Educational Conquest:  
A Comparative Study of Colonial Education in Senegal and the United States, 1880-1920

Senior Thesis

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Introduction

The idea for this project came from the summer and fall of 2011, when I spent two months on the Navajo Reservation followed by three months in Senegal. The more I learned of the history and culture of the peoples, the more I was struck by their similarities. Both areas had been colonized by Western powers and their peoples dominated culturally and politically. A key feature of colonization in both the United States and Senegal was official assimilation policy. To varying degrees, the colonizers employed tactics to integrate the indigenous people into the dominant society and spread their own cultural practices and beliefs. Furthermore, education of indigenous people was an important tactic within assimilation policy, beginning the assimilation process early in life and effectively translating assimilationist intentions (official or unofficial) into action. An important aspect of assimilation is acculturation, or the conforming of one culture to another. The Oxford English Dictionary defines assimilation as, "The action of making or becoming like; the state of being like; similarity, resemblance, likeness.” Whereas it defines acculturation as, "Adoption of or adaptation to a different culture, esp. that of a colonizing, conquering, or majority group; an instance of this." This definition of assimilation is ambiguous to any specific kind of similarity, thereby suggesting the inclusion of several different sub-processes of assimilation. For example, political assimilation indicates likeness in citizenship, rights and responsibilities and cultural assimilation connotes likeness in cultural practices, beliefs, and values. In this way, cultural assimilation is synonymous with acculturation. Therefore, colonial education of indigenous peoples sought to specifically acculturate the natives of Senegal and the US to French and American culture, respectively.
However, the similarities between the two accounts of acculturation are only part of the story. There are many differences in both theory and practice between the two policies. In this paper, I will examine how education of indigenous people in Senegal compared to that in the US with the hope of providing a base of understanding for wider conversations, such as the relationship between the cultural and political aspects of colonial history as well as present-day attempts to develop culturally sensitive and inclusive educational systems.

Education in both instances was employed as an attempt to transform the indigenous populations into “civilized” peoples. While assimilation was in part a political process, politicized and racialized ideas of culture meant that education’s role in assimilation was strongly acculturative. Hegemonic and normative ideas of civilization created a sense of superiority in the colonial powers and further justified their policies. The ideas that the dominant powers perceived as the foundation of their more civilized state, such as Christianity and secular morality, were the most important in educating the indigenous peoples. The US policy makers and educators focused heavily on Christian education while those of Senegal were more concerned with secular morality. These differences impacted religious and cultural continuation amongst indigenous peoples. The forcing of the dominant powers’ language through education deeply affected the psyche of the indigenous peoples. Education’s treatment of social ties fortified other acculturation attempts by repressing the students’ relationships with their communities. This education deeply affected the colonized community and had profound consequences. Altruistic and political motivations converged in the education of indigenous
peoples in Senegal and the United States so that, while the formulation of acculturation through
education was similar, the methods led to varying degrees of cultural survival.

This paper is historical in approach and features an analysis of secondary and primary
sources. It also includes some discussion of modern circumstances of cultural survival. To
clarify, I in no way seek to suggest that education as acculturation is solely responsible for
cultural loss or survival. Rather, it is one of many important contributing factors. Before
beginning this analysis, it is necessary to define my use of the word, “indigenous.” While
indigenous is a contested term, in this context, it indicates cultures and peoples that existed in a
given region prior to colonization. Similarly, I use “colonial powers” to refer to the French
presence in Senegal and the Federal Government in the US in that they both exploited and
controlled a native population as an alien power. It is my hope that the juxtaposition of the two
cases of colonial acculturation will allow them to enlighten each other and lead to wider
observations about colonial acculturation and cultural survival.
I. Justification and Motivation

In the nineteenth century, colonial policy makers concerned with indigenous peoples in both Senegal and the United States looked toward education to carry out the task of acculturation. The intertwining of culture and race clearly led the dominant powers to believe that acculturation through education of the indigenous peoples was necessary to any subsequent political and social integration. Ultimately, justified by hegemonic ideas of culture, influenced by politicized and racialized ideas of culture, and seeking solutions to political needs, the French in Senegal and the Federal Government in the US developed an education system and curriculum to acculturate indigenous peoples.

Throughout the nineteenth century, ideas of race had shifted from the belief that the indigenous peoples were inherently inferior to that, in theory, all races were equal. Indeed, the official nineteenth century French policy of *Assimilation* in Senegal expanded their revolutionary emphasis of “Liberty, equality, and fraternity” to include the black Senegalese, thereby affirming their equal humanity (Crowder 1; Idowu 195). This idea suggests that, in the eyes of the French, the Senegalese were indeed men. More specifically, General Faidherbe, appointed governor to Senegal in 1854, worked deliberately to increase education facilities in Senegal because of his belief in the equality of races (Crowder 12). If races were equal, they had equal capacity to be educated. This idea is equally obvious in the discourse surrounding education in the United States. In his memoirs from 1867-1904, *Battlefield and Classroom*, Richard H. Pratt, the founder of Carlisle Indian Vocational School and noted leader of Indian education, described the government’s recent persuasion that Indian youth, if exposed to an American education away
from the reservation, were capable of becoming as civilized and competent as white youth (221). Reformers and policy makers also came to view past treatment of Indians as inhumane due to the confirmation of Indian humanity. In 1888, Amelia S. Quinton, a leader of the Women’s National Indian Association, wrote that Indians were, according to her experience, quite capable of experience and character and therefore, deserved to be treated as men and women, “and not like un-thinking, irresponsible barbarians” (as cited in Prucha Americanizing 217). Indians were not only human and deserved to be treated as such but it was also their very ability to think that made them human. As a result of this sentiment, education was an emphasized option of Indian policy. Acknowledgement of the ability of indigenous peoples to be educated opened the door to somewhat contradictory notions of education as a tool for both elevating the indigenous people to the “culturally evolved” level of the Western cultures and forming them to be useful servants to the dominant powers.

However, even if the races were considered equal, cultures were not. Hegemonic ideas of civilization insisted that civilization could only exist in the Western form, serving as the foundation of acculturative education policies. While French assimilation policy in Senegal was based on ideas of racial equality, it was equally founded on a sense of the superiority of French culture (Crowder 2). If the peoples’ cultures were backwards, showing them the way of advanced cultures was a gift. Georges Hardy wrote in Une Conquête Morale that the French had the responsibility to share their heightened system of morality and values. According to Hardy, such values should be the cornerstone and main task of education in French West Africa (17, 8). This same thought process existed in the United States. Indian education was closely related to
the idea of cultural evolution. The reformers believed that through a Western education, Indians
could quickly move from savagism to civilization, the same process Western cultures had
completed naturally over centuries (Adams 19). Similarly, the sense of duty to aid the indigenous
peoples in cultural evolution was felt equally by reformers in the United States and policy
makers in France and Senegal. In 1880, the Board of Indian Commissioners wrote:

The public sentiment of our country appreciates as it never has before our duty and
responsibility in this respect. It is unwilling to perpetuate in our midst a race of paupers and pagans, groping in a superstition and barbarism unknown in the darkest age (as cited in Prucha Americanizing 194).

The American Indians, like the Senegalese, were thought to be living in darkness and it was the
responsibility of the white man to offer the light of civilization. The perceived inferiority of the
indigenous cultures as well as the resulting sense of duty to civilize it were present in the
thoughts and policies of the dominant powers in Senegal and the United States.

It must be noted, however, that ideas of cultural inferiority were clearly intertwined with
ideas of racial inferiority. They are not truly separate ideas. In speaking of the French
responsibility to civilize in 1884, Jules Ferry, a French politician who argued for colonial
expansion, said, “There is a right for the superior races, because there is responsibility for them.
They have the responsibility to civilize the inferior races” (my translation) (Hardy xvi). His
mention of race rather than culture is quite telling of underlying racial essentialism. Likewise, in
the United States, the report by the Board of Indian Commissioners in 1880 states:

The Indian, though a simple child of nature with mental faculties dwarfed and
shriveled, while groping his way for generation in the darkness of barbarism, already sees the importance of education; bewildered by the glare of a civilization above and beyond his comprehension, he is nevertheless seeking to adjust himself
to the new conditions by which he is encompassed (as cited in Prucha Americanizing 194).

The description of an Indian with words such as “simple” and his mental ability as “dwarfed and shriveled” demonstrates an undercurrent of a sense of racial superiority despite the occasional acknowledgement and practical acceptance of the equal capacity of the indigenous peoples. On one level, such discourse establishes that the governing peoples’ beliefs were not that truly removed from ideas of racial essentialism. Such ideas were more deep seated than a few acknowledgements to the contrary could defy. Cultural inferiority and backwardness were symptoms of the perceived racial inferiority, all of which justified the dominant authority’s tactics and treatment of the indigenous people.

The dominant powers, however, were certainly well-served by their attempts to do so. Acculturation through education filled both their political and practical needs. In his 1961 post-colonial novel, L’aventure ambiguë, or The Ambiguous Adventure, Senegalese author Cheikh Hamidou Kane wrote of the colonial school, “The new school participated in the quest of the cannon… More so than the cannon, it perpetuated conquest. The cannon constrains the body, the school traps the mind” (my translation) (Kane 60). These words delineate the important relationship between control of material land and bodies and control of people’s minds. In both Senegal and the US, a greater shift towards state education as acculturation took place after the dominant power had a greater, more secure hold of the land. While it geographically increased the reach of their control and power, expansion also opened the door to threats against the political power of the dominant authorities and other practical problems that they felt could be solved through education.
It is important to note that the indigenous peoples of Senegal and the US experienced different forms of colonialism which shaped the policies and acculturation attempts of the dominant powers. The French presence in Senegal was maintained by a centralized rule from Paris and, increasingly, the Four Communes. On the other hand, the United States was a settler colony. This difference was highly formative for the dominant powers’ approach to geographic expansion and colonialism. For this reason, interaction between Anglo settlers and Indians was inevitable whereas the majority of Frenchmen never encountered a Senegalese. Furthermore, the French relied on alliances with influential, native Senegalese to maintain their power and carry out their objectives while the Anglo-Americans needed no aid from the American Indians. These differences ultimately led the French to seek the formation of Senegalese who would be useful to their cause while Anglo Americans sought the solidification of the American identity.

In his book *La Stratégie Culturelle de la France en Afrique*, Papa Ibrahima Seck writes that the case of French colonialism in Senegal shows that an invading power may be able to conquer the land but to truly maintain power, the minds of the people must be conquered. The French were concerned with creating a sense of loyalty to the French colonial cause amongst the indigenous peoples as well as fitting them to be useful to the cause. They sought to educate the Senegalese in ways that convinced them of the necessity of colonialism in order to ensure their loyalty (Seck 21). In 1884-1885, the major European powers present in Africa met in Berlin to establish the boundaries of control of each power and codes of international law pertaining to control of Africa. The General Act of the Berlin Conference in 1884-1885 established the expanse of possible French control in West Africa, solidifying a shift towards inward expansion
and colonialism as opposed to the first phase, which focused on the coasts. This sanctioned penetration of the African interior caused more conflicts among European powers. Furthermore, international law related to control in Africa developed in Berlin required the maintenance of law and order in a colony in order to claim it as such. (Reinhard 198, 9; 206, 7). This newly established international law meant that the French as a colonial power depended on the cooperation, whether passive or active, of the indigenous peoples to legitimize a colony as their own. Georges Hardy, the Director of Education of French West Africa, wrote in 1917, that education was the surest method to “transform the primitive peoples of [the French] colonies to be devoted to [the French] cause and useful to [their] enterprises” (my translation) (Hardy 6). Acculturation of the Senegalese through education fulfilled the needs created by the results of the Berlin Conference.

