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## **“Moral Lessons’’: Charles Deas’s *The Wounded Pawnee***

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***Please note that images in this article may be disturbing to readers.***

On January 15, 2016, in the beautiful Louis Kahn–designed Kimbell Art Museum in Fort Worth, Texas, I met a man who thought he had a painting by Charles Deas (1818–1867) (fig. 1). The path I took to understand this picture led me from the genesis of its subject, to its early reception (really a snub) in New York City, to the possible meanings—what Deas’s contemporaries would have called “moral lessons”—of this violent painting, and finally to ways of thinking about it today. Before all of this, of course, I had to determine if Deas had painted it. The Kimbell’s director of conservation, Claire Barry, a longtime friend and colleague, had generously offered her lab to examine the picture. Rebecca Lawton, curator of paintings and sculpture at the Amon Carter Museum of American Art up the street, joined us, kindly arranging to have their painting by Deas, *Indian Group*, at the laboratory for comparison (figs. 2 and 3). It was a homecoming for me, since I had been a curator at the Amon Carter when the museum acquired that picture.



Fig. 1. Charles Deas, *The Wounded Pawnee*, 1845. Oil on canvas, 25 x 30 in. Private Collection; courtesy of Dara Mitchell LLC

Paintings by Deas are rare. Preparing to purchase *Indian Group* in 1980, I found fewer than twenty works by the artist, whose decade-long career as a painter of genre and western scenes ended in 1848, when he was committed to the Bloomingdale Asylum for the Insane. Aided by sympathetic doctors and supported by his family, Deas continued to paint and occasionally to exhibit his work at the National Academy of Design and the American Art-Union during the confinement that lasted until his death. Owners of his earlier paintings also showed them at special exhibitions. But his new subjects were distinctly different. One reviewer, noting that Deas was “an inmate at the Insane Asylum at Bloomingdale’s,” wrote

of the horror and beauty of *A Vision*, on view at the National Academy of Design, which showed “a naked youth . . . clenched by indescribable monsters that are striving to pull it in opposite directions.” This critic concluded “no mind to which the realities of the world did not present themselves in a distorted and confused shape could have conceived of such terrific and unearthly forms.”<sup>1</sup>



Figs. 2, 3. Left: Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth, Texas, constructed 1969–72, Conservation Studio. Louis I. Kahn (1901–1974), architect. Photograph: Robert LaPrelle. © 2022 Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth; right: Charles Deas, *Indian Group*, 1845. Oil on canvas, 14 1/8 x 16 1/2 in., Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, 1980.42

We cannot know the extent to which Deas’s reputation after 1848 suffered from prejudices against people with mental impairments who then were called “insane,” as he was categorized in the 1850 US census. But even before Deas died, in 1867, his art had effectively disappeared. Two scholars who looked for his pictures between 1860 and 1874 found none.<sup>2</sup> When John Baur sought them in 1947, he uncovered four.<sup>3</sup> A monographic exhibition I organized for the Denver Art Museum in 2010 included thirty significant paintings and drawings of the one hundred works I had recorded, about half of which I could locate. At the time, I was confident that many of the “lost” Deases would surface following the show, especially because the accompanying book included published descriptions of many of them.<sup>4</sup> I was wrong: the painting I saw at the Kimbell in 2016 is only the second to return.

With northern light filtering into the Kimbell’s conservation laboratory, Claire led the owner, Rebecca, and me to evaluate the condition and execution of the possible Deas, which was placed on an easel alongside *Indian Group* (fig. 3). The two paintings, each signed and dated 1845, were consistent in facture and in style, convincingly by the same hand. The new picture revealed Deas’s struggles with anatomy as well as his distinctive integration of figures and landscape. The Edward Dechaux stamp on the canvas verso provided circumstantial evidence of the painting’s maker. Although Dechaux canvases were common in the 1840s, the same stamp appears on at least three other Deas paintings. Examination of the picture under ultraviolet light illuminated a section at the lower right that appears to have been heavily overpainted to cover damage. We found a corresponding patch on the back of the unlined canvas, which otherwise was sound. Most important, examination under

the stereomicroscope revealed that beneath layers of surface dirt and yellowed varnish was a well-painted, intriguing—if violent—subject.<sup>5</sup>

