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The Monacan Nation Pow Wow: Symbol of Indigenous Survival and Resistance in the Tobacco Row Mountains

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On Sunday afternoon, May 23, 1999, two eagle feathers dropped in the arena at the Monacan Indian Nation's Seventh Annual Pow Wow. This is one of the most serious occurrences at any pow wow, and may be dealt with in a variety of ways depending on regional, tribal, and community norms. In this case the emcee cleared the arena and an elder retrieved the feathers while the host drum played an appropriate honor song.

Approximately an hour and a half later—around 4:30 p.m.—the emcee announced that Thomasina Jordan, then-Chair of the Virginia Council on Indians (a state-funded advisory group consisting of representatives from Virginia's eight state recognized tribes[1]), had passed away that afternoon after a long battle with cancer. Ms. Jordan's passing occurred at the same time that the eagle feathers fell in the pow wow arena. Whether anyone attached any supernatural significance to this occurrence, all Virginia Indians (and anyone who knew something of the peculiar and turbulent history of indigenous and non-indigenous relations in the state in the mid-twentieth century) realized the symbolic shock of the coinciding events. Jordan was a vocal political activist and proponent of Indian rights in a state where, until recently, Indians did not dare express discontent with state and local policies and power structures that relegated them to subaltern citizenship, at best. As Jordan drew her last breath, the feathers fell on soil in a county that was at the vanguard of Virginia racial integrity policies aimed at exterminating American Indians by removing them from the state's legal record, as will be discussed later in this essay—a county where no one would have dared to hold a pow wow until the late 1990s.

Yet such a pow wow did become a reality in the late 1990s, and, in addition to becoming a well-known intertribal gathering in the Southeast/Mid-Atlantic corridor, it marks one of the largest annual gatherings of Monacan tribal members.

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This is an interesting phenomenon considering the fact that the majority of the people in the Monacan community had never attended a pow wow (nor do many of them frequent other pow wows) until the advent of the Monacan Nation's annual gathering. This article, then, explores the meaning of the Monacan pow wow to those who live in the host community. We contend that this pow wow constitutes a political expression for the Monacan people, a celebration of survival as indigenous people not only in a state where Indian policy took the form of "documentary genocide" (Smith, 1992), but in a county where local power brokers managed to configure a local political economy in which Indians were integrated at the bottom of a virtual caste system. Considered in a community context, this gathering also constitutes a space where the Monacan people can articulate, on their own terms their existence as a contemporary indigenous people with a unique history. In other words, this now-integral event based on Plains cultural forms must not be seen as a wholesale cultural appropriation, but rather, as a means of expressing the Monacan community's relationship with the rest of the world.

From Plains to Woodlands: Pow Wows in the Southeast

No discussion of the pow wow as an intertribal/inter-regional phenomenon would be complete without referencing Robert K. Thomas's (1968) provocative article "Pan-Indianism." Writing in the context of post-Termination-era Indian activism in the late 1960s, Thomas proposed an explanation for the rapid appropriation of Plains cultural forms by indigenous peoples across North America. On one level, he saw "Pan-Indianism" (as he termed this collective appropriation) as an attempt to forge and adhere to a common "Indian" identity based on similarities in historical experiences across disparate indigenous groups. However, elaborating somewhat on James Howard's (1955) observations in Oklahoma, Thomas also suggested that in some tribes "where aboriginal traits have disappeared, these new symbols of 'Indianess' are *the* distinctive traits of the community.[2]

While Thomas is correct in explicating the inevitability of a new ethnic (and hence, political) identity emerging from prolonged intertribal activity, one must not automatically assume that the adoption of pan-Indian symbols and activities, such as pow wows, by indigenous groups beyond the Plains are mere acts of appropriation. Nor are they necessarily attempts to reclaim indigenous culture without historical insight. Indeed, that was not Thomas's point. However, contemporary critics have elaborated on that line of argument regarding indigenous groups in eastern North America (especially those who are non-federally recognized) to suggest that these groups' prolonged contact and relations with non-Indians has diluted any semblance of "tribal" or "traditional" culture.[3] Specifically, certain writers have leveled such criticism toward Southeastern indigenous groups in a manner so general as to be dangerous, arguing that appropriations of generic "Indian" culture by groups of questionable indigenous heritage are mere ploys to reap the benefits of federal recognition (Quinn, 1990). Such approaches fail to look critically at the manner

in which pan-Indian traits are situated in the context of the actual *communities* that have appropriated them.

Lerch and Bullers offer an alternative approach to understanding the intrinsic complexities involved when indigenous groups beyond the Plains, particularly in the Southeast, appropriate Plains (or Pan-Indian) cultural forms. They point out that ". . . pow wows and other Pan-Indian activities may exist alongside of more traditional activities or behavioral patterns that mark off *local* Indian identity and social community [emphasis ours]" They make their point through an examination of the Wacamaw Sioux Pow Wow in North Carolina, an event that has played an important role in local community life since 1970. Through structured interviews and factor analyses, the authors convincingly illustrate that this pow wow is an important "identity marker" for the Wacamaw people insofar as it is a *community* event that distinguishes them from their non-Indian neighbors and bolsters their visibility as indigenous people to a larger public.

Here, we intend to supplement Lerch and Bullers' approach with a phenomenological methodology that delves even deeper into the community context by focusing on actual *dialogue* within the Monacan community about their annual pow wow.[4] This ethnographic model is what Lassiter refers to as a *collaborative* approach as it "fully embraces dialogue in both ethnographic practice *and* ethnographic writing."[5] In other words, it is a "multivocal" (Tedlock, 1995) rendering of community reality, not simply because of our extensive reliance on oral reflections from tribal members, but because two of the authors are themselves Monacans, and are active participants in the pow wow and all endeavors necessary to make the pow wow possible. Through this approach, we intend to convey, if only to a limited extent, the meanings that Monacan people attach to the annual pow wow. While it might be said that pow wows have emerged as something distinct from any tribal/regional culture over the past thirty years, our conversations and experiences suggest that the Monacans (if not many other tribes) have incorporated the pow wow into the ebb and flow of community life as a means of celebrating their existing indigenous culture and identity. Our contention is that the Monacan pow wow is, indeed, and identity-maker, but not an identity *appropriation*. In a subtle but powerful way, the pow wow is a means through which the Monacan people articulate their identity as indigenous people who survived a peculiar set of historical circumstances where such survival seemed unlikely. In other words, the pow wow is a political act of resistance, endurance, and celebration.

"Just like the dust we come from": The Historical Context

The present-day Monacan Nation—both as an ethnic community and as a polity—is evolved from a once-vast alliance of Siouan-speaking tribes that inhabited most of the Virginia and Carolina Piedmont (and the Virginia Blue Ridge Mountains) at the time of Captain John Smith's arrival on the Virginia shores in 1607.[6] From then until the inception of the American republic, the history of most of the

Monacan-allied peoples was one of tribal diasporas and ever-shifting sociopolitical configurations (Hale, 1883).[7] Those who remained in the vicinity of present-day Amherst County, Virginia were descended from Tutelos and Saponis, and possibly some settlers from Algonquian communities from the Virginia Tidewater (Cook, 2000).[8] These Indians seem to have deliberately enclaved themselves in the remote Tobacco Row Mountains (a front-range of the Blue Ridge) in order to avoid excessive contact with European Americans. In particular, a core community was present around Bear Mountain by the 1750s, whose residents are the ancestors of the contemporary Monacan Nation.

However, like most indigenous groups in the East, contact with non-Indians was inevitable and prolonged. And as was true for most other tribes in the Southeast, such contact yielded both exogamous unions and tensions. Prior to the Civil War, this translated into a situation in which Indians were almost uniformly classified as "free people of color," the lowest possible tier of citizenship.[9] Yet even though the legal status of "free colored" theoretically disappeared with the emancipation of slaves, Indians in Virginia found themselves in a precarious legal situation that ultimately denied them the right to ethnic self-identification as indigenous peoples. After the Civil War, miscegenation laws (laws prohibiting interracial marriage, and often defining criteria for determining the race of individuals) became much more rigidly enforced in those states where they existed. To be sure, this reflected fears of challenges to the status quo with the (theoretical) enfranchisement of people of color.[10] This trend, of course, coincided with the advent of the eugenics movement, which found one of its most stalwart proponents in Walter A. Plecker, director of the Virginia Office of Vital Statistics from 1916 to 1946.

A physician by training, Plecker was obsessed with the notion of racial purity. He single-handedly drafted the 1924 Virginia Racial Integrity Law—perhaps the most explicit articulation of miscegenation law to date—which essentially stated that there were only two "races" resident to Virginia: "White" and "Negro." This effectively made it illegal for anyone native to Virginia to claim to be "Indian," and Plecker knew it. He drafted a so-called "scientific" method for identifying people of color on the basis of surnames located in nineteenth-century vital records (where Indians were typically classified as "free colored"). Interestingly, he seems to have developed a particular vendetta against the Monacans, who were perhaps more fervent in asserting their Indian heritage than any other tribe in the state.[11] Unfortunately, local planters, who had turned toward an orchard economy on the slopes of the Tobacco Row following the post-war depression, found in these new miscegenation policies a means of exploiting Indian labor to perpetuate the quasi-feudal political economy of the Antebellum years. Monacans found themselves effectively integrated at the bottom of a local caste-system. Not only were they providing cheap, if not virtually free, labor for local orchard owners and farmers, but they were not allowed to attend county schools until 1963—not even those established for African Americans.[12]

Needless to say, these conditions had a severe effect on the collective psyche of the Monacan people. Many Indians who could find the means left Amherst County and Virginia entirely for places such as New Jersey, Maryland and Tennessee, where they could either conceal their identity or live as Indians without fear of persecution. Those who remained in the county often adopted racialized identities in ways that created rifts within the Monacan community.[13] It was during this period that any vestiges of indigenous language faded away. The late Lucian Branham, a beloved patriarch in the Bear Mountain community for many years, recalled "[Monacan] people didn't want to speak Indian. That's what it was . . . they was pushed down to dirt and dust, just like the dust we come from."[14] Another woman expressed the pain of being an Indian in Amherst County during the mid-twentieth century in very sobering terms: "I can definitely sit here and say there were times when I was going through school [after public school integration], and things was happening to me, and [non-Indian] people was treating us like they was . . . there were times I didn't want to hear the word Indian."[15]

The early-to-mid twentieth century was undoubtedly a devastating time for the Monacan people. However, while many Monacans took no pride in who they were, there was certainly a core group of people who consistently asserted their Indian identity. In 1908, when the Episcopal diocese of Southwest Virginia opened St. Paul's Mission at Bear Mountain (the only place Indians could obtain an education in the county until 1963), the founding missionary noted that residents of the community around the mission referred to themselves as "Indian" in a very stalwart manner. He noted in particular that they made a point of distinguishing themselves from other people of color in the county.[16] During World War II, when Virginia Indians were placed in African American regiments at Walter Plecker's insistence, a group of Monacan men initially responded by resisting the draft and finally filing suit in the U.S. District Court for Western Virginia, where they won the right to self-identification as "Indians" for the purposes of military service. Yet for many, the mere act of remaining in Amherst County without conceding to be anything other than "Indian" constituted the ultimate act of resistance. Reflecting on those who fled the area, Lucian Branham recalled: "A lot of them got up and left [Virginia]. They kept after me, said, 'well, why don't you pull up and leave,' see? 'We ain't got a chance to make nothing for ourselves.' And I said, no, probably not. But I was born here, and I'm gonna still fight and stay here until I'm gone . . . If I was ten years old, I still wouldn't leave."[17]

Today, the Monacan Nation's Annual Pow Wow is a fundamental symbol of that spirit of resistance and survival.

The Monacan Pow Wow: Beginnings

During our conversations with Monacan people, we asked if anyone thought that the Monacan Pow Wow could have taken place in Amherst County thirty years ago. The unanimous answer was *no*. For one thing, the sociopolitical climate in

Amherst County was still not favorable for Indians. "I don't think the outsiders would probably have come," said Dovie Ramsey. "Because it's still a stigma, you know. Not as much. Not everybody, but they [non-Indians] make jokes. They think some of the customs of the Indians . . . is really funny, and far out, and irreligious."[18] To be sure, although racist views in Amherst County have retreated into the recesses of latency, they still exist and were considerably more blatant thirty years ago. Certainly, few local farmers or landowners wanted to have any association with the Monacans that did not place Indians in a position of subservience. As will be discussed, the first four Monacan Pow Wows took place in neighboring Bedford County, because the tribe found it difficult to find support for the event within Amherst County.

