

- Neils Conzen, *Making Their Own America: Assimilation Theory and the German Peasant Pioneer*, German Historical Institute Annual Lecture Series, No. 3 [New York: Berg, 1990], 24–25).
5. Annette Kolodny, *The Lay of the Land: Metaphor as Experience and History in American Life and Letters* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1975), 27, 133, 146–47; Pickle, *Contented Among Strangers*, 45, 67, 89, 183–86; Annette Kolodny, *The Land Before Her: Fantasy and Experience of the American Frontiers, 1630–1860* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984), 7.
 6. For a discussion of “Sources on German-Speaking Immigrant Women and Their Families,” see Appendix A in Pickle, *Contented Among Strangers*, 201–205.
 7. Georg Isernhagen, “The Story of My Life to My Children,” in *Memoirs of Pioneers of Cheyenne County, Kansas: Ole Robert Cram, Georg Isernhagen, Nancy Moore Wieck*, ed. Lee F. Pendergrass, trans. G. Kolb (Hays, Kan.: Fort Hays Ethnic Studies Center, 1980), 57–92. Subsequent references to this work will be given parenthetically in the text.
 8. Pendergrass (ed.), *Memoirs of Pioneers of Cheyenne County*, xviii.
 9. Pendergrass asserts that Isernhagen felt that his wife was inferior, partly because of her Russian ethnic-German heritage and partly because she was born two months before her parents married when her father was conscripted into the Russian army (*ibid.*, xiv).
 10. *Ibid.*, xiii–xiv.
 11. Susanna Krehbiel, “Autobiography,” typed translation (translator unknown), Mennonite Historical Library, Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas, 1979; original German manuscript begun January 11, 1911, in Geary, Oklahoma. Translations used in this paper are taken from the typed document. Subsequent references to this work will be given parenthetically in the text.
 12. Christian Krehbiel, *Prairie Pioneer* (Newton, Kan.: Faith and Life Press, 1961).
 13. Louisa Sophia Gellhorn Boylan, “My Life Story,” undated typed manuscript, Manuscript Collection, State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa. Boylan’s memoir consists of two typewritten texts. Neither is dated (although interior information indicates that they were written in the 1930s or 1940s). I have designated the one that depicts most of her earliest memories, a twelve-page single-spaced document, as “A” and the other, an eight-page double-spaced text that contains later memories from her childhood and youth and ends when she leaves home to attend a normal school, as “B.” Subsequent references to this memoir will be given parenthetically in the text.
 14. Scott E. Casper, in *Constructing American Lives: Biography and Culture in Nineteenth-Century America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), refers to such county histories as “mug books” and states of their contents: “Even as these stories expressed individuals’ pride in their achievements, they also combined to tell a national story” (298).
 15. Karen V. Hansen, “‘Helped Put in a Quilt’: Men’s Work and Male Intimacy in Nineteenth-Century New England,” in *The Social Construction of Gender*, ed. Judith Lorber and Susan A. Farrell (Newbury Park: Sage Publications, 1991), 83–103.
 16. An excellent example of this alienation is Henrietta Geisberg Bruns, whose letters from Missouri in the 1830s through the 1850s resonate with these emotions: *Hold Dear, As Always: Jette, A German Immigrant Life in Letters*, ed. Adolf E. Schroeder and Carla Schulz-Geisberg (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1988).

SARAH WINNEMUCCA

MULTIPLE PLACES, MULTIPLE SELVES

GIOIA WOODS

In the opening paragraph of her autobiography *Life Among the Piutes* (1883), Sarah Winnemucca writes, “I was a very small child when the first white people came into our country. They came like a lion, yes, like a roaring lion, and have continued so ever since, and I have never forgotten their first coming.”¹ Winnemucca’s entire narrative is informed by this contact. Her sense of self and her sense of place are intimately entwined, each informing the other, over and over again. She came into contact with whites early in her life, learned Spanish and English fluently, and witnessed how the land and her culture were irrevocably changed because of the nature of white-Paiute contact. She served as interpreter between whites and Paiutes, thereby becoming a figure of the contact zone: her subjectivity—her sense of herself—is constructed between homelands, cultures, languages, and traditions. Winnemucca lived her life in what scholars popularly call “the margins.” But Winnemucca’s migrations are characteristic of western lives, now and in the past, and her experience is not “marginal” but central to an understanding of western American history. Winnemucca’s narrative is marked by her travels between cultures, languages, desires; between places, between selves.

The West is defined by such migration, and westerners, particularly those pushed aside by Manifest Destiny, are people whose subjectivity or sense of self is made up by the conditions of migration, people whose sense of self is largely informed by movement through space. Subjectivity means more than a sense of oneself; it is the starting point of all knowledge about the world, about gender, about ethnicity, and about how experience links a person to that world. The well-worn adage “Tell



*Sarah Winnemucca in studio portrait, ca. 1880s.
Photograph courtesy Nevada Historical Society, Reno.*

me where you come from, and I'll tell you who you are" is a complicated proposition for a westerner, because a westerner comes from a place that is constantly changing—and a westerner comes from many places. Migration and rootedness in the American West are related conditions—they coexist and together comprise what it means to have and develop a sense of place.