While loyalty itself was advantageous, the usefulness of which Hardy spoke did not pertain only to loyalty. Further expansion in West Africa also required more literate natives. Education filled a need by equipping certain Senegalese to act as interpreters, perform administrative tasks, thereby aiding colonial expansion. Denise Bouche writes that this purpose of education created a contradiction between practical needs and the idealized concept of the civilizing mission (4). This political motivation further demonstrates the idea that education was a means by which to exercise control over the people’s minds in the same way the colonists had come to control the land. Both the land and the people were viewed as resources to be used and exploited for the benefit of the French.
With increased territorial control, the United States was faced with both a threatened national identity and costly wards of the State. First of all, newly expanded boundaries stirred up concern for the solidity of the American identity, as defined by white Protestants. Prior to westward expansion, there was less contact among different cultures within the United States and white Protestants could easily believe and assert that their priorities and those of the nation were identical. However, the increase in diversity and loss of space between different cultures that resulted from westward expansion threatened their sense of security of cultural and political power. This threat to cultural power was also due in part to the simultaneous threat brought by a rush of immigrants from different parts of Europe (Hoxie 12). This concern for identity was coupled with an acceptance that the Indian population could not be physically eradicated. War against the Indians had clearly failed to fully extinguish the population. Furthermore, past treatment of Indians had come to be viewed as inhumane (as cited in Prucha *Americanizing* 252). The cementing of American identity meant erasing any competing identities within the new boundaries of the United States. As Captain Pratt, the founder of the Carlisle Technical Indian School, famously directed, “Kill the Indian in him, and save the man” (as cited in Prucha *Americanizing* 261). Therefore, it was necessary to create a sense of “American-ness” in the indigenous peoples. Policy makers were essentially looking to make Indians as culturally Anglo-Saxon and Protestant as possible in order to secure their power.

A key feature of US western land policy was the reservation system. Throughout the nineteenth century, as the presence of Indian tribes impeded the westward expansion of white settlers, the Federal Government established a series of treaties that reserved land for collective
ownership by tribes (The Confederation of American Indians xiii). However, by the time of the 1880s when the Indian reform movement was gaining momentum, many people had found numerous problems with this system. Reformers, mainly white Protestant philanthropists interested in improving American Indian policy, took three main issues with the reservation system. First of all, reservations allowed for continued connections to land and tribal culture. Secondly, the reservation system created a sense of dependency because it was directly related to the rationing system by which the Federal Government was responsible for providing for the American Indians. Finally, there was little motivation for Indians to put individual effort into a farm that might be lost to an Indian removal program (Adams 17). The overarching problem that the white Americans found with the reservation system was that it created and perpetuated a dependent community with supposedly backwards ideas based in communality. The 1880 Board of Indian Commissioners wrote, “As a savage we cannot tolerate [the Indian in our society] any more than as a half-civilized parasite, wanderer, or vagabond” (as cited in Prucha Americanizing 8). American Indians, then costly wards of the state, had come to be viewed as needy and lazy dependents in American society.

The solution, then, was to teach the Indians to be self-sufficient individuals. American culture was an individualistic one; even its capitalist economy hinged on possessive individualism. To teach the Indians to be the same would secure the American identity as well as free the government for the responsibility of caring for them. By individualizing the American Indians, the Federal Government intended to develop competent, independent participants in mainstream American culture, thereby freeing itself of the financial task of providing for them.
The evolution of ideas concerning citizenship of the indigenous peoples also demonstrate the manipulation of culture for political ends and reveal a racially and politically charged conception and treatment of culture. Citizenship policies required acculturation due to the dominant powers’ cultural expectations of their citizens as well as the equation of these cultural expectations with “whiteness.” Therefore, a political status was granted to a marginalized ethnic group upon achievement of a cultural requirement. In Senegal, France began extending political rights and citizenship to people in the colonies beginning in 1794, when they granted citizenship to all who were “domiciled,” a subjective label granted by the Western power, indicating that there were cultural expectations for citizens. Characteristics of a “domiciled” person included adherence to French codes and customs, monogamy, literacy in French, and contribution in some way to the greater civilizing mission. Later in the 1800s, three different statuses of habitants existed in the Four Communes: the French, Mulattoes, and the native Senegalese. The Mulattoes had always been granted citizenship if a French parent acknowledged his mulatto child, yet the native Senegalese could only attain the same status through cultural acceptance of French customs and values (Idowu 196, 205). In this way, the French were basing citizenship on a racialized conception of culture that theoretically equated French nationality by blood with the same by culture. Therefore, French citizenship required acculturation.

However, Senegal moved away from the idea of education as a stipulation for citizenship when, in 1848, any resident of the colony for more than five years was granted citizenship and voting rights regardless of educational status. Originally, these rights were restricted to people in Saint-Louis and Gorée, which made up the sum of the colony. By 1860, however, the colony
also included Rufisque and Dakar, extending rights to these cities. Even as General Faidherbe expanded French control inward and village schools were opened in the interior, citizenship was withheld from people outside of the Four Communes of Rufisque, Dakar, Gorée, and Saint-Louis (Idowu 195, 6). Although citizenship and education were no longer directly related, the cultural expectations of being “domiciled” continued to guide education in Senegal. French literacy and adherence to French morals and laws remained the cornerstones of education in Senegal. However, the separation of education from citizenship gave the Senegalese slightly more freedom to resist acculturation. Citizens in the Four Communes were able to procure at least their voting rights without proving full acculturation.

Ideas of Indian citizenship in the US changed significantly and often at the turn of the twentieth century, becoming increasingly linked with “competency” as defined by the United States Government. This assignment of “competent” or “not” was based on the Indian Office’s perception of the individual’s ability to maintain their finances and allotment. As a landmark piece of Indian policy, the Dawes Act of 1887, by which reservation land was divided amongst the Indians as private property, granted citizenship at the same time as the granting of an allotment of private property. However, the Burke Act in 1906 granted citizenship at the end of the allotment’s trust period, unless “competency” could be earlier proven. Eventually, in 1917 citizenship was granted to the individuals that the government determined “competent” or to those with less than 50 percent Indian descent. In other words, an Indian who had equal or less Indian heritage as White heritage was considered fit for citizenship (Adams 145, 6). This concession again equates acceptance of Western customs with “whiteness.” Due to this pairing
of citizenship with “competency”, Indian schools could be used for citizenship training through “competency” education, emphasizing “principles of republicanism, the rights, and obligations of citizenship, and the structure of federal, state, and local governments” (Adams 145, 6).

Citizenship was, in theory, open to all Indians but demanded a level of “competency” adhering to Western ideals that was ultimately equated with cultural whiteness. Therefore, schools as means of citizenship training were clearly intended to Anglicize the Indians. In both Senegal and the United States, the dominant power held cultural expectations of citizens that were incorporated into their policies of citizenship for indigenous peoples. These ideas were also deeply related to ideas of race and whiteness and indicated that acculturation was necessary for citizenship.

Through education, the native peoples could acquire the cultural values and practices necessary to participate in society.
II. Religion and Secular Morality

Colonial powers in Senegal and the United States derived their motivations from different cornerstones of their cultures. In Senegal, the French were motivated in part by revolutionary, secular ideals of the Rights of Man. In the United States, the colonial motivation was largely Christian, primarily Protestant. This motivation stemmed equally from the sense of superiority provided by secular morality and Christianity, respectively, and the perceived universality of these value systems. These sources of motivation, therefore, shaped what they wanted to impart upon the indigenous peoples. There was also true practicality to their employment of secular morality or religion in education that cannot be denied. Ultimately, the implementation of these ideas and objectives within education deeply hindered the continuation of pre-existing religions and cultural survival.

French policy makers in Senegal were primarily compelled by the ideals of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution such as the Rights of Man and “liberty, equality, brotherhood.” Such Enlightenment ideals also entailed increasing secularism, especially in France where it was integral to the revolution (Custos 343). As the cornerstone of the society and culture, these values were understood to be the source of French civilization, and therefore, their cultural superiority. Anything different from these ideals or the subsequent system of morality was inferior. According to the French, the Black Senegalese did not understand or practice Western morality and were therefore inferior and barbaric. Georges Hardy wrote that the socialization of children by African families, religion, and society led to “barbaric routines and
dangerous prejudices” as well as “vanity, laziness, and prodigality” (my translation) (Hardy xv, 207). The Senegalese were, in fact, not considered moral at all. The justification this perceived immorality provided to colonialism was also coupled with the sense of universality associated with their values. The Rights of Man, inherent to the Enlightenment and the French Revolution, were conceived of as universal from the beginning. France, therefore, as French place of origin, had not only a right but a responsibility to spread such values around the world (Hardy xv). Their superiority in civilization gave the French the right and the understood universality of such values gave them the responsibility.

Because the French power’s sense of superiority called for the increase of its influence, education was steeped in French cultural values that were translated into curriculum. This meant that education in Senegal was founded on secularism. There was an undercurrent of secularism throughout state-run education in Senegal because of the influence of the ideals of the French Revolution. The universality of the Rights of Man and emphasis on equality also meant that education in Senegal should resemble that of France. Therefore, when moral education replaced religious education in French schools in 1880, it would have the same centrality in colonial schools (Hardy xv). William Ponty wrote in 1908 that the French focus should be “to teach the native to speak [French], to read it, to write it, to inculcate them with rudimentary skills to calculate with certain notions of morality, this suffices for the moment” (Ponty 24). Thus, the focus of French education in Senegal was not highly academic information but the basics of functioning in a French society, including French secular morality. Hardy dealt at length with moral education. He wrote, that “…moral education, the amelioration of the indigenous spirit,
walks beside the amelioration of material resources, and the school, before any other institution, must safeguard this equilibrium” (206). Secular morality was the keystone of French education in Senegal.

French colonial policies certainly reflected this increasing emphasis on secularism and morality in education. From 1841 to 1903, the Brothers of Ploërmel, a French religious order, held a monopoly on education in Senegal. Their schools were originally targeted towards European or biracial children and eventually opened to certain Muslim African children (Bouche “Autrefois…” 11). Their method of education had a strong religious and evangelistic emphasis. Until 1867, they focused mainly on religion, writing, French, arithmetic, and geography. The religious lessons were not the sole place for religion in the schools. Les Devoirs du Chrétien envers Dieu et les moyen de pouvoir bien s’en acquitter (Christian Responsibilities towards God and the Ways in which to Fulfill Them) was the sole reading textbook. The Brothers’ influence lessened, however, as the French colonial government gradually moved away from such religious education. In 1857, Faidherbe opened the first secular school in the colony at St. Louis. This school was in direct contrast and competition to the schools run by the Brothers (Bouche L’enseignement 165-9, 279-93). By 1903, secularism had prevailed in public schooling in Senegal. The general government of the colony relieved the Brothers of Ploërmel from their position of educators in exchange for secular instructors. Similarly, they replaced Devoirs du Chrétien, which carried “a character that was not only confessional, but also hostile to democratic principles,” with ones that were written, “in the secular and republican spirit” (my translation) (Bouche “Autrefois…” 114; Gouvernment Général de l’A.O.F. 160-166). The
secularization of all schools in Senegal was furthered when the colonial government officially discouraged private education in the colony beginning in 1904 (Bouche L'enseignement 3). This act greatly diminished the sway of missionaries in the daily lives of the people, especially in terms of their acculturation through evangelization. The French colonial government, therefore, pushed secularism not only in public education but advocated that such education be the only education.

