

# The Indian in Science Fiction

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■ The American Indian has had a far greater role in science fiction than anyone might suspect. He appears in many guises: as a two-foot-high creature covered with golden fur, and featuring a slightly humanoid face with big ears, wide eyes, and a snub nose, and called a fuzzy by H. Beam Piper; as a paunchy, splay-footed, flat-skulled humanoid with loose, liver-colored skin who delivers his sentences backward and called a Slunchan by Keith Laumer; or as a meter-high individual, covered with green fur, physically tough, a pacifist with great mental power and called a creechie by Ursula K. Le Guin. *Little Fuzzies* (1962), the Retief stories, and *The Word for World is Forest* (1972) are only a few works in which Indians appear in disguise, being treated like children, sold roller skates in a mud-filled world, and assumed to feel no pain. They are not threats, but nuisances. As Ambrose Bierce defined them in *The Devil's Dictionary*, aborigines are "Persons of little worth found cumbering the soil of a newly discovered country. They soon cease to cumber; they fertilize."

In addition to the thinly disguised native on the way to extinction with help from invaders from Earth, there are some genuine Indians, notably Clifford Simak's small tribe in *A Choice of Gods* (1972), Michael Bishop's untamed Cherokee, Menny, of *A Little Knowledge* (1977), Robert Silverberg's Tom Two Ribbons of "Sundance" (1969), the people of Craig Strete's stories (1974—), and, most developed of all, Andre Norton's Hosteen Storm of *Lord of Thunder* and *The Beast Master* (1959) and Kade Whitehawk of *The Sioux Spaceman* (1960). Although these characters function like any others dramatically, they have symbolic value. They may

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be racist; they may be inaccurate; they may be blatantly propagandistic; but science-fiction writers do preserve the American Indian.

The image of the American Indian in literature has been discussed in Albert Keiser's *The Indian in American Literature* and Louise K. Barnett's *The Ignoble Savage: American Literary Racism, 1790-1890*. Neither covers the modern period. Keiser argues that since the Indian has been thrust into the world of industry and even wealth, his literary uniqueness is vanishing:

Here as elsewhere powerful forces combine to usher in a new economic, political, and social era for the child of nature, who in his adaptation to this new-found freedom will more and more cease to be an Indian and become an integral part of white civilization. As such he will no longer serve as the subject of separate literary portrayal, and the picture of the native as reflected in American literature will then at last be finished, except in so far as master artists of the future may here and there retouch the immense canvas.<sup>1</sup>

His observation is interesting in view of the reality created by people who carry on traditions in spite of modernization and intermarriage. The vitality of those human beings labeled Indians but whose tribal names generally mean something like the People goes on undiminished by educators, bureaucrats, and scholars. Writing in 1975 Barnett concludes:

The contemporary novel has brought individual Indians into the present-day white world or placed them in historical milieus which mix the serious with the tongue in cheek. This Indian vantage point functions both as a comic perspective on American society and as a serious alternative to it. Well before the new Indian militancy of the later sixties and the ecological movement which has praised Indian reverence toward nature, writers began to portray the Indian as a repository of wisdom now lost to whites—an updated noble savage founded on a more secure base of understanding.

In addition to these new white points of view, Indians have begun to create their own images in literature. Whether or not it is up to the Indians themselves to write the final chapter of the American Indian upon this continent, as Vine Deloria, Jr., urges, the racist stereotypes perpetuated by whites in the frontier romance and its twentieth century heirs are now being challenged from more than one direction. Having realized their intention of possessing the New World, whites may be ready to accommodate a dissenting perspective.<sup>2</sup>

Barnett here points toward the use to which science-fiction writers put Indians—satire and consciousness raising. Probably the most striking Indian characters—outside such books about Indian life as *Laughing Boy*, *The Man Who Killed the Deer*, and *Old Fish Hawk*—appear in Joseph Heller's *Catch-22* and Ken Kesey's *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* in which they appear as invisible men, victims of a society that still want their land as soon as it proves to be of value. The Indian novelists Leslie Silko, Chuck Storm, James Welch, and N. Scott Momaday, for example, portray Indians as victims of white greed and vice, triumphing only by returning to

their people's ceremonies and values. Lately they have become soapbox Indians rather than cigarstore ones.