If a sense of self and a sense of place are related, and I believe they are, how does mobility influence subjectivity? A person like Sarah Winnemucca who has a sense of herself in constant migration is a migratory subject. There exist many points of reference (some painful, some empowering) from which identity is constructed, and the self "travels" between those reference points. Because of this travel, self-representation is complicated by the need to reach audiences within and outside her cultural affiliations. A migratory subject moves between the individual self ("I") and the communal self ("we") in representing

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Their Wrongs and Claims.

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self, culture, and place. This practice in the American West is not without its well-documented environmental and personal pitfalls, but the ability to rely on a variety of places to construct identity should not be readily dismissed, because rootedness is not always “good,” and mobility is not always “bad.” In Sarah Winnemucca’s case, mobility was necessary for survival. We can see this in Winnemucca’s *Life Among the Piutes*, in which mobility (including forced displacement) affects the way she represents her self, her people, and her home. Even though a person is said to exist in his or her body or soul, and a place is said to exist on a map, the “location” of both self and place are contested. Selves and places exist variously in memory, in story; both occur within a complex matrix of ever-changing human desires and situations.

Social and Historical Context

Before I turn to explicit examples of the ways Winnemucca shapes herself as a migrant, a brief history of her life is necessary. Winnemucca, also known as Thocmetony, was born in 1844 near Humboldt Lake in western Nevada. Captain Truckee, Winnemucca’s maternal grandfather, guided Colonel John C. Frémont across the Sierra Nevada and subsequently was a guide to emigrants during the 1840s and 1850s. Captain Truckee, an advocate of friendly relations with white settlers, welcomed various government officials to meet with representatives of the Paiute tribe. Gold was discovered in California in 1849, and emigrants heading for the gold fields traveled through the Paiute homeland. The railroad encroached on Paiute land, as did a number of army posts. Corrupt Indian agents were sent to “manage” the tribe, and wives of army officers set up provisional schools for Paiute children. Many young Paiute men and women, Winnemucca among them, worked as domestic and manual laborers for white families. Armed conflict between whites and Paiutes erupted in 1865. Camp McDermitt, in northeastern Nevada, was established after this, and Winnemucca worked there as interpreter for the soldiers. In 1878, the Bannock tribe of Idaho, joined by a band of Paiutes, went to war with the United States army. Winnemucca, however, became an army interpreter and scout. After the war, the federal government forced the Paiute and Bannock tribes from their land to the newly established Yakima Reservation, where conditions were deplorable.

Many Anglo-educated Native Americans did not write autobiographies in the nineteenth century because their time was devoted to fighting for their people’s cultural sovereignty. Winnemucca wrote and

fought, and she considered her autobiography a tool in the struggle for Paiute civil rights. She became an advocate for the Paiutes and lectured about the injustice of the Yakima Reservation to a San Francisco audience. She increasingly became more and more of a public figure: in 1880 she traveled to Washington, D.C., to speak with the president in behalf of her people, and she continued to travel and lecture extensively.

Winnemucca gave more than three hundred speeches to protest federal Indian policies. In Boston, she met Elizabeth Palmer Peabody and Peabody’s sister, Mary Tyler Mann. Mann encouraged Winnemucca to collect her speeches and publish her autobiography. *Life Among the Piutes* was written as a blend of tribal history, personal history, Paiute legend and ethnography, and social protest. Most significantly, the autobiography is a document of the contact-zone West because it narrates white-Paiute contact from the years 1844 to 1883.

Shifting Selves

Sarah Winnemucca traveled a great deal. Identity is always in transit, always constituting and reconstituting itself in terms of its relationship with different contexts, situations, and environments. Winnemucca’s mobility allowed (and forced) her to shift from one identity to another and to move between private and public spheres. She is daughter and sister, tribal advocate, army interpreter, lecturer, writer, teacher, soldier, guide.

All the identities she “performed” are complicated by gender and ethnicity. Some scholars of classical autobiography argue that the autobiographical “I” is universal, shared by all readers. This universal “I,” the theory goes, is liberated from the body and hence from class, race, and gender—presumably, this “I” exists in the exalted halls of the intellect, away from the messy body and mundane earth. It so happens that this “I” also norms as male. Sarah Winnemucca certainly does not typify the disembodied, unitary subject. In her autobiography, Winnemucca often chooses “we” over “I” to foreground the importance of the family unit in Paiute self-identification, and she strongly identifies herself with the places through which she moves. Winnemucca struggles throughout her autobiography to “travel” between different sets of expectations and self-representations, especially because traditional Paiute cultural identity became disrupted when the first white people came “roaring like a lion.” Several passages from *Life Among the Piutes* demonstrate the ways Winnemucca travels between cultures.