Despite the clear transition to secularism, its implementation was only moderately effective until the guidance of Hardy beginning in 1912. In 1857, Faidherbe boasted of the success of his secular schools, claiming forty-six students in addition to 155 marabouts, spiritual leaders in Senegalese Islam, as students. He boasted of the success of French language education. In reality, however, inspectors found only nine students at the school; many students came only once or twice a month. Such conditions hardly created an atmosphere for the successful learning that Faidherbe claimed (Bouche L'enseignement 293). Indeed, Hardy inherited an education office that was more often than not wrought with incoherence and incompetence. He met this challenge, organizing the service of education in Afrique Occidentale Française or French West Africa (A.O.F.), and collecting and developing his ideas on indigenous education in Une Conquête Morale. Hardy’s discussion of morality and education cements and codifies the emphasis on secular morality rather than religion. Indeed, the very title of this book demonstrates the centrality of morality in education and the role it was to play in conforming and civilizing indigenous peoples in A.O.F. In discussing what moral education and amelioration of the spirit entail, Hardy listed: “… the responsibility to the self (care of body, purity of habits,
straightforwardness, modesty), familial responsibility, responsibility to other men (justice, charity, respect of property, and honor of others, etc.)” (my translation) (Hardy 208). Because of the foundational function of secular morality in French culture, acculturation of the Senegalese to French-defined morality was supposed to civilize them. Secular morality, therefore, existed on both ends of the process of the French formulation of their education system in Senegal: as the inspiration and as the resulting curriculum. The same pattern is evident in the case of the US, yet the catalyst and material taught was Christianity, not secular morality.

In contrast to the centrality of secular morality, policy makers and reformers in the US derived their motivation for Native acculturation from Christianity. Thomas J. Morgan, then Commissioner of Indian Affairs, spoke to the Tenth Annual Meeting of the Lake Mohonk Conference, an annual meeting for American philanthropists advocating for reform of Indian policy, in 1887 on the issue of Indian education. He addressed the gathered reformers saying, “To fight [the Indians] is cruel; to feed them is wasteful; to educate them is humane, economic, and Christian” (as cited in Prucha Americanizing 282). In the eyes of the white, Christian Americans, to educate the Indians was Christian for several reasons. In contrast to the secular, enlightened ideals of the French, it was Christianity, primarily Protestantism, gave the reformers their sense of superiority. It was a commonly held belief in the US that a true civilization was built upon the Bible and Christian morality. America was highly civilized, therefore, precisely because of its Christian character (Adams 23). In 1887, Edward H. Magill, president of Swarthmore College, addressed the Lake Mohonk Conference of Friends of Indians, saying:

This other work is no less than the proper education, training, and full development of the Indian race, for the great change from a savage, semisavage, or barbarous to
a truly civilized people...a merely secular education, a training of the intellect alone, will not accomplish it... your attempts will be forever vain, and worse than vain, unless their moral and spiritual natures are trained to keep pace with the intellectual (as cited in Prucha Americanizing 283).

Therefore, as the perceived keystone of civilization, Christianity must play a part in the civilizing of those viewed as culturally inferior. Christianity and civilization were synonymous. Even more specifically, American civilization was often thought to be inherently, foundationally Protestant.

At the 1892 Lake Mohonk Conference, Rev. James M. King, secretary of the National League for the Protection of American Institutions said, “In this Columbian year, it becomes us to remember that our civilization is not Latin, because God did not permit North America to be settled and controlled by that civilization. The Huguenot, the Hollander, and the Puritan created our civilization” (as cited in Prucha Americanizing 291). The centrality of Christianity in American conceptions of civilization mandated its parallel centrality in its campaigns to acculturate the indigenous peoples.

Moreover, it was the mandated universality of Christianity and commandment to evangelize that compelled the concerned parties to acculturate the Indians. Merrill E. Gates presided over the Eleventh Annual Lake Mohonk Conference in 1893, saying, “Yet, in our self-appointed task of love, we work here as ‘children of the light’” (as cited in Prucha Americanizing 288). Similarly, in acknowledging the difficulties of Indian education, Amelia S. Quinton wrote, “That is the right thing to do, and therefore, it can be done; for the right is God’s way, and all his machinery is pledged to securing the right” (as cited in Prucha Americanizing 218). In proselytizing, they were fulfilling a duty to God as well as being benevolent and loving. Reformers and policy makers felt they were acting out of their Christian duty to save souls in
bringing the light of Christianity to the Indians. The religious motivation in the United States gave the colonizers an even greater fervor in their mission than in Senegal. That they were doing God’s work made their work all the more important and guaranteed success. This impetus to convert the Indians focused education more directly on Christianization and added a religious fervor to the colonists’ work.

There was a clear focus on Christianity in Indian education from the first contact with Indians. Missionaries had been acculturating Native Americans, even without providing any political rights or citizenship, through evangelism throughout the history of contact. In the mid-seventeenth century, John Eliot and Daniel Gookin travelled among the Indians in Massachusetts together as missionary and civil servant respectively (Tinker 31). Gookin, describing the constructed relationship between Christianity and civilization, observed, “Our design was to travel[sic] further among them, and to confirm their souls in the Christian religion, and to settle teachers in every town, and to establish[sic] civil government among them” (Gookin 79). This emphasis on Christianity in education and its connection to civilization did not fade with the government’s role in Indian education. The government and the Church worked closely together. In 1869, the Peace Policy announced by Ulysses S. Grant established the practice of Christian denominations appointing personnel to agencies and reservation staff (Adams 7). This system guaranteed the Church’s influence over the proceedings of the Federal Government in matters pertaining to Indian affairs. Even when the government took more control over Indian education, especially in the form of off-reservation boarding schools after 1880, Christianity maintained an important role. Despite the non-sectarian status of government schools, it was felt that all staff
should be Christians, in order to envelop the students with Christian examples (as cited in Prucha Americanizing 284). Furthermore, schools were expected to develop a set of weekly activities to implement religious instruction. These included morning, afternoon, and evening services on Sunday as well as daily morning and evening prayers and a Wednesday evening prayer meeting. From these services, the children were to gain an understanding of the Ten Commandments, the Beatitudes, and common Psalms (Adams 168).

In addition to the moral and Christian impetus to educate the indigenous peoples of Senegal and the US, the use of religion or secular morality in education also had concrete practical advantages. Indeed, the emphasis on either secular morality or Christianity fit well with the colonists’ respective goals for education. In Senegal, the French aimed to render the indigenous people useful to the colonial cause through education. They sought to reach as many people as possible, especially strategic populations. Secular education was practical in that it allowed the French to reach more natives and conform them to French needs, specifically, the overwhelming majority that were the Muslims of Senegal. Partly because of this fact, Faidherbe and the French established secular schools and moved away from religious education. In 1856, Faidherbe addressed the predominant Muslim presence in Senegal, saying, “The Muslim element is here [in Senegal] the most numerous, the most persisting, and the most useful…We cannot therefore view them as though they do not exist, these people who do almost all the work, commerce, and war. It is essential that we focus on them. And they do not yet have the way to learn our language” (Bouche L’enseignement 283, 4). The Muslims represented an influential
and substantial population; securing their usefulness to the French cause, by teaching them French, guaranteed their help in the continuation of French influence.

As discussed in Chapter 1, the primarily white, Protestant reformers and policy makers in the US were concerned with the solidity of the American identity as Protestant and white. This concern is evident in the debate over the role of Catholicism in Indian education. Indian acculturation and education did not exist in a vacuum; rather it was one of the stages of a larger debate taking place in American society. The post-Civil War years were marked by strong Protestant efforts to convert the entire nation (Handy 10). The Protestant force behind these efforts meant that Catholics did not fit into such efforts, including that of Indian education. No one disagreed about the vital role of Christianity in Indian education, rather Protestants often ignored and marginalized Catholics if not explicitly discriminating against them within efforts to convert Indians through education (Prucha Churches x). Though officially non-sectarian, the system of Sunday school and religious services enforced by the government at the government schools was understood to be Protestant in nature. The Catholics, aware of their marginalization within Indian education and the existing efforts to eliminate their influence, recognized the label of “non-sectarian” as untruthful. Father Joseph A. Stephan, director of the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions, addressed the Board of Indian Commissioners with a written statement, saying:

What I do object to is that the effort now being made to secularize, to ‘non-sectarize’ the Indian schools, is a dishonest, hypocritical one, whose sole aim and purpose it is to drive the Catholic Church out of the Indian educational and missionary field, in which it has gained glorious laurels, and to substitute for its influence and teachings the influence and teaching of other religious bodies (As cited in Prucha Churches 163).
The Protestantism of Indian schools was sometime more blatant than Protestant services on Sunday. The schools encouraged by Thomas Morgan, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, were often explicitly affiliated with the Baptists, Methodists, or Presbyterians. Captain Pratt, founder of the Carlisle School, was also staunchly anti-Catholic and often printed such remarks in *The Red Man*, the Carlisle publication (Prucha *Churches* 162-4). The marginalization of Catholics in Indian education was accurately perceived on the part of the Catholics and deliberate on the part of the Protestants as part of a wider effort to Protestantize America.

The Catholics fought hard, led by Father Stephan, to maintain their role in Indian education. Thanks to Catholic persistence, for example, an eventual agreement was reached between Catholics and the Carlisle school, which became a model for other Indian schools facing similar problems. Through this program, special allowances were made for previously converted Catholic students. These students met with Catholic nuns twice a week as well as during the Sunday school hour on Sundays. Catholic students continued to be expected to attend the non-denominational services on Sunday afternoons and evenings (Prucha *Churches* 166). Although Catholics maintained some role in the lives of the already Catholic students, this agreement allowed for no further conversion to Catholicism. Protestantism would remain dominant and primary in Indian Schools while Catholicism could only constitute a smaller faction of influence.

The controversy regarding the role of Catholicism in Indian schools was representative of the wider debate about American identity. The Protestants utilized Indian education to further their mission and meet their needs. The Catholics did the same to maintain their role in
American life. They were not to be ignored or eradicated as a part of American society and yet, as their marginal success in the Carlisle agreement represents, they would remain a minority in American life, a less influential entity than that of Protestantism. The concern for establishing an American identity was not limited to the Catholics-Protestants rivalry. Rather, it involved the whole of diversity in the United States. In 1893, Gates compared Indians to the white urban poor and rural Southern Blacks: “Sodden masses of humanity, whether depraved whites in our great cities or ignorant blacks in the South, or savage red men, isolated upon reservations, cannot be redeemed and lifted up as masses or by wholesale legislation. The life of a soul is awakened and strengthened and saved only by the touch of another life” (as cited in Prucha Americanizing 288). The conforming of the “red man” was equated with that of the Blacks and even the urban dwellers, who would have been primarily recent immigrants. It was clear that Protestantism, through the awakening, strengthening, and salvation of a soul, had the power to redeem members of all such inferior identities. In this context, formulated by Gates as a white, Protestant man, “redemption” can be read as synonymous to acculturation to the white, Protestant way. Therefore, Christianity’s role in the education of Indians took place in the wider context of concern for the American identity and served the reformers and policy makers’ objective of shaping that identity to their interest and continued power.