Do Indians fare better in science-fiction futures? At least five important science-fiction writers have used Indian characters, and I would like to examine selected works to see how they function.

A midwestern writer with a penchant for the pastoral and compassion for all life forms cannot avoid being attracted to Indian values. So Clifford D. Simak is. The Earth of *A Choice of Gods* has been left in the hands of a group of farm laborers on the West Coast, an aging midwestern couple, robots, and Indians. The rest of the People have traveled to the stars by teleportation. For over 5,000 years Earth life has been simple; then some expansionists who have lost their mental powers and developed a technological civilization feel the urge to return home. Through some robots who have developed a Project to communicate with the stars, the Principle that runs the universe objectively informs the advance scouts that Earth is now part of an experiment and must be left alone.

The Indians as a group are a significant part of the Earth's accommodation to change. Although Horace Red Cloud and Jason Whitney have been close friends from youth, the old chief will have nothing to do with robots, aside from the saintly Hezekia whom he tolerates for Jason's sake. Indians see robots as a reminder of the white man's destructive technological culture, so they have nothing to do with them although the robots desperately want to serve. Then, too, Indians spurned ownership and the ties entailed by it. A machine, Red Cloud tells Jason, has an undue influence on a man: "It brutalizes him. It serves as a buffer between himself and his environment and he is the worst for it. It arouses an opportunistic instinct and makes possible a greed that makes a man inhuman."<sup>3</sup>

White men tore the elements from the mother earth to create their technological world but the Indians live as a part of nature itself. "They've made a compact with the planet," Jason explains.<sup>4</sup> Simak wastes no energy on attempts to be subtle in any of his books. Man has been punished for his misuse of his environment. Through centuries Indians have not altered their old ways or values. David Hunt, the young man from the West Coast who has adopted a hunter's ways, recalls the drums, rattles, deer bone whistles, and dance of the buffalo hunters with whom he stayed a while. The tribes have kept their mystical association with natural objects, a personalized religion, certain beliefs and attitudes that have outlasted Christianity in humans. Though much time has passed, the Indians also remember what happened to them once before. Red Cloud is willing to fight, well aware that he will lose if the pattern is repeated. He knows that because the grow or die philosophy of a technological society is never

satisfied, treaties will be as worthless as those of the past. The Indians have fashioned a new and good life, and they fear dislocation.

The two central characters who represent the flowering of Indian life are Horace Red Cloud, the leader of the Indian band, and his "many times removed granddaughter" Evening Star. Although Evening Star is an avid and perceptive scholar, she communes with all creatures, particularly with an ancient white oak tree, which she has taken as a guardian spirit and to which she brings offerings. She knows a woman should not have such a masculine spiritual association, but it has spoken to her and has become like her old Grandfather. When David Hunt wonders at her closeness to trees, streams, flowers, animals, and birds, she tells him that all her people share this power. Actually, she, like David, has a special power, and it is appropriate that these two beautiful young people are united at the end, after David has vanquished the spectre of technology called the Dark Walker.

Horace, too, combines the best of both cultures. He is the remarkable physical specimen portrayed in American fiction:

Red Cloud was the same age as Jason, but had a younger look. When he came into the room and across the carpeting, his stride had a young man's spring. His hair was black, without a trace of gray; it was parted exactly down the center of his scalp and hung in two heavy braids across his shoulders to dangle on his chest. His face was weatherbeaten but, except for a tiny network of crow's feet at the corner of his eyes, had not a wrinkle in it. He wore a buckskin shirt and leggings, with moccasins on his feet.<sup>5</sup>

He brings his friend wild rice and buffalo meat. He knows his world intimately, the Indian's particular brand of psychic power. He is also a practical and realistic fellow. When he relaxes, however, he finds himself falling into cultural reflexes, holding out his hands to wash them in smoke, purifying himself. Then he berates himself for a senseless gesture of magic.

In many ways Simak's Indians follow the old stereotypes: fine physical specimens, dignified, beautiful in features, able to control physical reactions, stoic, noble, picturesque, generous, brave, honorable, independent, passionate in convictions, and resistant to change. Simak's own conviction that life close to and respectful of nature is ideal leads him to imbue the Indians with the qualities all of us should have. Red Cloud, Evening Star, and their people are glorified representatives of the ecological movement used to promote a message.