The Winnemucca family (l. to r.): Sarah Winnemucca, Chief Winnemucca, Natchez, Captain Jim, and a white boy who occasionally accompanied the party, 1880. Photograph courtesy Nevada Historical Society, Reno.

The first such passage occurs early in Winnemucca's autobiography. In the opening chapter, "First Meeting of Piutes and Whites," Winnemucca details several attempts by her father and grandfather to encounter white emigrants peaceably. Her grandfather, writes Winnemucca, had expected so much pleasure in "welcoming his white brothers to the best in the land," that when his anticipation was met with his white brothers' fear, "he came away quite unhappy" (6). When it is clear to Captain Truckee that the white emigrants will not trust him, he gathers "his whole people" and relates a Paiute story promising peace between Anglos and Natives. The story takes place "in the beginning of

the world" and relates the tale of four children—a light boy and girl, and a dark boy and girl. "For a time," writes Winnemucca, "they got along well together without quarreling, but soon they disagreed, and there was trouble" (6). The foreparents separate the light children from the dark, commanding them to "[D]epart from each other . . . go across the mighty ocean and do not seek each other's lives.' So the light girl and boy disappeared by that one word" (7).

The Paiute story, according to Captain Truckee, promises a happy reunion between the two nations sprung from the two sets of children. The point of view of the story implies that the white race has been cast out to wander, while the dark race, though following seasonal migration patterns, remains in one place, awaiting their return. By referring to a time when whites and Paiutes were one, Winnemucca attempts to provide continuity to her otherwise fragmented identity, culture, and place. Literary critic Hertha Sweet Wong calls this narrative strategy the "mythic and historical networks of identity formation."³ If whites and Paiutes have a mythical familial connection, then Winnemucca herself does not serve two opposing interests in her work as an interpreter between the United States army and her Paiute people. In fact, her work has a mythical sanction—her purpose is to "reunite" the two cultures.

The Paiutes saw the wave of emigrants through Nevada in the 1840s and 1850s as displaced migrants. Emigrants were unfamiliar with land and seasonal patterns in the Great Basin and Sierra foothills; stories of starvation and cannibalism reached the Paiutes. By the third year of white emigration, Winnemucca notes that the emigrants "could not get over the mountains, so they had to live with us. It was on the Carson River, where the great Carson City stands now. . . . During the winter my people helped them" (10). But the relationship between the Paiutes and their "white brothers" soon turned bitter.

The following spring, the Paiutes heard news "that the people they called their white brothers were killing everybody that came in their way, and all the Indian tribes had gone into the mountains to save their lives" (11). Sarah Winnemucca and her family went into the mountains and gathered pine nuts for the coming winter. In late fall, they went to the Humboldt River to fish and gather dried seed. During this preparation, Winnemucca reports a pervasive fear of whites: "Our mothers told us that the whites were killing everybody and eating them. . . . Every dust we could see blowing in the valleys we would say it was the white people" (11). One morning, upon hearing that whites were indeed venturing into

the valley, Winnemucca's extended family fled again. Because young Sarah and her cousin could not run fast enough to keep up with the rest of the tribe, an aunt suggested that they hide the girls by burying them: "Let us bury our girls, or we shall be killed and eaten up.' So they went to work and buried us, and told us if we heard any noise not to cry out, for if we did they would surely kill us and eat us. So our mothers buried me and my cousin, planted sage bushes over our faces to keep from burning them, and there we were left all day" (11).

The burial is a particularly dramatic moment in Winnemucca's narrative. Because she could not move as swiftly as the others, and therefore not participate in the forced migration, Winnemucca and her cousin are planted, rooted in the place that is their habitual homeland. The narrative tension dramatized in this event illustrates how crucial to survival *chosen* mobility is. Buried in place, Winnemucca is without family and tribe and, she writes, waits in great fear, "thinking every minute that I was to be unburied and eaten up by the people that my grandfather loved so much" (12). The implied threat of betrayal, by both her grandfather and her homeland, suggests the threat of total assimilation and digestion by the emigrants. Her sense of self is reliant on her ability to shift places, to shift identities. Once Winnemucca is buried, unable to move, her migratory subjectivity and thus her very survival are threatened.

Winnemucca longs to be reunited with her family and removed from a place that so singularizes her identity: "Oh, can any one imagine my feelings *buried alive*. . . Oh, how I cried and said: 'Oh, father, have you forgotten me? Are you never coming for me?'" (12). Winnemucca closes her narrative of the incident by referring to what she sees as the inevitable singularity of death: "I was once buried alive; but my second burial shall be for ever, where no father or mother will come and dig me up. It shall not be with throbbing heart that I shall listen for coming footsteps. I shall be in the sweet rest of peace,—I, the chieftain's weary daughter" (12). The adult narrator, looking back on the child's life, constructs the incident in terms of her present seemingly hopeless struggle to regain the Paiute homeland. More to the point, the idea of the "buried child" directly informs how identity is related to place.

