

Truth and Expectation: Myth in Alaska History

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In his recent apologia titled *Thinking Back: the Perils of Writing History*, C. Van Woodward quotes Henrik Ibsen to the effect that “Truths are by no means the wiry Methuselehs some people think them.¹ A normally constituted truth lives—let us say—as a rule, seventeen or eighteen years; at the outside, twenty, seldom longer. And truths so stricken in years are always shockingly thin.” And while Woodward writes that he does not think Ibsen meant his aphorism to be taken literally, still it probably applies to a good many more truths than most of us find comfortable, particularly those who are historians. One does not like the idea of going on a fool’s errand.

Ibsen’s observation is useful as a way of introducing the topic of historical mythology. One of the things teachers of history try to do is persuade students that the past is not set in concrete, that history is malleable. The principal business of the historian is to try to discover the meaning of the past, as Woodward says, “to explain how certain things and ideas came about, and what became of them.” This is more complicated than it first appears, for history is not a fixed thing. Each historian may regard different data, different facts, as the most important upon which to build an interpretation. And when chose, the facts do not interpret themselves; they do not line themselves up in order of priority and significance. It is the role of analyst to arrange the facts properly, to interpret them. That act of arranging, however true to source documentation, is an individual and subjective act, and is the beginning of what we call history. And each historian will arrange the past differently, i.e. will interpret the fact differently. Sometime these differences are minor, as in the question of whether the closing of a factory was a result of labor strife or a change in the market for the product.² But sometime they are major, as in the different cultural views of Columbus’ arrival in America as “discovery,” or “invasion.”³ This is part of the reason why in the academy, our courses are not labelled “Chronology 101, 311, 641” and the like, but “History 101, 311.” and so forth.

Reasonable minds will disagree over historical explanations, of course. There are many reasons for this. In the first place, everyone’s

mind works differently, a function of one's personal history. Additionally, knowledge is in some ways cumulative, and each generation builds on the work of the previous ones. It was Newton, among others, who said that we stand on the shoulders of giants. And we are probably much more functions of our environment than we would like to admit. In a popular anthology of American historiography, editors Gerald Grob and George Billias quote Benedetto Croce's insight that "every true history is contemporary history." They go on to assert that "every generation of American scholars has reinterpreted the past in terms of its own age" and that "historians reexamine the past in light of prevailing ideas, assumptions and problems of their own day."⁴ Still, this having been said, historians like to think that the conclusions they advertise have validity, and most hope that their preserved utterances will make some sense for longer than a day, and if truth be told, longer than seventeen or eighteen years.

What the public believes is history often seems less malleable than what the historians tell them it is. The past is a common curiosity. Indeed, as most students of history, and students of any other subject for that matter, have figured out by the time they leave off being sophomores, identity is impossible without an historical frame of reference. The first realization of this is usually in a personal, individual context, but it is as true in a collective context, as well, a fact which analysts of education often offer as a reason for including history in the school curriculum. Much of the work historians do is to provide a broader frame of reference for individual identities by constructing collective histories for general understanding, that is, for the public. But the public is often careless about its history. It often seems that what history is, is much less important than that it be there. In fact, it's not quite this easy; it helps a lot if the popular history provides the kind of exemplars which fit a people's image of themselves, and which illustrates their values and aspirations.

What the popular mind fixes upon as its history is significant, for once set, it is hard to dislodge. Yet truths tenaciously held in the public mind are often not truths at all, but myths, and historians often are at great pains to correct popular history, and when they are called upon outside their own realm to provide historical expertise, it is as often not to verify or contradict popular versions of historic phenomena. But it also happens that historians themselves through ignorance or incompetence may aid and abet the misconceptions of popular history. For historians, it must be admitted, are only slightly less needful of mythologies than anyone else.

In a 1986 essay on myth in history, William McNeill noted that most human beings have loyalties to various kinds of groups, both large and small, perhaps the most intense being to national cultures.⁵ He also noted that groups like to be flattered, and that historians often write a history which flatters groups. There is a level at which this is quite useful. The virtue and self-righteousness which a group fixes upon its history can be self-validating, and if pursued collectively, can be self-fulfilling. But historical myth can be misleading, too, and can lead its adherents into errors which are frustrating, self-defeating, expensive, and even inhumane.

Historians have their own loyalties, of course, and often flatter ideologies as well as other entities. Loyalty and bias bear a more than passing resemblance. But McNeill noted that historians have made their stock in trade the reinforcing of group myths, and many have been among the most effective myth-makers. Others attack or pick apart group identities, and earn their reputations as myth-breakers. But theirs is a lonely trade, for myth and identity are closely interwoven, and people do not like to be disabused of self-images upon which they have based their lives and activities. But the historian as educator, and as human being, has the same obligation as any other teacher, to attempt to objectify reality and courageously and persuasively to argue to those conclusions which one's best judgement finds are suggested by the evidence, measured by intelligence and experience.

Memory is a further complication of the business of discovering, or making, the meaning of the past. Often the data the historian chooses include journals or diaries or recollections kept or written by participants of the phenomenon being described. These, along with both official and unofficial accounts of events, for example, institutional memoranda and court records, on the one hand, and newspaper accounts, on the other, are often regarded as sufficiently reliable to be used as sources. But a close look at such material reveals that the correspondence between memory and reality may be quite suspect. Just as the popular view of history regards it as something fixed and permanent, so is memory also popularly understood. It is usually assumed that memory is rather like a folder in a file cabinet in the brain. When one wants a particular memory, the appropriate drawer in the cabinet is opened and the permanent folder extracted. But those psychologists and others who have studied the psychology of memory argue that this is not the case. Memory, they say, is in fact not recovered, but constructed.⁶ Rather than simply being recovered intact from a reposing place in the brain, each memory is freshly

made up each time it is called to mind. Researchers have found that while some elements of the memory are constant, each time people remember something they omit, reshape, distort, combine, and reorganize the details in an active and subjective way. They mix the pieces of the present with elements of the past. Indeed, the present is the major element in the shape of any particular memory.⁷ Jean Piaget noted that as we change the way we think about the world, we automatically update memories to reflect our new understanding.⁸ And in addition, the construction is itself a collective act, one which takes place with, through and in relation to other people, and ideas. The act of construction takes place in conversations with others which occur in the contexts of community, broader politics, and social dynamics.

Those broader contexts often form the principal paradigm in which a “new” memory is generated. Clyde Milner II included an example of this phenomenon in a chapter on the West in popular imagination in his recent compendium, *Major Problems in the History of the American West*.⁹ In 1897, a woman named Harriett Sanders wrote a memoir of her experience trekking to Montana Territory in 1863. Moving across the plains from the settled regions of the country, the party encountered Indians every day between June 19 and July 22. The Indians were considered savage, and the settlers travelled in fear of them. Or did they? When she wrote her memoir, Mrs. Sanders ignored a diary she had kept on the actual trip in 1863. In the diary she recorded that Indians were seen on only four specific days and she recorded explicitly that they were not seen on other days. Nor were the Indians which were seen any problem. Mrs. Sander’s memory in 1897 may be taken as genuine, not false. Despite the evidence of her earlier diary, she truly remembered Indians on the trail in 1863. But by 1897 what had been a matter of fact occurrence in 1863 had become in Mrs. Sanders’ thinking a heroic saga of bringing civilization to a wild land, a saga in which she had played her small part. And conceiving of it as a saga, she had transformed her memory of events, constructing a memory in 1897 which fit her ideology and her circumstances, and those of popular history as well.