Indian writers, however, are just as prone to using their brothers to promote messages. Although Craig Strete has not written much yet, what he has done is good enough to be published in several "Best Of" volumes and a Nebula Award anthology. "Bleeding Man" appeared in *Galaxy* in 1974 and is reprinted in Donald A. Wollheim's *The 1975 Annual World's Best SF*.

Joe, as the story's protagonist is called for convenience, is under government research after being discovered in a freak show, exhibited by his uncle Nahtari. For twenty-three years, from birth, he has bled between two and three pints an hour from a gaping chest wound. Miss Dow, an icy, asexual, imperious government official, has been sent to Dr. Santell, the psychochemist who has observed Joe for seven years, to put the bleeding man to good use. She plans to have him dissected for tissue regeneration. Prisoners, she informs the doctor, have already been given transfusions with no ill effects. Since Joe is blood type 0 lateral, he is a universal donor. Miss Dow sees Joe as no better than a mindless vegetable. In fact, she sees Dr. Santell, twice a Nobel prize winner in psychochemistry, as a mindless vegetable. To get more information she demands to see Nahtari, who is unimpressed by her power over the government employees. Seeing his story as nonsense, she walks out on him.

It seems that Joe's parents were powerful medicine people, in despair at the evil they saw about them. Though they had formed a suicide pact, the child within the mother kept them alive until he was born. Then both parents went outside to the garden and killed themselves. Later Nahtari found their decayed corpses. The infant's power was so great that he was not named. He did not talk; only bled. Not willing to accept the non-empirical, Miss Dow has no way to absorb this kind of story. She also ignores the stories of his ability to make things like the observation port in his room disappear. When she goes in to take a blood sample, she sees Joe cup his hands and drink his own blood. She passes out. Upon regaining consciousness, she declares her intention to dissect this animal and threatens Santell for speaking treason when he protests this would-be murder. Joe advances on her, smashing through doors until she had guards fire a stun gun into his face. When she and Santell are alone with Joe's unconscious body, the doctor kills and dissects her instead. Joe, no longer bleeding, walks outside and disappears into a cloud. The story ends, "He Who No Longer Bleeds is gone. He will return. To bleed again."<sup>6</sup>

Wollheim indicates that this story is "the farthest out" of *Galaxy* that year. It combines the mythic nature of Indian tales with the satiric potential of science fiction, and Strete is unique in this area, though the famous works of C.S. Lewis and Roger Zelazny, for example, have previously incorporated biblical and Hindu myth. Mysterious births and scapegoat-savior motifs are common in Indian oral tradition, which has strong recurring motifs of good versus evil, individual versus society, life versus death, and power versus cleverness. In "The Bleeding Man" archetypal conflicts center around the cold, self-important bureaucracy represented by Miss Dow and the recognition of the world's inhumanity symbolized by Joe and his bleeding. Miss Dow's name links her with the large chemical corporation associated with producing napalm for use in Vietnam (a

boycott of Dow Chemical was recommended at the time the story was published); and Joe's bleeding from the chest links him to the concept of the Sacred Heart. Joe has, as Nahtari notes, been gathering power for just this encounter. Miss Dow epitomizes all the arrogance of the inhuman structure that holds life cheap.

"Bleeding Man" is an example of what Vine Deloria, Jr. is calling for. Nahtari, the old uncle, is unawed by Miss Dow but does not hate her. He knows that her power cannot match Joe's. That Joe is an Indian of wonderful birth strengthens Strete's satire on modern society.

Alexander Menewa Guest is the organizer of a revolutionary group protesting the presence of the Cygnusian star-men in Michael Bishop's *A Little Knowledge*. This Cherokee named after Menewa, Crazy War Hunter, hero of the Creek War, feels they are invading Earth the way Oglethorpe invaded Georgia. Cats, dogs, pigeons, and people of Earth need to stick together. Eccentric that he is, he buys flounder and distributes it to the starving alley cats when he gets drunk. He is "a brown, heavy-gutted, heavy-scrotumed giant,"<sup>7</sup> as huge as the stereotyped Indians of American literature but physically debased. He drinks, whoops, and propels himself into fights whenever possible. He is confused about his relation to the Cygnusians, but his sense of outrage at the mistreatment of his forefathers has eaten at him. He broods over how the white man deprived the Indian of a written heritage and a voice in society and then gave them smallpox along with their gift blankets. He recalls Hothlepoya's warriors and Horseshoe Bend and enlists his fellow stevedores in a Red Stick band, distributing red batons and planning the assassination of the Cygnusian priests. Menny is an anachronism who should have been, the hero notes, in the open, "where he could see sunlight wheeling off the back of a falcon or a pharaoh quail."<sup>8</sup> So in the best tradition of the historic warrior, Menny finds his own way of death, carrying a laser to the seminary commencement at which the Cygnusians are to be ordained. Even though he kills one starman, he is carried off to the police station—and left there.