I thought then that this “found” picture might alter my understanding of Deas’s art. It stuck me that the violence Deas foreshadowed in such paintings as *Indian Group* erupts in *The Wounded Pawnee* and *The Death Struggle* (fig. 4). All three paintings date to 1845, a year significant in the history of the western United States and one to which Deas had a personal connection: one of his brothers was in the army occupying Texas, the state newly admitted under President James K. Polk, who championed the call of “Manifest Destiny,” a phrase coined that year. The United States’ ambition as a continental power especially threatened Indigenous people who lived along the eastern part of what white settlers called the Oregon Trail. To better grasp how, in this moment of explosive expansion, white audiences might have reacted to the violence of *The Wounded Pawnee*, which garnered only two brief published mentions, I will trace the reception of *The Death Struggle*. But first I return to considering the newly returned painting.



Fig. 4. Charles Deas, *The Death Struggle*, 1845. Oil on canvas, 30 x 25 in., Collection of Shelburne Museum, museum purchase, acquired from Maxim Karolik. 1959-265.16. Photography by Bruce Schwarz

The owner knew only that, from at least the mid-1950s, the painting hung in the dining room of his grandparents’ home in New Rochelle, New York. I matched it with one called *The Wounded Pawnee*, which I lost track of after the American Art-Union distributed it in 1848.<sup>6</sup> But I wondered how Henry Tuckerman’s 1846 description of the painting could possibly refer to the one at which I was looking. Tuckerman saw “a Pawnee galloping on an unshorn and unharnessed horse across the prairie. Its authenticity was self-evident, and everything about the rider and his steed in perfect keeping.”<sup>7</sup>

My first response to the painting was emotional, focused on the pain of the beleaguered horse and rider silhouetted against gray clouds. I then concentrated on its central object—the buffalo-hide-covered shield from which a hank of human hair dangles at its red center. From here my eye moved toward the white-feathered hair ornament that frames the terror and resolve I read in the warrior’s face. I noticed how his body, twisted to look back at an enemy, exposes wounds in his forehead, chest, and shoulder, from which blood streams. His horse, too, is suffering. Blood is in its eye, snorted from its nostrils, and coursing down its side. Finally, white paint highlighting the feathered fletching on one of the embedded arrows pointed my gaze to the hourglass brand on the horse’s hindquarters.<sup>8</sup> Whether Deas had observed or imagined this brand, it signaled to me that this Pawnee’s time had run out.

James Elkins argues that seeing, bound by time and place, is “irrational, inconsistent, and undependable.”<sup>9</sup> I should not expect Tuckerman to have seen the picture as I did, but if I looked closely and recognized my own cultural biases, as Jules Prown wisely recommends, could I understand how Tuckerman’s experience shaped a response that was so different



from mine?<sup>10</sup> The critic's biographical sketch of Deas offered a path. There he presented the western United States as a region of "majestic rivers flowing through almost interminable woods; seas of verdure decked with bright and nameless flowers; huge cliffs covered with gorgeous autumnal drapery" that he describes striking his (perhaps imaginary) English visitor with "a moral excitement."<sup>11</sup> Although a Euro-American background shapes my looking, as it did Tuckerman's, 175 years separate us, giving me a different perspective on the violence of settler colonialism—the movement of Euro-Americans through, and possession of, Native lands for settlement and speculation, accompanied by a United States military presence and outbreaks of intertribal warfare.<sup>12</sup> This was all happening in Tuckerman's time but found no place in his understanding of the West or in his anodyne description of *The Wounded Pawnee*.