There are other examples of the role of myth and memory in history which have cultural significance. Before the mid-1930s, General George Custer was generally considered a hero, losing his life in defense of a way of life, while pushing back the frontier so that way of life, democracy and individual self-sufficiency, could spread across the land. Even more, Custer’s derring-do was admired, his decisiveness and his willingness to put his life on the line for his

beliefs, and his readiness to take action, rather than to talk. But as Indian policy changed in the 1930s, and as the destruction of Indian lands and culture began to be seen as a tragedy, the interpretation of Custer changed dramatically. He came to be seen as a megalomaniac, as careless, and blinded by his ambition to a reasonable appreciation of the jeopardy into which he so carelessly and callously put the men who depended on him.¹⁰

It is important to analyze the role of the history of popular imagining, both for what it can reveal about the way historians approach the task of finding meaning in the past, and for its commentary on the need for historical mythology in popular culture. This is an enterprise far more useful than simply dismissing the construction of imagined pasts as romantic, escapist, inaccurate, or neurotic.¹¹ I contend that these various epistemological and historiographical phenomena have played a significant role in Alaska's history, and further, that the tenacity with which many of them are held has impeded Alaska's development, and as well an effective understanding of the relationship of Alaska's past to its present and future. In other words, Alaska's historical mythologies have not just been inconvenient or curious; they have been in some important ways destructive. Misinformation about the Alaskan part and misinterpretation of the information have both contributed to and exacerbated the mythologizing of Alaska history. I should like to attempt to demonstrate this thesis with three examples.

First, however, I would like to suggest that the principal paradigm which had been used to explain Alaska, past and present, is the territory's assumed uniqueness from the rest of the United States, and in some ways, from the rest of the continent. This is a particularly tenacious assumption, found in most writing about Alaska. It has been the conviction of most authors who have written about it that as a place, Alaska is so different an environment that it presents human beings with challenges which they have not and cannot encounter elsewhere.¹² Moreover, before going to Alaska, having learned to think of it as unique, and to think of living there as heroic, many immigrants quickly become convinced that they themselves are unique. The environment makes them heroes in their own minds even though often enough their lives manifest no unusually heroic characteristics.¹³ This phenomenon has not received much attention from historians, for, as in much of the history of the American west, place has been given a more prominent role in development of the region than people's conceptions about place and how those have evolved, so too has this been the case in the history of Alaska.

It is not just the physical environment which Alaskans think of as unique, then, a conviction for which there might be some justification, but as well the political and economic environment has been considered unique by many writers. And writers have often used this conviction to serve not only their audience's, but also their own agendas, their own loyalties. Accounts of such episodes as the gold rush, the modern fur trade, bush flying, attempts at agricultural development and the final disposition of Alaska's lands in the 1970s and 1980s, as well as the purchase of Alaska itself, have manifested this conviction of uniqueness, and also have used the past to serve the present.¹⁴ For example, Ernest Gruening in his history *The State of Alaska*, written in the most critical days of the struggle for statehood, castigated the federal government, first for having usually neglected Alaska in all of these episodes, and also for having interfered ineptly in the region's affairs when it did deign to notice Alaska.¹⁵ Gruening created a particular past with this argument, one from which he wished the Alaska of his time escape, through statehood. But other writers have disagreed with Gruening, pointing out that the federal government's treatment of Alaska was generous, and not categorically different from its dealings with other territories.¹⁶ Still other writers, however, have reinforced popular perceptions, insisting that there is a distinct Alaskan culture, one characterized by greater independence, love of freedom, and willingness to take risks than in the rest of the United States.¹⁷ The conviction of uniqueness serves many uses. Not only does it help to persuade writers that their subject is more interesting than others, but for the inhabitants, it can serve to justify being in a place which they regard as extraordinary, and which is regarded by others only as bizarre.

In fact, despite the conviction of Alaskans' uniqueness, the lives of most Alaskans are not characteristically different from those of most other Americans. Most Alaskans live in the several urban centers, in platted subdivisions with framed houses where automobiles travel on paved streets and roads and where the residents have access to commercial and cable television, where salaried employment and consumer dependency are the normal and expected aspects of daily living.¹⁸ The image of the independent sourdough supporting himself in the wilderness while prospecting for gold universally symbolizes the more independent, unique culture supposed to have existed in historic Alaska, and the staying power of the image and the idea it generates seems to fulfil the need for a past which would have produced a more independent, self-reliant populace in the present, or at least the conditions for such a culture. The conviction that such

a culture exists has complicated the business of sorting out the meaning of Alaska's previous peoples. I shall discuss this in the context of three episodes in the Alaskan past: the purchase of the territory from Russia in 1867, the advocacy of Native rights by the Alaska Native Brotherhood, and reaction to the statehood act of 1958.

The Purchase of Alaska

The earliest American interest in Alaska was not directed at development of any of Alaska's own resources. Rather, it was guided by the role that Alaska might play in a grander scheme of development. William Henry Seward, the American Secretary of State who negotiated the Alaska purchase treaty, was an expansionist. He was fully committed to expanding the American economy. He accepted fully the capitalist notion that a stable economy is one in a state of growth, not stasis. Growth, he believed, was necessary to economic health and continuing profitability. Thus, as had many American expansionists before him, including Thomas Jefferson, John Quincy Adams and Henry Clay, he sought new markets for American products. In particular, he was persuaded that the American economic future lay in the East, in Asia.¹⁹

As an important aspect of American economic expansion, Seward sought to ring the United States with support areas which could offer safe havens and resupply stations to American merchant vessels on commercial voyages. Greenland, the Virgin Islands, Hawaii, and Alaska all were to be part of Seward's support network for economic expansion beyond continental United States.²⁰ Such support stations could also serve strategic and defense purposes, providing naval coaling stations and bases from which the United States could be protected in times of emergency. Seward also sought to annex British Columbia, to forge an unbroken link between western U.S. and the Alaskan outpost.²¹

Expansion to the Orient, then, was Seward's primary motivation for the purchase of Alaska, as a way station for commercial expansion to Asia. Already on the 1850s, California merchants looked to the Amur River valley and to Japan as fertile ground for trade and markets. Perry McDonough Collins, an aggressive American trade broker, established commercial relations with Russian companies operating in the Amur River region before the Crimean War. One of the priorities of the U.S. Senators from the new state of California in the 1850s was a commercial treaty between the U.S. and Russia

which would facilitate development of those relations.²² In 1865 and 1866 Collins was instrumental in designing the Russian American Western Union Overland Telegraph project to build a telegraph line from the U.S. to Europe through Alaska and Siberia. Again, Alaska's resources were not an object of interest. Rather, though Alaska real estate was to be utilized, Alaska's role was incidental to the larger project. Alaska was drawn into an enterprise directed toward American economic expansion or imperialism. In fact, the only American commercial interest in Alaska's resources before the purchase came from a group of California investors who secured a contract to ship ice from Sitka to cool westerners' drinks and help preserve their meats on hot summer days.