In her book *The Geography of Modern Drama*, Una Chaudhuri sees the buried child as a common trope of what she calls the "problem of place." Although she writes specifically about American drama, Chaudhuri's discussion about the buried child is useful in reading *Life Among the Piutes*. This "problem of place" unfolds in Winnemucca's au-

tobiography (and indeed, in many western American autobiographies) as the tension between exile and belonging, home and homelessness. Chaudhuri argues that the buried child signals "the hope, however hopeless, that what has been lost or destroyed . . . can somehow be reclaimed, 'dug up,' revived, and acknowledged."⁴ The fear that Winnemucca narrates is the conviction that what has been lost to white emigration—Paiute cultural sovereignty and a land-based cultural identity—is unrecoverable. The buried child incident in *Life Among the Piutes* speaks to the fear that Paiute culture (and Winnemucca herself) will be consumed by whites and made to disappear into the corpus of the dominant culture. The threat of disappearance is the very real danger that Winnemucca faces as she represents herself as a migrant subject—a traveler between cultures. In this tragic narrative moment, Winnemucca foresees her own death and burial, in which there is no hope of recovery, only "the sweet rest of peace."

Many Native American autobiographers narrate the loss of place, people, and tradition. In her autobiography, Winnemucca has a personal memory of what has been lost, and she narrates her travels between tradition and the tragedies of white domination. This migration is another way she represents herself as a dweller between past and present.

Early one spring during Sarah Winnemucca's youth, her father, then chief of the Paiutes, warned his people to go into the mountains to avoid the coming summer's influx of emigrants. He had had a dream, and he planned on sharing his new revelation with the tribe in ten days at the sink of the Carson River. The subchiefs, Winnemucca writes, gathered their bands together and traveled to the Carson. As Winnemucca and her family arrived, the people already gathered sang beautiful songs "for my father . . . every man, woman, and child were looking out for us. They had a place all ready for us. Oh, how happy everybody was!" (13).

The celebration continued for five days, because, as Winnemucca explains, "It is a rule among our people to have five days to settle anything" (13). After the tribe had spent the five days dancing and hunting, running races on foot and on horseback, Winnemucca's father gathered the people together to tell them his vision. The vision of white emigration that he saw in his dream would prove devastating for Paiute culture. The time had come, Chief Winnemucca told his people, when

we could no longer be happy as of old, as the white people we call our brothers had brought a great trouble and sorrow among us already. He went on and said—"These white people must be

a great nation, as they have houses that move. It is wonderful to see them move along. I fear we will suffer greatly by their coming to our country; they come for no good to us, although my father said they were our brothers, but they do not seem to think we are like them. . . . There is something telling me I am not wrong, because I am sure they have minds like us, and think as we do; and I know they were doing wrong when they set fire to our supplies. They surely knew it was our food." (14)

Chief Winnemucca's speech to his people signals the end of an era for Paiute culture. The chief recognizes how Paiute tradition will change—"we could no longer be happy as of old."

The constant movement of the white emigrants is the source of the trouble, the chief warns. The Paiutes until then had many home bases and were free to travel among a variety of desert and mountain homes in northern Nevada, following ancient subsistence patterns. What struck Chief Winnemucca was the way in which the white emigrants carried their homes with them. The emigrants do not consider themselves tied to the land as Paiutes do; it's as if nature and culture are separate. The chief goes on to relate his dream, in which he saw his people dead all around him, his land invaded and barren: "I looked North and South and East and West, and saw nothing but dust" (14). The coming of the emigrants will not only mean an end for his people, the chief warns, but an end to their place. The dust implies the constant movement of the emigrants and the transformation of Paiute homeland into a foreign, hostile environment that would support no life. So, Sarah Winnemucca writes, "[N]ow comes an end to our merrymaking" (14).

Because of white emigration, Paiute patterns of migration began to change. Seasonal migration had been an integral part of Paiute culture and identity, but in order to prevent bloodshed, the chief suggests that they "keep away from the emigrant roads and stay in the mountains all summer . . . we can lay in supplies for the coming winter, and if the emigrants don't come too early, we can take a run down and fish for a month . . . and kill as many rabbits as we can. In that way we can live in the mountains all summer and all winter too" (15). After her father's prophetic speech, Winnemucca writes, she heard old women talking over the tribe's future: "It is true what our great chief has said, for it was shown to him by a higher power. . . . Oh, it surely will come to pass. We shall no longer be a happy people, as we now are; we shall no longer go here and

there as of old; we shall no longer build big fires as a signal to our friends, for we shall always be afraid of being seen by those bad people" (15).