Furthermore, American Christianity was often infused with a strong sense of individualism, which lent itself, through Protestant education, to the American goal of privatization of Indian land. Accepting Christianity, especially Protestantism, meant adopting a complete ethical code and values, including the idea of individual responsibility both in
economics and spirituality (Adams 23). The pervasiveness of the goal of individualism, as well as its role in the American conception of Christianity, is evident in the discourse surrounding education and Christianity’s role in it. In his Lake Mohonk address, Gates said:

As we get them one by one, as we break up these iniquitous masses of savagery, as we draw them out from their old associations and immerse them in the strong currents of Christian life and Christian citizenship, as we send the sanctifying stream of Christian life and Christian work among them, they feel the pulsing life-tide of Christ’s life (as cited in Prucha Americanizing 288).

The rhetoric of individualism, as evidenced in terms such as “one by one” and “masses of savagery,” directly contrast the barbarous savages with the highly individualized and civilized American Christians as well as demonstrate that the way to convert the Indians, to Christianity and to the American way of life, is to individualize them. This sentiment is perfectly fitting with the policy makers and reformers’ goal of individualizing the Native Americans, which would serve American society in two main ways. First of all, it would teach the Indians how to work in the Western way, providing them with basic skills and trades so that they might function in their new reality as a working class. Secondly, it would teach them the value and respect of private property and the accumulation of wealth. The latter goal is relevant to the enacting of the Dawes Act in 1887, which divided reservation land into personal, privately owned allotments (Adams 17, 22, 3). One sees, therefore, the intersection of multiple political objectives culminating in the Christianization of the American Indians through education. Proselytizing the American Indians individualized them because of the individualized mentality of American Protestant Christianity, preparing a working class inculcated with the value of consumerism and private property, in turn solving the challenge of the reservation system by weakening tribal relations to each other and the idea of communal land.
The implementation of secular, moral or religious education contributed greatly to variations in religious and cultural survival in Senegal and the United States. The emphasis on secular morality in Senegal led to greater continuation of Islam among the black Senegalese. In turn, there was greater cultural survival because of the cultural beliefs and values inherently imbedded in religion. Conversely, the fervor of Christianity behind and within Indian education was integral to the cultural genocide the Native peoples experienced. As a result of Christianity’s imposition on Native cultures, the prevalence of Native spirituality and religious traditions was diminished to a much greater degree than in Senegal.

The emphasis on secular morality in French education in Senegal led to the continuation of Islam in Senegal. Muslims were able to continue practicing and Muslim children avoided the Christian education endured by native children in the United States. This difference ensured Islam’s continuing presence and influence in society as another generation practiced Islam. Furthermore, by rendering Muslims useful to the French through secular education, the French colonial government depended on the marabouts for governance of rural areas. This guaranteed that Islam would continue to have an influential role in Senegalese life and society (Seck 869). The secular education of Muslims in Senegal relatively safeguarded individuals’ practice of Islam and the subsequent employment of such Muslims for the colonial cause secured the continued pervasiveness of Islam in Senegalese culture. Indeed, Senegal continues to be vastly Muslim. Statistics from 2010 state that ninety-four percent of the Senegalese are Muslims, five percent are Christians, and one percent are animists (CIA, World Fact Book 2010). Therefore, Islam was certainly not as greatly diminished as were native spirituality and religion in the US.
The emphasis on Christianity in the United States led to considerable destruction of indigenous religious systems and practices. George Tinker discusses the role of Christian missionaries in the cultural genocide of indigenous peoples. He describes cultural genocide as the “effective destruction of a people by systematically (intentionally or unintentionally in order to achieve other goals) destroying, eroding, or undermining the integrity of the culture and system of values that defines a people and gives them life” and the religious aspect of cultural genocide, therefore, as “…the overt attempt to destroy the spiritual solidarity of a people” (Tinker 6, 7). The imposition of a Christian education ideally leading to conversion in Indian schools not only enforced the idea of Christian and Western superiority but also separated the children from the rest of their community. Because of the cultural values imbedded in native religion, the near destruction of it also threatened the survival of indigenous cultures. Indeed, that is what acculturation was intended to do. Christianity’s influence in Indian education often effectively eliminated the Indian from the man. Statistics again reveal the loss of indigenous religions in the United States. The Pew Foundation for Religion and Public Life reported in 2008 that less than .3 percent of Americans practiced Native American religions while Native Americans themselves comprised 1.5 percent of the American population in the 2010 Census (Pew Foundation 5; Norris 5).

The motivation for acculturation of indigenous peoples was derived from secular, revolutionary ideas and morality in Senegal and Christianity in the United States. These sources of motivation then became the very subjects of the acculturating curriculum of the schools. This was due in part to the perceived superiority offered by the hegemonic understandings of
civilization, with secular morality and Christianity as the keystones of their civilizations. The French and Americans viewed their respective motivating values and beliefs as universal and intended for the entire world. Therefore, “civilizing” the indigenous peoples was partially a philanthropic, moral act. There were also political motivations and advantages to assimilating the indigenous people in Senegal and the US. Secular education filled needs in Senegal in the same way that Christian education did in the United States. Ultimately, the secularism in Senegal allowed for greater religious and cultural continuation while Christianity in the US participated in the cultural genocide of the native peoples, nearly eradicating indigenous religions. Colonial education of indigenous peoples perpetuated the cultural system of values in which it was deeply rooted while simultaneously serving the needs of the colonial power. The values which the education system perpetuated directly affected the degree to which the indigenous religion and culture survived.
III. Language and Literacy

In his 1952 landmark book, *Peau Noire, Masques Blancs* or *Black Skin, White Masks*, Frantz Fanon writes, “Every colonized people – in other words, every people in whose soul an inferiority complex has been created by the death and burial of its local cultural originality- finds itself face to face with the language of the civilizing nation…” (Trans. Markmann 18). Language was integral to colonialism as the dominant powers used it to exercise control over the colonized peoples as they forced their language onto them. This, in turn, harmed the indigenous communities’ relationship with their own languages. Language education in Senegal and the United States involved more than direct language instruction and, as intended, it affected the indigenous peoples on a deeper level than replacing their language. Justified by a sense of superiority and guided by political objectives, the French in Senegal and the Federal Government in the United States used language as a tool to effectively replace the indigenous nature of the children with “civilization.”

On a basic level, language instruction was necessary to open the door to further attempts at acculturation and political assimilation due to the inevitable language barrier. However, the relationship between language and culture renders language a powerful tool in itself for acculturation. Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o writes in his book, *Decolonising the Mind*, that the choice of a language and use of it is “central to people’s definitions of themselves in relation to their natural and social environments, indeed in relation to the entire universe” (Thiong’o 4). Cultural values and beliefs are imbedded in a language. Languages reveal cultural priorities and values. For example, the Navajo language uses different verb forms for different experiences of rain fall. It
uses one form if the individual is aware of the rainstorm from the beginning and another if the individual just recently became aware of the occurring rainfall. It also distinguishes between the complete stop to the rain and the movement of it from one locale to another. This differentiation demonstrates their attention to details that are often irrelevant in English conversation and therefore, to the “white point of view” (Kluckhohn 271-3). Learning another language includes learning new ways of thinking and being. It provided the dominant powers an effective way to attempt to replace perceived barbarity with the idealized hegemonic civilization.

The French and the US Federal Government were aware of the deep connection between language and culture and used it to their advantage. Georges Hardy, recognizing language as a carrier of culture and the vast difference between French and African languages, wrote that, “…there is a veritable abyss between the indigenous languages of Africa and the French language; they express sentiments, tendencies, and approaches of deeply different thoughts” (146). Similarly, J.D.C Atkins, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs at the time, wrote in 1887:

Through sameness of language is produced sameness of sentiment, and thought; customs and habits are moulded and assimilated in the same way, and thus in process of time the differences producing trouble [between Whites and Indians] would have been gradually obliterated (as cited in Prucha Americanizing 198).

Both policy makers recognized that language perpetuated the thoughts and habits of culture. Therefore, to replace a mother tongue in a child was to replace their entire worldview with a new one. Due to hegemonic ideas of civilization in the West, this process again was viewed as replacing a barbarous language and worldview with civilized ones.

Just as the French and the United States Governments equated their morality and religion, respectively, with civilization, they idealized their languages to the point of equating them with
civilization. In both cases, the dominant power saw its language as foundational to its civilization and its society as the greatest civilization. To be civilized the indigenous peoples had to learn French or English. Civilization through language, however, also entailed the eradication of the indigenous language in the minds of the students. Only by completely replacing the indigenous language with the Western language could the peoples be civilized.

The French highly valued their language to the point of “attach[ing to it] a magical value” (Idowu 211). Hardy wrote, “Finally, is it not universally admitted that the French language possesses exceptional virtues, that it is marvelously suited to the expression of clear ideas and noble sentiments and that it is the very language of civilization?” (my translation) (147). The proliferation of the French language was vital to the creation of French nationalism and citizenry. At the beginning of the Third Republic in France, in 1870, Parisians did not believe rural communities to be civilized, true Frenchmen because of their lack of mastery of Parisian French. To rectify this, the Parisians created Frenchmen out of their rural counterparts by enforcing a system of compulsory, standardized education (Kwang Johnson 5). The French language was historically central to French conceptions of civilization and the creation of French identity. Replacing African languages with French was necessary to civilize the black Senegalese and effectively make them Frenchmen.

English was the language by which the US had been founded and therefore, according to many white Americans, the language on which the highest civilization rested. For this reason, not only was knowledge of the English language necessary to comprehend and appreciate the
founding documents for the sake of citizenship, but it was also integral to entering into civilization itself. Indeed, Atkins explicitly articulated this idea:

True Americans all feel that the Constitution, laws, and institutions of the United States, in their adaptation to the wants and requirements of man, are superior to those of any other country and they should understand that by the spread of the English language will these laws and institutions be more firmly established and widely disseminated (as cited in Prucha Americanizing 200).

The superiority of the foundation of American civic society, and its language, to all others made English crucial to civilization. Atkins also stated, “Their barbarous dialect should be blotted out and the English language should be substituted” (as cited in Prucha Americanizing 199).

Bilingualism among the Indians was not permitted. The hierarchy of English as civilized and native languages as savage sanctioned the required education in English in order to civilize the Indians.

Beyond the sense of superiority and philosophical motivations, the colonial powers recognized political and practical advantages in teaching the students their language. The very existence of language education as well as its application were shaped by the French and US Federal Government’s political needs. In Senegal, the French needed a group of trained and relatively educated works who could fill basic positions in the colonial government and continue the colonial cause. In the US, policy makers and reformers sought to integrate the American Indians into society as a working class.