Menny's futile gesture is indicative of the hopelessness of the urban Indian. He is a rundown giant subject to alcohol and bad temper—a little crazy, in fact. Bishop uses his character's Indian heritage from the proud and successful Cherokee to indicate the inability of nonconformists to survive in the urban theocracy of his novel. Although he is not totally admirable, possessed in fact of large doses of the treachery, envy, and revenge that the evil stereotype of the Indian had, Menny is shown as an individual who happens to be an Indian rather than a symbol alone.

While Mennis is a secondary character, he is well portrayed through small details. When his descriptions in *A Little Knowledge* are combined with those in "Allegiances," published in the February, 1975 *Galaxy*, a more complete picture emerges. He is a valued, energetic, and efficient

worker. In both stories he is fatherly. He treats his attractive team member Clio Noble like a daughter in the short story and his landlord Julian Cawthon as a son in the novel. He advises and expresses concern for these two, and approves Julian's choice of a fiancée, seeing her as a second Clio. He midwives for cats and raises roses, orchids, fuchsia, and lilies. He even feels sorry for a lobster.

He does not have tenderness for the Cygnusians because he sees them as the polished, gift-bearing invaders that Oglethorpe and his men were. His view of them as things outside nature is demonstrated by his loudly expressed desire to take them apart with a screwdriver. He himself is related to a bear, with a rumbling voice and a tendency to "whuff." He also sees his essential and normally flawed humanity in his extra nipple. When these characteristics are put together from the two works in which he appears, Alexander Guest becomes a memorable character as well as a determined bearer of the message that history repeats itself. His role is not a simple one.

Tom Two Feathers of Robert Silverberg's "Sundance" is, like Menny, a confused human being who happens to be Sioux. "Sundance" is the most stylistically sophisticated of all the works discussed here. It is told from the second-person point of view when Tom tries to think through his problem objectively, the third when others are observing him, and the first when he is in the open, experiencing being alive with the Eaters ecology-destroying, bloodless animal pests unique to the planet his team is preparing for colonization. Tom has had a history of mental breakdowns and "reconstruction therapy." He carries within him both the guilt of the white man and the pain of the Sioux.

At forty, Tom Two Ribbons is a biologist preparing a new planet for colonization after failing in anthropology, real estate, and marriage. In his past are a great-grandfather dead of alcoholism, a grandfather addicted to hallucinogens, and a father who "had his ancestors edited away, his whole heritage, his religion, his wife, his sons, finally his name."<sup>9</sup> Childless, Tom is well aware of his family's self-destructive pattern.

One day after a pellet-dropping run that liquidates around 50,000 oxygen-destroying Eaters, Tom's partner asks: "Tom, how would you feel about this if it turned out that the Eaters weren't just animal pests? That they were *people*, say, with a language and rites and a history and all?"<sup>10</sup> The old wound has been opened. The more Tom thinks about this, the more confused he becomes. Like Menny, he wonders with whom he should identify. First he goes out to observe the Eaters in their protected study groups; then he goes out to the wild Eaters, identifying them with his own exterminated race and seeing their actions as rituals. When he is forcibly brought back to his human group, he is assured that he was only hallucinating, that no life forms were being destroyed.

Silverberg employs a common theme in science fiction, the destruction of other life forms to make room for man. The buffalo were in the railroad's way, and their "necessary" extermination drastically altered the lives of the plainsmen who depended on them. The Indians themselves threatened the settlers and were hustled off to reservations and fenced in, just as the Eaters are, to be appreciated in scholarly detail by anthropologists. In the twentieth century students of Indian life admire their arts and deplore the loss of a utopian pattern of society. Civilized man spends much time writing about regrets. Thus Silverberg's material has the makings of a sentimental tale indeed; but "Sundance" is a thought-provoking work that uses the treatment of the American Indian to make the reader think about the whole matter of progress and how it affects an individual.