The change in Paiute culture, the old women understand, will be profound. They cannot be migrant and have several bases from which to construct their identity; they cannot communicate with each other, and they will always live in fear. Because the land will change, Paiute ways of living on and with the land will change. This change signals a radical change in Paiute identity, and Winnemucca lived in the throes of change. It is in the now-idyllic past that Paiutes could "go here and there." Winnemucca is further divided: in order to advocate for her people in her work as translator, she *must* be "seen by those bad people."

Winnemucca, like many Native American autobiographers, moves between the genres of ethnography and autobiography. Many scholars have used the term "autoethnography" to describe this sort of genre blending.⁵ By describing her people's traditions, Winnemucca situates herself in a collective identity and balances the singular "I" with a plural "we." Note, for example, her narration of the extensive Paiute naming and courting ceremonies. She carefully positions herself between the contemporary violent conquest and subordination by whites (the present), and the longed-for relationship between Paiute people and place (the past). "Many years ago," she writes, "when my people were happier than they are now, they used to celebrate the Festival of Flowers in the spring. I have been to three of them only in the course of my life" (46). The happiness of Paiute people, implies Winnemucca, rests on seasonal cycles—but with the coming of the whites, it's as if the very seasonal cycles have been disrupted. The language of nostalgia dominates Winnemucca's account of the Flower Festival and her own naming: "Oh, with what eagerness we girls used to watch every spring for the time when we could meet with our heart's delight, the young men, whom in civilized life you call beaux. We would all go in company to see if the flowers we were named for were yet in bloom, for almost all the girls were named for flowers. . . . They all go marching along, each girl in turn singing of herself; but she is not a girl any more,—she is a flower singing . . . 'I, Sarah Winnemucca, am a shell-flower, such as I wear on my dress. My name is Thocmetony. I am so beautiful! I shall be beautiful while the earth lasts'" (46–47). In this quotation, Winnemucca's movement between a singular and a collective identity is apparent—she aligns herself with the other girls participating in the ceremony, and in the union with the natural world, becomes "I, Sarah."⁶

She ends her reverie by remembering how parents and children praised sage, rye-grass, and rock, and in this way "all are happy; and that closes the beautiful day" (48). That "beautiful day" does not refer merely to the celebration of the Flower Festival but represents the beautiful day of the Paiute past, before whites came to the Great Basin "roaring like a lion." It is clear that the Paiute people deeply rely on their home place as a source of identity, even taking their names from their environment. When that home place is disrupted, cultural identity also becomes disrupted. Winnemucca travels from past to the present as she explains how Paiute unhappiness threatens Paiute survival. "My people have been so unhappy for a long time," she laments; "they wish now to *disincrease* instead of multiply. The mothers are afraid to have more children, for fear they shall have daughters, who are not safe even in their mother's presence" (48).

Shifting Places

The way Sarah Winnemucca moves between cultures is related to her physical movement through places. "A migrant," writes cultural studies scholar Madan Sarup, "is a person who has crossed the border."⁷ Sarah Winnemucca's narrative details a constant crossing and recrossing of a variety of borders. These border crossings, for Winnemucca and her people, are a result of the violent clash of cultures that occurred in the Great Basin. People can cross borders, and it affects their sense of self. But what happens when borders shift? How do these changes affect a sense of self? A migratory subject is someone whose sense of self is informed by her own constant movement—someone who relies on many places, many "home bases," to gain a sense of herself. A migratory subject also has the awareness of how places themselves change and shift meaning. Sarah Winnemucca displays all these characteristics.

Because Paiute ways of mobility and white ways of mobility differed so dramatically, the Great Basin became a zone of contact in which desires, languages, and identities intersected, irrevocably changing both place and culture in the process. Sarah Winnemucca's identity is not only constituted by this complex meeting of cultures—she complicates her sense of self by traveling to the seat of power of the United States government and to cities such as San Francisco and Boston. She crosses and recrosses her path all over the United States (and the soon-to-be-states) pleading for her people's civil rights. In writing her autobiography, she is conscious of her position as both insider and outsider. She is a permanent

migrant: she "travels" the fluid boundaries between communal self and individual self, between Paiute homeland and government bureaus, and most significantly between belonging and exile, home and homelessness. One of the most interesting aspects of the relationship between Winnemucca's sense of her self and her sense of place can be seen in her narration of how *place* physically changes. She does indeed hold a sense of herself as someone in constant motion, and part of that migratory subjectivity is based not just on her movement through space, but on the "movement" of place itself. The Great Basin, widely traveled by Northern Paiutes as part of seasonal migration patterns, became increasingly occupied by settlers. In 1859, Frederick Dodge, the first United States Indian agent to work exclusively with tribes in the western part of the Utah Territory, surveyed the Great Basin for suitable reservation sites. Much of the land used by Paiutes in their nomadic lifestyle was already taken by settlers. In 1860 Dodge wrote to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in Washington, D.C., requesting that land be set aside for Pyramid Lake and Walker River reservations before it was completely occupied by emigrants. "These are isolated spots," he wrote, "embracing large fisheries, surrounded by mountains and deserts, and will have the advantage of being their home from choice."⁸ The Pyramid Lake Reservation was established in 1861, and although the Walker River land was set aside for "Indian purposes" in 1859, it did not become a reservation until 1874. The Malheur Reserve in Oregon was set aside in 1871 but was not occupied as a reservation until 1873. The reservations drastically changed Paiute patterns of nomadism. As a result, Winnemucca and her people became exiled from the very places where they had once "belonged," rendering them homeless in their homeland. The meaning of "home" radically changed. Consider, for example, the following ways Winnemucca documents changes in place.