Research and pictorial evidence confirms that intertribal warfare was Deas's subject. In the summer of 1844, he left his home in St. Louis for a six-week journey with Major Clifton Wharton's military campaign, the goals of which were, in Wharton's words:

to impress upon such Indian tribes as we may meet the importance of their friendly treatment of all white persons in their country, to convince them of the power of the U.S. Government to punish them for aggressions against such persons . . . and to endeavor to effect a reconciliation between the Pawnees and the Sioux, between whom a most ferocious war has been carried on for many years.<sup>13</sup>

The campaign focused on four bands of Pawnee people who called themselves Chaticks si Chaticks and lived in villages along the Platte River and the Loup Fork in what is now Nebraska. By the 1840s, as white travel through Pawnee lands accelerated, better-armed Lakotas had moved aggressively into their territory, thwarting their hunts and further threatening their village life, where epidemics beginning at the end of the eighteenth century had diminished their numbers, and recent periodic droughts had caused crop failures.<sup>14</sup> On June 27, 1843, Oglala and Sicangu bands of Lakotas raided one of the Pawnee villages, the abandoned, charred remains and scattered inhabitants of which Wharton and his crew, including Deas, visited a year later. Lieutenant J. Henry Carleton's daily logbooks offer insight into one side of the many encounters between Wharton's party and the tribes he visited. Carleton described at length the Pawnee survivors' stories of the 1843 attack, which, like Carleton, Deas would have heard in translation.<sup>15</sup>

*The Wounded Pawnee* is a white artist's idea of intertribal warfare, shaped by contemporary attitudes toward Indigenous people, to which Deas was exposed in St. Louis.<sup>16</sup> For the most part, those attitudes were hostile. One report in the *St. Louis Weekly Reveille*, for example, decried "the Indian hordes who are now daily committing murder, outrage and robbery on the plains."<sup>17</sup> But, as John Coward reminds us, "the newspaper Indian in the antebellum period was not universally condemned,"<sup>18</sup> even if more sympathetic voices, such as another St. Louis reporter's, sound grudgingly, "Amid the cry of execration which is raised against Indian outrages . . . we are now and then compelled to remember that the red man, also has his complaint to make."<sup>19</sup>

Deas must have read about and seen Indigenous people in St. Louis, but he also encountered members of several tribes in their own lands. For *The Wounded Pawnee* he drew on his 1844 experience, first seeing warriors mounted and dressed in full regalia when they greeted the 1844 expedition marching along the Platte River toward the villages. He

also heard tales of Pawnee bravery in battle and saw them performing at several ceremonies staged to demonstrate their strength, comparable to the howitzers that Wharton displayed and fired at various points during the visit. Carleton described how, at one of the gatherings, Wild Warrior (Tic-ta-cha-rico) spoke, offering his hide painting as evidence of his revenge against the Lakotas who had attacked his village in 1843.

“Here, upon this Battle-robe, is a history of the exploits of Wild Warrior. Take it to your home, that your people may know of his deeds!” At this he spread his robe upon the grass in front of the major [Wharton]. . . . This robe was covered with hieroglyphics, indicating his many successes, both in the taking of scalps and the stealing of horses.<sup>20</sup>

I wonder to what extent this warrior’s words and his battle robe shaped Deas’s plans to paint a scene of intertribal warfare.

The clothing and weapons Carleton described throughout his logbooks included “a white shield made of buffalo-bull’s scalp” that one Pawnee man deployed to reflect sunlight into the lodge where Deas was sketching. Within the village lodges, Carleton also observed spears, bows, and quivers filled with arrows—some of which, along with a feathered hair ornament, moccasins, and a silver cuff, Deas featured in action in *The Wounded Pawnee*.<sup>21</sup> Such specificity may speak to Deas’s admiration of Indigenous craft and surely signaled to white viewers that the artist had first-hand experience with Pawnee people.

If the painting’s central warrior’s attire and weapons identify him as Pawnee, the arrow wounds he and his horse suffer confirm that he is engaged in Indigenous warfare. But what is the tribal identity of the mounted warriors in the background? Although the Pawnees had rifles, the Lakotas were then better armed, which suggests that the small mounted figure at the far left who raises a rifle is a Lakota warrior. This identification also explains what look like bullet wounds among those inflicted by arrows in the Pawnee warrior’s body, such as the bleeding mark in the rider’s thigh. I conclude that Deas incorporated his understanding of the Lakota attack of 1843 and his knowledge of Pawnee weapons and attire into an imagined story of intertribal warfare waged over contested land at a moment when increased white movement through the territories—military, commercial, and settler—exacerbated long-standing animosity between Indigenous nations.