However, most Monacans believed that the internal barriers to putting on such an event in the past were equally as formidable. Kenneth Branham, who has served as Chief of the Monacan Nation for six years and who has lived around Bear Mountain since he was born in the mid-1950s, stated that "Even if we had our own land to do it, the know-how to do it would not have been there. And the connection with other Indians."[19] Diana Laws, who grew up in east Tennessee where her grandparents (along with many other Monacan families) fled to escape the wrath of Virginia racial integrity policies in the early twentieth century, placed a great emphasis on the manner in which many Indians internalized the pain that one sustained for even claiming to be "Indian": "I think it took a time out for our people to be able to come to accept things. It took time for it to become acceptable to them [to embrace their Monacan heritage], for them to understand, for them to be able to receive it and then express it."[20] One of the most profound statements came from Buddy Johns, who as a youth in the early 1970s was rather active in indigenous political movements. He also attended the mission school for as long as he could and experienced firsthand the hardship of public school integration in Amherst County (described below). As he sat back and watched Saturday evening events at the 2001 pow wow, he pondered the past:

> Thirty years ago this wouldn't have been possible. The atmosphere here wasn't right. I know some people in the tribe wouldn't have liked it. They would have been scared to try it thirty years ago. The pressures and the prejudices wouldn't have allowed it. I'm just trying to think thirty years ago who owned this land. They would have never allowed anyone on this land to do it. Now, I'd like to consider myself one of those who was, maybe, more to the forefront of pushing for our rights, and tribal status and things. And thirty years ago, no, I wasn't even ready for it.[21]

In fact, thirty years ago the Monacan people were facing profound changes in the social, political, and economic climate—locally, regionally, and nationally—that would allow them to challenge the bonds of racial oppression that had damaged their collective self-image, and to assert their autonomy and endurance as an indigenous community. By 1963, every county in Virginia had integrated people

of color into its public schools with the exception of Amherst, where a $30,000 bond was pending to build a separate school just for Indians. However, the county abandoned this plan after much pressure from the Episcopal Church, and Monacans were finally accepted in the county's schools. Their experience there was far from pleasant in the beginning, as evidenced by the fact that the first Monacan did not graduate from public high school in the county until 1971.[22] With time, public school education did benefit Amherst County Indians, and their matriculation coincided with the decline of the local orchard economy, the rise of a more diversified service sector, and the abolition of miscegenation and racial integrity laws. All of this transpired in the midst of the Civil Rights Movement, which tended to instill in many ethnic groups a renewed sense of pride in their heritage. These changes motivated the Monacans to become more assertive—if not organized—as an ethnic entity. This became symbolically apparent in 1989 when the Monacans received official recognition as an Indian tribe from the state of Virginia.[23]

Encouraged by these profound changes within and beyond the Monacan community, scores of Monacans who had left the area during the Plecker years or who were the progeny of such migrants began to move back to Amherst County, some of whom had developed a long association with other indigenous groups in a pan-Indian context. One such individual was George Branham Whitewolf, who was born in Glen Bernie, Maryland, where his parents moved (as did many Monacans) in the mid-twentieth century. During the 1970s, Whitewolf became active in the American Indian Movement and concomitantly became deeply involved in pow wow circuits across the United States. Eventually, he began sponsoring his own circuit on the east coast. In the early 1990s, the charismatic Whitewolf moved to Amherst County and became an active leader on the tribal council. He was determined to see the Monacan people sponsor their own pow wow, and with his guidance the First Annual Monacan Indian Pow Wow became a reality in 1993.[24]

However, recalling the climate of dwindling, but latent, racism in Amherst County, the path to making the pow wow was not easy. Not only was Whitewolf the only one in the Monacan community at the time with a solid knowledge of how to plan and sustain a pow wow, but the tribe simply had no place to hold the event. At that time, the Monacans had no substantive official land base, and non-Indian landowners and civic organizations in the county typically found convenient ways to side-step Monacan requests for a venue. Tribal historian Diane Johns Shields recounted, "I know that we approached Amherst County to have our pow wow here, and they, of course, could not seem to find a place that they would let us have it. And we approached Sweet Briar College [a private women's college near the town of Amherst], and of course, they couldn't. And then once we had it in Bedford and they found out how much money Bedford County made, then they wanted us to bring it back to Amherst."[25] Indeed, from 1993 to 1996, the pow wow was held at a community center in neighboring Bedford County. Each year the crowds grew, as did the revenues, until 1997 when an Amherst County farmer in Elon, Virginia volunteered his land for the event. In spite of a pouring

rain most of the weekend, that pow wow drew the largest crowd of participants and spectators yet. It also marked the pinnacle of tribal participation in putting on the pow wow.

The fact that the pow wow drew such support from within the community in a relatively short period of time is impressive. After all, most Monacans had never attended a pow wow until their own tribe became sponsors, and those who were returning to Amherst County had to work to bolster respect within the community. Diane Johns Shields recounted her own return in 1994: "You know, when I first came, I had the feeling that they [Monacans who lived their entire lives in Amherst County] were afraid. They were afraid of things that were changing. Because they had come out of a dormant time, where everything just kind of stayed the same. And then all of a sudden, everything's starting to change." If those returning home had to endure the gauntlet of community scrutiny as "outsiders" before being accepted as vital members of the collective, one must wonder what the allure of a seemingly foreign institution such as the pow wow might have been. From Diane's perspective it was because, "Things were beginning to change, and they were either going to change with them or just kind of be pushed aside. And people are beginning to change now, and accept who they are and be proud of who they are. Because for so many years they were put down, and they didn't want to just accept that."[26]

Community Institution or Pan-Indian Event?

Perhaps there was a temporal symbolism in the fact that the first Monacan Pow Wow took place at a community center in neighboring Bedford County, twenty-some miles from Bear Mountain. Not only were Amherst County officials and landowners reluctant or unwilling to endorse such an event, but many Monacans were still coming to grips with the negative ramifications of even claiming publicly to be "Indian" in Virginia. Some even feared possible backlash from local non-Indians for such a bold display of ethnic pride. However, for other Monacans it was time to catch the current of changing circumstances and to make sure that the times continued to change for the better.

The first pow wow, which took place in July of 1993, was modest but successful. Perhaps its most significant outcome was that it convinced many wary Monacans that such an open celebration of indigenous culture could proceed in the area without negative repercussions. By 1997, the Monacans were able to move the pow wow back to Amherst County to the community of Elon, where many Monacan families live. By then it had become the largest regular Monacan community event both in terms of turnout from the Monacan community and the amount of effort tribal members put forth to prepare for and operate the pow wow.

Actually, the Monacan pow wow is one of two major tribal events that take place each year. The second is the annual Homecoming Bazaar, which takes place in October. While the Homecoming is an impressive affair in itself, it is safe to say that it does not draw as many Monacans at one time as the pow wow does

(especially from those who live in Amherst County and vicinity). Even though the Homecoming is not as much a "public" event as the pow wow is, one reason it does not attract certain Monacans is because it has often been perceived as a "church" event. The Homecoming actually began as a gathering for those who attended the Episcopal Church at St. Paul's Mission, all of whom were Monacans. However, past missionaries tended to exhibit favoritism toward certain Indian families over others, arguably on the basis of skin color. This served to exacerbate tribal rifts that were either created or worsened with the elaboration of racial integrity laws in Virginia in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. People in the Monacan community are coming to grips with these factional tensions, and the Homecoming is slowly becoming more of a *tribal* (as opposed to congregational) event. From its inception the pow wow seems to have offered an alternative collective space for *all* Monacans to express their historical identities as local indigenous peoples.

It should be noted that some Monacans, especially those who live out-of-state, regard the pow wow and the Homecoming as events serving similar purposes. As Kenneth Branham pointed out, "You know a lot of our people travel from out-of-state. Some from Illinois, and even from Texas come to these two functions. When someone will travel that far just to socialize, that makes a difference."[27] For many Monacans-at-large, then, both events serve as a means of reconnecting to the community and reinforcing familial ties that might otherwise be severed by distance. For some, such as Diane Laws (whose grandparents moved to East Tennessee during the Plecker years), both events help to narrow the distance between generations as well.

> Well, I know for one thing that it's [coming to the pow wow and Homecoming] important to my grandfather because he gets to come up here and he gets to talk to people, you know, maybe once or twice a year that he doesn't see very often. And I know that it brings peace to his heart. And it's good for me to see that in him, and it's good for me to listen to the stories he tells when we're seeing these things. Because when we see these things it provokes him and reminds him of things to tell me that he may not remember otherwise.[28]

However, for many Monacans there is a marked difference between the Homecoming and the Pow Wow. Buddy Johns put it succinctly, "I guess basically 'Homecoming' is a good word because there's more fellowshipping going on among the people. They're not busy trying to run booths and maintain ticket lines. Some of the guys, of course, are parking vehicles and all, but not nearly as much. I think it gives our people more time to fellowship with each other.[29] Indeed, the Homecoming is not nearly as labor-intensive as the Pow Wow, and allows for more flexibility and open socializing among tribal members. This, however, evokes an important point. Many Monacans will turn out for the pow wow and work all weekend—and even days before and after, setting up and cleaning up—who may not appear at any other tribal events for the rest of the year. A regular crew of Monacan men spends three days parking cars in the fields adjacent to the pasture

where the arena and vendors are set up; other men haul non-stop water and trash after having set up temporary fences and electrical circuits. Women tend the tribal concession stands and set up the tables for the Saturday night feast with food they have prepared in their own homes. As previously noted, most of these people do not attend other pow wows on a regular basis, and few dance at the Monacan pow wow except during specified honoring songs. What accounts for their dedication to this event?

It is tempting to attribute their efforts to the fact that the Monacan Pow Wow is the tribe's primary source of annual revenue. Indeed, with money raised from the first two pow wows the tribe was able to purchase 120 acres of land on Bear Mountain, which included a symbolically important settlement and Monacan cemetery. By 1999 the land was paid for in full, almost entirely from pow wow revenues. However, many of those who pour their efforts into the pow wow are not on hand the rest of the year to reap the material benefits of pow wow revenues.

Dovie Ramsey, who grew up in neighboring Rockbridge County in the mid-twentieth century spoke for many who have found the pow wow to be particularly appealing. "To be in the circle, you know, with the Indian people, the Native Americans, that's a time of renewal. And when you come to the Homecoming, that's coming home to gather. I say it's a spiritual difference in it."[30] These words may sound like common utterances in a pan-Indian context, but they must be understood in a local and *personal* context. Dovie came from one of a number of families in neighboring counties who, in spite of their proximity to Bear Mountain and surrounding areas, were increasingly isolated from social and political life in that community as the twentieth century progressed. While the situation in Rockbridge and other counties was no better for people whose surnames fell on Plecker's so-called "hit list" of people to be classified as "colored," they were not subjected to the layer of chastisement as a *community* of racial "others" that salient groups such as the Amherst County Indians were. At the same time, they had to contend with being victims of racial integrity policies without the same semblance of an empathetic community as Indians in historically visible communities. Thus, Dovie was part of a generation of Monacans who knew they were "Indian" but who were discouraged (if not forbidden) by parents and policymakers to voice or pursue a tribal affiliation, per se. (Ironically, Dovie is now regarded as an authority on certain aspects of traditional Monacan culture, especially for her impressive knowledge of local flora). Her use of the term "renewal" is understandable and telling in this context, and many Monacans concur for varying reasons.