Caught in two worlds, it is no wonder that Tom cannot identify the real. His ribbons are white and red; he is both persecuted and persecutor, killer and victim. This story deals with the breakdown of one individual. The Sioux have not been annihilated, poisoned and returned to molecules the way the Eaters are. They are still living on Earth, but poisoned—not only by alcohol, drugs, and memory erasure, but by the white man's ways. Tom is like the genuine human being who is split in two by the conflicting values of two divergent worlds. His plight is the logical development into the distant future of a pattern described by Louise K. Barnett:

Fictive Indians always begin as bad Indians, but through contact with benevolent whites, individual Indians may become "good," that is, they can be taught to forgo some of the practices and beliefs objectionable to whites and to adopt white values and loyalties. Thus, good Indians enter fiction singly, cut off from their own people to provide an opportunity for extended interaction with whites.<sup>11</sup>

Tom's group is friendly and concerned for him, but Tom has lost his own people and not found a substitute.

Hosteen Storm has lost not only his own people, but his whole planet—the ultimate alienation. In *The Beast Master* and *Lord of Thunder*, Andre Norton presents a Navajo hero who is a Beast Master by occupation, part of a Galactic Commando team that includes an African Black Eagle named Baku, an experimental lab puma-dune cat cross named Surra, and two meerkats, Ho and Hing, small saboteurs. On the planet Arzor, the team gains Rain-On-Dust, a young unbroken stallion. Storm communicates telepathically with his animals, each of which has its own personality and ability. After Terra was destroyed, many Earth-born commandos turned against others; but because Storm is a pureblood Amerindian he is assumed to be more self-controlled and able to hold up under the loss of his home planet. Actually, he endures because he has two blood debts. The oldest one is, the racial grudge. When asked if his people were Earth's dominant nation, he replies that they once thought so, but "their country



was overrun by a white-skinned race, representing a mechanized technical civilization, who considered them barbarians."<sup>12</sup>

His background has made him anti-technological. In *Lord of Thunder* Norton develops this trait in the story's thematic conflict. In this future there is a strain between two types of special service: the best masters and the technologists. The scientists refer to men like Hosteen as "nature boys," and the Beast Masters do not trust the techs either. Favor Dean, the Lord of Thunder, is a demented genius who has taken over an isolated area like a malevolent wizard of Oz. Norton explains Hosteen's prejudice:

The Terran's own training had been in psycho-biology. An Amerindian had an ancient tie with nature. . . which was his strength, just as other races had come to rely more and more on machines. It was upon such framework that his whole education had been based, his sympathies centered. So, both inborn and special conditioning had made of him a man aloof from, and suspicious of, machines. One had to be anti-tech to be a Beast Master.<sup>13</sup>

Hosteen operates on the unconscious level, acting on compulsion, reacting to subtle clues from his environment, which he knows so well that small changes are noticeable. What people generally call luck, he calls "medicine," though this is a great oversimplification.

He is a pureblood Indian right out of the past. Seeing him as "exiled majesty," the natives of Arzor admire him because he is like them. His self-control is lost only when he faces the Xik enemy in outrage at their destruction of his world and attempts to wipe out Arzor's natives who look and behave very like Earth's Indians. Otherwise, he is described as easygoing, self-confident, not given to idle boasts, and capable of any amount of heroism. Six feet tall, he bears a scar from a fight with an alert sentry on a faraway planet. His race is the Dineh, the People, called Navajo by whites—expert horsemen, artists in metal and wood, singers, good knifemen, desert dwellers, nomadic hunters, herders, and raiders. All these racial traits prepare Hosteen well for life on Arzor, a space Arizona where all men go armed with stun rays on their belts and do their homesteading and ranching while holding off rustlers.