Chapter 5, "Reservation at Pyramid and Muddy Lakes," chronicles a variety of clashes between whites and Paiutes over land. Not only does Winnemucca move from place to place, but "place" itself is not stable: "This reservation, first given us in 1860, was at first sixty miles long and fifteen wide. The line is where the railroad now crosses the river. . . . No white people lived there at the time it was given us. We Piutes have always lived on the river, because out of those two lakes we caught beautiful mountain trout, weighing from two to twenty-five pounds each, which would have given us a good income if we had it all, as at first. Since the railroad ran through in 1867, the whites have taken all the best part

of the reservation from us, and one of the lakes also" (76). The railroad physically intersects the land and culturally disrupts what Winnemucca wistfully portrays as the once-held continuity of Paiute custom. As literary critic Leo Marx points out, much nineteenth-century literature by Anglo (men) was concerned with the retreat to the pastoral ideal and the contradiction inherent in the "machine in the garden"—the railroad. The railroad, as Thomas Jefferson saw it, was "a token of the liberation of the human spirit."⁹ Winnemucca does not see the railroad in such glorious Jeffersonian terms, but instead as a physical reminder of the way the boundaries of Paiute homeland change under her very feet. The land is central in tribal identity formation. The Paiutes, Winnemucca writes, have *always* lived by the river because it provided sustenance. The railroad, in Marx's assessment a powerful metaphor of the pastoral ideal and the potential of the raw American landscape, becomes an entirely different metaphor in Winnemucca's rhetoric. The railroad is a sign of encroaching white settlement and a literal division of homeland. The Anglo metaphor for prosperity and power has real and dire consequences for Winnemucca and her people.

Winnemucca narrates how the Paiute homeland became a monument to the growing hostilities between whites and Paiutes. In 1865, after accusing Paiutes of stealing cattle from white settlers, army soldiers rode to Muddy Lake and massacred every man, woman, and child. That summer, two white men were killed at Walker Lake and reinforcements of soldiers were sent from California. The loss of Paiute homeland was very real, and in Nevada "the trail began which is marked by the blood of my people from hill to hill and valley to valley" (78). The very places that formed Winnemucca's identity are changing. And because her experience of place largely contributes to Winnemucca's sense of self, changes in subjectivity are profound. Winnemucca's people had existed in a home marked by hunting patterns, ritualistic patterns, familiarity, and stories. Mobility was chosen for reasons of subsistence, not forced by governmental decree and violent upheaval.

In the opening page of her autobiography, Winnemucca describes precontact Paiute life: "My people were scattered at that time over nearly all the territory now known as Nevada" (5). Paiutes traditionally traveled extensively according to subsistence patterns. But because Winnemucca wrote and lived in a historical period when boundaries between Native and Anglo land were hotly contested, her people could not scatter at will. Winnemucca is a dweller who turned into a traveler—"travel" or migra-

tion was necessary for the survival of her people. Within her tribe, because of family lineage, linguistic skill, work experience, and persistence, Winnemucca was regarded for a long while as a liaison and spokeswoman as she traveled between various assigned tribal homelands and the East. Winnemucca's migratory subjectivity, her sense of herself in constant motion, is the political result of her attempts to claim a home for her people. Winnemucca's narrative links continuous departure and return.

Winnemucca foregrounds the results of how place changes by the very place names she emphasizes in her autobiography. Language is crucial to a sense of self and a sense of place, and these names show how contested home had become for Paiutes. Captain Truckee's friendly overtures toward Colonel Frémont were finally reciprocated during the third summer of emigration. "My grandfather met him," Winnemucca writes, "and they were soon friends. They met just where the railroad crosses the Truckee River, now called Wadsworth, Nevada" (9). These changing meanings of place suggest how many meanings a place can have: the endless Anglo mobility (the railroad), the natural nonhuman features and the Paiutes' mode of travel and source of sustenance (the Truckee River), and an Indian reservation-edge town, constructed by Anglos and inhabited by both Anglos and Paiutes (Wadsworth).

After unsuccessfully trying to cohabit with his "white brothers," Captain Truckee announced to his tribe that they would return home for the summer. "Dear daughter," he tells Sarah Winnemucca's mother, "we will get ready to go home. It is time now that the snow is off the mountains" (40). Winnemucca narrates the celebratory mood of the people: "Everybody was singing here and there, getting beautiful dresses made, and before we started we had a thanksgiving dance. . . . It was all so nice, and everybody was so happy because they were going to see their dear country and the dear ones at home" (40).