Phyllis Hicks is one of the most respected individuals in the Monacan community. Even though she has always attended and worked closely with St. Paul's Church, she is held in high regard by those who felt alienated by missionaries in the past and those who never cared to attend the church. She grew up in the Bear Mountain community during the mid-twentieth century and was among the first Monacan children integrated into public schools (she attended the mission school through the third grade). Phyllis also spearheaded the Monacans' effort to gain state

recognition as an Indian tribe in the 1980s. Now she devotes most of her time to the Monacan Ancestral Museum, which she was instrumental in founding. For Phyllis, the pow wow and related activities generate a message of pride in Indian heritage that she believes will motivate tribal members—especially children—to grasp and preserve their heritage as *Monacans*. She expresses a strong desire for "our young people to dance, and for them to learn how to sing the Indian songs. Things that I didn't get to do. I'm hoping all our young people will stay in it and try to learn it so they can pass it on to their children." However, even though some dance styles and songs are adopted from Plains tradition, she does not regard this learning of "Indian" songs as an act of cultural appropriation, but as a means of escalating pride in tribal and community heritage: "Most importantly, as my great-grandmother would say all the time, jut remember who you are—you're Indian. And that's the reason the museum means so much to me, is that I want *our* history to be put in there so that when our children say they're Indian they got history to back it up. They can say, 'Hey, I got it, I know where it's at, and I'm proud of who I am, and my history's all together. And I don't have to worry about trying to prove something, or trying to tell someone who I am and they not understanding who I am."[31]

Phyllis's words speak of both fear and lethargy as barriers to preserving and reclaiming Monacan history. Indeed, the politics of race, coupled with the colonial political economy that plagued the Monacans (and other Virginia tribes) for over three centuries resulted in intensive cultural loss and placed a strain on tribal, communal, and familial ties that held many indigenous communities together. Yet these ties were not severed completely, and these ties, coupled with the immense sociocultural fluidity of most North American indigenous groups have allowed the Monacans and others to survive as distinct indigenous communities.[32] For Kenneth Branham, the pow wow is a celebration of the Monacans' capacity to survive through adaptation to changing cultural and political circumstances, even when the odds seemed stacked against them: "I think [the pow wow] shows that although we are Indian, and we're different in some ways, but yet we're so much alike the community here in Amherst County and the state of Virginia, that that's why a lot of people don't feel like there are Indians here. Because we do blend in. But if it hadn't been for that capability of blending into our surroundings we *would not* be here today. And that's very important that we were able to do that."[33]

The recurring themes of survival, renewed pride, and change ring strong as Monacans ponder what the pow wow means to them. Dovie Ramsey's eyes grew misty as she related her thoughts on what the pow wow means to her and what it should mean to all Monacans: "There comes a time in all of our lives when we need to stop a while—if they would do it, and while they're going in the circle—just think, 'What a heritage we've got!' And how things had been once, and now we can really have a pow wow, where before they couldn't even have a decent life."[34] Indeed, there does come a time during the pow wow when all Monacans are beckoned into the arena, when everyone leaves their booths, gates, and sundry duties, and makes a round in the circle for an honor song. Whether all share her

sentiments while making the round is difficult to ascertain. However, it is perhaps clear to everyone in the circle at that time more than ever that the pow wow is an overtly *public* event.

In their study of the North Carolina Wacamaw Sioux Pow Wow as a *tribal* "identity marker," Lerch and Bullers point out that the particular pow wow in question was important from its inception in 1970 to the community as a means of "communicating the presence of the Wacamaw to a much larger audience than ever before possible . . ."[35] Indeed, this is true of many tribally-sponsored pow wows in the eastern United States, particularly when the host is a non-federally recognized tribe. As Lerch and Bullers point out, the importance of "being known as Indian" is both personal and political.[36] While many Wacamaws have come to perceive their pow wow as a "traditional" community activity (perhaps by virtue of the fact that it has been in existence for over thirty years), tribes such as the Monacan Nation can certainly admit to the same personal and political interest in their pow wow. This public gathering marks the nexus of and blurring of lines between three worlds for the Monacans—the Monacan community, the Pan-Indian or intertribal sphere of activity, and the larger public of which Indians and non-Indians are a part. It is this interaction with the non-Monacan world that makes the pow wow meaningful within the community context. On the final morning of the Monacans' Ninth Annual Pow Wow, Chief Branham contemplated the importance of the interactions taking place at this event:

> I think it's one of our major learning tools that we have. Ten years ago most of our kids, none of our grownups, knew how to do any type of dancing. And you know, we were just like the normal public, even though we were Indian people. Since then we've realized that there are a lot of different Indian people across this country and on this continent. And a lot of them went through the very same thing that we went through, especially the ones on the east coast. And we can also explain to people [who ask], "hey, you know, why don't you look like the Indians we see on TV?" The pow wow has enabled us to get into our culture. I think it has brought a lot of respect to our young people and to our elders.[37]

Lloyd Johns concurred: "[the Pow Wow] is very important to us. It demonstrates the community, our pride in who we are. It gives us a chance to show ourselves off in a good light to the county and surrounding areas. It also brings in other tribes and cultures, and we can share with them, and learn from them. They can learn from us. We get to see people from other nations, see how they react to things and what pride they take in their tribal status, or whatever. And I think that's very enlightening to our people.[38]

Implicit in both of the above statements is a notion of incubating *political* solidarity with other Indians. Given the Monacans' unique and turbulent history in their dealings with non-Indians, there is certainly a degree of collective comfort to be found in relating to other indigenous groups whose historical experiences have been comparable. However, such recognition from other indigenous groups

certainly helps to bolster the Monacans' political *image* as Indians at a time when the tribe (along with Virginia's seven other state-recognized tribes) is seeking federal recognition. Nonetheless, it is dangerous to assume that acquiring federal recognition is a prominent motive behind the pow wow from any Monacans. In fact, many Monacans, although they support efforts to pursue federal recognition, do not care whether they ultimately gain such acknowledgement. Instead, bolstering their political image as "Indians" is part and parcel to reclaiming their history as a community and as Monacans.

How might the pow wow, which is a fundamentally Pan-Indian activity, facilitate the process of historical and cultural reclamation (and in some cases, revitalization) within the Monacan community? Quite simply, it is a source of inspiration to pursue hidden elements of the Monacan past and to revitalize dormant traditions, however subtle. This occurs in a variety of ways. For instance, one finds that while relatively few Monacans own ceremonial regalia, an increasing number of them who do are trying to emulate traditional Eastern Siouan clothing to the best of their ability. While the use of Plains-style regalia is prevalent at many pow wows, one finds a growing movement in the east toward the use of Eastern Woodland styles that are tribally-specific when possible. While historical information on such clothing among the Monacans and their affiliates at the time of European contact is scant, efforts have been made to reconstruct the material past through subsequent anthropological data and through comparative research on other Eastern Woodland cultures.[39]When Kenneth Branham was first elected as Chief of the Monacan Nation, he was presented with a Plains-style head dress and buckskin shirt and leggings for ceremonial occasions, including the pow wow. While he took pride in wearing this regalia, primarily because he remembered a time when it would have been dangerous to do so, he explained his own transition toward more accurate regalia: "You know, we've lost so much here on the east coast. Again, we get into the stereotype stuff. But I think we need to show them [the general public] that yes, we're Indian, but we're also different. And I think we need to teach everybody that not all Indians killed buffalo and lived in tipis. So I think it's very important [to wear regionally accurate regalia]. And the reason I've been slow is because I've been trying to find what type of headwear that the chiefs wore."[40] Kenneth now wears an Eastern Woodland contact-era outfit which is predominantly made from trade cloth. Fittingly enough, he is also employed as a cultural/historical interpreter at a contact-era model Monacan village at Natural Bridge Park, thirty miles west of Bear Mountain. Dovie Ramsey, on the other hand , has never worn Plains-style regalia. For her it is important to dance with Eastern Woodland regalia (which for her includes a calico trade cloth dress) out of respect for her ancestors. "That was our grandmothers that wore the long dresses, you know. And after the settlers started coming over and they got material, they made dresses like this I got on. And I think it reflects your respect for them."[41]

By trying to wear (to the best of their knowledge) distinctly Monacan (or at least Eastern Siouan) regalia, Monacans seek to distinguish themselves from other

Indians. The pow wow presents the ideal occasion for such a moment of distinction. However, as the above statements indicate, it is also a time for the Monacans to realize what they hold in common, historically and politically, with other indigenous peoples. These statements also allude to the importance of the pow wow, both as an intertribal and as a community gathering, in conveying a message to the non-Indian public. While it is a positive experience for Monacans to have Indians from other nations attend their gathering and thereby embrace them as indigenous peoples, it is critically important that non-Indians respect their open assertion of tribal identity. Given the deplorable record of Indian and non-Indian relations in Amherst County, one can understand how sensitive many Monacans might be, especially in light of the fact that it took four years before the Monacans could actually move their pow wow to Amherst County. Yet the move seems to have paid off in many ways. In spite of pouring rains, the 1997 pow wow drew a record crowd, most of whom were non-Indians, and grossed over $35,000 at the gate. Moreover, if the entire endeavor is too young for the Monacans to consider it a "tradition," it seems that it is not far from becoming one for many non-Indians in the community. Buddy Johns related the following observation to that end: "I was talking to a friend of mine who's Caucasian, and he was talking about how there's a group [of non-Indians] there that's talking about how they enjoy coming to the pow wow. That they see people here that they don't see but maybe every pow wow, and how it's really become a thing that's galvanizing the community. A lot of these people I see here every year. Seems like it's something that draws them all together."[42]

The Monacan Pow Wow has had a galvanizing effect on the larger community of Amherst County and surrounding areas. County Schools send busloads of elementary school children for Students' Day at the pow wow (the Friday before the grand entry), where once these buses refused to pick up Monacan children who were legally entitled to attend public school. County law enforcement officials gladly provide assistance in traffic control and security (which has never really been an issue), where forty years ago their primary interaction with Indians entailed keeping them out of local restaurants. Most importantly, scores of local non-Indians *willingly* attend the pow wow on a regular basis. Words can barely convey what this means to many Monacan people, especially those who had to endure the peculiar politics of race that left no space for Indians in Virginia during much of the twentieth century. In the 1980s a core group of Monacans started the movement to reclaim their history (and community pride therein), a movement that was given a significant boost when in 1984 local historian Peter W. Houck penned a highly-speculative but sensitive book on the Monacans entitled, *Indian Island in Amherst County.*[43] However, the book was not uniformly celebrated by all in the Monacan community, and the process of gaining community support for the movement to reclaim Monacan history has not been easy. Yet the pow wow has made a difference, as Buddy Johns described as he relaxed after the Saturday evening meal during the 2001 pow wow: "I just passed a lady there a couple of

minutes ago that, well, I can remember when Dr. Houck wrote the book, *Indian Island.* I know a number of years went by she wouldn't even pick the book up. She didn't want to even mention the word 'Indian', you know. She'd been beaten so badly with the prejudice over the years she didn't want to do anything or get involved at all. And I passed her there and she's one of the most active members now. It definitely makes a difference."[44]

The question remains: is the Monacan pow wow an *identity maker*? Perhaps not in the strict sense that Fredrik Barth crafted the term to explain how many ethnic groups use their most salient and distinct cultural elements (e.g., language, specific art forms, and so forth) to distinguish themselves as unique from all other groups with a single symbol (Barth, 1969). However, it is an identity marker in the more flexible sense that Lerch and Bullers use the term—not as a traditional activity, but as a community event that occurs along aide (and often accentuates) local cultural forms and dynamics. As stated, it is the only pow wow that many (if not most) Monacans attend (and many do not wear regalia), thereby obscuring the argument that it is a simple appropriation of pan-Indian cultural forms. Nor is it a distinctly (or exclusive) community event, as is the case with the Monacan Homecoming, which adds a layer of regional distinctiveness. For example, many Virginia tribes—notably the Chickahominies—incorporate their annual pow wow into their homecoming festivities. Yet many Monacans attend the pow wow who do not attend the Homecoming for previously stated reasons relating to past infractions within the community. For them, the pow wow provides a somewhat neutral space to reconsider their place in the community again, while for all Monacans the pow wow provides a space to reconsider and rearticulate their status as indigenous people in Amherst County. Thus, the Monacan pow wow constitutes a fluid identity marker that not only distinguishes the Monacans as a people, but serves as a point at which their cultural and political identity in relation to non-Indians locally and to other Indians nationally—and just as significantly, to each other—is constantly being negotiated.

"That's what a Pow Wow's about"

On Saturday, May 19, 2001, sometime around 3 p.m., emcee Marvin Burnette called all dancers into the arena at the Ninth Annual Monacan Nation Pow Wow and announced a dance contest to begin immediately. Within seconds, Bob Seeger's "Old Time Rock and Roll" blasted through the PA system, taking everyone by surprise. A few seconds passed before the shock and confusion wore off and almost everyone present burst into laughter as dancers ad-libbed it.

However, not everyone laughed. As Kenneth Branham stood on the outskirts of the arena trying to contain himself, a non-Indian woman with her children stood next to him with a half-scowl and thought out loud, "Well, this is not what I expected." As Chief of the Monacan Nation, Kenneth recognized a situation calling for tact and diplomacy when he saw one. He explained to the disappointed

spectator, "Ma'am, we're just like everybody else. We're having a little fun. That's what a pow wow's about."[45]

Such is the ongoing predicament of being Indian in Virginia in the twenty-first century. Like most indigenous groups in the east, Virginia Indians have endured prolonged contact with non-Indians for almost 400 years. Ironically, the larger non-Indian public expects them to behave as if such contact has been extremely limited, or to resign any claims to Indian heritage entirely. However, the Monacans know as well as anyone that culture is not static. That understanding has allowed them to survive. It also lies at the heart of the pow wow. While most tribal participants work until they are thoroughly exhausted—so hard that it would be difficult to imagine them enjoying themselves by any means-- they understand the pow wow as something that they present on their own terms. It is a space where they negotiate—or more appropriately, articulate—their identity as *contemporary* Monacans and as people of integrity with other indigenous peoples and with non-Indians. They do so because they *can*. That is why they have a pow wow.