When he speaks aloud to his team, it is in Navajo. Expressions like "Yat-ta-hay," the war cry "Ahuuuuuu," " 'anna Hwii' iidzii," "ach'ooni," "Kwii hachinigii 'ant'iihnii," "Shil hazheen," "Ani' iihii" decorate his speech.<sup>14</sup> There are more Navajo expressions in *Lord of Thunder*, particularly because for quite a while what goes on in that desolate region seems supernatural and Hosteen loses his English when he is confused. Of course, Norton must have done more research before her second Storm novel. Although he is intelligent and articulate, when talking to the tribes Hosteen drops auxiliaries and waxes stereotypically poetic: "I not of this world—I know not evil flyer"; "I stranger."<sup>15</sup> The Shosonna Dagotag sounds like the Hollywood Shoshone on whom he is modeled: "maybeso enemy you

faraway men. Nitra never see faraway men—big trophy bow hand.”<sup>16</sup> Like a traditional Indian, Hosteen instinctively sings for power:

Comes now the Monster Slayer, wearing this one's moccasins,  
Wearing the body of the storm born one.  
Comes now the Monster Slayer—ready for battle—<sup>17</sup>

I have a song—and an offering—  
In the midst of Blue Thunder am I walking—  
Now to the straight lightening would I go.  
Along the trail that the Rainbow covers—  
For to the Big Snake and to the Blue Thunder  
Have I made offering—  
Around me falls the white rain,  
And pleasant again will all become!<sup>18</sup>

Hosteen carries his cultural heritage just below his well-trained surface. In *Lord of Thunder* he explains to his native friends that his grandfather who had great powers might have “laid upon me something of his own at his passing,”<sup>19</sup> transmitting a spiritual legacy for him to carry to the stars. He uses the hypnotic spell that his people had made for themselves to carry a conviction of invincibility into battle. Naturally he respects the similar “medicine” of the natives of Arzor. He thinks of his adaptation to his life as a turquoise set in silver, but one that is loose and always will be. He has an enormous struggle reconciling his white man's education with his grandfather's legacy, symbolized by a turquoise necklace, bracelet, and belt. He makes an offering to secure medicine for his weapon and puts on war paint with grease, red dust, and chalk, though he thinks of it as camouflage. Finally, he holds his weapon to the sky and earth, then gives it to his friend, Gorgol. These are all actions of the traditional Indians on Terra.

*The Beast Master* tells how Storm worked out his personal problem by seeking revenge on Brad Quade, a quest laid on him by Na-Ta-Hay, his grandfather, who had accused Quade of murdering the boy's father. The accusation was false. At the end of the novel, Quade, part Cheyenne, powerful, heroic, and good, explains that the old man was against any change in culture to the extent that he refused to send for medical help for this son-in-law's snakebite. He drove Raquel, his own child, away and kept the baby, Hosteen, to raise in the old ways. Later Raquel had married Quade and with his and their son, Logan (who becomes Hosteen's friend), moved out to Arzor. Seeking revenge, Storm finds a family and home instead.

Although it is mixed, Hosteen's medicine is good. Still he prefers to remain a lonely outcast, riding alone with his animals. He is, however, a man of endurance, compassion, and skills—a red superman. Most of all, he is a character with whom a reader can identify because he is caught between two worlds, white and red, scientific and humanistic, as many of us are.

This conflict is another standard part of both Indian and juvenile writing today, most notably summarized in the writing of a Sioux author for young people, Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve. Norton, like Simak, is a strong voice for ecology and respect for all life forms. The Indian hero works for Norton because his people held so many of her own values; thus Hosteen becomes her voice.

Although there is some racism in endowing Hosteen with the simple elements associated with Indians as children of nature, Norton does not follow the pattern of early portrayals, the change from beast to retarded child. Hosteen has been able to survive society's attempt to take away his racial identity by fitting him into the mechanized world of the future.

Norton's other Amerindian hero, Kade Whitehawk of *The Sioux Spaceman*, is involved in a native uprising on the plains of Klor. This is a novel of parallels. Kade is a rebellious Trader who is unable to endure the arrogance of the imperialistic Styor race who treat inhabitants of other planets like their slaves. Reminiscent of the white men who drove out Kade's ancestors, their chief occupations are politics and war. After atomic wars wiped out Earth's dominant machine-centered civilization, the Indians regained their lands in the same manner that their brothers did in *A Choice of Gods*. Like Hosteen, Kade is anti-technological, so in tune with nature that he senses ambush and danger. He is particularly alert when he learns that he is replacing another Sioux who died mysteriously. As soon as he sees the Ikkinni race, he feels brotherhood. They are covered with long black hair and have "a hard beak of nose" protruding "in a bold curve, overshadowing the rest of the features."<sup>20</sup> When he sees the collars around their necks, which transmit jolts of pain miles away to maintain control, he is outraged. Using his influence as an expert on animals, he talks the High-Lord-Pac into ordering horses. With his horses, his courage, and endurance, he leads a successful rebellion.