After traveling toward their summer home and arriving at the head of the Carson River, the tribe "was met with some very bad news indeed, which made us all cry" (41). Captain Truckee's band encountered some of "our people," Winnemucca writes, "who said almost all the tribe had died off, and if one family got sick it was a sure thing that the whole family would die. He said the white men had poisoned the Humboldt River, and our people had drank the water and died off" (41). Paiutes who had lost family members, including Winnemucca's mother and sister, cut off their hair in mourning. The head of the Carson River now stands in the Paiutes' emotional geography as an intersection of hope and

desire for home, and the news of death.

Winnemucca writes that after mourning for those who died at the Humboldt River, the tribe continued onward: “after travelling three more days we came to a place called Genoa, on the west side of the Carson River, at the very place where I had first seen a white man. A saw-mill and a grist-mill were there, and five more houses. We camped in the very same place where we did before” (41). The changes in the landscape that Winnemucca notes link the past to the present and suggest the disruption of her tribe’s cycles of mobility. The place is the same—they had camped there before—but it is irrevocably changed because of permanent white settlement.

Throughout the first lengthy chapter of *Life Among the Paiutes*, Winnemucca often refers to the tribe’s joy of homecoming and return. Upon each return, Winnemucca narrates a series of misfortunes: a seemingly poisoned river, a settlement of hostile whites, and a cache of winter food discovered by whites and burned. Winnemucca constantly reconstructs the site of home, the base on which much of her identity is continuously formed. When home becomes disrupted, Winnemucca’s sense of self and sense of place become increasingly complicated. By layering the land with departures and returns, and by narrating the differences encountered each time around, Winnemucca complicates her own migratory subjectivity and exposes the instability of place. As identity is a fluid, undulating matrix of meaning, dependent on context, so place is constantly shifting meaning.

The year is 1858, Winnemucca writes, and she and her sister live with the Ormsby family in Genoa. She can name all twenty-one of her white neighbors, and does so in order to demonstrate the peaceable way Paiutes and whites shared the land. “All these white people were loved by my people,” she insists; “we lived there together, and were as happy as could be. . . . My people never said, ‘We want you to give us something for our land’” (59). Instead, Winnemucca stresses, the Paiutes and whites engaged in trading practices, “our white brothers gave my people guns for their horses in the way of trading” (59). But this home is a zone of contact, a borderland, a “liminal landscape of changing meaning,” as historian and literary critic Annette Kolodny calls the West.¹⁰ Winnemucca notes the movement and interaction of the settlers and immigrants—Mormons came to settle in the Carson Valley, and whites began farming and mining. She creates an almost pastoral scene of peaceable coexistence until 1859, when two white men were shot and made to look like victims



Sarah Winnemucca at a lecture in Baltimore, ca. 1880s. Photograph courtesy Nevada Historical Society, Reno.

of Indians because arrows were placed in their bullet wounds. This event introduces more voices in contact with each other: whites seek an explanation from the Paiutes, who note that the arrows belong not to Paiutes but to the Washoe tribe. Winnemucca is conscious of her position at a crossroad—the message in *Life Among the Piutes* is a painful one, but it is incidents like these that move Winnemucca to write her autobiography in order to bear witness.

The way one moves through the world shapes one's sense of self. The places through which Sarah Winnemucca moved changed, and the purposes for which she moved changed. The establishment of Indian reserves, the coming of the railroad, and the proliferation of agriculture are factors that physically changed the Great Basin West. Sarah Winnemucca's reasons for being mobile changed, too. Precontact Northern Paiute life was characterized by nomadism; the Paiutes ranged freely over the high deserts of the Great Basin. During Winnemucca's lifetime, traditional Paiute patterns of mobility became restricted because of the presence of white settlers. Winnemucca no longer moved solely in search of food and subsistence, but in search of audience and empathy.

Winnemucca's experience forced her into a powerful yet precarious position. On behalf of her people, she spoke and wrote and bore witness. Her subjectivity is suspended in a borderland,¹¹ a productive and conflicted space that demanded her to compromise her tribal identity while appealing to the world of her Victorian audience. She lectured from northern Washington State to central Nevada, from San Francisco to Salt Lake City. She appeared before audiences in Boston and Washington, D.C., to expose the malevolence of Indian agents and secure civil rights for her people. It is clear that she is aware of her rhetorical position between the expectations and desires of her audience and bound by her commitment to find sustainable solutions for her people when she comments, "Oh, dear readers, it is a fearful thing to tell, but it must be told. Yes, it must be told by me" (77).