Only Charles Sumner seems initially to have imagined that Alaska might have resources of its own which Americans might develop in the future. Sumner was chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, whose responsibility it was to make a recommendation to the full Congress on whether or not to ratify the treaty negotiated by Seward. From his study of notes made by explorers who had been there throughout Alaska's Russian history, Sumner concluded that Alaska's furs, fish, and forests would at some time in the future support a population of American settlers who would take their American democratic institutions with them, and rescue a portion of the North American continent from what was considered to be the barbaric autocracy of the Russian czars.²³

Would-be settlers who flocked to Sitka in 1867 shared Sumner's preconceptions of Alaska when they embarked from west coast ports hoping to be the first to cash in on the opportunity represented by the purchase of the territory. But they were to be rudely surprised. Large amounts of capital were necessary to develop Alaska's resources. And most of those which might be developed would have to compete with ample supplies of the same resources much closer to markets in the continental states and territories. For the boomers at Sitka, discovery was a negative experience. There was no local economic base, and with nothing to export they could survive only a limited time before their personal capital was exhausted. Unable to make use of the natural resources, most of the early boomers soon left Alaska for brighter prospects. By 1873, Sitka had atrophied from a town of perhaps two thousand five hundred residents to a village of only a few hundred, and the Native population had given up the expectation that the town would become the center for an expanding Alaskan population.²⁴

That the purchase of Alaska was universally unpopular in the United States is a singular example of the complication of the

understanding of the past by the mythologies of the present.²⁵ The unpopularity asserted by many present-day writers is one of the strongest historic myths in American history. It persists despite conclusive evidence to the contrary, and the efforts of the best historians to dispel it.²⁶ In analyzing this notion, it is necessary to remember that treaties must be ratified by two-thirds of the U.S. Senate to become effective. The Alaska Purchase Treaty passed on its first roll call by the margin of 29 to 12, four more than the required two-thirds.²⁷ Not even the earlier count suggests that the purchase was unpopular in Congress.

Three decades ago Richard Welch surveyed American newspapers for editorial opinion on the purchase of Alaska in 1867. He found that nearly all major urban newspapers supported the purchase.²⁸ The principal one which did not was the *New York Tribune*, edited by Seward's political foe Horace Greely. Greely charged that Seward had quickly "cooked up" the purchase to divert attention from the country's domestic disasters.

There was opposition to the purchase of Alaska in some quarters, but it had nothing to do with the unpopularity of the territory. As Russian minister to the U.S. Eduard von Stoekl observed, "This opposition is not aimed at the 'transaction' itself as from the passionate animosity which reign in the Congress against the President and even more against the Secretary of State."²⁹ The U.S. was torn by perhaps its most severe constitutional crisis in 1867 as the Congress warred with President Johnson over the reconstruction of the southern states after the Civil War. Following Lincoln, Johnson wanted a lenient reconstruction policy, which, perforce, would not have been as vigorous in its protection of the civil rights of newly freed blacks. Congress, however, was determined to implement a strong federal program which would protect blacks from an unsympathetic southern white leadership, while at the same time exacting recognition of federal power. Congressional fury over Johnson's plan led to the president's impeachment on a political issue. The Senate came within one vote of convicting him. Opposition to Johnson on reconstruction spilled over to other of his policies, and to his cabinet officers and their activities.³⁰

Some critics viewed Alaska, America's first non-contiguous acquisition, as a colony, and objected to such acquisition on the grounds that the U.S. had itself been founded in revolution against colonial rule. Others thought Alaska would ultimately come into U.S. possession by default, and therefore there was no reason to pay for it. "Undoubtedly . . . it is our 'manifest destiny' ultimately to rule the

continent," wrote the editor of *Harper's Weekly*, for whom Thomas Nast drew his cartoons of polar bears welcoming Seward; "but that is no reason why we should immediately annex Mexico, or make war upon Canada, or buy Russian America."³¹

Many commentators, however, favored the purchase. Editors of the *Boston Daily Evening Traveller*, the *World*, the *Commercial Advertiser*, the *Times*, and the *Herald* in New York, the *Philadelphia Ledger*, and the *Evening Star* and the *National Intelligencer* in Washington, D.C. supported the purchase, as did most of the forty-eight major newspapers in the U.S.³² Noted spokesmen who supported the purchase included Spencer Baird of the Smithsonian Institution, and Civil War heroes General Henry Halleck and Commodore John Rogers, as well as Quartermaster General Montgomery C. Meigs. Others included such important members of Congress as Thaddeus Stevens.³³ Unlike *Harper's Weekly*, most felt that the U.S. *should* immediately acquire Russian America to make more probable and early the acquisition of British Columbia. At the same time, New Englanders looked to the Bering and Arctic whaling fishery. But most, with Seward, saw Alaska as a bridge to the Orient, facilitating American commercial expansion into the Pacific.³⁴ The easy passage of the treaty in the Senate demonstrates that most leaders agreed with these arguments.

Why, then, has the myth of the unpopularity of the purchase persisted in American historical perception? In addition to the phenomenon that textbook authors often do not have time to stay current with developing research on all questions, the myth fits two images of Alaska which serve writers. The first is of an Alaska so far away and with a history so different from the rest of American development as to be difficult to include in one's study, and one's national history. Most writers of national history probably fall into this category.³⁵ The second is that of victim Alaska, starting the American phase of its history with a number of disadvantages, including national unpopularity and neglect by the federal government, and overcoming these disadvantages to produce that imagined, unique culture discussed above, characterized by a level of independence, self-reliance and ingenuity rivaling that associated with the nineteenth century western American frontier. Most Alaskan writers fall into this category.³⁶ Neither image is essentially correct, but with the myth of the unpopularity of the purchase, they persist.

William Paul and the Alaska Native Brotherhood

In April 1925 the seventh Alaska Territorial Legislature enacted into law a measure requiring that voters in territorial elections be able to read and write the English language. Passed after World War I in a period when racism and segregation became increasingly regimented throughout the United States, the law clearly was consistent with the growing willingness on the part of white Americans to enact restrictions on the movement and civil participation of non-whites, including Indians. Such restrictive legislation often was a direct response to the growing political power and social mobility of minorities, and was based on assumptions of racial inferiority. When this was not the case, charges of cultural inferiority often were used to deny minorities rights and privileges enjoyed by whites. In Alaska, the literacy act was aimed at one man, William L. Paul, Sr., principal leader of the Alaska Native Brotherhood (A.N.B.), and the first Alaska Native elected to the territorial legislature.³⁷ The aim of the act was to destroy Paul's political base, and with it his power and credibility as a Native leader, and successful territorial politician.