When Deas returned to St. Louis in late September 1844, he learned that the American Art-Union had purchased *Long Jakes*, “*The Rocky Mountain Man*” (1844; now jointly owned by the Denver Art Museum and the American Museum of Western Art—the Anschutz Collection).<sup>22</sup> This success must have spurred him on. In 1845 he painted at least six large works, four of which he sent to the Art-Union. Two of these—*The Wounded Pawnee* and *The Death Struggle*—are brutal scenes set in the West.

I wondered why early critics in New York were silent regarding *The Wounded Pawnee* but told elaborate stories around the equally violent *Death Struggle* (see fig. 4), in which they identified the white trapper as the instigator of the fight for the live beaver writhing in a trap attached to the white man’s saddle. The *Broadway Journal* understood that this trapper, “trespassing upon the Indian hunting ground,” precipitated the struggle.<sup>23</sup> Responding to the painting with a short story, Henry William Herbert further blamed the man he called “Mike Carson,” who, despite being “one of the bearded and chivalric rovers of the western wilderness,” was “predetermined to find evidences of the Indian’s guilt” and had “filled his

prejudiced mind with false conclusions, and convinced himself of the truth of a lie" that the trapper Herbert called "Mato-tope" had stolen his catch and therefore retaliated by stealing one of the Mandan's traps.<sup>24</sup> Both critics expressed some admiration for the "Indian," but the *Broadway Journal* saw he had "no other expression than that of tiger-like ferocity," in opposition to the white trapper's "unmistakable evidences of indomitable firmness."<sup>25</sup> Racial prejudice may have abounded, but the story Herbert spun from Deas's painting was a moral lesson about the deadly consequence of such prejudice.

Deas had been criticized in 1839 for choosing a subject devoid of moral uplift. Reviewing *Walking the Chalk* (fig. 5), a painting of a barroom betting scam of a drunk's ability to walk a straight line, a critic admonished Deas "that the degradation of human nature is not a pleasing subject for contemplation, and consequently not a fit subject for art; unless it be so represented as to convey a moral lesson, or excite moral sympathies."<sup>26</sup> Six years later, another critic proclaimed "sympathy" for Deas's "half-breed" subject of *The Indian Guide* (location unknown), then on view at the Art-Union. He wrote:

Pictures of pure savage life, like those by Mr. Catlin, cannot excite our sympathies as strongly as do the representations of beings who belong to our own race. The Indian stands at an impassable remove from civilization, but the half-breed forms a connecting link between the white and red races; we feel a sympathy for the Indian Guide that we never could for the painted savage, for we see that he has a tincture of our own blood, and his trappings show that he has taken one step towards refinement and civilized life.<sup>27</sup>

Portraits by the painter George Catlin (1796–1872) came in for similarly racialized criticism. In 1847, Florida Senator James D. Westcott Jr. resisted the federal government's purchase of Catlin's collection. *The Congressional Globe* summarized his speech, which referenced the Second Seminole War. Westcott "was opposed to purchasing the portraits of savages. What great moral lesson are they intended to inculcate? He would rather see the portraits of the numerous citizens who had been murdered by these Indians. He would not vote a cent for a portrait of an Indian."<sup>28</sup>

Euro-American travelers in the West during the 1840s expressed strong moral judgments about the Native people they met. Carleton admired "those brave enemies" of the past but concluded, "Wherever their race has come in contact with ours it has begun to wither like those native plants which are overshadowed and blighted by the more vigorous growth of some hardy exotic—until drooping, they have perished, and passed away forever."<sup>29</sup> Carleton also looked ahead to an imagined future for Native lands: "If the Pottawattamies [sic] could be induced to cede their lands in Iowa to the whites, that portion of the Territory would fill up with a first rate population. The land is so fine either to cultivate or