In Senegal, educating the indigenous peoples in French enabled them to perform administrative and clerical tasks for the French colonial government. In educating the Senegalese, the French hoped to create interpreters, writers, administrative workers, and
mechanics (Bouche 4). All of these positions required a certain level of mastery of the French language. Indeed, Hardy wrote, “…even in the humblest positions, they will need to refer to legislative texts, to circulars no one can translate into the indigenous languages” (147). The tasks demanded of the black Senegalese employed by the French required them to be able to read texts from the French government and often act as intermediaries between the French and Senegalese. This was particularly important as the French continued to expand territorially inward on the African continent. The French political need of a class of low level workers mandated teaching the black Senegalese the French language.

In the US, policy makers and reformers wanted Native Americans to be fully functional in American society, but under white American conditions. Relative mastery of the English language was clearly necessary. As Atkins wrote, “A wider and better knowledge of the English language among them is essential to their comprehension of the duties and obligations of citizenship” (as cited in Prucha Americanizing 198). Education was necessary in order for an Indian to prove “competency” and achieve citizenship. However, white Americans did not want Indians fully integrating into every aspect and tier of society. Rather, they wanted a working class filled with skilled workers and traders. Atkins wrote, “…the main purpose of educating them is to enable them to read, write, and speak the English language and to transact business with English-speaking people” (as cited in Prucha Americanizing 200). Indians were not being taught English so that they could participate in all tiers of society but that they would be capable of serving the English speakers.
The language policies of the French in Senegal and the Federal Government in the US were motivated in part by political needs and practical objectives. Teaching the indigenous people a Western language would acculturate them, ultimately civilizing them, as well as create a working class capable of serving the needs of the dominant group. The moral aims of elevating the culturally inferior indigenous peoples overlap with these political aims and converge in the language education of the indigenous people. As a result of this convergence, two main components mark language instruction of indigenous peoples: a basic level of language education and the discouragement of native tongues.

Though language education in both cases was a priority, it was not necessarily intended to be advanced or in-depth. Rather, the educators focused on the basics of the given language. Hardy also discussed the arguments against French language education in Senegal:

Those [enemies of indigenous education in general] estimate that teaching French to the indigenous peoples will open the door to revolts and transform our colonization into perpetual saturnalia. Our colonial work has no other reason but that the black remains at the mercy of our exploitation; it is not necessary that he is too knowledgeable, that he draws from books the idea that he can become our equal and that our superiority does not have absolute magic…Others pretend that knowledge of French will give the indigenous person unjustified pretensions (my translation) (145).

Hardy later acknowledged that the arguments against education are not illusory but nevertheless counters that the language education he had developed was created to avoid such problems. He wrote, “…our education of French must create capable characters to limit danger” (my translation) (149). The French did not seek to create knowledgeable equals out of the Senegalese; indeed, they feared it. Rather, they sought to offer them a base of knowledge that would not empower them into “unjustified pretensions”.
Thus, full comprehension and appreciation of the French language was not the focus, merely a general, functional understanding of it. Indeed, Hardy wrote, “…we teach only basic French, the language of days…we eliminate with care our lessons of abstract terms, figurative words” (my translation) (Hardy 149). Basic French was the minimum necessary to fulfill the needs of the French colonial cause and anything else would be superfluous and perhaps dangerous. To accomplish this basic education, French educators employed the direct method (Hardy 149). This method introduced a language to children before exposing them to any other academic subjects or material (Engle). Hardy acknowledged drawbacks of this method as not accessing the children’s spirit and not allowing for an exploration of literature. He wrote, “[This method] is not an instrument for an intellectual culture.” However, he also recognized that the creation of highly intellectual students was not the goal, saying, “We do not have the pretention of opening a course of French literature” (my translation) (Hardy 150).

In the United States, English was the first priority in education of Native Americans. However, the Indian schools did not focus seriously on English grammar until after two or three years. Their first objective was a basic vocabulary and recognition of the alphabet. The objective method was the primary method used for English instruction, pioneered at Carlisle and Hampton Institute in Virginia and recommended by the Indian Office. Students were first shown basic objects, such as pencils or books, followed by the English word for them and its repetition. Eventually, they were taught to copy the words written on the blackboard. In this way, they learned the alphabet and the written word as well as a rudimentary vocabulary (Adams 137). Such an educational method did not lead to a complex comprehension of English but rather a
basic sense of the vocabulary. Again, a basic comprehension was all that was needed to fulfill the political aim of creating a subservient working class. The indigenous peoples were not being educated to raise them to the same level of civilization that the policy makers had achieved.

The conduction of all scholastic subjects in Senegal and the US in French and English, respectively, further demonstrates the dominant powers’ objective of creating a working class with basic knowledge. In explaining why education in the indigenous language would be impossible, Hardy wrote, “Do we not run into serious difficulty in forming teachers who must teach the acquisitions of a modern civilization in a barbarous tongue?” (my translation) (147). Similarly, in the US, Atkins instructed that all instruction must be conducted in English for any other language hindered the process of civilization (Prucha Americanizing 199). The role of language in education was to form the students to Western, “civilized” ways of life, not offering a path towards true comprehension of the subject matter. Indeed, any complex understanding would be hindered by a lack of language comprehension. Therefore, again, language education aligned with the aim of education: not to raise the indigenous peoples to the same level of knowledge as the Western society but rather to acculturate them and prepare them for basic, subservient participation in society.

The objective of replacing the indigenous language with the Western language mandated more than mere language instruction. The intended full acceptance of the Western language and blotting out of the indigenous language required discouraging any use of the indigenous language. A hindrance to French education was the continued use of indigenous languages in the classroom. To discourage use of non-French languages, educators used a “symbole” or symbol.
This method was introduced by the Brothers of Ploërmel and continued after their departure from Senegal. Under this coercive tactic, an object called a symbol would be given to a child who accidently spoke his ethnic language. The child would then have to keep it until another child made the same error. At the end of the day, whoever was in possession of the symbol was punished. It was an effective method of monitoring and discouraging the use of indigenous languages through humiliation and shame. Indeed, one schoolteacher, Malick Diop, noted that it was difficult to catch students speaking their mother tongues as a result of this method (Johnson Kwang13, 4). Colonial language education in Senegal, therefore, sought to turn children away from the use of their indigenous language.

While the French worked to eliminate indigenous languages in the classroom, the United States Indian school system extended this prohibition beyond the classroom as well. Acknowledging again the relationship between language and culture, Atkins wrote:

In my opinion schools conducted in the vernacular are detrimental to civilization. They encourage Indians to adhere to their time-honored customs and inherent superstitions which the government has in every way sought to overcome, and which can only be accomplished by adopting uniform rules requiring instruction in the English language exclusively (as cited in Prucha Americanizing 205).

Indian languages were to be prohibited and discouraged by all measures. The “no Indian” rule forbade native vernaculars inside and outside of the classroom. The stakes were high for Indian schools to enforce this regulation. In 1884, an order was issued stating, “If Dakota or any other language is taught such children, they will be taken away and their support by the government will be withdrawn from the school” (as cited in Prucha Americanizing 199). With such a threat, educators worked hard to enforce this rule. At Carlisle School, awards were given for students
who went for long periods of time without speaking their native language while at Hampton, students had to confess their violations of the rule at roll call. Most schools, however, used corporeal punishment to enforce the rule. One educator recalls laying out thirty-five kindergartners across tables and spanking them for speaking Mohave (Adams 142). Through attempting to completely wipe away Indian languages from every aspect of children’s lives in exchange for “civilized” English, the “no Indian” rule and its fervent enforcement demonstrated the idea that any remnant of Indian languages in schools would inhibit the way towards civilization as a whole.

The perceived barbarity within native language was translated into curriculum and internalized by the indigenous people. Language conversion is as much a part of acculturation as are moral and religious education. Thiong’o discusses language as culture as having three aspects: language is a collective memory bank of historical experience, language is an image-forming agent, and language imparts and expresses these cultural images (Thiong’o 15). Therefore, to force a vastly different language on a child in replacement of their mother tongue is to isolate the child from their community’s collective history, their culture’s imagery and symbolism, and the ability to perpetuate their community’s culture. While these results clearly lend themselves excellently to an acculturative goal, they are detrimental to the individual and collective psyche of the indigenous people.

In Peau Noire, Masques Blancs, Fanon discusses at length the internalized feelings of inferiority within African peoples that came as result of cultural colonialism, including language conversion. He extends his definition and discussion to include all colonized peoples. He
describes the phenomenon in which colonized peoples become essentially white through mastery of the Western language. He uses the case of “Negros” from the Antilles in France who adopt French language and customs, as well as the glory they receive at home for their knowledge of the Western world, to demonstrate the internalized idea that Western culture is superior to indigenous culture (18-21). The rhetoric of the discourse clearly delineating Western languages as civilized and ethnic languages as barbaric surely made its way into the rhetoric of the classroom, shaping the manner in which the teachers treated and talked to the students. Similarly, the methods utilized to discourage use of indigenous languages were certain to create a sense of internalized inferiority because of the shame and humiliation caused by coercive methods.

These ideas of Fanon are mirrored almost exactly in the words of Madicke Wade, a Senegalese school teacher:

First of all, it was a privilege (speaking French)… The individual who spoke French when he came to a village, even if he was a Black, a Serer, a Fulbe, when he came to find his community and he spoke French, the community had a complex towards him. When two individuals found themselves in front of a white person, and one spoke French and the other did not (speak French), the respect went towards the one who spoke French (as cited in Kwang Johnson 15).

Not only did the indigenous individual recognize the privilege and power of speaking French, but the whole community did as well, translating that recognition into respect. Similarly, one American Indian student, Luther Standing Bear, described the process of language instruction:

For a whole week we youthful warriors were held up and harassed with words of those letters. Like raspberry bushes in the path, they tore, bled, and sweated us – those little words rat, eat, and so forth until not a semblance of our native dignity and self-respect was left (as cited in Adams 138).
This memory illustrates the embarrassment and disgrace associated with language instruction. Indeed, the forced use of another language threatened native dignity and the coercive methods used for enforcement forever associated the memory of schooling, particularly boarding schools, with the belittlement felt at the hands of the educators. Generations later, adolescents are able to recount their relatives’ stories and feel deeply the same indignity (House 59). This suggests a kind of intergenerational shame and humiliation caused by education, especially language education, and the lengths taken in order to abolish the indigenous languages. The combination of forcing of the Western language and the methods that came to associate shame with indigenous languages created an internalized perception of the superiority of Western languages and culture. This internalization affected not only individuals but also the indigenous communities as a whole and their subsequent generations.

While the psychological aspects of the invasion of another language in the minds of the children can be compared in both cases, other variables led to differences in language survival and the use of a native vernacular. Many of the African languages pre-existing colonialism still exist today in Senegal, with Wolof as the primary one and the true lingua franca. Very few Senegalese speak French. In 2003, only fifteen to twenty percent of the Senegalese could speak and were literate in French while eighty percent spoke Wolof. In terms of linguistic diversity, twenty-two percent speak Pulaar, thirteen percent speak Serer, five percent speak Djola, four percent speak Manding and finally, one percent speak Soninké (Kwang Johnson 2). In contrast, almost all Native Americans now speak English fluently and many native languages are greatly endangered if not extinct. According the US Census Bureau, only 14.8 percent of people of full
indigenous descent speak a Native American language and only .7 percent of people with partial Native ancestry speak their indigenous languages. Conversely, 77.9 percent of indigenous peoples and eighty-eight percent of people who are of partial Native descent speak English only (Siebens 3). This kind of drastic drop in numbers of speakers threatens the very existence of a language. Indeed, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization’s lists 191 languages in the US that are threatened to extinct (Moseley). While many factors influence the survival of a language, it is important to note the role that education played in the attempted extinction of indigenous languages in Senegal and the US.

