading Troutman (2009) to understand the dynamics of ‘safe’ and ‘dangerous’ music within American history at a time when popular entertainment was deeply shaping American values and interests. Arguably, this ‘safe’ versus ‘dangerous’ association for minority performers was especially pertinent on public entertainment vehicles like chautauqua (see Canning, 2005; Tapia, 1997, Gentile, 1989), who were programming minority acts such as Princess Watahwaso, The Tuskegee Singers, Onondaga Indian Concert Band, the Ethiopian Serenaders and others across the country (see Lush, 2013).

In viewing the ways both whites and nonwhites used authenticity as a marker for identity, Michael Largey (2000) expanded upon Handler’s (1984) theory of cultural objectification through what he calls traditionalization, a process by which labels of ‘traditional’ or ‘authentic’ are created by those in positions of power, usually wrapped in a political motive. This process attempts to convince the receiver of an ‘authentic’ experience, something that Turino (2008) called indexical snowballing. Here, cultural markers of dress, language, presentation, environment or set, props, and artifacts collectively work together to assume a ‘real’ experience. While the process of traditionalization hinted at

markers of hegemony, Largey (2000) posited that this concept also be used to *subvert* the power structure assigned to it. In the case of Native American performance practices on chautauqua, it did just that through Indianness in presenting music and dance as a vehicle for liberation, a way out from such exclusionist legislation, as well as an entry point to directly challenge these initiatives at the federal level during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. To this end, music moved beyond the object or form as a structure (see Levi-Strauss, 1977) to one of functional structuralism and meaning through social, political, and spatial values assigned to and by a particular culture (see Turino, 2008).

In this way, processes of Handler's (1984) traditionalization were also reinterpreted within the cultural formation that is the tribal community. These youth, in their reaction to enculturation strategies by OIA boarding school curricula, found new reasons to exert their identity from individual cohorts on reservations to larger formations in boarding schools. Turino (2008) identified these types of hybridity as rooted in what he termed 'transstate' cultures (p.118), particularly within a cosmopolitanism, colonial framework. These students were no longer identifying solely as Native American but as American, lending recognition to the popular habits of the capitalist-cosmopolitan culture, Western European at its core, and the achievements of the OIA to traditionalize returned students towards an 'acceptable' and 'civilized' lifestyle.

In the early 1900s, Francis Densmore, like the emerging Indianist composers Edward MacDowell, Charles Wakefield Cadman, Amy Beach and others, collected Native songs through visits to boarding schools across the country as well as through other unorthodox

methods such as bribery, ambushing, and plain deceit (Troutman, p.163), taking raw musical materials and ‘westernizing’ the melodies and forms to fit European scale systems, harmonics, cadences, and forms. While Densmore, James Wakefield Cadman, Geoffrey O’Hara and others would eventually take this reimagined material into federal boarding schools to teach to Native students (p.174), the OIA still considered such practices as ‘dangerous’. The practice of Indianness in schools was also extended to the dramatic arts, in the form of pageants, as well as visual arts. It was around this time that boarding schools began to hire their alumni in an effort to teach artistic classes on Indianness in the early 1900s (p.179). Angel Del Cora, a well-documented example, established a Native arts and crafts program at the Carlisle school in Pennsylvania in 1906, and soon others like George La Mere and Virginia Bailey followed suit (p.256).

It is important here to bring in a brief discussion of the Indianist musical movement to understand how musical appropriation by white European ethnologists affected the musical material and, subsequently, the role that Indianness played in expressing that material on public entertainment venues. As Browner (2007) has noted, the practice of reimagining source material from Native tribes led to a breakdown in its authenticity (p. 280), a concept that touched on Jean Baudrillard’s (2001) disassociation of authenticity by reproduction. This romanticization of Indians and Indian musical culture was capitalized on by European composers and ethnographers of the time, although Browner (1997) found the way in which this source material was analyzed, and ultimately presented, drastically shifted after 1900 (p.274). Prior to the twentieth century, ethnologists captured Native musical material directly from tribes and was generically

used and packaged as Native music. After 1900, researchers like Densmore and others began to situate this music in relation to Native social life and cultural practices, nodding to the shift that Rice (2014) and other ethnomusicologists have cited, from music *as* culture to music *in* culture. This did not necessarily mean that cross-pollination of source material did not occur; in fact, those collecting raw data in the field made no conscious effort to tie these musical structures to specific tribes or regions, rather, they simply aimed to understand a deeper connection between Indian musical practices and Indian cultural life (Browner, p.266).

This increased fascination with Indianness and Indianist music among Americans pervaded throughout popular culture, including Tin Pan Alley, vaudeville, and chautauqua circuits (see Troutman, 2009; Lush, 2013; Gentile, 1989; Canning, 2005), and served to exacerbate the ingrained indices of savagery and primitivism among Native Americans. This fascination with the Other and its commercialization efforts eventually circled back, however, to Baudrillard's (2001) disassociation by accessible mass consumption, noting, "...people who had the least amount of power in the country but who nevertheless seemed to pose the greatest threat to the maintenance of the social order were increasingly encoded and contained in the art, minstrel, vaudeville, and Tin Pan Alley compositions that founded the modern epoch of American society" (p.255).