Sarah Winnemucca often appeared on stage in traditional buckskin and wooed her Victorian audiences by playing at once the exotic and the intimate. Her public persona demanded that she meet the expectations of her genteel white audience. After Sarah Winnemucca first appeared on stage with her family in San Francisco, an anonymous letter to the editor of the *San Francisco Daily Alta California* asks why Chief Winnemucca "had taken the white man's ways to show himself."¹² This

letter points to another kind of migratory subjectivity: Winnemucca had to develop the ability to travel between audience expectations. The media referred to Winnemucca as "princess" and "squaw," and an 1870 letter by Indian superintendent Major Henry Douglass draws attention to the many selves that Winnemucca (and her audiences) constructed. He writes, "She is not by any means the Goddess, which some Eastern people imagine her to be . . . neither is she a 'low, dirty, commerce Indian,' as the papers of this country describe her to be. She is a plain Indian woman, passably good looking, with some education and possesses much natural shrewdness and intelligence. She converses well and seems select in the use of terms. She conforms readily to civilised customs, and will as readily join in Indian dances."¹³

Winnemucca stands at a historical crossroads. Her life is a testament to the migratory West. The history of Paiute-white contact informed who she was, and it is in this contact zone, this borderland, that she developed a self characterized by movement across place and between worlds.

NOTES

1. Sarah Winnemucca Hopkins, *Life Among the Piutes: Their Wrongs and Claims* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1994), 5. *Life Among the Piutes* was originally published by G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, in 1883. Subsequent references to *Life Among the Piutes* will appear parenthetically within this essay.
2. Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson, in their collaboratively produced reader *Women, Autobiography, Theory* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1998), argue that "all subjects are in transit, shifting for identification" (39). Smith and Watson urge readers of autobiography to consider how issues like "mobility, location, and zones of transit" foreground the ways subjects shift identities.
3. Hertha D. Sweet Wong, "First-Person Plural: Subjectivity and Community in Native American Women's Autobiography," in *Women, Autobiography, Theory*, ed. Smith and Watson, 174.
4. Una Chaudhuri, *The Geography of Modern Drama* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997), 16–17.
5. Françoise Lionnet writes that autoethnography is "the defining of one's subjective ethnicity as mediated through language, history, and ethnographical analysis." Françoise Lionnet, *Autobiographical Voices: Race, Gender, Self-Portraiture* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989), 99.
6. Hertha Wong, who has written extensively on Native American women's autobiographies, notes that an Indian woman's subjectivity tends to be "relational"—that is, "associated with cultural grounding . . . family, community, and expansive geocentric kinship networks" (Wong, "First-Person Plural," 168).
7. Madan Sarup, "Home and Identity," in *Traveller's Tales: Narratives of Home and Displacement*, ed. George Robertson et al. (New York: Routledge, 1994), 94–104.

8. Gae Whitney Canfield, *Sarah Winnemucca of the Northern Paiutes* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1983), 17–20.
9. Leo Marx, *The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), 150.
10. Annette Kolodny, "Letting Go of Our Grand Obsessions: Notes Toward a New Literary History of the American Frontiers," *American Literature* 64 (March 1992): 9.
11. The borderland, Gloria Anzaldúa has written, is a place "wherever two or more cultures edge each other, where people of different races occupy the same territory." Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (2nd ed.; San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 1999), 19.
12. Canfield, *Sarah Winnemucca*, 41.
13. *Ibid.*, 62.

STEPHEN CRANE AND "SOME OTHERS" ECONOMICS, RACE, AND THE VISION OF A FAILED FRONTIER

MATTHEW EVERTSON

In August 1896, Stephen Crane shared with Theodore Roosevelt, then New York police commissioner and a noted western enthusiast, a draft of a story inspired by his recent trip to the West, "A Man and Some Others." Roosevelt wrote a note to Crane about the story, in which an American tough-guy turned Texas sheepherder is gunned down by a band of Mexican locals, with the following suggestion: "Some day I want you to write another story of the frontiersman and the Mexican Greaser in which the frontiersman shall come out on top; it is more normal that way!"¹

The "normal" way that easterners overcame the obstacles and challenges of western settlement, which Roosevelt championed as the "winning of the West," forms the central source of conflict and tension in most of Crane's western writing. His most famous and widely anthologized western works—for instance, "The Blue Hotel" and "A Bride Comes to Yellow Sky"—focus on the growing pains of two tiny communities facing the expansion of eastern industry, business, transportation, and immigration into a formerly sparse frontier landscape. But the story that aroused Roosevelt's displeasure has received little attention since it appeared in the back pages of *Century* magazine in February 1897.² This is unfortunate, because Roosevelt's complaint reveals two crucial issues of western migration under debate in the 1890s that few literary scholars have tackled in Crane's western work: economics and race. Roosevelt, who admired much of Crane's writing, including his dark portraits of New York's neglected and impoverished ethnic enclaves, simply could not abide this portrayal of a failed frontier. Both he and Frederick Jackson Turner were arguing at the time that successful migration west was