Born of mixed-blood parents in Tongrass Village, Alaska, in 1885, William Paul had been educated at the Sheldon Jackson (Presbyterian) Industrial Indian School in Sitka, and later at Carlisle Indian School in Pennsylvania, before going on to attend Banks Business College in Philadelphia, and Whirworth College, then in Tacoma, now in Spokane. He also earned a law degree through correspondence at Lasalle Law School in Chicago. He returned permanently to Alaska in 1920 and immediately qualified for the Alaska bar. William's brother, Louis F. Paul, had joined the Alaska Native Brotherhood after service in the U.S. Army in World War I, and he encouraged William to become a member also. The A.N.B. had been founded in 1912 in Juneau as a self-help Native service organization dedicated to the acculturation of Alaska's Native people. Its principal goals were Christian service, education, and American citizenship. Under the Pauls' leadership the A.N.B. adopted a vigorous political agenda in defense of Native rights. The primary issues of its concern were the abolition of fish traps, which depleted the salmon fishery which provided the principal livelihood for many Indian families, integration of territorial schools, and voting rights for Natives. In addition to serving as legal counsel to the body, William Paul started and edited a newspaper, the *Alaska Fisherman*, which served as the official organ of the A.N.B. At the same time Louis Paul began a local paper at Petersburg, *The Alaskan*. Although under the Pauls the

A.N.B. continued to pursue acculturation for Indians, now it was to be on Indian terms and founded on recognition of the full equality of Indians, based on the fourteenth amendment's guarantee of equal protection to all citizens. Alaska Natives, the Pauls insisted, were equal citizens of the United States.

Living in eleven Native villages and seven white communities in southeast Alaska, perhaps eighty percent of the six thousand Tlingit and Haida Indians in 1925 were illiterate. Whether or not adult Indians in Alaska were eligible to vote was not clear before 1923 and 1924, for since there had been no treaties with Alaska Natives, their citizenship status was actually uncertain. A small number of Indians had voted since the beginning of territorial elections in 1907.³⁸ Their right to do so was tested in a court case arising from a challenge in 1923, the court finding that without treaties, all Alaska Indians were citizens.³⁹ The finding was made moot by the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924.

In 1922 William Paul had organized the Indian voters in southeast Alaska. Since most were illiterate, he provided them with pieces of cardboard with spaces cut over the places on the election ballot where they were to make their marks, voting for candidates he recommended, if they so chose. All of the candidates Paul supported won election, some probably because of his block of Indian votes, which probably numbered about five hundred; about four thousand total votes were cast throughout the district.⁴⁰ Capitalizing on this success, Paul organized the Indian vote again in his victorious campaign for election to the legislature in his own right in 1924 and 1926. There was nothing illegal about Paul's actions; the Indian voters were free to vote for whomever they might wish. However, white sensibilities were offended both by the suggestion of directing voters who were supposed to act independently, and by the threat of control of key election races by Indian votes, especially illiterate ones. A vigorous, often racist campaign was waged against Paul in newspapers in the district, and in the legislature,⁴¹ and the 1925 legislature adopted the voters' literacy act. However, Paul had considerable oratorical and political ability, and he succeeded in getting added to the act before it was passed a clause exempting anyone who had previously voted in an Alaska election. This effectively nullified the act, for it was impractical to send white election supervisors into the villages to query every voter appearing at the polls. It was too blatantly racist an act, and the financial resources were unavailable.

While in the legislature Paul worked effectively to secure benefits for Indian orphans and widows, attempted to secure entrance to the

territorial pioneers' home for Indians, and wrote legislation adopting an Aleut boy's design for a territorial flag.⁴²

William Paul would go on to a significant life-long career as an Alaska Native leader. He was elected secretary or president of the Alaska Native Brotherhood seven times, and served permanently on its executive committee.⁴³ In 1935 he worked with the staff of the Secretary of the Interior and with Alaska's delegate to Congress, Anthony Dimond, to extend the New Deal *Indian Reorganization Act* to Alaska, and in 1936, served as general counsel to a U.S. Senate sub-committee investigating Indian conditions in Alaska, one result of which was the desegregation of Civilian Conservation Corps camps in the territory. The following year he was appointed the first Indian field agent for the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs in Alaska, and was considered for the position of Alaska director for the IRA credit fund. In 1938 he organized the Tlingit-Haida Central Council to prosecute a major Indian land claim to the Tongass National Forest, which occupied sixteen million acres of southeast Alaska.⁴⁴ The claim would endure a variety of permutations before the U.S. Court of Claims found in 1959 that the Tlingit and Haida did in fact have title to the forest at the time of its taking by the U.S. government in 1905.⁴⁵ In the 1950s Paul would initiate several legal suits in which he sought to clarify the basis on which a compensatory award might be made in regard to the land claim. Subsequently, in 1968, the Tlingit and Haida Central Council was awarded \$7.5 million in compensation for the taking, but Paul was not involved in the Tlingit and Haida claim in its later stages.

In 1937, however, William Paul's effectiveness as a Native leader was irreparably damaged when he was disbarred following charges of unethical conduct.⁴⁶ Paul had won a settlement from a salmon cannery which had discriminated against Native fishermen in the price paid for fish, but he had not paid the settlement proceeds to his clients, partly because it was not clear who was a party to the suit and who was not, and partly because Paul was entitled to half the proceeds for his fees. However, a committee of the bar found that he did not have the right to withhold the funds. Given a year to make amends, Paul chose not to do so. It is likely that Paul's enemies in both the Indian and white communities allied against him because of his pending appointment as the Alaska officer for the IRA credit fund. His name was withdrawn from consideration for the post when the disbarment proceedings were undertaken.⁴⁷

Whatever the truth of the charges, Paul's contribution to the cause of Alaska Native rights and claims in the 1920s and 1930s was

substantial. He made the A.N.B. an effective voice of Native concerns and causes. By 1925 federal and territorial officials had acknowledged the political significance of the organization. From then on U.S. Interior Department personnel routinely conferred with Paul about Alaska Native matters.

Before the disbarment, Paul's direction of the A.N.B. had been challenged by the Peratrovich family of Klawock, and after 1937 they emerged as the body's principal leaders. Roy Peratrovich served five successive terms as A.N.B. president from 1940 to 1944. In 1945 Peratrovich's wife, Elizabeth, successfully lobbied an anti-discrimination bill through the Alaska territorial legislature. At the same time Frank Peratrovich was elected to first the territorial House, and later the Senate. This was the first election of an Alaska Native to the legislature since Paul's election in 1924 and 1926.⁴⁸ Throughout the 1940s and 1950s the A.N.B. was a major element in Alaska politics; the territorial governor always addressed its annual convention, the Congressional delegate usually did, and political candidates assiduously sought the body's endorsement. The A.N.B. was eclipsed as a significant political force in Alaska only with the advent of a fully state-wide organization, the Alaska Federation of Natives (A.F.N.), in response to statehood after 1959.