Fig. 5. Charles Deas, *Walking the Chalk*, 1838. Oil on canvas, 17 3/8 x 21 3/8 in., Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Museum purchase funded by the Agnes Cullen Arnold Endowment Fund, 2007.740. Photograph © The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; Photographer Thomas R. DuBrock

for stock that it would immediately invite the best kind of settlers."<sup>30</sup> In his influential *The Oregon Trail*, Francis Parkman Jr., despite his friendship with individual Lakotas on an 1846 western journey, judged them generally "a troublesome and dangerous species of wild beast."<sup>31</sup> Viewers of *The Wounded Pawnee* in 1840s New York probably understood Carleton's imagined colonial future for the territories as well as his botanical comparisons and Parkman's bestial analogies. The threat of intertribal warfare to colonial movement through, and settlement in, the territories might have further hardened viewers against Native people, justifying their removal.<sup>32</sup> But without more evidence, we cannot know if some saw *The Wounded Pawnee* differently, perhaps—projecting my own response onto viewers of another time—with sympathy for this mortally wounded man.

As I ponder the painting in light of my own values, I know what its first viewers appear to have doubted: Native people survived. In the case of Pawnee history, suffering from violent encounters with increasing numbers of white settlers and continued Lakota attacks, Pawnees agreed in 1859 to move to a reservation farther west in Nebraska Territory. The United States government failed to keep them safe there, and fifteen years later, facing increasing white colonization, they were pushed toward a new reservation in Indian Territory (current-day Oklahoma). But, as David J. Wishart observes, "the hardships of famine, bad weather, and gnawing homesickness were with them all the way south and adumbrated the terrible conditions that they would face in the years to come in Indian Territory."<sup>33</sup> Recovered from their lowest population numbers in the late nineteenth century, the Pawnee Nation in Oklahoma and across the United States is 3,200 strong today.<sup>34</sup> We can and should read Deas's painting in ways that counter the assumed annihilation of Native America it presented to initial audiences. *The Wounded Pawnee* offers us instead evidence of cultural continuity and resistance to erasure.

Deas told one story of race in America—constructed by a white artist who, attached to an Army expedition, engaged with Pawnees in their villages and heard their tales of recent warfare, all filtered through the moral, aesthetic, and political values of his time, when the contest for control of a continent was unresolved. At this moment, too, Deas experienced his world through an increasingly troubled mind.<sup>35</sup> As a scholar of Deas's art, I see now that *The Death Struggle* is not a singular example of violence in his small body of work. If the only contemporary descriptions of *The Wounded Pawnee* give no hint of its violence, might other images of violence, especially those involving Indigenous people, have numbered among his and other artists' "lost" pictures? I take the risk that engaging these paintings—in their time and in ours—perpetuates stereotypes of Indigenous men as violent and expendable with the hope that fresh readings and greater understanding of each painting's many contexts may disrupt such stereotypes.<sup>36</sup>

## Notes

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My thanks to the family who owned *The Wounded Pawnee* for contacting me and to Tylee Abbott and Tyler Mongerson for their consultations. I am grateful to Claire Barry, Emma Hansen, Anne Helmreich, Marni Sandweiss, and Bill Truettner for discussions about this painting, which sadly had to be virtual in this pandemic year. I appreciate, too, the cogent suggestions of *Panorama's* editors.

<sup>1</sup> "Topics of the Month," *Holden's Dollar Magazine* 3, no. 5 (May 1849): 315, quoted with additional discussion of Deas's post-commitment reception history, in Carol Clark, "Charles Deas: A Life," in Carol Clark et al., *Charles Deas and 1840s America* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2009), 42.