Notes

1. The eight state-recognized tribes in Virginia are the Chickahominy, Eastern Chickahominy, Mattaponi, Upper Mattaponi, Monacan, Nansemond, Pamunkey, Rappahannock. None of these tribes is federally recognized as yet. In addition to including one representative from each Virginia tribe, the Virginia Council on Indians (VCI) includes "at large" members who reside in the state but belong to other Indian nations. The VCI also includes certain state legislators who have demonstrated an interest in Indian affairs.

2. Thomas, "Pan-Indianism," 81.

3. James Clifford provides an innovative multi-vocal discussion of such criticism and its negative impact on a New England indigenous group in his essay on the Mashpee Wampanoags in *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art* (1988: 277-346).

4. We use this less structured approach as a means of placing emphasis on *local* meaning. Such an emphasis on community dialogue guides Lassiter's work on Kiowa Gourd Dance Song, the meaning of which, he argues, can only be understood through such discourses (as opposed to standard interpretations such as musical notation). See Luke E. Lassiter, "'Charlie Brown': Not Just Another Essay on the Gourd Dance," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* vol. 24, no. 4 (1997): 75-103; See also, Lassiter (1998: 154-167).

5. Lassiter, *The Power of Kiowa Song*, 10. For earlier discussions of the concept of collaborative or dialogical ethnography see, e.g., Elaine J. Lawless, "'I was Afraid Someone Like You . . . An Outsider . . . would Misunderstand': Negotiating Interpretive Differences Between Ethnographers and Subjects," *Journal of American Folklore* 105 (1992): 301-14, and Dennis Tedlock, *The Spoken Word and the Work of Interpretation* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1983).

6. For a basic description of pre-contact Monacan society and territory (ca. 900-1600 AD) see Jeffrey Hantman, "Between Powhatan and Quirank: Reconstructing Monacan Culture and History in the Context of Jamestown," *American Anthropologist* vol. 92, no.

3 (1990): 676-690. Some of the better-known indigenous entities in the alliance were the so-called Monacans proper (settled near the falls of the James River at the time of European contact in 1608), Tutelos, Saponis, Occaneechis, and Manahoacs. While some scholars, including Hantman, often refer to the indigenous groups in this vast territory as comprising a "confederacy," we prefer the term *alliance* as it more accurately reflects the sociopolitical fluidity of the region.

7. Many of the Tutelos and Saponeys migrated into the Iroquois Confederacy in the mid-eighteenth century and were adopted into the Cayuga Nation. Vestiges of their ceremonies and language survive on the Six Nations Reserve, Ontario, Canada.

8. Peter Houck's suggestion that the settlers from the east were predominantly white traders (who brought with them English surnames, such as Johns and Branham, which became common among Monacans) has been commonly accepted until recently. However, the authors and others have recently found documents linking the lineal ancestors of certain Monacan families to Tidewater Indians in the early eighteenth century. For Houck's account see his book, *Indian Island in Amherst County* (Lynchburg, Va.: Lynchburg Historical Research Co., 1984).

9. Cook, *Monacans and Miners*, 56-60; McLeRoy and McLeRoy (1993).

10. For a good discussion on how miscegenation law was elaborated upon and interpreted to maintain white privilege in the postbellum South see Eva Saks, "Representing Miscegenation Law," *Raritan* 8 (1988): 39-69.

11. Cook, *Monacans and Miners*, 85-108. For an excellent discussion of the eugenics movement in Virginia, including Plecker's role in the international movement and his obsession with Amherst County, see J. David Smith, *The Eugenic Assault on America: Scenes in Red, White, and Black* (Fairfax, Va.: George Mason University Press, 1993). In fact, the Monacans were the focus of a major eugenic study during Plecker's tenure that characterized the people in the community around Bear Mountain as chronically retarded, mixed-race degenerates. This widely circulated book, entitled, *Mongrel Virginians*, is etched in the collective memory of the Monacan People as a dark moment in their history. It has also created a historical wariness of scholars seeking to do research in the community. See Arthur H. Estabrook and Ivan McDougal, *Mongrel Virginians* (Baltimore: Williams and Wilkins Co., 1926).

12. Cook, *Monacans and Miners*, 65-77.

13. Cook, *Monacans and Miners*, 108-114. There is another Indian community in Amherst County known as the Buffalo Ridge Cherokees, many of whom share lineal descendants with people in the Bear Mountain community. The contemporary existence of these two (relatively) mutually exclusive indigenous groups is largely attributable to historical factionalism among local Indian families that was aggravated by racial integrity policies. See, e.g., Horace R. Rice, *The Buffalo Ridge Cherokee: The Color and Culture of a Virginia Indian Community* (Madison Heights, Va.: BRC Books, 1991).

14. Lucian Branham, recorded conversation with Samuel R. Cook, Bear Mountain, Virginia, 1 July 1996.

15. Anonymous collaborator recorded conversation with Samuel R. Cook, Bear Mountain, Virginia, 20 June 1996. Some collaborators opted to remain anonymous due to the sensitive nature of some of the information they provided.

16. Gray, 1908: 1. Gray was specifically commenting on the Monacans' opposition to being called "Issues." Derived from the pre-Civil War term, "Free Issue," in reference to slaves who had been *issued* papers for freedom, by the turn of the twentieth century

it evolved into a derogatory term in Amherst County, roughly the equivalent of calling someone a mixed-race degenerate.

17. L. Branham, 1 July 1996.

18. Dovie Ramsey, recorded conversation with authors, Elon, Virginia, 20 May 2001.

19. Kenneth Branham, recorded conversation with authors, Bear Mountain, Virginia, 20 May 2001.

20. Diana Laws, recorded conversation with authors, Elon, Virginia, 19 May 2001.

21. Lloyd "Buddy" Johns, recorded conversation with authors, Elon, Virginia, 19 May 2001.

22. Cook, *Monacans and Miners*, 114-116; Houck, *Indian Island*, 104-108.

23. Cook, *Monacans and Miners*, 116-124. The process through which tribes become state-recognized in Virginia is quite rigorous. While the state legislature is responsible for codifying the act of recognition, the actual decision is in the hands of the Virginia Council on Indians, which examines evidence of a tribe's historical existence and community continuity.

24. The Monacan Pow Wow was officially part of his circuit for the first four years of its existence.

25. Diane Johns Shields, recorded conversation with Samuel R. Cook, Amherst, Virginia, 27 June 1996.

26. Johns Shields, 27 June 1996.

27. K. Branham, 20 May 2001.

28. Laws, 19 May 2001.

29. Johns, 19 May 2001.

30. Ramsey, 20 May 2001.

31. Phyllis Hicks, recorded conversation with Samuel R. Cook, Bear Mountain, Virginia, 20 June 1996.

32. Cook, *Monacans and Miners*, 60-65, 97-103. For a discussion of the endurance of indigenous (ethnic) groups in the context of intense culture change and nation-state development, see Edward H. Spicer, "The Nations of a State," *American Indian Persistence and Resurgence* ed. Karl Kroeber (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994), 27-49.

33. K. Branham, 20 May 2001.

34. Ramsey, 20 May 2001.

35. Lerch and Bullers, "Pow Wows as Identity Markers," 392.

36. Ibid.

37. K. Branham, 20 May 2001.

38. Johns, 19 May 2001.

39. Anthropological data on Tutelo-Saponi ceremonies that were incorporated into the Cayuga ceremonial complex after the latter were adopted into the Iroquois Confederacy have yielded some clues regarding Monacan ceremonial regalia. See, e.g., Frank G. Speck, *The Tutelo Adoption Ceremony: Reclothing the Living in the Name of the Dead* (Harrisburg, Pa.: Pennsylvania Historical Commission, 1942); Gertrude P. Kurath, *Tutelo Rituals on Six Nations Reserve, Ontario* Ann Arbor: The Society for Ethnomusicology, 1981).

40. K. Branham, 20 May 2001.

41. Ramsey, 20 May 2001.

42. Johns, 19 May 2001.

43. Houck, 1984.

44. Johns, 19 May 2001.
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Lumbee Origins: The Weyanoke-Kearsey Connection

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The contemporary Lumbee are considered a North Carolina tribe in terms of their political relationships with the state and the programs administered by the federal government on behalf of Indians, such as housing and economic development. They define home as a small, roughly rectangular area encompassing most of Robeson County as well as parts of Hoke, Scotland, and Richmond Counties. Most of the Lumbee political and cultural interactions are with other tribes in North Carolina, whether it be through the North Carolina Commission of Indian Affairs, United Tribes, or the numerous Pow Wows held throughout the state. Their interaction with tribes in South Carolina and Virginia are limited to visiting each other through the medium of Pow Wows, but rarely extend into the political arena. For all intents and purposes, the Lumbee are at home in North Carolina.

Given their contemporary connection with the state of North Carolina, many scholars have attempted to push this connection back to the colonial era. After all, in the mid to late nineteenth century, they were identified as Croatan, a place name linked with a historic North Carolina tribe. And, when questioned as to their origins, some Lumbee elders spoke of formerly residing on the Roanoke River, or even on Lake Mattamuskeet. References to a settlement of Cheraw on Drowning Creek, at the border of Anson and Bladen Counties, where most of the Lumbee reside, also tends to connect the contemporary Lumbee with the North Carolina-South Carolina border region. There is even a Lumbee family ancestor, Thomas Grooms, linked to the Cheraw lands (Lumbee River Legal Services, 1987). All these things justified attempting to link Lumbee families to historic North Carolina tribes in the colonial era.

Still, in spite of the contemporary geographical location of the Lumbee, the existence of a Cheraw settlement as late as 1771 (*South Carolina Gazette*, 1771), and a long historical presence of core families such as Locklear, Chavis, Revel, Braveboy and others from 1790 forward, there is evidence that points in another direction for the origins of some Lumbee families. Genealogists such as Virginia DeMarce, with the Branch of Acknowledgment and Research for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and Paul Heinegg, a genealogist who focuses on the "free colored" populations traces other early colonial origins. Most of their research suggests Virginia, rather than North Carolina, as the ancestral origin of many contemporary Lumbee families.

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While DeMarce and Heinegg's research is valuable in identifying the early origins of some of these families and their connections to one another, it is problematic as they equate all free persons of color with exclusively African ancestry. Yet, as early as 1705 in the colony of Virginia, "mulatto" included the offspring of Indian women, regardless of the race of the father (Hening, 1809-23). Their research also ignores linguistic, historic, or political connections between family lines and tribes. However, by using their genealogical research as a framework, I maintain it is possible to reconstruct tribal affiliations for many of these families identified as free persons of color. And, while it may surprise many people, English forenames and surnames existed before the eighteenth century for many eastern Native people. For example, Dixon Coursey is described as emperor of the Nanticoke, a tribe of the Eastern Shore of Virginia, Delaware, and New Jersey, in 1680 (Rountree, 1993).

Colonial Virginia and finding the Indians

While it seems that a description of the political milieu would be essential to understanding ethnicity in the colony of Virginia, genealogists overlook most of this. Historians discuss the political and historic happenings; yet do not discuss specific families and individuals involved. To successfully identify the tribal affiliations of specific families and individuals, the ethnohistorian must do both.

The most prominent historian of Virginia Indians, Helen Rountree, does so in describing the surviving Indian communities in Virginia. She also describes a process called "spin off," when Indians left their home communities and were absorbed into either the African-American or European-American communities. This process led to the depopulation of Native groups to the point that they ceased to exist. I would argue that spin off also had another unanticipated consequence. As this case study will show, what may initially be viewed as spin-off of what I would maintain is a Weyanoke individual, was actually the continuation of a cross border movement to friendlier social and political environs. These persons also did not move in an isolated fashion. They are the individual faces of historic movements of tribes. Additionally, they did not move to isolation, but maintained contact with their kinsfolk and allies, and recreated their communities as much as possible in new territory. This process created new Native communities in North Carolina with very ancient roots in Virginia.

Research Methods

To determine the historic Virginia tribe or tribes from which the Lumbee may be descended, I have taken a different approach from that of most genealogists or anthropologists. Rather than looking for tribes indigenous to the area that Lumbees now occupy, I have decided to search the records of North Carolina and Virginia and see where surnames linked to the Lumbee in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and

early twentieth centuries appear. My goal is to see which, if any, have documented ties to specific Virginia Indian communities.

Documents used in this search include the *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, the *Colonial Records of Virginia, Executive Journals of the Council of Colonial Virginia*, the *Virginia Calendar of State Papers*, and some other miscellaneous articles in the *Southside Virginian*. These sources contain original sources such as vestry lists, reservation rolls, copies of court records in which individual Indians where mentioned, deeds of sale, allotments made to individual Indians by the state or county, and letters in which colonists discussed individual Indians. The main secondary sources I have utilized are Rountree's *Pocahontas's People*, *Eastern Shore Indians of Virginia and Maryland*, and *Powhatan Foreign Relations* which provide detailed accounting of tribes in Virginia and the specific references to individual members of those tribes.