Alaska historians have not dealt well with William Paul and the A.N.B. The most widely recognized text does not mention him and includes nothing on the Alaska Native Brotherhood except to note its founding.⁴⁹ A secondary school text produced with public funds contains a brief paragraph on Paul's early career, and a note on the founding of the A.N.B. But the saga of the rise of the body to political significance and of Paul's struggle against racism and jealousy of his power is nowhere evident in either text. With one exception, other histories of Alaska, both those written before statehood and after, are silent on both Paul and the A.N.B.⁵⁰ Only one general history, *The State of Alaska* by Ernest Gruening, includes any appreciation of the significance of the Brotherhood, citing its role in the battles for an anti-discrimination act in 1945.⁵¹ Most who write Alaska history have portrayed Natives principally as victims of overzealous missionaries who sought to acculturate the Native population through immersion in education in the 1880s and 1890s.⁵²

In truly unhistorical fashion, Alaska Natives arrive on the scene in most histories only after statehood, when they presented a significant challenge to the new state government because of their protests of state land selections made under the authority of the Alaska statehood act of 1958. That act provided that title to 105 million of the

375 million acres in Alaska, 28%, should be conveyed to the new state. As state officials began to make their selections of land, however, Natives protested that most of the selections were subject to aboriginal title, and they immediately filed protests with the Interior Department, and soon afterward began to file official land claims.⁵³ In 1965, the same year that the Alaska Federation of Natives was formed, the U.S. Secretary of the Interior, responding to A.F.N. demands, halted conveyances of title to the State of Alaska until the Native claims had been settled. At that time, about twelve million acres had been conveyed to the state. It is only then, when Native action threatened the new state's potential economic development, that Natives make an appearance in Alaska's popular and visible history, rather as if they had not existed previously and stepped out of a vacuum into the very recent past. In this history, the Alaska Native Brotherhood and the capable and effective representation of Alaska Native concerns by William and Louis Paul, and Roy, Elizabeth and Frank Peratrovich and others is lost from view.⁵⁴

There are perhaps two reasons for this. The first is that despite the turn to social history in most of the historical profession in the last three decades, and with it a growing sensitivity to the role, status and history of minorities in American culture, and despite an increasing volume of scholarship documenting the role of Natives in the Alaskan past, no one has yet incorporated that sensitivity and scholarship into a comprehensive history of the region.⁵⁵ This is a significant, current need in Alaska history. The absence of a socially comprehensive history exacerbates reliance on non-Native achievements, figures and values. This circumstance exists more by default than by intention, but it exists nevertheless, and this helps to perpetuate an incomplete and potentially ethnocentric reconstruction of the past.

The Statehood Compact

A third example of mythmaking helps to show the problematical effect of clinging tenaciously to an unrealistic romance of the past. In common with other western states, Alaskans take a chauvinistic view of federal sovereignty over their state.⁵⁶ Ernest Gruening's portrayal of Alaska as victim of federal interference in Alaska's independence and economic development, noted above, has become an axiom of the "standard" interpretation of Alaska history. His was a past of "unique neglect and downright discrimination" on the part of "United States rule."⁵⁷ This portrayal served Gruening's broader purpose of building a political base for the statehood struggle.

“Statehood,” Gruening wrote, “was the ‘remedial first step’ in combating federal abuse of the territory.”⁵⁸ Under state government Alaskans would have, many thought, the sovereignty to control their own destiny, rather than being subject to the vicissitudes of an uncaring federal sovereignty in pursuit of interests which had nothing to do with Alaska and which inhibited the independence and self-reliance of its citizens.

The achievement of statehood in 1958 was and continues to be viewed in Alaska as the triumph of independent and uncorrupted David over the wiles and designs of an oafish Goliath, a heroic saga of victory against impossible odds.⁵⁹ The economic future of the new state was to be assured by development of the 105 million acres of state land provided for in the statehood act, and by an uncharacteristically large 90% share of the sale of mineral leases on federal lands retained in Alaska.⁶⁰ However, barely was the ink dry on the official statehood proclamation before Alaskans were confronted with substantial challenges to their view of sovereignty. The freeze on title conveyances to the state as a result of Native protests in 1965 and the subsequent granting of 44 million acres of land to Alaska Natives in the claims settlement act in 1971 were interpreted by Alaskans as a violation of the statehood act. They interpreted the act as a compact between the federal and state governments which could not be changed by one party without the express consent of the other. The selection of Native lands provided in the claims settlement act preceded completion of the selection process for state lands. Moreover, the settlement act included a provision for the reservation of an additional 100 million acres of environmentally sensitive land to be set aside in federal reserves, the selection of which also was to precede the completion of state selections.⁶¹ Alaskans were outraged by these provisions, which they interpreted as renegeing on the promises of the statehood act. The federal government was soundly berated in the press. Telegrams and petitions were sent to Congress from communities across the state, and in a committee hearing on the implementation of the settlement act Alaska Senator Ted Stevens raged at his colleagues for violating the statehood compact. In Alaska, spokesmen in one community warned federal officials that their safety could not be guaranteed while they performed their official duties in the Alaska wilderness.⁶²

To implement the conservation reservations mandated in the settlement act a joint federal-state land use planning committee was established to work out recommendations for Congress concerning federal and state land selections. The committee quickly reached an

impasse, and Interior Secretary Cecil Andrus allied himself with national environmental leaders in an attempt to obtain strong Alaska conservation legislation.⁶³ Alaskans fought the pending legislation on the same grounds they had fought the Native claims settlement, calling it a violation of the promises of statehood and a theft of the state's birthright.⁶⁴ The 1980 legislation reserving the additional 100 million acres of parks, forests, wildlife refuges and wilderness areas was called by many in the state a fatal blow to prospects for economic development.

To contemporary historians of the west, this expression of state or provincial chauvinism will not be surprising. It is a common staple of public rhetoric concerning the federal-state relationship in the large landed states where the federal government holds large percentages of lands within states as federal reserves.⁶⁵ Western states have traditionally demanded grants and services from the federal government, both as a matter of routine and in cases of emergency, while at the same time rejecting federal sovereignty, denying the right of federal oversight and ignoring the role of the federal government in their economic development.⁶⁶ Federal bashing has always been good sport west of the hundredth meridian.