Several aspects of indigenous education could account for the difference in language survival in Senegal and the US. Firstly, there was great cultural and linguistic diversity among students at the Indian boarding schools in the US. Intertribal schools, therefore, made the “no Indian” rule easier to enforce because students were forced to converse in English as their only common language. A student might be one of only two members of her tribe and linguistic group at her school and therefore, would speak to almost no one until a greater mastery of English was achieved (Adams 142). This linguistic diversity, therefore, encouraged, the use of English as well as often associating indigenous languages with feelings of isolation, at least while in attendance at the boarding schools. While linguistic diversity certainly existed among the students in Senegal, the difference in the number of students and the expanse of the territory from which they came was not equal to the larger quantities and wider expanse in the US. Less linguistic diversity allowed children to converse among themselves in their mother tongues outside of the classroom, which was also not prohibited as it was in the US. This meant that students in
Senegal had more opportunities to use and thereby preserve their language than those in the US who were forced and often had reason to abandon their native vernaculars.

Another factor of education in Senegal that promoted the creation of Wolof as the de facto lingua franca was the contradiction between the philosophical and political objectives. The French did seek to civilize the Senegalese through language. In their perception and practice, this meant discouraging use of the ethnic language so that it could be replaced with “civilized” French. However, their political aim of creating a working class that could act as intermediaries between the colonial powers and the Senegalese people required continued use of an ethnic language in order to communicate with those Senegalese who did not speak French. Therefore, those who did obtain such positions retained their native vernacular while also achieving a certain degree of mastery of French. In this way, ethnic languages had a greater opportunity to continue.

Language education in Senegal and the US sought to fully acculturate the indigenous peoples by replacing their indigenous language with French or English. Because of the connection between language and culture, the policy makers recognized that teaching the indigenous peoples their Western languages would conform the thoughts and values as well. It was an ideal tool for acculturation. It also fulfilled political needs of the dominant powers that allowed practicality to guide language instruction. It is because of this practicality that language instruction aimed for a basic comprehension rather than an academic one. Similarly, the quest to completely blot out the indigenous languages led to methods that discouraged the use of native
tongues in and out of the classroom. The deep connection between language and culture also meant that these tactics deeply affected the collective psyche. The existence of language conversion as well as the methods used to enforce it associated the indigenous languages with feelings of disgrace and isolation, which led to a sense of internalized inferiority. This sentiment along with other factors in teaching methods and expectations led to greater variations in language survival in Senegal and the US.
IV. Social Ties and Roles

The French colonial government in Senegal and the Federal Government in the US also manipulated social ties and roles in order to strengthen their acculturation attempts. First of all, both powers recognized the benefits of isolating students from their communities, thereby discouraging tribal and ethnic ties in exchange for immersion in Western culture. However, the French and the Federal Government manipulated the relationships of the indigenous students to different extents due to practical reasons and over-arching political objectives. The dominant powers also educated girls for the purpose of acculturating the heart of the domestic sphere, further demonstrating the exploitation of social ties to sustain acculturation as well as the fulfillment of a political need. These tactics were very effective in acculturating the indigenous peoples for they affected the systems and structures that perpetuated their cultures. The ways in which the dominant powers approached the manipulation of these social ties and roles were guided by their political and practical needs and the differences in their methods ultimately affected the continuation of the culture.

Removing children from their communities was seen to dissolve their ethnic and tribal ties. It took them from environments that fostered nativeness and immersed them in environments of Western ideals, languages, and ways of thinking. The dominant powers recognized this phenomenon and employed it to varying degrees. Their approach to the manipulation of social ties was evident in the location of their schools in proximity to the indigenous communities as well as their intentions in the placement of these schools. While the increasing trend in Senegal was village schools, the US policy makers and reformers increasingly
urged off-reservation boarding schools. Off-reservation boarding schools were specifically intended to separate their children from the families, literally and figuratively, while village schools were intended for the opposite. Ultimately, this difference was founded in the fact that acculturation was not equated with individualism in Senegal in the way that it was in the US.

For many years, Senegal consisted only of the Four Communes in the eyes of the French. Situated along the coast, these communes were the locations of all schools in Senegal. However, as French control expanded inward, so did the existence of schools, which were intended to widen the French base of support, specifically through the promulgation of the French language. In 1884, Governor Bourdiaux noted that it would be worthwhile to open schools as they would provide a base for the future and the people seemed interested in sending their children to school. (Bouche L’enseignement 380). General Faidherbe preemptively announced the success of the first school outside of the communes in 1857. More schools were opened but the administration ultimately viewed the whole project as a failure and the schools all closed one by one (Bouche L’enseignement 358-64). With the more thorough theorization and systemization of colonial education under the AOF, especially by Georges Hardy, rural education was again broached. In 1903, education was officially organized into a hierarchy of schools that lasted until independence in 1960. This system consisted of the village school at the base, followed by the regional school, urban school, and finally two professional schools for the best students in the AOF, William Ponty School and Pinet-Laprade Professional School (Bouche L’ecole rurale 207, 8). As the director of education in AOF, Hardy intended for village schools to “transform the country without uprooting its habitants” (my translation) (as cited in Bouche L’ecole rurale 209).
They offered a way in which to acculturate a greater number of indigenous people, convincing them the importance of colonialism and cultivating their usefulness to the colonial cause. It was the aspect of not relocating the indigenous children from the beginning that allowed the French to acculturate and make contact with a greater number of the population. This sought-after cooperation of the indigenous peoples was legally necessary to maintain French colonial control under the international law established by the Berlin Conference, which called for the maintenance of law and order in order to claim a colony (Reinhard 198, 9). For this reason, acculturating indigenous peoples away from the territory in which their cooperation was needed made little sense.

As with all schools, policy makers emphasized a practical education, not a highly academic one. Hardy wrote that, through village schools, the colonial government hoped to establish a point of contact with the indigenous peoples and convince them of the importance of progress while ameliorating their quality of life. The teaching of spoken French was of high priority as well as very basic written French. Apart from language education, the village schools were to offer calculation exercises related to daily tasks and basic agricultural work in a school garden. The course of education was to take two to three years (Hardy 49, 50). This curriculum provided a basis of acculturation that lent itself to the continuation of French colonialism. By educating the people with the basics of the French language, the French enabled continued contact with the people and their attempts to ameliorate indigenous lives through health and hygiene would, in the eyes of the French, inspire loyalty to progress vis-à-vis colonization.
The best students of the rural schools could then continue their education at the regional schools. These schools were mainly attended by older adolescents and offered the same subjects as the rural schools but were more precise, nuanced, and theoretical in their curriculum and approach to the material. Unlike the village schools, regional schools did require the students to leave their home communities. While school was in session, they were allowed to stay with a family of their choosing or, ideally, at school, which offered lodging and food for a price. Hardy did recognize the benefits for acculturation of removing the students from indigenous communities. Referring to the regional school dormitory as a “scholastic village,” he wrote:

Village of children, more active, more agreeable than all the villages in the region, each day transformed, increased, embellished as a people of imps who are open to all progress and reactive to all experiences. It seems that, under the authority of the master, this little world can live in perfection and guard for an entire life the impression of this order, of this light, of this joy of labor and mutual assistance. And this inerasable image, it is perhaps the best result of our teaching” (my translation) (Hardy 54).

Despite the recognition of the usefulness of separating children from their communities, the fact that village schools were the base of the education system and the permission for a student to stay with a family at regional school demonstrate that entirely separating a child from their community was not the intention.

The emphasis on schools situated in the indigenous communities contrasts to the US policy, where the emphasis was increasingly on off-reservation boarding schools. While day schools and reservation boarding schools did exist, the recommendation throughout this time was for off-reservation boarding schools. In their 1880 report, the Board of Indian Commissioners discussed the deficiencies of reservation schools and the promising results of off-reservation
boarding schools, such as the Carlisle School. They argued that, “To expect [the Indians] to attain civilization without these advantages [of boarding and industrial schools] is to look for impossibilities; to deny them these opportunities is to perpetuate their present helpless semi-barbarous condition” (as cited in Prucha Americanizing 195). Furthermore, the pan-tribal nature of off-reservation boarding schools lent itself to the acculturation attempts. By hosting children of many different tribes, the newly inculcated practices and values often became the common denominator amongst the students. The educators recognized this phenomenon and exploited it. For example, Pratt filled one dormitory with children from nine different tribes. In this way, they would be forced to use and develop their English in order to communicate with each other (Adams 142). Therefore, the American reformers recognized, just as Hardy did, that separating children from their home communities furthered their acculturation attempts. It provided the ideal atmosphere for the children to literally forget their indigenous ways and accept Western customs.

Off-reservation boarding schools also served the purposes of the policy makers and reformers more fully in the US where there was an emphasis on individualism. The individualization of the Indians was one of the main intentions of education; it would civilize them and prepare them for participation in American life. It was commonly accepted that the Indians’ savageness was largely due to the emphasis that tribal life placed on communalism. The value placed on common welfare and the lack of private property contrasted too vastly with American principles to be viewed as a viable way of life. Merrill Gates wrote in 1885, “There is an utter barbarism in which property has
almost no existence. The tribal organization tends to retain men in such barbarism. It is a great step gained when you awaken in an Indian the desire for the acquisition of property of his own, by his own honest labor” (Gates 777). The Indians’ lack of individualism was the cause of their savagism; thus, removing them from an environment that perpetuated this communalism into one that fostered individualism was vital to elevating them to civilization. In 1893, Pratt wrote:

I have grown to believe in every fibre of me that we wrong ourselves and the Indians when we build them up as tribes, and to know that we do this when we plant our schools in the tribes, where their greatest influence is to hold the Indian to the tribe…I believe that, for any right government purposes, tribal schools are largely a waste of public money… (as cited in Prucha Americanizing 279).

Thus, off-reservation boarding schools would dissolve the students’ tribal ties, removing them from communities that perpetuated barbarism in general but especially the savagery of communality.

Social ties were further manipulated in order to foster individualism in the Indian School system through the “outing system.” The basic system assigned Indian children to white homes for the summer months. At these placements, they lived, worked, and worshipped with the family members. Students could also be sent off for an entire year. While the original system was created for rural and farming areas, students could also be sent to an urban apprenticeship. The outing system sought to increase English ability among the students, break down prejudices between whites and Indians, and show students civilized living more fully, especially including the value of possessive individualism (Adams 157). This process sought to replace any relationships with other natives with relationship with white host family members or bosses. Not
only did this further extricate the children from tribal ties, or even pan-native ties, it also deeply lent itself to individualization. In his description of the outing program, Pratt wrote, “The solution of the Indian problem hinges upon the destruction of the present systems and in the devising of means that will disintegrate the tribes and bring them into association with the best of our civilization” (as cited in Prucha Americanizing 275). The outing system was an ideal means for individualizing the Indians by literally isolating them as individuals. Living with an Anglo family, they would find it impossible to envelope themselves in any tribal or pan-native relationships. Furthermore, the outing-system clearly aligned with the educational goal of teaching the native children the importance of hard work leading to the accumulation of personal wealth and property. Not only did they cultivate a work ethic but all students were also paid a minimum wage, most of which was sent to Carlisle to be kept in a personal savings account for the student (Adams 22). Thus, the isolation and emphasis on possessive individualism of the outing-system further manipulated social-ties to acculturative ends.