My focus has been to look for individual Indians with specific surnames and tribal affiliations rather than following movements of towns, villages, or tribes. As a result, I compiled a list of these Indians, where they were located, and in what fashion they enter the records. I contend it is possible to see where groups smaller than the corporate tribe, such as one or two families, were moving and to determine with which other groups they were interacting. This information supports some of the basic premises of the Lumbee petition for Federal recognition, that tribes moved from Virginia to North Carolina. However, my research will also show that individuals and families migrating south to Robeson County came from much farther east than did the Cheraw, and were much less of an amalgam, but were of closely related peoples. My findings seem to contradict DeMarce's notion that persons who left the region of eastern Virginia were of ambiguous racial and ethnic classification. Several of these families, (Carter, Sampson, Sweat, Collins, Griffin, Bolin, Driggers, Revels, Baker, Pierce, Rogers, Bartlett, Kersey, Hunt, Clark) were members of Virginia tribal communities. Further genealogical research will either confirm or deny this assertion.

Among researchers supporting Virginia origins for Lumbees, is Michelle Lawing (1978) who traces Lumbee families to the border region of North Carolina and Virginia. Robert Thomas has examined Lumbee oral tradition and the continual recounting of Virginia origins (1980). Other researchers have studied the evolution and experience of the Lumbee community after the Revolutionary War, but add little to its understanding before that time (Blu, 1980; Sider, 1993).

My research points to a potential geographical origin of Lumbee surnames that is east of the Cheraw's villages along the Dan River. The Native communities in which these names occur are all non-Cheraw communities and the majority are from the Algonquian language family. This paper will review Lumbee surnames that match those in each tribe. The two lists below identify Lumbee surnames. The first derives from the Lumbee petition and is an abstract of names from the 1790 Federal Census of Robeson County. The census identifies all as free persons of color as no category existed for Indians on the 1790 census. The second list is

an abstract of surnames of persons who identified as Indian in the 1900 Federal Census. Lists referenced from years other than 1790 or 1900 are from reservation censuses and allotment records, and should not be confused with these Robeson County, North Carolina records.

1790 Free Persons of Color for Robeson County

Hammonds	Lockileer	Hunt	Stableton	Ransome
Cumbo	Revil	Brooks	Oxendine	Kersey
Carter	Chavers	Braveboy		

(Lumbee River Legal Services, 1987)

Self-Identified Persons as Indian for Robeson County (1900)

Allen	Caulk	Hardin	McLean	Strickland (Stricklin)
Ammanuel	Carter	Hagan(s)	McAllister	Sealy
Baker	Chavas (Chavis, Chaves, Chavous, Chavus)	Hammon(d)s	McGirt	Simeon
Barnes	Clark	Harris	McLaughlin	Smith
Barton	Coats	Hatcher	McMill(i)an	Spaulding
Bell	Collins	Henderson	McNeil	Stuart
Berry	Conner	Hodge	Mercer	Sweet (Sweat)
Black	Cox	Howard	Mitchell	Tadlock
Blanks	Cumbo	Huggans	Moore	Thomas
Blue	Cummings	Hunt	Morgan	Thompson
Borgden	Davis	Jackson	Owens	Ussury
Bowen	Dees (Deese)	Jacobs	Oxendine	Wariax (Warriax)
Brayboy	Demory	Johnson	Peavy	Watson
Brewington	Dial	Jones	Porter	Weatherly
Brigman	Driggers	Kirby	Ransom	Wilkins
Brooks	Edens	Lamb	Ratley	Williams
Broylen	Edwards	Lambert	Revels	Williamson
Bryant	Evans	Lee	Roberts	Wilson
Bullard	Faulk	Lenon	Rodgers	Winn
Bullock	Field(s)	Locklear	Rowell	Wood(s)
Burnett	Freemen	Lowery	Rozier	Woodell (Woddell, Woddle, Woodle)
Burns	French	Loyd	Sampson	Wright
Byrd	Godwin	Lucas	Sanders	Young
Campbell	Goins	Marnes	Sanderson	
Canady	Graham	Maynor (Manor)	Scott	

(DeMarce, 1992)

Comparing these two lists reveals an obvious expansion in the diversity of surnames of persons who considered themselves to be Indian in 1900 and those enumerated as Free Persons of Color in 1790. I will be comparing both the 1900 list and the 1790 census with Virginia Indians' surnames from the seventeenth to early nineteenth centuries.

The tribes in Virginia with English surnames in this period are as follows: Nottoway, Meherrin, Chickahominy, Pamunkey, Mattaponi, Weyanoke, Wicocomoco, Saponi, Tuscarora, Gingaskin, and Metomkin. Comparing names for these tribes with English names found among the Lumbee from both the 1790 Robeson County census as well as the 1900 census yields the following:

Weyanoke		***Lumbee Match***
Pierce	1710	Pierce (post 1900)

Wicocomoco		***Lumbee Match***
Paptico	1710	none
Vesey	1713	none

Saponi		***Lumbee Match***
Bowling	1742	Bolin (post 1900)
Collins	1742	Collins (1900)
Ervin	1728	none
Griffin	1742	Griffin* (post 1900)
Irvin	1728	none
Irwin (Irvin)	1728	none
Isaac	1742	none
Mack	1728	none
Sauno	1728	none

*(post 1900 cite from Gingrich, 1989)

Pamunkey		***Lumbee match***	
Bolling	1700	Bolin (post 1900)	
Collins	1830	Collins	1900
Rosen	1708	none	
Sampson	1748	Sampson	1900
Tawhaw	1708	none	
West	1677	none	

Nottoway		***Lumbee match***	
Bartlett	1808	Bartley(?)	1900
Edmunds	1808	none	
Green	1710	none	
Rogers	1808	Rogers	1900
Turner	1808	none	

Meherrin		***Lumbee match***	
King	1727	none	
Major	1710	none	
Querro	1712	none	

Gingaskin		***Lumbee match***	
Baker	1816	Baker	1900
Bingham	1831	none	
Carter	1819	Carter	1790, 1900
Collins	1824	Collins	1900
Drigghouse (Driggers)	1831	Driggers	1900
Francis	1823	none	
Jeffrey	1815	none	
Povell	1831	none	
Press	1816	none	
Stevens	1862	none	
West	1813	none	

Chickahominy		***Lumbee match***
Mush	1704	none
Perry	1704	none

Metomkin		***Lumbee match***	
Revell	1688(?)	Revil, Revels	1790, 1900

Tuscarora		***Lumbee match***
Blunt	1713	none
Jumper	1707	none
Mason	1707	none

Seneca		***Lumbee match***
Gils	1713	none

Unknown Tribal Affiliation		***Lumbee match***	
Bif	1711	none	
Brown	1717	none	
Fri	1712	none	
Ridle	1767	none	
Williamson	1727	Williamson	1900
Tucker	1710	none	

There are fourteen distinct surnames with tribal affiliations that match surnames in the Lumbee community in either 1790 or 1900. This seems to be a substantial number, given that there was only one identifiable Cheraw surname matching a name positively linked with a Lumbee family. Proximity between the ancestral territory and village sites of the Cheraw and the contemporary Lumbee

settlements seems to be the rationale behind focusing on the Cheraw, rather than Virginia Algonquins as the founders of the Lumbee community.

However, a similarity in names, many of which are common English names in the Southeast, cannot be taken as proof that these are the same families in different regions and at different times. But, Lawing's study tracks the introduction of these names and the Lumbee families associated with them in the coastal border region of North Carolina and Virginia (Lawing, 1978) and DeMarce identifies these names in Tidewater Virginia (predating their appearance in North Carolina). Together, this evidence gives greater credence to a Virginia origin. My research goes further and links some of these families with specific Indian communities in Virginia. Lastly, Lumbee oral traditions as documented in Dial (1996), Thomas (1980), Lowery (1960), and Barton (1967), all place the Lumbee point of origin north and east of the contemporary Lumbee settlement.

DeMarce asserts that the Lumbee surnames of Goins, Chavis, and Manuel (Emanuel) also originated from Tidewater Virginia (1993). Although my research has not yet tied these families to specific tribes, their origins in the same region of Virginia may indicate that they were part of the same Virginia Algonquin communities from which other Lumbee families originated, or that they in-married with these Indian lines.

Leaving Virginia

If the hypothesis is correct that many Lumbee families originated in Tidewater and south-central Virginia, why did they leave Virginia and their tribal communities? Oral tradition provides several reasons as do certain pivotal historical events. First, Lumbee oral tradition as documented in McMillan (1888) states that Lumbee families left the Tidewater region of North Carolina and Virginia because of their friendship with the white colonists. This alliance caused them to be chased south by other coastal Algonkians, eventually leading them into colonial Anson/Bladen County, North Carolina (Thomas, 1980). Also, some Lumbees interviewed in the late nineteenth century pointed out that by siding with the colonists in the Tuscarora war, they were given the lands of the Tuscarora after their expulsion from North Carolina. Several Lumbees said their grandparents used to reside in cabins near Lake Mattamuskeet, which was part of the Tuscarora and Mattamuskeet Reservations. However, given their historic animosity toward the Tuscarora and their confederates, they chose to move further south (McMillan, 1888).

Weeks, the first historian to study the Lumbee, places their migration into the Lumbee River basin as early as 1650 based on his interviews with the elder members of the community in the nineteenth century. Weeks speculated that the removal of the "Croatan" community was linked with the growth of the Jamestown colony (Weeks, 1891). Lowery (1960), Barton (1967), and other Lumbee proponents of the Lost Colony theory[1] do not think that the Lumbee came from Tidewater Virginia, but do recognize Tidewater North Carolina origins for them.

Events in Virginia that played a role in Native dispersal included a series of wars between the Powhatan confederacy and the English (1610-1646), enslavement of Indians, and a continual loss of legal rights (Rountree, 1993). Native communities were further depopulated through the use of the indentured servant system. As a result of this system, many Native youth left the community, some never to return to Native society (Rountree, 1993).

Many of the tribes, such as the Nottoway, Occaneechi, and Saponi, suffered continual depredations from the Iroquois. They found their lands had been taken over by colonists after they returned from Fort Christiana (a settlement and trading center created by the Virginia colony to keep the peace among the various tribes as well as to Christianize and civilize them through education).

In the aftermath of Bacon's Rebellion (1676) and having been forced out of their traditional territory, many of the Saponi and Tutelo migrated to join their former enemies, the Six Nations. By the 1740s, Saponi using traditional hunting methods of firing the woods were being arrested and tried in Virginia courts for killing the hogs of colonists (Grinnan, 1895). Thus, the Virginia legal system was operating to drive the Saponi and other tribes out of central Virginia. The Saponi, like other tribes of the region, utilized parts of North Carolina for their southern range, and moved south after the dissolution of Fort Christiana.

Following the War of 1812, the termination of the Nottoway and Gingaskin reservations in 1813 and 1824 led to another potential cause for out migration of Natives from Virginia. The Nottoway's overseers petitioned the Virginia assembly to divide their land, asserting that the Nottoways no longer desired to live communally. The Gingaskins were terminated after constant complaints by their neighbors that they were no longer Indian due to continual association with free blacks. These complaints started as early as 1754 in Northampton County and usually correlated with recommendations to force all free non-whites from the county altogether. Also, their white neighbors were quite bothered that the Gingaskin men refused to farm like European men using draft animals and plows, but instead continued to follow the traditional Algonquin hunting, fishing, trapping, and clearing land. The Gingaskin women were responsible for horticultural crops until their reservation's termination (Rountree and Davidson, 1997).

After termination, each Gingaskin family was given an allotment. Most were encouraged to sell their allotments and leave the region, although most did not until the Nat Turner Revolt of 1831. Northampton County went so far as to collect funds to forcibly relocate "free persons of color" from the county. Gingaskins would have fallen into this category (Rountree and Davidson, 1997). These "free persons of color" also were subject to legislation that limited their ability to gather in groups and own firearms if any African ancestry could be proven (Weslager, 1983). Most of the matches for Lumbee surnames come from this group (Collins, Baker, Carter, Drigghouse [Driggers]).

Like the Gingaskins, the Nottoway were affected by Virginian's views of persons of color. However, unlike the Gingaskins, many were still found in the region of

their former reservation until late in the nineteenth century. This is not to say that all Nottoways remained in the area (Rountree and Davidson, 1987). There are two matches found in Nottoway surnames who were on the 1808 Nottoway census and the 1900 federal census of Indians in Robeson County (Bartlett, Rogers). Relatives of the Nottoway, the Weyanokes, were already living in Northeastern North Carolina and could have aided Nottoways leaving their community (VMHB, Vol. 8).