It survives in good health in Alaska today. The American Independence Party won enough votes in the general election of 1986 to appear on the 1990 ballot. The leader of the party is a long-time Alaskan miner, Joe E. Vogler, who regards "America" as a "land of weaklings who allow themselves to be pushed around by the federal government," and argues that Alaska should secede from the Union.⁶⁷ In 1990 former Alaskan Governor and U.S. Secretary of the Interior Walter J. Hickel won election for a new term as governor in a three-party race on the Independence party ticket, obtaining 39.5% of the vote running largely on a platform whose essence was a call for greater Alaskan independence from the federal government.⁶⁸ In the spring of 1990, an aide to Governor Hickel published a tract called *Going Up In Flames: The Promises and Pledges of Alaska Statehood Under Attack*.⁶⁹ In it the author, Malcolm Roberts, repeated the charge that the claims settlement act and the Alaska conservation lands act were violations of the statehood compact, and provided a brief constitutional history of the compact theory. The primary impetus for the tract, in addition to whatever relationship it may have had to Hickel's impending decision to seek the governorship, was the question of whether or not the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge will be opened to oil exploration and development by the federal government.⁷⁰ Congressional leaders have indicated that should the refuge

be opened, they will seek a reduction in the 90% share of lease revenue dedicated to the state in the statehood act.

The history of the compact theory of statehood acts is not a promising one for Alaskan independence. Because states are created by the Congress, exercising federal sovereignty in the name and interests of the nation, the conditions under which they are created can be altered by the Congress. Challenged in such celebrated incidents as the Supreme Court case of *Marbury v. Madison* in 1803 and Andrew Jackson's response to South Carolina nullification in 1832, the compact theory was given the *coupe de grace* by the Union victory in the Civil War in 1865, a fact given ideological approval by the Supreme Court in *Texas v. White* in 1869.⁷¹ Recent cases have not effectively assaulted the historic stand of the Court. Perhaps aware of this history, Roberts noted a number of difficulties in applying the compact theory to specific measures relating to Alaska, and offered an alternative suggestion, one founded on the assumption of Alaska's uniqueness from the rest of the United States. The Court might find Alaska a "politically isolated state privileged to litigate claims of federal encroachment in the federal courts," he argued, by virtue of the state's "separateness, extreme climate and special environment." This is a novel suggestion for which there is little if any judicial precedent.

Effectiveness of the compact theory of statehood is a myth, and reliance on it by Alaska political leaders as a method to obtain greater independence for Alaska is an example of acting in the present on the basis of a mythological understanding of history. When such an effort fails, as this one must if it is ever actually tested, the consequence may well be cynicism and certainly will be frustration. Moreover, law suits cost time and money. Yet such is the power of the myth of Alaska as victim that there is little prospect of persuading Alaskans that pinning their hopes on the compact theory is pinning their hopes on a chimera. Neither has it been possible to dissolve the myth of the unpopularity of the purchase of Alaska in 1867, despite abundant scholarship demonstrating the contrary. Of the examples cited here, only the myth of a Native-less Alaskan past seems susceptible to substitution in the public mind because that myth is more in the nature of a vacuum than of a contrary image which first must be dismantled.

Myth is so powerful in human experience because it serves the purpose of providing images of the past which reinforce values in the present. Part of the role of popular history is to provide, perhaps to create, a past which would produce the kind of present people want

for themselves. In Alaska the role of victim creates a powerful impetus for images of self-reliance and independence, and the notion of uniqueness provides a justification for being in Alaska in the first place. But for Alaska a full re-examination of many of the historical "received truths" is sorely needed. Rather than reinforcing the old mythologies, contemporary historians might better inform and enlighten by examining them and how and why they have come to be. And they might also provide a more objective and analytical history which explains more realistically "how certain things and ideas come about, and what became of them." I hope this discussion might suggest some ways in which that enterprise might be undertaken.

Some portions of this essay were included in "Rediscovering Alaska: A Way of Thinking About Alaska History," *Pacifica*, 1 (September, 1989), 101-128.

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NOTES

- ¹ Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1986, p. 3.
- ² John Bodnar, "Power and Memory in Oral History: Workers and Managers at Studabaker," *Journal of American History*, 76 (1989): 1201-1221.
- ³ James Axtell, "Europeans, Indians, and the Age of Discovery in American History Textbooks," *American Historical Review*, 92 (June, 1987), 621-632.
- ⁴ Gerald N. Grob and George Athan Billias, eds., *Interpretations of American History: Patterns and Perspectives* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1967), p. 1.
- ⁵ "Mythistory, or Truth, Myth, History, and Historians," *American Historical Review*, 91 (February, 1987), 1-10.
- ⁶ See David Thelen, "Memory and American History," *Journal of American History*, 75 (March, 1987), 1117-1129.
- ⁷ Bolles, *Remembering and Forgetting*.
- ⁸ Jean Piaget and Barbel Inhelder, in collaboration with Hermine Sinclair-DeZwart, *Memory and Intelligence* (New York: Basic Books, 1973).
- ⁹ "The Shared Memory of Montana's Pioneers," pp. 454-457, reprinted from *Montana the Magazine of Western History*, 37 (Winter, 1987), 2-13.
- ¹⁰ Paul A. Hutton, "From Little Bighorn to Little Big Man: the Changing Image of a Western Hero in a Popular Culture," *Western Historical Quarterly*, 7 (January, 1976), 19-44.
- ¹¹ One lesson of reinterpretation especially important for teachers is that history must not be presented as if it were a single, "right" story. The meaning of the past is susceptible to a variety of understandings, rather like contemporary life. It is likely that more can be learned of how human beings actually confront situations by accepting this diversity of interpretation rather than by presenting the past as a simple story which can only have happened in one particular way.

- ¹² See, for example, Michael P. Malone and Richard W. Etulaine, *The American West: A Twentieth Century History* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989), pp. 9,10; for locally produced conceptions see Elsa Pedersen, *Alaska* (New York: Coward, McCann and Geohegan, 1972), *passim*.
- ¹³ See the celebrations of Alaska's uniqueness in Robert Hedin and Gary Holthaus, eds., *Alaska: Reflections on Land and Spirit* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1989). See also Lee J. Cuba, *Community and Identity on the Alaskan Frontier* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987).
- ¹⁴ Examples include William R. Hunt, *North of 53* (New York: Macmillan Press, 1974), James A. Carroll, *The First Ten Years in Alaska: Memoirs of a Fort Yukon Trapper, 1911-1922* (New York: Exposition Press, 1957), Jean Clark Potter, *The Flying North* (New York: Macmillan Press, 1947), and George Sundborg, *Opportunity in Alaska* (New York: Macmillan Press, 1945); James Michener's fictional *Alaska* (New York: Random House, 1988) celebrates these qualities at length. For alternative views on the gold rush see Pierre Berton, *The Klondike Fever: The Life and Death of the Last Great Gold Rush* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1982), pp. 425-31; on the fur trade see Melody Webb, *The Last Frontier* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1985), pp. 291-312; on agriculture see Orlando Miller, *The Frontier in Alaska and the Matanuska Valley* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975).
- ¹⁵ New York: Random House, 1954.
- ¹⁶ William H. Wilson, "Alaska's Past Alaska's Future," *Alaska Review*, 4 (1970), pp. 1-11; "The Founding of Anchorage: Federal Town Building on the Last Frontier," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, 58 (July, 1967), 130-141; Terence Cole, "The History of a History: The Making of Jeannette Paddock Nichol's *Alaska*," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, 77 (1986), pp. 130-38. The construction of the Alaska Railroad (1915-1923) and the establishment of the Matanuska Valley Colony rural rehabilitation project (1935) are but two examples of federal programs in Alaska prior to World War II.
- ¹⁷ John McPhee, *Coming into the Country* (New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1976), pp. 368-438; Joe McGinnis, *Going to Extremes* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1980), pp. 226-41; Webb, *Last Frontier*, pp. 308-09.
- ¹⁸ James Lee Cuba, "A Moveable Frontier: Frontier Images in Contemporary Alaska," unpub. doct. dissert., Yale University, 1981, pp. 28-54 provides a description of contemporary urban Alaska. Cuba's discussion of "Becoming an 'Alaskan,'" pp. 111-132, addresses such phenomenon as "A Frontier Vocabulary," "Initiation Rites," and "Adopting the 'Alaskan' Label." He concludes that while the labels contrast markedly with the reality, they serve the purpose of providing an identity for people who perceive themselves as living on the margin of a larger, insensitive world. Half of Alaska's 450,000 people live in Anchorage, the dominant city. Most of the 80,000 aboriginal people of Alaska do not live in urban centers; only 4% of Alaska's Natives are urban. Most of the rest live in small villages and struggle with the dilemma of preserving a bush and subsistence life-style while becoming educated in ways not well adapted to that life-style, and trained for jobs which do not exist there, but only in the cities.
- ¹⁹ Paul S. Holbo, *Tarnished Expansion: The Alaska Scandal, the Press, and Congress, 1867-71* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1983), pp. 5, 14, 34; Ronald J. Jensen, *The Alaska Purchase and Russian-American Relations* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1975), pp. 63-67.