Understanding minority performance practices as represented not representational (see Lefebvre, 1974) might aid in further understanding of the misleading label of authenticity from multiple viewpoints, Native and non-Native alike, while allowing for the authority

of those practices to lie within those participating and creating, not simply appropriating, disseminating, and consuming them.



Given the legacy that chautauqua left for Americans and its access to new experiences through self-education and betterment, we are now faced with a similar charge in a modernized, technological landscape concerning the arts and arts programming to educate and inspire youth, adults, families, and marginalized groups. That is, if chautauqua utilized public space for communal artistic experiences, how are we to understand the emergent spatial dimensions today and the role they play when assigning labels of authenticity and identity? What is to be learned from the use (and misuse) of such terms as ‘authentic’ and ‘culture’ over one hundred years ago and how are these labels problematic even today?

As I have outlined above, the concept of authenticity in chautauqua was a bit of a double-edged sword. From the standpoint of bureaus and management companies, authenticity was a word used ubiquitously through the marketing and publicity materials of the various circuits as well as the local newspapers that oftentimes critiqued performances. Use of this term was not exclusive to minority or exotic groups, for it was also used in a similar way to promote and sell tickets for European brass bands as well as notable white performers, but the exotic, minority acts relied heavily on the use of selling their ‘realness’ or ‘authentic’ performances to ordinary citizens through these terms.

By the same token, the use of authenticity by minority groups themselves was present, primarily using the term to validate their own cultural identity and musical aptitude on chautauqua programs as did the Indian String Quartet. In a similar fashion, the Jubilee Singers born out of Fisk University (see Ward, 2000), credited with popularizing African

American spirituals to the Western world, initially received lukewarm reception on early chautauqua tours when their set lists were comprised of classical music. Not until they began to include spirituals and field songs at the ends of their concerts did audience support begin to flourish, eventually leading groups to perform what managers labeled ‘authentic’ Negro melodies exclusively on future engagements (see Lush, 2013).

Chautauqua primarily utilized absolute space through presentational performance practices with markers of Western influence. In this way, absolute space was non-negotiable and held by those in power, the bureaus. The exceptions to this were the Black Chautauquas. These appeared in black communities in the East and Midwest and were financially and artistically driven by blacks for black audiences. Although there was no evidence to suggest the performance styles differed than their larger counterpart, it does suggest that African American communities were using space in its more abstract form. That is, in addition to the importance African American communities placed on social and cultural establishments like churches and fraternal organizations, they reshaped space through events like the Black Chautauquas in ways that promoted moral uplift and enlightenment by way of self-education and cultural expression, an identical vision embodied by other groups at that time, including chautauqua and the KKK.

How do we come to terms with modern implications of abstract, ‘lived’ space based on its participants and the individual identities they each bring in actualizing such a place? In many ways, artists and arts programmers today are using art to do just that: allowing artistic products and the interpretation of such products to be completely subjective and

open to all who engage with them. Artists like Luke Jerram, Christopher Janney, and Candy Chang are redefining what artistic engagement means to participants through public visual and performing art installations that are both programmed and improvisatory. Other forms include internationally recognized music and visual art festivals like SXSWedu, Sasquatch, and Burning Man, to smaller, local iterations like the Pickathon and the Oregon Country Fair. These examples show how space can be negotiated and realized on the physical, social, spiritual, and cultural levels, however, technology has opened up a new and vast platform from which a new space emerges, a digital space. These arenas allow for space to become completely malleable based on the user's interest, experience, and comfort with others who will engage and create alongside them. From connected, experiential learning models to Mozilla badging technologies, TEDx lectures and user-created content like blogs, zines, vines, and many others, digital citizenry and the creation of avatar-based identities knows no such claims as authentic or identity in the singular sense.

As digital space allows for discretion and anonymity of the user, ethnicity and race are not as "visible" as they once were. What we are left with, then, is the space itself and the product(s) that inhabits that space. This abstract space separates authenticity from authority, focusing not on the interpretation and manipulation of such products and experiences by those who hold power but rather the creation and interaction of such concepts and ideas by those generating the content. In this way, Lefebvre (1974) suggests that abstract space becomes a place for activity of, "...social energies and natural forces" (p.236), whereby, "The rational is naturalized, while nature cloaks itself in nostalgias

which support rationality” (p.30). This rationality, then, becomes completely subjective and open for manipulation and regeneration, ultimately dissolving its symbolism in these newly redefined spatial dimensions (p.417).

While spatial manipulation was apparent during chautauqua’s heyday with the use of ‘authentic’ programming of white and minority artists alike, this control can be reversed to allow for a modern understanding of creators and innovators of physical and digital tools alike. We might even consider Bernard’s (1973) theory of community as experience to further understand how ‘lived’ or abstract space can be a powerful tool for access and inclusion of all participants regardless of background. Imagination is the key to community (see Anderson, 1991). Space today also occupies multiple dimensions and realities and with it come ever-changing ways to create and interact with, not simply interpret an experience. Given the multitude of spatial dynamics and their individual intricacies, space, specifically, abstract space and its ability to embody a ‘lived’ quality, demands our utmost respect and care to include all who inhabit and contribute to its potential toward achieving the possible.

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