This process of community splintering and disintegration had an effect other than the disappearance of Native communities. It led to the creation of new communities. An example of this was the Pamunkey Reservation and what became a secondary, dependent community at Mattaponi which was formed of displaced Indians from other groups of the old Powhatan confederacy.

I maintain that some of these persons did leave their Native communities, but the only change in their ethnic identity was in the eyes of the new state in which they resided. It is my hypothesis that some Gingaskins, as well as members of the Pamunkey, who drifted to the "New Kent fringe" Indian community left Virginia. They drifted further south and became members of what would become the Lumbee community; passing along their sense of Indian identity and group cohesion. Members of disassociated groups such as the Metomkin of the eastern shore also joined this migration. Many Natives were already living among non-Indians (VMHB, Vol. 3:158), and having entered indentured servitude, lost ties to their home communities. This could have made the move out of Virginia easily.

DeMarce identifies a general migration pattern from Virginia to North Carolina, from the Eastern Shore and Richmond south to coastal North Carolina and eventually the North and South Carolina border region that is now home to the majority of Lumbee families. This path was most commonly used during the early eighteenth century (DeMarce, 1993). It is also my contention that this migration did not stop in the eighteenth century. These Gingaskin, Pamunkey, Metomkin, and detribalized Indian families followed this path, and joined with what was left of the Cheraw community.

Like the Revolutionary War, the Civil War led to displacements of people. Native people were to be no exception to this process. Some Chickahominy and Rappahanock went as far north as Canada to avoid being embroiled in this conflict, where they took refuge with a band of Ojibway (Rountree, 1990). Just as some took refuge with northern Indians, it is possible that during and following the Civil War, families no longer part of their tribal community ventured south to join what would become the Lumbee. It might be safer to be part of a community than to settle as isolated families of color. This was a continuation of "spin-off."

A Case Study

To show the potential for this line of research, I provide additional analysis of one particular family from whom numerous descendants of the contemporary Lumbee descend, and whom also have clearly identifiable Virginia roots. What does not

seem clear from a strict reliance on the genealogical records is the Native identity of this family. The family is the line of Thomas Kearsey. Thomas Kearsey was an indentured servant of Benjamin Harrison's Surry County household in the early eighteenth century, and identified as a mulatto (Heinegg, 2000). He moved to Chowan and Bertie County, North Carolina in 1720 and 1726. He purchased land, had children, and grandchildren. Most were identified as mulatto in various tax and court records. Perhaps his most famous descendant in the Lumbee community was Cellia Kersey, also known as Sally. She was the wife of James Lowrie Sr., from whom the Lumbee Lowries descend. Thousands of contemporary Lumbee are the descendants of this marriage.

Celia became famous as a result of her famous, or infamous, grandson, Henry Berry Lowrie (the son of her son, Allen). In numerous accounts during the Lowrie War, Celia Kersey is described as a "half-breed" Tuscarora (Norment, 1895). Her father was Thomas Kearsey, who lived in Edgecombe County, and was the son of Thomas Kearsey, formerly of Surry County Virginia. Heinegg uses the genealogical information of her father to discount any Native ancestry on the Kearsey line, because her father and grandfather were both identified as mulattos. He attributes whatever Native ancestry she possessed from her mother, who to this day is still unknown. Many other historians have also accepted this interpretation, without looking closely at the identity of the Kearsey paternal line.

A Fresh Look at Thomas Kearsey

As stated earlier, Thomas Kearsey was a mulatto indentured to Benjamin Harrison on his Surry County, Virginia plantation. On the surface, this tells us little about Thomas or his background. Given the ambiguous definition of mulatto in Virginia colonial law and practice, all we really know is that he was not white. However, when we start placing Thomas and his employer in their proper historic context, more clues appear as to his origin. First, we know that Benjamin Harrison was a well-known Indian trader who dealt extensively with Saponis, Nottoways, Meherrins, and Weyanokes. Also, the Weyanokes were reported to have cabins in his orchards on his Surry County plantation until 1667, following a conflict between the Tuscarora and Weyanoke (Binford, 1967).

Additionally, Surry County was the English boundary region of the area reserved for Indians following the last Powhatan-English War. The Weyanokes were known to have a village, Warekeck, in the Blackwater River region as early as 1653, which bordered on Surry County, and later established the village of Musketank in Surry County itself and resided there as late as 1676 (Binford, 1967). Their last village, identified as a Weyanoke town, was abandoned in 1693 on the boundary of the Blackwater, perhaps at the earlier site of Warekeck (Binford, 1967). After this last Weyanoke town in the Blackwater was abandoned, they are thought to have gone to join the Nottoway on their reservation. We do know that in 1710, the daughters of Captain Pierce, a Weyanoke headman, were living in Nottoway terri-

tory (*Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, 1900). The surname "Wynoak" appears in Nottoway records from 1792-1808, giving the impression that they were still somewhat distinct at this late date (Rountree, 1979). Pierce does not appear as a surname, leading to one of two conclusions. This line died out, or relocated.

Another strong connection that predisposed the Weyanoke to relocate to Tuscarora-controlled territory is their pre-contact relationship with the Tuscarora as ambassadors for Powhatan's chiefdom (Rountree, 1993). In fact, the Tuscarora queens (clan mothers) are on several occasions documented as entreating with them to relocate to North Carolina. This begs the question, what did the Tuscaroras have to gain by the relocation of the landless Weyanokes to their homeland? A couple of possibilities seem evident. First, this was an infusion of additional Native people in a region that was coming under increasing pressure from the English (pressure that would eventually result in the Tuscarora Wars). The Tuscaroras, although clearly an Iroquoian people, had other Algonquin speakers as allies, and recruiting others is not surprising. Second, the Weyanoke were Algonquins that had already had extensive dealings with the English, and knew their customs fairly well, particularly as a result of the experience of indentured servitude. They also had connections with English traders in Virginia, who might be more willing to supply the Tuscarora with guns and powder as opposed to the English traders who lived in their area. Perhaps they were viewed as potential go-betweens with the English. In any case, by the mid-eighteenth century, Weyanokes were very much a part of the Tuscarora political structure, as is evidenced by their names on land deeds (Powell, 1758).

Given this historic information on the Weyanoke, Surry County, and the Blackwater region, it becomes apparent that Benjamin Harrison had extensive geographic contacts with Indians, and even had a band of Weyanoke residing on the same plantation where Thomas Kearsey was indentured. The "when" of Thomas Kearsey's indenture also fits with Weyanokes being closely affiliated with Harrison's plantation. Dispossession and their sad political status made it more likely that Weyanoke boys would be indentured to friendly, prosperous, powerful whites. However, this still does not allow us to reach a definitive identification of Thomas Kearsey. The simple presence of Indians on and around the plantation does not mean he was one of them, simply because he was not white. More evidence is needed.

This evidence comes in the form of names and linguistics. After his indenture ends at the Harrison household, Thomas Kersey Sr. relocates to the colony of North Carolina where he purchases land. Here, he is near the former Weyanoke settlements at Ahoutsky and Cotchawesco in Chowan County, on Meherrin Creek (Binford, 1967). It is also assumed that his wife was from this area. One of their daughters is named Mary Poheigan/Poheigon. This unusual name is not an English name. In fact, it bears close resemblance to surnames and place names found among the Mohegan-Pequot dialect of southern New England. Pohegnut, Paugunuck, Pahegansuk, are all names found that are of clear Algonquin affiliation (Hughes,

1976). In these dialects, it refers to an area of cleared land, or a bare hill. While the meaning of Poheigan in the various southeastern dialects spoken in Virginia could have varied from its more northerly meanings, it clearly is an Algonquin-based word. This evidence, while not absolute, does point to one of several possibilities. First, the mother and father of Mary were not Native, but had a strong affinity for Algonquin Native people, and named their daughter accordingly. Second, the mother, father, or mother and father of Mary were of Algonquin extraction. If the first of these possibilities were the true scenario, it would probably be the first documented case of African-descended peoples giving their child an American aboriginal name.

The next generation of marriages between the Kearsey families that may shed light on this naming pattern involves the brother of Mary, Thomas Kearsey Jr. According to numerous recorded documents written in the nineteenth century, his daughter, Celia Kersey, was half-Tuscarora. We already have shown that Thomas Kearsey Sr. was most likely not Tuscarora, thus meaning that his wife must have been. How does this marriage shed information on the probable identity of Thomas Kearsey? During this same time, several land deeds record the selling or leasing of Tuscarora land to neighboring whites. The signatories on many of these deeds bear English names, as well as ones of obvious Algonquin extraction, such as "Netops," which means friend or ally in Narragansett and Pequot-Mohegan (Williams, 1936). These Algonquin-surnamed individuals were obviously considered part of the Tuscarora community. Thus, the marriage between a Weyanoke man, Thomas Kearsey, Jr., and a Tuscarora woman seems less unusual. It also points that Mary Pohaigan was not an anomaly in the Native community during her time, but would be outside this Algonquin/Tuscarora context. Her niece, Celia, is identified as a Tuscarora woman who married James Lowrie Sr. Again, this identification is not surprising. Given the matrilineal nature of the Tuscarora and the landless status of the Weyanokes, it should be no surprise that the identity of Celia Kearsey is in terms of her mother rather than her father's tribal ancestry. Still, it is unfair to neglect the male Kearsey tribal affiliation.

Thomas Kersey, Jr.'s land seems to have been directly across the river from King Blount's town, one of the Tuscarora settlements on the Bertie County reservation (Seib, 1983). His wife could easily have visited her relatives across from her home. Additionally, he petitioned for a pension from the colony of North Carolina as a result of his service in the French and Indian War. He served as a scalp hunter with Captain Hugh Waddell's North Carolina regiment (Lawing, 1977). We know that there were both Tuscarora and Nottoway auxiliaries in this conflict with North Carolina and Virginia regiments. Given his occupation as a scalp hunter, we can infer that he was most likely affiliated with one or both of these Native auxiliary units. He received a pension as a result of a serious musket injury. His wife, according to oral tradition, was linked to the Tuscarora, and they resided near the Tuscarora reservation at King Blount's Town. Lastly, his sister carried an Algonquin surname, Poheigan. Little clarity comes from these facts, other than he was a non-white

person with possible linkages to two Native communities, both through marriage and birth. This does not preclude African ancestry, but points to a cultural affinity that is linked with Native peoples in Virginia and North Carolina.

Drowning Creek, North Carolina

Thomas Kersey, Jr., is documented as being in Edgecomb County between 1733 to 1761. His first land grant in Bladen County was issued in 1764 on Jacob Swamp, east of Drowning Creek. He first settled in the Peters Bay (Wisharts) Community in 1772 and 1775. This community consisted entirely of Kersey, Cumbo, and and Freeman families (Seib, 1983). Given the continuing land pressure on the Tuscarora reservation, it is not surprising that he and his family would look to relocate to a less populated area.

In the early eighteenth century, the region of Drowning Creek/Lumbee River was considered a frontier, or Indian country. Waccamaw and Cheraw villages are shown on the banks of the river. The Cheraw, while maintaining two parcels of land on which to hunt, were diminished in both numbers and territory (Lumbee River Legal Services, 1987). The Cheraw had also carried on chronic warfare with the colony of South Carolina during the eighteenth century and had made frequent trips to Richmond to purchase powder and guns to use in this conflict. This provided a context for interaction with the coastal tribes of Virginia. The Metomkin, Gingaskin, Pamunkey, and others had compelling reasons for settling in this region including its geographic isolation, the presence of a Cheraw Indian community, and the possibility of kin relationships with earlier settlers (Revels, Carter). It is my contention that Thomas Kersey, Jr., and his siblings were individual Weyanokes participating in this southward movement.

Weyanokes and Siouans

While it may seem to be of only passing interest that William Chavis may have left the Weyanoke community and connected with a Saponi community, this single incident deserves a second look when linguistic analysis points to this connection occurring at other places and other times. For example, some scholars point to the village named Wianee in the Catawba-Wateree Valley. This village shows up in the early-to-mid-eighteenth century in the Catawba Nation (Rudes, 2004) and its name points to the possible presence of Weyanokes much further south and west of where the Kersey family would ultimately reside. Other linguistic traces found among the contemporary Lumbee may be the name "Lumbee" itself. According to Rudes (2004), what is now Lumbee may have started as Arambe, a village name identified by the Spanish in 1520-1522. The Catawban version of this word would be Yambee or Yamba. In Woccon, a Catawban dialect spoken near the Neuse River, it would show up as Ranbee, and potentially the source of the modern term "Lumbee". Ranbee/Yanbee translates as "river bank" (Rudes, 2004). Lumbees interviewed in

the early twentieth century identified this as the original name of the river, and a fitting one given its Siouan interpretation (Knick, 1992).