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- <sup>2</sup> E. K., "Queries: Charles Deas," *Historical Magazine, and Notes and Queries Concerning the Antiquities, History, and Biography of America* 4, no. 8 (August 1860): 250; Mary Elizabeth Garland Deas to Lyman Copeland Draper, June 9, 1874, Lyman Copeland Draper Papers, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Wiss Mss DY-Box 24.
- <sup>3</sup> John I. H. Baur, "Unknown American Painters of the 19th Century," *College Art Journal* 6, no. 3 (Spring 1947): 280–81.
- <sup>4</sup> Carol Clark, "A Catalogue of Works," in Clark et al., *Charles Deas and 1840s America*, 171–215.
- <sup>5</sup> Claire Barry's notes and excellent memory reinforce my description. Tom Yost, at Yost Conservation, Oxford, Connecticut, successfully treated the painting later that year (report, August 1, 2016).
- <sup>6</sup> *Transactions of the American Art-Union, for the Year 1848*, no. 213 (1849), distributed to Edwin Rostron. If this is the same Edwin Rostron whom the 1860 US Census listed as then living in Providence, *The Wounded Pawnee* first belonged to an eighteen-year-old artist who was born in England. See 1860 US Federal Census database on Ancestry.com. My unsuccessful effort to trace this picture led me to realize that the organization's intention of broadening art ownership with a low annual fee (five dollars, equivalent to roughly \$180 today) ironically removed many of these paintings from the public sphere because they landed with individuals who did not otherwise collect, lend, or donate art, which makes them particularly hard to track.
- <sup>7</sup> {Henry T. Tuckerman}, "Our Artists—No. V: Deas," *Godey's Magazine and Lady's Book* 33 (December 1846): 251. The only other contemporary reference—"The 'Wounded Pawnee' is of {Deas's} own peculiar class of subjects, and that in which he has always been so happy."—appears in "The Fine Arts: The American Art-Union," *Home Journal*, November 25, 1848, 2.
- <sup>8</sup> "The brand would likely have come from the former owner(s) of the horse. The figures do not seem to be painted, as would have been done by a warrior in preparation for battle." Emma Hansen, curator emerita and senior scholar, Plains Indian Museum, Buffalo Bill Center of the West, to the author, March 1, 2022.
- <sup>9</sup> James Elkins, *The Object Stares Back* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), 11.
- <sup>10</sup> Jules Prown, *Art as Evidence: Writings on Art and Material Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), esp. "Mind in Matter."
- <sup>11</sup> {Tuckerman}, "Our Artists—No. V: Deas," 250.
- <sup>12</sup> Especially useful texts are Frederick E. Hoxie's conception of the Red Continent, "Retrieving the Red Continent: Settler Colonialism and the History of American Indians in the United States," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 31, no. 6 (September 2008): 1153–67; and Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, introduction to *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2014), 1–14.
- <sup>13</sup> Clifton Wharton, quoted in "The Expedition of Major Clifton Wharton in 1844," *Collections of the Kansas State Historical Society* 16 (1923–25): 273.
- <sup>14</sup> David J. Wishart, *An Unspeakable Sadness: The Dispossession of the Nebraska Indians* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994), 64, 80–85; Pekka Hämäläinen, *Lakota America: A New History of Indigenous Power* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019), 185–89.
- <sup>15</sup> James W. Cleghorn, a French Canadian who lived with the Pawnee people, was the government's official interpreter. He understood little English, and therefore Wharton and the Pawnees relied on a soldier who spoke French to complete the necessary translations at the councils. Deas, too, spoke French and may have done some translation. Carleton published his journal anonymously: {J. Henry Carleton}, "Occidental Reminiscences: Prairie Log Book; or Rough Notes of a Dragoon Campaign to the Pawnee Villages in '44," *Spirit of the Times* 14, nos. 37–52; and 15, nos. 2–7 (November 9, 1844–April 12, 1845). The text was subsequently abridged and republished as *The Prairie Logbooks: Dragoon Campaigns to the Pawnee Villages in 1844, and to the Rocky Mountains in 1845* (Chicago: Caxton Club, 1943); reprint, edited and with an introduction by Louis Pelzer (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983). For ease of locating text, I cite the 1983 reprint, 107–9; see also Wishart, *An Unspeakable Sadness*, 91–92.