The outing system was a great success at Carlisle, so much so that it was encouraged in other off-reservation boarding schools across the US despite many suspicions that such a system would fail in the West. Daniel Dorchester, the superintendent of Indian Schools, wrote in 1892, “With too many the common idea is that the Indian is a creature to be cheated, debauched, and kicked out of decent society. Young Indians from the schools cannot be safely located among such people.” Nonetheless, the Indian Office continued to press for wider acceptance of the system and throughout the 1890’s Haskell Institute, Carson Indian School, Albuquerque Indian School, Genoa Industrial Indian School, Phoenix Indian School, and Sherman Institute
developed outing programs. They were, as predicted, highly exploitative of the Indian children. The schools experienced trouble convincing the Anglo families that they were not employment agencies and that the children had to return to school at the end of the summer. Even more blatantly, Genoa, Chilocco, and Albuquerque often sent out work gangs of fifty to one hundred children to labor for farmers and ranchers. Through this system, they completed monotonous, heavy labor and were never taken in as members of white, middle class families (Adams 162). This increased exploitation in schools in the Western US further demonstrates the creation of a working class of Indians.

In the US, obligatory enrollment was a key factor of Indian education policy. In an 1889 report, Thomas Morgan, then Commissioner of Indians Affairs, wrote, “A comprehensive system of education modeled after the American public-school system, but adapted to the special exigencies of the Indian youth, embracing all persons of school age, compulsory in it demands and uniformly administered, should be developed as rapidly as possible” (as cited in Prucha Americanizing 75). This obligation to attend was intended for the individualizing of the children because allowing children not to attend ultimately allowed them to continue in communities that fostered barbarism. In 1892, Thomas Morgan addressed the Lake Mohonk Conference:

Shall we say that, after having made this abundant provision and having offered it to the children, we will allow those who are still savages in their instincts, barbarians in their habits, rooted to the conservatism, - that we will allow them to keep their children out of these institutions of learning, in order that they may be prevented from becoming like white men and women? I say, No; and I say it for these reasons: We owe it to these children to see to it that they shall have the advantages of these schools. We owe it to their
children…We owe it to the old people themselves… (as cited in Prucha *Americanizing* 255).

However, the indigenous communities greatly resisted compulsory enrollment. Parents often resisted sending their children to school by simply leaving the main reservation during the fall round-up of students, offering as substitutes orphans or distantly-related children, or even bargaining with federal agents when the child population exceeded dormitory space (Adams 211). This resistance was met with enforcement through force on the part of the Federal Government. Morgan proposed:

> I would first make the schools as attractive as they can be made, and would win these children, so far as possible, by kindness and persuasion…I would then use the Indian police if necessary, I would withhold from the rations and supplies where those are furnished, if that were needed; and when every other means was exhausted, when I could not accomplish the work in any other way, I would send a troop of United States soldiers, not to seize them, but simply to be present as an expression of the power of the government. Then I would say to these people, ‘Put your children in school’; and they would do it (as cited in Prucha *Americanizing* 255).

Compulsory education and the extremes taken to implement it guaranteed that a greater number of children would be acculturated and individualized.

Primary education in France was “free, obligatory, and secular,” beginning in 1880. As an intended reflection of the French school system, education in Senegal was, ideally, to be the same. However, obligatory education was never possible for economic reasons; it was simply impossible to enforce obligatory education. Village schools did continue to be free and open to all but recruitment was particularly targeted towards sons of the indigenous village chiefs (Hardy xvii, 47). The lack of obligatory education certainly affected the number of children that the acculturation process reached. The targeted recruitment also reveals the French strategic
intention of creating loyalty among an elite native population that would then influence and lead other native populations. Acculturating an influential population such as the sons of chiefs would, in turn, acculturate more indigenous people who could not necessarily be reached by education. According to their thought, this acculturation would then create loyalty and usefulness. Children did not need to be entirely extracted from their communities to foster a loyalty to the French colonial cause.

Despite French recognition of the benefits of removing children from their community, relationships between indigenous children and their communities were not suppressed in Senegal to the extent that they were in the United States. They were checked by practicality and economic limitations. Ultimately, the French were not seeking the same extreme individualism as the US and therefore, their schools did not require the same amount of extraction. The village schools, as intended, acculturated children without removing them from their families. Although regional schools did pull students away from their families, it was only for a limited number of exemplary students, mostly adolescents. The campaign to individualize the Indians, conversely, mandated the extraction of students from their community and indigenous relationships. This sentiment was implemented through off-reservation boarding schools and the popular outing system. Ultimately, the extraction of children from their communities was thought to be ideal for its suppression of native relationships and tribal bonds and more complete perpetuation of Western values by both dominant powers yet was exercised to different degrees due to the object of education.
The dominant powers also manipulated the role of women as wives and mothers in order to further their attempts at acculturation. In both cases, the policy makers recognized that acculturating the women would allow them greater access to the heart of the culture, allowing for a more complete and sustainably acculturated population. For this reason, education for young girls was very different than that of young boys; it was intertwined with contemporary ideas of womanhood and taught girls to be civilized, Western wives and mothers. However, female education was also shaped by political needs.

In Senegal, the education of young girls was intended to create Gallicized wives and mothers who would be loyal to the French cause. French colonial education of Senegalese girls was marked by temporary, short-lived attempts. Just as with schools for boys, education of girls was dominated by efforts of Catholic sisters until 1902 and reserved mainly for habitants or signares, women of mixed descent. The first such school opened in Saint-Louis in 1819, run by the Sisters of Saint-Joseph and reserved for signares. In 1847, the Sisters did open a class to young black girls, but only to those who were recently baptized. The first secular school for girls was opened in 1882 in Saint-Louis. However, it was quickly transformed into a nursery school for both very young boys and girls (Bouche L’enseignement 400, 17-20). Schools for girls were mainly located in the Four Communes. In 1895, two nursery schools were opened in Kaolack and Foundiougne, outside of the communes, and run by two female teachers from Saint-Louis. However, these schools were quickly closed in 1899 despite steady enrollment. (Bouche L’enseignement 421). In 1902, 647 young girls were educated in Western schools but only 358
of those students were indigenous Senegalese, the others were of Europeans and mixed descent. Among these Senegalese, there were very few Muslims, for which the colonial administration blamed the sisters for only admitting girls of mixed race and converted Catholic Senegalese girls (Bouche *L’enseignement* 423).

Under the General Government of the AOF, education of girls was widely recognized as vital to more complete acculturation. The Lieutenant-Governor of Senegal, Camille Guy, wrote in 1903, “It is by the influence of the mother and the spouse that we arrive at modifying futures generations and bring closer to us those individuals that immemorial traditions and interested guidance have continued to separate from us” (Guy 24). Education of girls not only allowed for the penetration of the indigenous home by French culture and customs but also ensured the continued influence of French acculturation on children. This continued influence also entailed continued loyalty and usefulness to the French. First of all, Hardy wrote, “When the mothers speak French, the children learn it without effort…French becomes for them, in the literal meaning of the phrase, a maternal language” (Hardy 64). Theoretically, if a child speaks French from the beginning of their life, this increases their usefulness to the French colonial cause in terms of the tasks and positions they can fill. Hardy also noted that women play influential roles in the families and societies of most Senegalese ethnicities. Hardy recounted that it was often mothers who ultimately decide whether their sons attend the French school or the Qu’ranic School. He also referenced the fact that regions with active and well-attended schools for girls have never rebelled (Hardy 67-71). Other factors were indeed relevant in the lack of rebellion. Nonetheless, Hardy, as a government official, made the connection between the two as cause and
effect, thereby recognizing the imperative to educate girls in securing loyalty of the entire colony.

As with many elements of education in Senegal, the education of Senegalese girls reflected female education in France. The education of girls that was developed and implemented in France in the nineteenth century was based on the idea of the equality of primary instruction for both sexes. However, education prepared young boys and girls for entirely different destinies. Boys were prepared for responsibility in the public sphere while girls were trained for the domestic sphere (Seck 164). The education of girls in Senegal was inherently related to French ideals of womanhood, focusing on moral formation of female students into Western wives and mothers. The acculturation of women as wives and mothers was the sole purpose of their education; every aspect of their school years served this goal. In *A Moral Conquest*, Hardy used a curriculum of practical material:

….basic French, a little of calculating and the metric system, exclusively applied to the establishment of a domestic budget and daily purchases, but the largest part of class-time is dedicated to sewing, propriety, infant care, hygiene, housekeeping, and all the exercise guarding a practical character, immediately useful (my translation) (69).

Hardy described a school for girls where a student:

…ties her blue apron, she hikes up her sleeves, she sets large tables in the middle of the class, she works at closets of linen, medicine cabinets, cupboards of cookery, she places flowers at the window, and, between two sweeps of the broom, sings a pretty round (my translation) (69,70).

This picture painted by Hardy is certainly an idyllic scene of a Western home. The girls were not merely being raised to be sensible wives and mothers capable of caring for infants, their very sensibility and capability were defined by French norms; the purpose was to acculturate them.
Therefore, all aspects of the curriculum, including practical training and basic academic material, were intended to acculturate the girls for wifery and motherhood in a Western-style household.

In 1883, Isaac Baird, a member of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions in Wisconsin spoke of American Indian education, saying, “The girls will need the training more than the boys and will wield a greater influence in the future. If we get the girls, we get the race.” Although this was written in regards to mission schools, it was widely accepted by the government as well. Indeed, it was a commonly held belief at that time that women must be educated in order to raise exemplary young citizens in their sons (as cited in Devens 224). While boys focused on farming or at times metal working or carpentry, practical education for girls emphasized the domestic sciences. At school, girls learned to sew, cook, can, iron, care for children, and clean (Adams 150). At schools such as the Chilocco Indian Agricultural School, stronger attention was paid to the attire and countenance of Indian girls compared to that of Indian boys (Lomawaima 91). Such monitoring demonstrates the recognized importance of completely acculturating women, even more so than men, to Western ideals of propriety, thus ensuring the perpetuation of the civilizing instruction for years to come. Those involved in Indian education sought to create mothers and wives who could manage a private household, encourage Christian, civilized living, and support their husbands through the difficult process towards civilization out of barbarism (Lomawaima 86). To this end, the education of girls again sought individualism of the female student as well as the children she would raise and the husband she would serve. Finally, the education of Indian girls also served the purpose of creating a subservient class of workers. Educating girls in the domestic sciences prepared them
to serve as domestic help for white women. Racially, Indian women were perceived to be stronger and more resilient than white women. For this reason, as well as the notion of general native inferiority, Indian girls were trained for simple labor such as kitchen work, sewing and darning, and polishing endless floors (Lomawaima 82-7). Vocational training of girls was intended to cultivate a work ethic that simultaneously fostered individualism and produced a class of hard workers.