- ²⁰ Kushner, *Conflict*, pp. 106-116.
- ²¹ David E. Shi, "Seward's Attempt to Annex British Columbia, 1865-1869," *Pacific Historical Review*, 47 (1978), pp. 217-38. See also Richard E. Neunherz, "'Hemmed In': Reactions in British Columbia to the Purchase of Russian America," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, July, 1989, 101-111.
- ²² *Op. cit.*; Victor J. Farrar, "Senator Cole and the Purchase of Alaska," *Washington Historical Quarterly*, 14 (1923), pp. 141-55.
- ²³ U.S. Congress, House, *Russian America*, 40th Congress, 2nd session, House Executive Document No. 177, pp. 138-9, 169-88; this is Sumner's report to the Congress.
- ²⁴ Ted C. Hinckley, *The Americanization of Alaska, 1867-1897* (Palo Alto: Pacific Books, 1972), pp. 59-60; Frank N. Sloss, "Who Owned the Alaska Commercial Company," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, 68 (1977), pp. 120-30.
- ²⁵ See, for example, Naske, *Alaska*, p.57; Antonson, *Alaska's Heritage*, is refreshingly free of the assertion that American viewed the purchase as "Seward's Folly," "Icebergia," or "Walrussia." The following is a list of works which repeat this conundrum: Richard Current, T. Harry Williams and Frank Friedel, *American History: A Survey* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969), p. 569; Thomas A. Bailey and David M. Kennedy, *The American Pageant* (New York: D.C. Heath and Co., 1979), p. 448; Edwin C. Rozwenc, *The Making of American Society*, Vol. II (New York: Time-Life Books, 1977), p. 43; Lucile Frey, *Eyes Toward Icebergia* (Anchorage: Alaska Methodist University, 1970), pp. 35-36. Some recent American history college texts have dropped this folly.
- ²⁶ Morgan Sherwood, *Alaska and Its History* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1967) p. 273; Howard Kushner, *Conflict*, pp. 144-53; Holbo, *Tarnished Expansion*, pp. 11-14; Ronald Jensen, *The Alaska Purchase and Russian-American Relations* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1975), pp. 92-93.
- ²⁷ U.S. Congress, Senate, *Journal of the Executive Proceedings of the Senate of the United States, 1867*, 39 Cong., spc. sess., v. 15, pp. 675-76.
- ²⁸ Richard Welch, Jr., "American Public Opinion and the Purchase of Russian America," *American Slavic and East European Review*, 17 (1958), pp. 481-94.
- ²⁹ As quoted in Kushner, *Conflict*, p. 144.
- ³⁰ Holbo, *Tarnished Expansion*, p. 14.
- ³¹ April 13, 1867, p. 266, as quoted in Kushner, *Conflict*, p. 148.
- ³² See the introduction to Richard Welch's article in Mary Mangusso and Stephen Haycox, eds., *Interpreting Alaska's History: An Anthology* (Anchorage: Alaska Pacific University Press, 1989), pp. 141-42.
- ³³ *Op. cit.*
- ³⁴ *Op. cit.*
- ³⁵ Malone and Etulain, *ibid*, as an example. Numerous major works on the history of the American west do not mention Alaska, for example Gerald D. Nash, *The American West Transformed: The Impact of the Second World War* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), one of the most profound works on the history of the west written in recent times.
- ³⁶ Gruening, *State of Alaska, passim*; William R. Hunt, *Alaska: A Bicentennial History* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1976), pp. 117-19 and *passim*.
- ³⁷ Much of the reconstruction of this episode is based on Stephen Haycox, "William Paul, Sr., and the Alaska Voters' Literacy Act of 1925," *Alaska History*, 2 (Winter, 1986-87), 17-38.