Kade is a less well-developed character than Hosteen, but his racial origin is stressed. Norton explains the Indian presence in space. The Service has twenty or more subdivisions of the Federation of Tribes, Lakota being one of them. Kade's past includes the game of stealing horses unarmed from the enemy, the ability to communicate with animals, respect for the supernatural, and even remembrance of a ceremonial fast as part of adolescence. Most of all he carries with him the pride of the undefeated Sioux nation. It makes him play into the hands of the Traders who are subtly but successfully undermining the power of the Styor. Kade is an undercover warrior without realizing it.

This novel emphasizes plot more than the struggle to find an identity. The necessary overthrow of the Styor, however, is dramatized by Norton's parallels with arrogant white men: "But what did the off-worlders know of the free Ikkinni anyway? Their observations were based on the actions of

cowered and spirit-broken slaves; on the highly prejudiced comments of masters who deemed those slaves no better than animals."<sup>21</sup> Obviously Kade reads the similarities into the situation on the distant planet. His Sioux background is useful, though not totally accurate. The Sioux nation is composed of many tribes, the second largest in number of language groups, one of which is Lakota, itself subdivided into seven tribes. One of these is the Oglala group famous as warriors. Kade's racial stock is a powerful symbol. His horsemanship and tight-lipped courage make him an ideal hero for an adventure story in which a people is freed.

The existence of the American Indian in science fiction is a reminder of a tendency to exploit and even annihilate those who stand in the way of progress, a recurring theme from Wells to Le Guin. The works mentioned here are only a few that might be discussed. Indian characters and values can also be found in Alfred Bester's *The Computer Connection* (1975), Hayden Howard's *The Eskimo Invasion* (1967), Fred Saberhagen's *The Mask of the Sun* (1979), and Philip Jose' Farmer's *The Gate of Time* (1966) and his trilogy, *Maker of Universes*, *The Gates of Creation*, and *A Private Cosmos* (1965-68). The hero of a recent anti-nuclear thriller, *Dome* by Lawrence Huff (1979), is Dr. George Slayer, an Apache specializing in theoretical mathematics and nuclear ecology. Science-fiction writers use native Americans as a symbolic warning that progress is dangerous to tradition and as a plea to appreciate differing lifestyles. The modern Indian is still around in many forms, a complex reality that will not melt into the planetary stew. Each author examined here has a different fictional use for his or her Indians. Simak, justifiably, wants to improve the world, a task that he sees must be performed through respect for ecological balance. Indians, who have generally adapted to their environment rather than molded it for their personal convenience, are useful agents of reform. Michael Bishop has created Menny as an atavistic resister of a religious utopia. This outsider can see through society better than someone involved in day-to-day workings and benefiting from them. Robert Silverberg, who has researched his topic fully and is listed in *The Reference Encyclopedia of American Indians* for writing *Home of the Red Man*, *Vanishing Giants*, *The Old Ones*, and *Mound Builders of Ancient America*, has acknowledged the inevitably mixed nature of the people and the confusion of identity entailed by being part of both conquered and conqueror. Craig Strete, himself part white and part Indian, employs the myths that will probably hold the people together longer than any one language or pattern of culture. His stories are alien to most white readers until they are seen in cultural terms. Norton's two protagonists are well within white tradition and tend toward being cigarstore superandroids because she focuses on adventure and positive role models for young people. Both Silverberg and Strete present fresh and unsteretyped images of the Indian. Of the authors

considered here, they deal most powerfully with believable, suffering human beings who react personally to conflicts in values without a lot of trappings from the old days added on for authenticity's sake.

Whether they appear in disguise as threatened aliens, in the form of traditional old ones projected into the future to find a place for themselves, as models for man living in harmony with his environment, or as archetypal scapegoats, Indians do appear to great advantage in science fiction. The best role is probably shown in "Sundance"—thinking man with a conscience.

### Notes

1. Albert Keiser, *The Indian in American Literature* (New York: Oxford, 1933), p. 299.
2. Louise K. Barnett, *The Ignoble Savage* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1975), p. 195.
3. Clifford D. Simak, *A Choice of Gods* (New York: Putnam, 1972), p. 160.
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