Thus, the dominant powers’ reconstruction of social ties and roles was intended to acculturate the indigenous peoples presently and in the future. The relationship between children and the rest of their indigenous community is the source of their socialization into the indigenous way of life; these relationships are the life-blood of the culture. Similarly, the role that women play in a culture often sets them as the heart of the culture; their responsibilities in the domestic sphere essentially included the continuation of the culture into the future. However, their approach to this manipulation was guided by somewhat political and practical objectives. While the French were primarily concerned with loyalty, the reformers and policy makers in the US focused on individualism. As a result, schools in the US were intended to separate children from their home communities while a Senegalese school could reach its acculturation goal within the community. Furthermore, the acculturation of girls to Western ideals of wives and mothers ensured the acculturation of their families and future generations. These tactics undergirded the other elements of the dominant powers’ acculturating curriculum. The dissolving of native ties made it easier for children to abandon their native religions and value systems. Furthermore, what the mother practiced and believed, her children would be raised to practice and believe.
This lent itself to the eradication of native spirituality and ways of being in exchange for French secular morality or Christianity. The same phenomenon occurred in regards to language. The inability to readily hear the native language would cause the children to lose the ability to speak and understand it, if they ever learned the language. The impetus for off-reservation boarding schools due to the American emphasis on individualism meant that the influence of these tactics was stronger. Ultimately, the dominant powers’ objectives and attempts were greatly served by the destruction of social ties and the reconstruction of the role of women through the deepening of acculturation into the heart and the life-blood of the indigenous culture.
V. Conclusion

By 1920, the United States and Senegal were at very different points in the development of their educational system for indigenous peoples. In the US, despite having educated more than 18,000 Native Americans by 1895, a general pessimism had set over the policy makers, educators, and reformers due to the failure of Indian schools to fully integrate Indians into larger society. Off-reservation schools were replaced by reservation schools. It was accepted that Indians would continue as a minority on the fringes of civilization (Hoxie 190-3, 210). Highlighting the end of the era of off-reservation boarding schools, Carlisle School officially closed in 1919 after a gradual descent from its former glory (Adams 325). Conversely, in Senegal, the education system for the Senegalese had reached a level of development by 1920 in which it was fully organized and theorized. The system developed by Hardy would remain mostly intact until independence in 1960 and was mostly unchanged even after independence (Bouche 9). While the French and the US Federal Government looked to the future of educating indigenous peoples in different ways, the history of these efforts were comparable in many ways.

First of all, the Western powers’ hegemonic ideas of civilization created a sense of superiority for the Western cultures and an image of inferiority of the indigenous peoples, justifying the actions of the dominant powers. This sense of superiority, then, materialized in the methods of education. The Western powers sought to impart on the indigenous peoples the very elements of their civilization that they felt laid the foundation of their civilized state. Both powers, motivated by their core value system, whether it was secular Enlightenment ideals or Protestant Christianity, also sought to create adherence to the same value system among the
indigenous peoples. Similarly, both the French and the US Government considered their languages to be superior in and of themselves as well as the foundation of their respective, superior civic society. Furthermore, the dominant powers sought to eradicate the perceived sources of the indigenous barbarity, completely replacing such practices and values with Western ones. The forced use of Western languages served this end by destroying a tie to the past and present of cultural beliefs and practices. Similarly, they repressed the social relationships and roles that perpetuated “backwardness.”

The perceived right and responsibility to educate native peoples that stemmed from notions of cultural superiority were partially motivated by benevolent and philanthropic sentiments. Colonizers felt a sense of altruistic, albeit paternalistic, duty to raise the indigenous peoples from darkness into light. This sense of responsibility also came from perceptions of the universality of their value systems. The French felt the universality of the Rights of Man commanded the global spread of adherence to them. In the same way, the US reformers acted out of the religious demand to evangelize and aid those in need. According to the dominant powers, the indigenous peoples were in great need of civilization. Raising them out of their barbarous state included conforming their morality and value systems to those of the dominant powers, educating them in the respective Western languages, and using their cultural ties to undergird their efforts.

The dominant powers were also well served by their acculturation attempts. Political needs also shaped their objectives and methods. Geographic expansion created practical
problems for the dominant powers and threats to their control. Policy makers and officials recognized that the solution to these could be found in educating the indigenous peoples, thereby creating educational objectives that filled the dominant powers’ political needs. The French were concerned with continuing their colonial presence. They needed the cooperation of the Senegalese to maintain control of the land. To this end, they sought to create individuals who would be useful to their cause, filling clerical positions, as well as fostering loyalty amongst the Senegalese. Citizens of the US were concerned with the solidity of the American identity and the Federal Government faced the problem of the reservation system, an increasing financial burden. Therefore, they sought to create Indians that were as culturally Anglo-Saxon as possible.

These political needs and consequent educational objectives continually appear throughout the development of the education policies, shaping their methods. In Senegal, the French were very intentional in fostering loyalty among the people, targeting influential populations, and educating them to be useful to the colonial government. The formation of secular schools allowed the French to reach more Muslims, a highly tactical population as the dominant religious group. Language education was also intended to create a class of Senegalese that would be useful to the French in performing clerical tasks. A complex understanding of the language by students was not the goal, but rather the basics essential to completing tasks needed by the French. Furthermore, in situating their schools, the French believed that if people in interior villages were acculturated to a basic level and convinced of the need for colonialism, they would be remain loyal to the French, which was vital to the continuation of their cause of
inward expansion and control. Finally, educating women was, again, targeting a strategic population as women were often influential figures in the community.

In the US, all aspects of the Indian school service worked to form the Indians into Protestantized and individualized white children. The influential role of Protestant denominations in Indian schools and the controversy over Catholic schools paralleled the ongoing campaign to Protestantize America. Language education sought to create a working class that would enable the Indians to break free from the reservation system and be self-sufficient, solving the issue of the perceived backwardness and dependency fostered by the reservation system. The religious conversion of the Indians sought to individualize them through Protestant emphasis on individual responsibility. Boarding schools and the outing system also sought to dissolve tribal and ethnic ties, not only strengthening the other methods of acculturation within education but also individualizing the Indians through isolating them from their communities. Mothers were trained to be the women of allotment households, capable of managing domestic affairs in a way that focused on private property.

Furthermore, the very act of acculturating indigenous peoples fit their political needs. In Senegal, native Senegalese who thought, act, and spoke like Frenchmen and thus accepted the necessity and legitimacy of French colonialism, would be far more useful to the French colonial cause than even cooperative Senegalese who completely maintained their nativeness. In the United States, the American Indians’ acceptance of mainstream American culture, shaped by Protestant Christianity and possessive individualism, would allow the white Protestants to maintain their power. In this way, the people were seen as resources to be developed in the same
fashion as the land. The dominant powers exploited, developed, and conformed the indigenous peoples to further their own gain.

In both cases, the political motives for educating the indigenous people created a second class of citizens rather than fully integrating them into mainstream society. The educational material was not highly academic. Rather, it intended to grant the indigenous peoples the basics of knowledge necessary to function within the class of life where the dominant power had decided they should remain. In both Senegal and the US, this indigenous class was a subservient one, designed to continually serve the needs of the dominant social group. The native Senegalese were trained primarily to perform clerical work and other vocational tasks for the colonial government. Similarly, Indian education in the United States focused on vocational training and skill formation to create a class of skilled, subservient workers. This motivation and outcome demonstrate the dominant powers’ objective to acculturate the indigenous peoples without fully, truly integrating them into their society as a whole with access to any social tier.

While the formulation of policies of education for natives in Senegal and the US is similar in many respects, the differences in specifics between the two cases greatly affected the natives’ cultural survival, leading to less cultural survival in the US than in Senegal. The greater loss of tribal spirituality and religion in the US led to greater loss of culture while Senegalese Islam avoided extermination due to secular schools in Senegal. Similarly, many tribal languages were lost and replaced by English in the US while ethnic languages are still widely spoken in Senegal, despite French’s status as the official language. The loss of a language is a threat to all the values and cultural significance held in that language. The emphasis on individualism in the
US was also extremely detrimental to Native American cultural survival. It was not only the complete opposite of the communality of tribal systems, with their emphasis on common welfare, but it also worked to eliminate the relationships between Indian children and their communities, weakening their ties to indigenous ways of thinking and being. An important reason that these tactics were so successful in the US was the isolation created by the off-reservation boarding schools and the outing system. Children were enveloped in atmospheres that fostered and demanded individualism and Protestantism, as well as the English language. Such isolation made it nearly impossible for students to continue their traditional ways of life and speak their native languages.

Nonetheless, acculturation through education resulted in both cases in complicated identities for indigenous peoples that continue into today. Through their hegemonic ideas of civilization, the Western powers constantly projected the indigenous peoples as the other, creating a constant reminder to the indigenous peoples that they are different, and even more so, they are the inferior other. Furthermore, colonial education forced indigenous children themselves and their entire cultures to conform to a culture that treats them as inferior and does not fully accept or integrate them into society. Therefore, the process of acculturation through education in Senegal and the US resulted in pan-generational feelings of alienation from their native cultures as well as internalized inferiority.

For American Indians, this isolation and inferiority has led to what Dr. Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart calls historical trauma. This psychological and emotional injury affects not only the individual but also the culture as a collective and spans a single lifetime as well as
generations. Historical trauma presents itself in symptoms and behaviors that include “depression, self-destructive behavior, suicidal thoughts and gestures, anxiety, low self-esteem, anger, and difficulty recognizing and expressing emotions” (Brave Heart 7). Fanon similarly speaks of such internalized inferiority as a result of the alienation from native culture:

In the first case, the alienation is of an intellectual character. Insofar as he conceives of European culture as a means of stripping himself of his race, he becomes alienated. In the second case, it is a question of a victim of a system based on the exploitation of a given race by another on the contempt in which a given branch of humanity is held by a form of civilization that pretends to superiority (Fanon 224).

This internalized inferiority and alienation created a disconnect in the creation of personal, or even, collective identity. Fanon’s title itself, *Black Skin, White Masks*, illustrates identity confusion. Indigenous children, of past and present, are confronted with two opposing cultures that attempt to socialize them simultaneously. Ultimately, all these results perpetuate cultural loss because an individual is less likely to pass on cultural systems, practices, or language that they associate with inferiority, shame, and historical grief. The systemic exploitation of the indigenous people implemented through acculturating them and the subsequent cultural loss resulted in damage to the collective psyche of the native populations in both Senegal and the US, furthering continuous acculturation.

The native populations of Senegal and the US were not passive victims and to paint them as such denies their agency. They had a much more complex relationship with the colonization and acculturation process. They often resisted acculturation in many ways on individual and collective bases. At times, they were convinced of the benefits of acculturation and cooperated
with the dominant powers. The complexities of these relationships were not within the scope of this thesis. The indigenous peoples of Senegal and the US continue to interact and grapple with the results of acculturation through education. Much work is currently being done to confront and counteract the problems for modern education caused by colonial education. For example, both the now independent Senegalese government and the US Federal Government in cooperation with tribal governments have attempted to integrate ethnic languages into the public education system, with mixed success (Diallo, House). The aim of this thesis was to compare the educational systems in such a way as to shed light on cultural loss and survival and create a basis of information to be used in seeking solutions to the problems posed to modern education by indigenous peoples and cultural continuation. The acculturation methods implemented through education of indigenous peoples in Senegal and the US were very effective to varying degrees, replacing indigenous ways of life with Western ones and cultivating internalized inferiority for multiple generations. One of many challenges now is to develop education of indigenous peoples that is founded on cultural respect and perpetuates cultural continuation, thereby addressing related problems caused by this detrimental history.
Works Cited