- ³⁸ *Contested Election Case—Wickersham v. Sulzer*, House Committee on Elections, 65th Cong., 3rd Sess., H.Rept. 839, 1415; *Delegate from Alaska*, 66th Cong., 1st Sess., H. Doc. 74, 11-14; *Contested Election Case—Wickersham v. Sulzer and Grigsby*, House Committee on Elections, 66th Cong., 3rd Sess., H. Rept. 1319, 9 (also minority report under same title).
- ³⁹ *L.M. Churchill v. Charlie Jones*, Alaska Docket No. 1314 (1923), Alaska District Court Records, records of the Office of the Governor of Alaska, RG 348, Pacific Northwest Branch, Federal Archives and Records Service. William Paul represented the illiterate Indian who appeared at the polls to vote, his uncle Charlie Jones.
- ⁴⁰ Canvassing Board Report, 1922, File 19, RG 348.
- ⁴¹ Haycox, "Literacy Act," pp. 25-28; as an example, the *Alaska Daily Empire*, November 3, 1924, p. 5, included a full-page ad urging voters to "Keep Alaska and its Schools Free From Indian Control." One of Paul's announced agenda items was integration of the district's segregated schools.
- ⁴² The Alaska state constitution adopted this same design for the Alaska State Flag.
- ⁴³ Stephen Haycox, "Alaska Native Brotherhood Conventions: Sites and Grand Officers, 1912-1959," *Alaska History*, Fall, 1989, 38-46; all past presidents of the body automatically served on the executive committee.
- ⁴⁴ 49 Stat. 388, ch.295; see David S. Case, *Alaska Natives and American Laws* (Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press, 1984), p. 67.
- ⁴⁵ Stephen Haycox, "Economic Development and Indian Land Rights in Modern Alaska: The 1947 Tongass Timber Act," *Western Historical Quarterly*, XXI (February, 1990), 21-46.
- ⁴⁶ *United States ex rel. Folta v. Paul*, 9 Alaska Reports 189.
- ⁴⁷ October 17, 1937, William Zimmerman, Asst. Dir. of Indian Affairs, to Don Foster, Juneau Office, Bureau of Indian Affairs, File Alaska Matters, 1937, Central Office File, Records of the Office of the Secretary of the the Interior, RG 48, U.S. National Archives.
- ⁴⁸ Two other Natives were elected at the same time.
- ⁴⁹ Claus-M. Naske and Herman Slotnick, *Alaska: A History of the 49th State* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co. 1979), pp. 199, 208; Joan M. Antonson and William S. Hanable, *Alaska's Heritage* (Anchorage: Alaska Historical Commission, 1985), pp. 508, 516. Both these texts inaccurately state that the A.N.B. was founded at Sitka; it was founded at Juneau.
- ⁵⁰ William R. Hunt, *Alaska: A Bicentennial History* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1976); Clarence Leroy Andrews, *The Story of Alaska* (Seattle: Lomen and Hanford, 1931); Clarence C. Hulley, *Alaska, 1741-1953* (Portland: Binfords and Mort, 1953); Henry W. Clark, *History of Alaska* (New York: Macmillan, 1930).
- ⁵¹ New York: Random House, 1954, pp. 363, 398. However, Gruening erroneously has Paul only elected once to the legislature, in 1926.
- ⁵² Even scholars appreciative of Native capabilities have sometimes reverted to stereotypes, as noted anthropologist Richard Dauenhauer, "Two Missions to Alaska," *Pacific Historian*, XXVI (Spring, 1982), 19-41, in discussing the suppression of Native culture by Presbyterian missionary Sheldon Jackson. Compare Victoria Wyatt, *Shape of the Thoughts: Reflections of Culture Contact in Northwest Coast Indian Art*, (New Haven: Peabody Museum of Natural History, 1987).

- ⁵³ Robert N. Arnold, *Alaska Native Land Claims* (Anchorage: Alaska Native Foundation, 1974), p.116.
- ⁵⁴ This sudden appearance of Natives in the "mainstream" history of Alaska as of 1965 is exacerbated by the sensitive but ahistorical treatment of Native reaction to the implementation of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act in Thomas Berger, *Village Journey: The Report of the Alaska Native Review Commission* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1985).
- ⁵⁵ See as examples Ted C. Hinckley, *Alaskan John G. Brady: Missionary, Businessman, Judge and Governor, 1878-1918* (Ohio State University Press, 1982); Ann Fienup-Riordan, ed., *The Yup'ik Eskimos: As Described in the Travel Journals and Ethnographic Accounts of John and Edith Kilbuck, 1886-1900* (Kingston: Limestone Press, 1988); William Schneider, "Chief Sesui and Lieutenant Herron: A Story of 'Who Controls the Bacon,'" *Alaska History*, 1 (Fall, 1985), 1-18; James VanStone, *Eskimos of the Nushagak River: An Ethnographic History* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1967); James Beverly, "The Alaska Fisherman and the Paradox of Assimilation: Power, Progress and the Preservation of Culture," *Native Press Research Journal*, 5 (Summer, 1987), 2-15.
- ⁵⁶ See the perceptive discussion of western resentment of federal power in "Denial and Dependence" in Patricia Nelson Limerick, *Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1987), pp. 78-96; see as well Chapter 13, "The Federal West" in Clyde A. Milner II, *Major Problems in the History of the American West*, pp. 546-562.
- ⁵⁷ Forward to the Revised Edition, New York: Random House, 1968. This had been the theme of an earlier history of the federal-territorial relationship, Jeannette Paddock Nichols, *Alaska: A History of its Administration, Exploitation, and Industrial Development during its First Half Century under the Rule of the United States* (Cleveland: Arthur H. Clark, 1924). See a discussion of this book by Terrence Cole, "The History of History: the Making of Jeannette Paddock Nichol's *Alaska*," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, 77 (October, 1986), 130-138.
- ⁵⁸ Forward to the Revised Edition.
- ⁵⁹ Gerald E. Bowkett, *Reaching for a Star: The Final Campaign for Statehood* (Seattle: Epicentre Press, 1989), pp. 93-100.
- ⁶⁰ Other states receive between 37.5% and 50% of federal lease revenues.
- ⁶¹ The federal government already had reserved 100 million acres of Alaska land in military, conservation and other categories. Ultimately, 80 million acres of environmental lands were reserved by the *Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act* of 1980.
- ⁶² Mary Clay Berry, *The Alaska Pipeline: The Politics of Oil and Native Land Claims* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1975), p. 92; Robert Cahn, *The Fight to Save Wild Alaska* (Washington, D.C: The Audubon Society, 1982), pp. 6-8. See also G. Frank Willis, *Do It Right the First Time: The National Park Service and the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act of 1980*, unpubl. admin. history, National Park Service, 1985, pp. 38-67.
- ⁶³ Alfred Runte, *National Parks: The American Experience* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2nd edition revised, 236-258).
- ⁶⁴ *Anchorage Times*, July 2, 1976, p. 1.
- ⁶⁵ Limerick, *Legacy*, pp. 78-96. After the legislation, the *Alaska National Interests Conservation Act* of 1980, the federal government holds 60% of the land in

Alaska (12% of which is unreserved public domain administered by the Bureau of Land Management), an additional 12% having been conveyed to Native regional structures established by the 1971 claims settlement act. The federal government holds in reserve 87% of the land in Nevada, 66% in Utah, 64% in Idaho, 45% in California, and 29% in Washington: *State Government News* (Nevada), 22 (November, 1979), 3-5. See also Paul Gates, "An Overview of American Land Policy," *Agricultural History*, 50 (January, 1976), 213-229.

⁶⁶ Gerald D. Nash, *The American West Transformed* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), and *The American West in the Twentieth Century* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1973).

⁶⁷ Joe E. Vogler, *Alaska and Statehood: A Factual Primer* (Fairbanks: Alaskans for Independence, 1986). Vogler signs his letters "An Alaskan Patriot."

⁶⁸ A life-long Republican, Hickel ran on the Independence party ticket, but disavowed his association with the party and its call for secession immediately following the election. Hickel bypassed the primary campaign, and was able to run on the Independence party ballot when the candidate who won the Independence primary resigned at the eleventh hour, permitting Hickel to be named the party's candidate.

⁶⁹ Malcolm B. Roberts, ed., Anchorage: Alaska Pacific University Press, 1990.

⁷⁰ pp. 58-60.

⁷¹ See John Roche, *Constitutional Law* (New York: Macmillan, 1987), 300-307; *Shadow and Substance: Essays on the Theory and Structure of Politics* (New York: Macmillan, 1985).