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- <sup>16</sup> See Frederick E. Hoxie, "A World of Fragments: America in the 1840s," in Clark et al., *Charles Deas and 1840s America*, 55–69.
- <sup>17</sup> "Indian Depredations," *St. Louis Weekly Reveille*, July 26, 1847, 357.
- <sup>18</sup> John M. Coward, *The Newspaper Indian: Native American Identity in the Press, 1820–90* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999), 81.
- <sup>19</sup> "Indian Hardships," *St. Louis Weekly Reveille*, July 12, 1847, 343.
- <sup>20</sup> {Carleton}, *The Prairie Logbooks*, 90–91.
- <sup>21</sup> {Carleton}, *The Prairie Logbooks*, 68, 72. I am grateful for Emma Hansen's guidance in identifying Pawnee clothing and weapons.
- <sup>22</sup> Minutes of the Committee of Management, September 9, 1844, Records of the American Art-Union, New-York Historical Society Library.
- <sup>23</sup> "The Paintings at the American Art-Union," *Broadway Journal*, September 13, 1845, 154.
- <sup>24</sup> Henry William Herbert, "The Death Struggle," *New York Illustrated Magazine of Literature and Art* 2 (September 1846): 289–94. Perhaps to gloss his story in the historical West, Herbert gave his protagonists real or combined names. "Mike Carson" might have joined the name of Mississippi riverboatman Mike Fink (c. 1770/80–c.1823) to fur trapper and guide Kit Carson (1809–1868), who during his lifetime drew praise for his skill as a scout and condemnation for his treatment of Native people, and Herbert named his opponent after the Numak'aki (Mandan) chief Mató-Tópe (c. 1784–1837), but he also called him a "Manitarri," which may be a reference to another tribe, the Minitari (Hidatsa).
- <sup>25</sup> "The Paintings at the American Art-Union," 155.
- <sup>26</sup> "Exhibition of the National Academy—No. II: Pictures of Incident and Character," *New York Literary Gazette*, May 11, 1839, 118.
- <sup>27</sup> "The Indian Guide," *Broadway Journal*, April 19, 1845, 254.
- <sup>28</sup> *The Congressional Globe*, Twenty-Ninth Congress, Second Session, March 2, 1847, cited by Brian W. Dippie, *Catlin and His Contemporaries: The Politics of Patronage* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990), 115–18.
- <sup>29</sup> {Carleton}, *The Prairie Logbooks*, 131.
- <sup>30</sup> {Carleton}, *The Prairie Logbooks*, 142.
- <sup>31</sup> Francis Parkman Jr., *The California and Oregon Trail: Sketches of Prairie and Rocky Mountain Life* (New York: George P. Putnam, 1849), 317, <https://archive.org/details/californiaoregonoopark>.
- <sup>32</sup> For summaries of different positions on white writers' responses to Indigenous warfare, see Richard J. Chacon and Rubén G. Mendoza, "Ethical Considerations and Conclusions Regarding Indigenous Warfare and Violence in North America," in *North American Indigenous Warfare and Ritual Violence*, ed. Richard J. Chacon and Rubén G. Mendoza (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2007), 222–32. On violence in American paintings more generally, see Ross Barrett, *Rendering Violence: Riots, Strikes, and Upheaval in Nineteenth-Century American Art* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2014).
- <sup>33</sup> Wishart, *An Unspeakable Sadness*, 199.
- <sup>34</sup> "Culture—Pawnee History," Pawnee Nation, accessed March 28, 2022, <https://pawneenation.org/pawnee-history>.
- <sup>35</sup> Records of Pliny Earle, attending physician at the Bloomingdale Asylum, to which Deas was committed in May 1848, reveal that he suffered symptoms as early as the spring of 1844. See Medical Center Archives of New York-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell; and Pliny Earle Papers, list of patients and notes on cases, box 5, folder 3, American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, MA.

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<sup>36</sup> I take this perpetuation/disruption question from La Tanya S. Autry, "Beholding and Curating with Care," *Hyperallergic*, January 20, 2022, <https://hyperallergic.com/706626/beholding-and-curating-with-care>.