Additionally, some of the descendants of the Kersey/Poheigan families have phrases of Siouan passed down as part of an oral tradition. Reverend Dawley Maynor, interviewed by Robert Thomas in 1976, relayed to Thomas that his grandmother had taught him the phrase "epta tewa newasin" and that she told him that it meant "I love you Jesus." Thomas believed this to be a Saponi phrase, which for him made sense, given that many ancestors of the contemporary Lumbee lived for a time in central North Carolina. However, more recent linguistic analysis look more Catawban in nature. "The second and third words look like the Catawba words for I (tewa) pray (newasin) and the first word appears to be the New Testament Greek word Hepta "seven," which is used in the New Testament as a reference to the Holy Spirit, but also occasionally to Jesus. The prayer could have been brought to the Lumbee by missionaries from the Methodist church established in Fayetteville in the late 1700s.[2]

This personal story and oral tradition suggests Siouan roots, when the same individual's genealogy may tie him to ancestors with Algonquian connections. This is indicative of the type of complexity that is at the root of the formation of the contemporary Lumbee community. It also reveals the type of information that may be found given careful analysis and sifting of data.

Conclusions

Some Lumbee family lines have documented origins beyond the current homeland of the Lumbee. Many of these family names have been shown to originate from Tidewater North Carolina and Virginia (Lawing, 1978; DeMarce, 1993). Also, the Lumbee community may not have resulted from one migration from Virginia. Instead, this process of "spin-off" described by Rountree could have added Native families from Virginia Native communities to the Lumbee community until the late nineteenth century. The appearance of new names of self-identified Indians speaks to community expansion; it is my contention that some of this expansion resulted from the introduction of new Indian families.

If only one source of information is used, such as census records, it is easy to conclude that none of the families examined in this paper were part of the racial and political category known as Indian. All show up as "mulatto," "free persons of color," "black," or "white" in various federal and state census records. Only after reviewing records that enumerate or list Indians for specific purposes (such as land allotments, land sales, or reservation rolls) it becomes apparent that many of these family names associated with the Lumbee community could have had tribal origins beyond the borders of North Carolina. When researching the family roots of Native communities, it is not sufficient to examine only the immediate area in which the contemporary Native community resides. Doing so will result in incomplete research and leave sources unexplored that provide the necessary

information to link them with specific tribes. In addition to going beyond the local area, the researcher must look for those Indian specific sources to begin to understand the links between Indian families before and after termination or loss of political status.

With the southerly migration of these family names, ethnic identification appears to have been replaced by a "racial" one. Instead of being identified as Nottoway, Saponi, Pamunkey, or Gingaskin, they were identified as white, black or as free persons of color depending on time and location. This lack of consistency could have many explanations. First, the racial composition of this group could be shifting with each passing generation. The Virginians maintained that the Gingaskins were at least as much African as they were Indian by the early nineteenth century. In the minds of the Virginians, this racial mixture meant they were no longer Indian, although they still maintained a community, political organization, and practiced a subsistence pattern that, to the chagrin of the Virginians, still reflected their Algonkian cultural roots (Rountree, 1990).

Another potential explanation for the evolving racial designations is the changed political geography. In Virginia, these families were members of distinct political communities that had separate political rights to certain territories that varied from that of whites and blacks, at least until their reservations were terminated. Others left their reservations behind to cast in their lot with other Native people and as they crossed the line into North Carolina, they lost their peculiar political status and associated entitlements. Rather than being part of a separate political community, they became part of the free colored population. North Carolina had no particular reason to care what their ethnic identification was, as long as they did not pose a threat to safety of the state. In other words, there was no ethnic affinity recorded in the North Carolina records because it was irrelevant to those records. A clear example of this occurred in the state of Delaware, where a man named Levi Sockum was listed as Indian during the reservation period, and later as a free black after the termination of the reservation (Rountree, 1997).

Areas for Further Research

This paper is just the preliminary groundwork for a much larger undertaking. Several obvious flaws exist with the conclusions of this paper. First, without significant genealogical research, there is no definitive connection between the Virginia Indian families and contemporary Lumbee families that carry those same names. However, given the definitive links done by Lawing that take many of the Lumbee families to the border region of North Carolina and Virginia, it would be unfortunate if this trail were not followed further.

Notes

1. The Lost Colony theory is a belief that the current day Lumbee are the descendants of the Hatteras and survivors of Sir Walter Raleigh's Roanoke colony on the Outer Banks of North Carolina. The colony, composed of over two hundred adult men and women, vanished. Only the word "Croatan" was found carved in a tree at the site of their settlement. There is much debate as to the ultimate fate of these colonists.

2. The Methodists never missionized the Catawbas, who instead were missionized first by Baptists and later in the nineteenth century by Mormons (Rudes, 2004).

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Sounds of Survival: Language Loss, Retention, and Restructuring Among American Indian Peoples in the Southeast

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Among the approximately 200 surviving indigenous languages in North America, only a few are still extant in the Southeast. Such severe language attrition is a historical culmination of socio-political upheaval on both macro (i.e., federal) and micro (i.e., state and local) levels, forcing Native peoples into a complex struggle for their right of language (and cultural) identity. This paper investigates indigenous language loss in the Southeastern United States, involving the Eastern Cherokee, Occaneechi, Chickahominy, Haliwa-Saponi, Nansemond, Pamunkey, Catawba, the Monacan tribes, and particularly considers the Lumbee. As will be evident, the resiliency of Native peoples is symbolically manifested in cases like the Lumbee, where ancestral languages have been lost or simply forgotten. Language is adaptive and can be restructured as identity is negotiated over time and social space. In the face of language loss and encroachment, the survival of American Indian culture through language is a testament to the adaptability, and creativity of the Native peoples of the Southeast.

Language Encroachment and Attrition

Language death is a symbolic loss of power, cultural practices of traditional ancestral living, and overt identity as a people. Extant ancestral American Indian languages in North America are very few compared to the thousands that pre-existed before European encroachment and "historical" classification. Many American Indian communities in the United States have struggled to retain or regain their language traditions in the hopes of re-establishing the cultural ties that bind them together. Funding the rebuilding of languages by educating new generations of speakers (the construction of "language nests") has been the subject of congressional hearings as recently as 2003 (Native American Languages Act, S.575).

The majority of language revivals are among groups that have retained vestiges of their ancestral language, whose identification as American Indian is indisputable, and whose cultural practices are unquestioned by outside government(s). Such is not the case with a number of American Indian groups in the Southeastern United States. Most ancestral languages in the Southeast have been completely lost or are moribund. Amalgamation of peoples (and languages) due to warfare, sickness or

governmental intervention and banishment, etc., can explain such disassociation between ancestral people and their cultural communication.

Languages of the Southeast, Then and Now

Siouan, Algonquian (a subset of Algic), and Iroquoian language families coexisted in the Southeast prior to substantial European contact and invasion. Languages like Saponi, Cherokee, Occaneechi, Tuscarora, Nottoway, Tutelo, and Virginia and North Carolina Algonquian thrived at this point in prehistory and were spoken by a variety of peoples. Table 1 lists the classification of American Indian languages prior to European contact.

Such classifications of American Indian languages are quite controversial, given that little written record exists. Historical linguists face a paucity of linguistic evidence to confirm or deny their hypotheses, not only about what languages thrived in this region for thousands of years of prehistory, but also about how the languages and their speakers might have been related and how their relationships changed over time. Linguists have had to hypothesize about language origin and spread through contact, utilizing various statistical techniques while at the same time comparing their hypothetical data to independently collected anthropological and archaeological evidence. Even given these challenges, however, many scholars of American Indian languages believe that Siouan languages in the Southeast belong to a sub-group of the Siouan-Catawban language family; that southeastern Iroquoian languages belong to a sub-group of the Iroquoian family; and that the southeastern Algonquian family belongs to a sub-group of the Algic language group (Goddard 1996).

The Siouan Language Family

Across the Southeast, the Siouan language family dominated the linguistic geography of Virginia and North Carolina and constituted the majority of languages spoken in these areas. The application of complex linguistic dating processes such as the lexicostatistical methods to the existent language data suggests that Siouan-Catawban languages moved into the Carolinas out of the Ohio region several thousand years ago(Goddard 1996). The primary Siouan language spoken in North Carolina was Catawba, part of the Catawban branch of the Siouan-Catawban family, but Woccon, Tutelo, and Ocaneechee were other Siouan-Catawban languages documented in North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia.

Catawba and Woccon were structured more similarly to each other than to either Tutulo or Ocaneechee, which were widely used languages in southern Virginia and northern North Carolina. This affinity between Catawba and Woccon supports the hypothesis that they were in use early in North Carolina prehistory. While they may have been widespread, Siouan-Catawban languages are not currently spoken where they had flourished prior to European contact; collected word

Table 1:
Historic Period Language Families of the Southeast

ALGIC*	IROQUOIAN	SIOUAN-CATAWBAN
EASTERN ALGONQUIAN	NORTHERN	SIOUAN
Micmac	IROQUOIAN	MISSIOURI RIVER
ABENAKIAN	Tuscarora	Hidatsa
Maliseet-Passamaquoddy	Nottoway	Crow
Eastern Abenaki	Huron (Huron and	Mandan
(Penobscot, Caniba,	Wyandot)	MISSISSIPPI VALLEY
Arosaguntacook, and	Laurentian (Saint	DAKOTAN
Pigwacket)	Lawrence Iroquoian)	Sioux (Santee-Sisseton,
Western Abenaki	Seneca	Yankton Yantonai, and Teton
Echemin	Cayuga	[Lakhota])
SOUTHERN NEW	Onondaga	Assiniboine
ENGLAND	Susquehannock	Stoney
Massacgesett-	Mohawk	DHEGIHA
Narragansett	Oneida	Omaha-Ponca
Loup	Cherokee (Southern	Osage
Mohegan-Pequot	Iroquoian)	Kansa
(Mohegan, Pequot,		Quapaw
Niantic, and Montauk		CHIWERE-WINNEBAGO
Quiripi-Unquachog		Chiwere (Otoe, Missouri, and
DELAWARAN		Iowa)
Mahican (Stockbridge		Winnebago
and Moravian)		OHIO VALLEY
Munsee Delaware		(SOUTHEASTERN)
(Munsee and Wappinger)		Ofo
Unami Delaware		Bioloxi
(Northern Unami,		Tutelo (Tutelo, Saponi,
Souterhn Unami, and		Occaneechi)
Unalachtigo)		CATAWBAN
Natinticoke-Conoy		Catawba
(Naticoke- Piscataway)		Woccon
Virginia Algonquian		
Carolina Algonquian		

*The Algic language family includes Eastern Algonquian, Algonquian, Ojibwayan and Sauk-Fox-Kickapoo to name a few. For a full list of Algic languages, consult Goddard (1996).

lists and grammatical and phonological sketches from these languages are the only records of their existence (Gatschet 1900a; Siebert 1945; Swanton 1936).

Algonquian Languages

Carolina Algonquian, Virginia Algonquian and Pamlico, thrived on the outer Coastal Plains of the east, stretching northward into Virginia. Estimates suggest that Eastern Algonquian speakers migrated into the Southeast from the North (cf.

Fiedel 1991; Luckenbach, Clark, and Levy 1987) and subsisted there for about 1000 years prior to sustained European contact (Wetmore 1975).

While any extensive records of the grammatical and phonological systems of these languages have been lost; word lists of Carolina Algonquian collected by Thomas Harriot in the late sixteenth century (including names of places, animals, and persons) have survived. The only other surviving and reliable documentation of Carolina Algonquian was made in the early 1700s by John Lawson, the general surveyor in North Carolina who collected a word list of Pamlico (Goddard 1996). Like the Siouan-Catawban languages, the Eastern Algonquian subset is classified as extinct.

Iroquoian Languages

Iroquoian languages have fared better than most other language families in the Southeast. Regional Iroquoian languages included Tuscarora, Nottoway, Meherrin, and Cherokee. The first three were spoken in the eastern part of North Carolina and into the Piedmont and the Inner Coastal Plain areas of Virginia. Cherokee was spoken in the Appalachian Mountains of North Carolina. Although the Cherokee and Tuscarora languages were relatively close in geographic proximity (less than 500 miles), they are only very distant relatives linguistically. Cherokee is the sole member of the southern Iroquoian language branch while the other three are more closely related to the northern Iroquoian branch, which includes such languages as Mohawk and Oneida. Such a situation indicates that the Iroquoian language family probably originated in the Southeast, following the gravity principle set forth by Goddard (1996) in which the greatest linguistic division is indicative of the focal point of origin. This is not to say, however, that the Iroquoian language family came into North Carolina before the Siouan speech group, which probably originated in Ohio and traveled south into the North Carolina region. Linguistic and archaeological evidence, in fact, suggest that Siouan was well established in the Carolinas long before Iroquoian emerged.

Both the Cherokee and Tuscarora languages are still viable in some form. Tuscarora is used by the Tuscarora tribe in the northeast United States, an apparent descendent of the North Carolina Tuscaroran group which moved northward in the late eighteenth century. Cherokee, on the other hand, is currently still spoken in the Appalachian region, the tribe's historical homeland, and in Oklahoma where the majority of the Cherokee Nation was forced to move in the early nineteenth century during the infamous Trail of Tears.

Inter-Tribal Contact

The indigenous languages of the Southeast were hardly spoken in complete isolation of each other. Although archaeological and anthropological evidence supports prehistoric tribal distinctiveness, contact between American Indian language groups

existed in a variety of forms, including primarily trade, warfare, and general cultural practices that brought about interaction and idea exchange. Language adaptation as a result of this contact would have perhaps been greatest among the groups at the borders of linguistic boundaries or for those groups located along established trade routes. Indeed, American Indian multilingualism and a type of lingua franca among associating groups was quite common in areas of contact in the Southeast before European encounters (Silverstein 1996). However, the type and extent of language accommodation in these contact areas would have been crucially dependent upon power relations between the groups as well as upon group attitudes about language purity.

The addition of European languages to the already dynamic southeast language network accompanied a shift in power relations unparalleled in inter-tribal relations. As history well documents, European attitudes about the American Indian populations in the Southeast ranged from pity to fascination to fear, but rarely did the attitudes include a genuine inclination towards equality. Asymmetrical power relations, then, most likely fueled the formation of new pidgins in the Southeastern coastal regions consisting of superstrate European (mostly English) and substrate American Indian language varieties. Further speculation suggests that some of these pidgins became creolized, serving as "neo-indigenous" languages for their speakers (Silverstein 1996). However, for most American Indian languages, association with European language varieties, especially English, meant ultimate eradication of the ancestral language. In many instances, English subsumed these varieties very quickly--within several generations. For other American Indian languages, though, language shift was more gradual, lasting a number of generations before complete linguistic accommodation to the new European inhabitants.

Today, only a handful of languages still exist in the Southeast in their ancestral form; Cherokee, as mentioned earlier, is one of them. That is not to say, however, that American Indians exclusively use mainstream varieties of English in their day-to-day communication. Rather, many groups, due to their insularity and cohesiveness as a people have created a unique and distinctive language variety of English that symbolically expresses their culture as American Indians. One such exemplary group is the Lumbee Indians of North Carolina.

Language Evolution and Cultural Survival[1]

The tension between identity and linguistic subordination is clearly evident in the case of the Lumbee Indians of Robeson County, North Carolina. The Lumbee constitute the largest American Indian group east of the Mississippi River, yet they have continually fought to maintain their cultural identity in the face of sociopolitical opposition for close to a century and a half. The Lumbee have been caught in a Catch 22 situation. Firstly, they were stripped of their ancestral language centuries ago when they were faced with cultural assimilation or annihilation by European invaders. Secondly, the Lumbee are now denied their rightful place among feder-

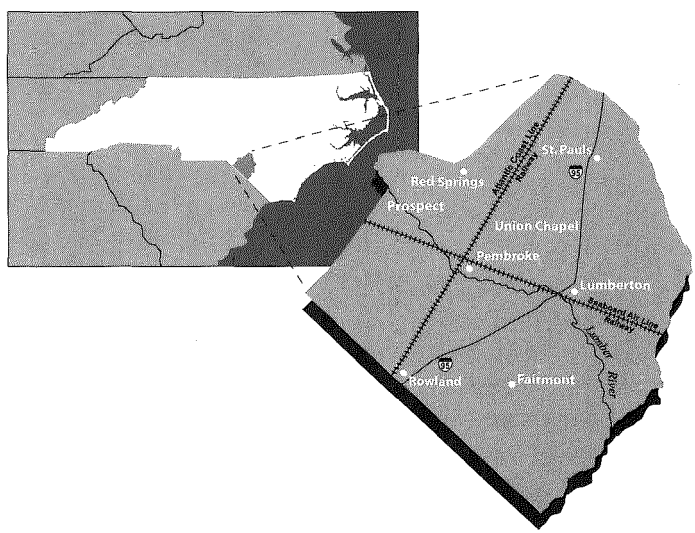
ally-recognized American Indian tribes because they have been unable as of yet to trace their history back to one specific ancestral tribe or language. To prove their Indian identity today, the Lumbee must provide evidence of the linguistic and cultural heritage that they previously had to suppress to survive.

Relatively early in their contact with Europeans, the Lumbee lost their ancestral language(s) to the linguistic hegemony of European invaders. They responded to their language loss by carving out a unique dialect niche as they maintained and reconfigured their identity in relation to other groups. The story of Lumbee language identity is not simply a matter of speculation about ancestral American Indian languages, but is about the flexibility and resiliency of a cultural group in shaping a dynamic identity through available language resources.

The Lumbee Today

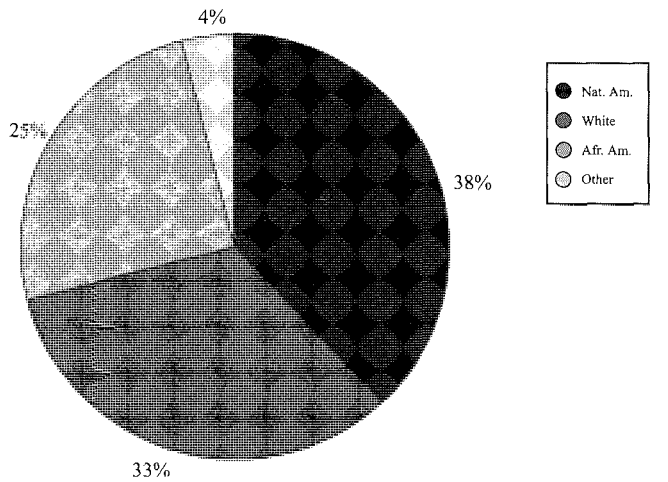
Robeson County, North Carolina is located in southeastern North Carolina along Interstate 95 near the South Carolina border and is home to close to 47,000 Lumbee Indians.

Figure 1.
Robeson County, North Carolina



In addition to the Lumbee, Robeson County, North Carolina is home to large populations of European Americans and African Americans, and a small but growing population of Hispanics. The proportion of the three major ethnic groups in Robeson County is illustrated in the population pie chart in Figure 2. ("Other" accounts for 4% of the population.)

Figure 2.
Population Distribution in Robeson County, NC (2000 census)



The Lumbee constitute the largest ethnic group in the County, and estimates of the Lumbee population during the 1990s indicate that this status will not likely change, as their population appears to be increasing proportionally to the other groups. In this regard, they are quite different from other groups of southeastern American Indians who typically account for a very small percentage of the population. For example, in Graham County, the home of the Snowbird Eastern Cherokees in Western North Carolina, American Indians represent less than 6.8 percent of the population (U.S. Bureau of the Census 2001, 39). Likewise, the Catawba Indians, located in Rock Hill, South Carolina, maintain very small numbers; there are approximately 2,600 members on their tribal register.

Census data and ethnographic study evidence indicates that the three ethnic groups in Robeson County remain divided. In fact, de facto segregation continues to be mirrored in many facets of Robeson County community life. For example, while the school system has been integrated since the early 1970s, several community-based schools are comprised almost exclusively of one ethnicity, and several towns in Robeson County are largely monoethnic. The town of Pembroke, for example, is 81.7 percent Lumbee, and the settlement of Prospect is over 96.2 percent American Indian (U.S. Bureau of the Census 2001). Some elementary schools are comprised of more than 90 percent Lumbee. However, even in the schools that reflect the county's ethnic diversity, status still relates to ethnicity. For instance, one interviewee reported (Miller 1996) that in his integrated high school, three homecoming queens and three school presidents were elected—one for African Americans, one for European Americans and one for Lumbee.

Currently, the power and economic structures in Robeson County appear to be in flux. European Americans have held a majority of the political offices in the county historically, but the office of County Sheriff now belongs to a Lumbee Indian (a Robeson County first, long thought to be impossible). Economically, the county is shifting from agricultural to factory-based employment. Small tobacco farms--once the staple of Robeson County subsistence--can no longer compete with larger agricultural conglomerates. Thus, many Lumbees who were independent farm owners now must seek employment in the factories within the county or look outside the county for work; still others choose to further their education, which often results in their departure from Robeson County.

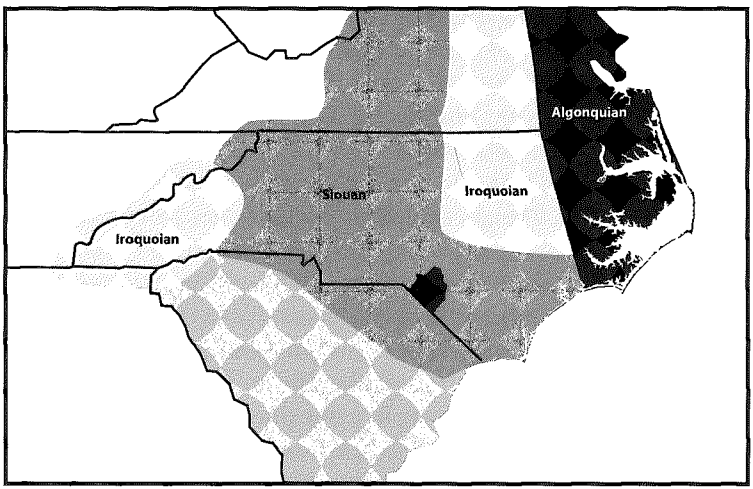
The three ethnic groups think of themselves as separate, and most residents live their lives accordingly. Ethnic boundaries seem relatively fixed, but are not impenetrable, as evidenced by recent changes in political representation. Ethnic boundaries in Robeson County are often situated constructs that change in relation to time, place, and social setting.

The Lumbee Language

The Lumbee Indians are state recognized and entitled, but have yet to be granted full federal recognition as an American Indian group. Their status is, in part, due to their socio-cultural and political situation, which was similar to most American Indian peoples of the Southeast. In fact, it is virtually impossible to trace the roots of Lumbee language definitively to one particular ancestral American Indian language source. The prehistorical migration that characterized American Indian groups in the area, the oppressive nature of European contact in the Southeast United States that resulted in the loss of American Indian languages, and the changing status of different American Indian groups in the region make it difficult to identify a unitary language lineage for the Lumbee. Problems in documenting the precise ancestral language history of the Lumbee are compounded by the apparent time depth of their ancestral language loss. There is little obvious evidence of language transfer from an ancestral American Indian language in Lumbee English today as a clue to the lost ancestral language.

There is dispute over the point of origin for the Lumbee: whether they were a coastal people who migrated inland or whether Robeson County is their ancestral home. Given the location of Robeson County within the context of the language families in North Carolina, however, it is quite likely that the Lumbee would have at least been exposed to if not familiar with Siouan languages, regardless of their point of origin.

Figure 3.
American Indian Language Families in North Carolina, in Reference to Robeson County



As figure 3 illustrates, the Robeson County area was located on the boundary between the Siouan and Iroquoian language groups. Moreover, this area is also not far removed from the coast, thus adding possible exposure to Algonquian languages to the mix of possible ancestral language influence. Whether or not the Lumbee migrated inland from the coastal region, contact with Algonquian languages is likely due to their current location and the navigational routes afforded by the Lumber River and Cape Fear River. In fact, the ancestors of the Lumbee might well have been familiar with varieties from all three language families, given the transitional language zone evident around the Robeson County area. It is thus not unreasonable to speculate that the current-day Lumbee people emerged as a group exposed to a multilingual ancestral language situation. This speculation could be drawn for any group co-existing in such transitional language zones.

As European infiltration began, clear power relationships began to be drawn between European contact varieties, such as English, Scots-Gaelic, and Scots-Irish and the indigenous language varieties in the Robeson County area. In most cases, indigenous varieties gave way to varieties of English. The rapid decline of American Indian languages in the United States is well attested (Hinton 1994); a language can be lost within three generations--without a trace if it is not documented. Within the last century more than 25 American Indian languages—not dialects but separate languages—have been lost in California alone. The loss of an ancestral language by the Lumbee is consistent with the widespread loss of American Indian language throughout North America. What may be different in this case is the time period of the language loss, which seems to have taken place somewhat earlier than the loss of ancestral language for some other American Indian communities, and the

ambiguity involved in tracing the ancestral language. Given an earlier period of language loss, vestiges of source language transfer from the ancestral language to English also would be reduced accordingly. We assume that there was a period in which both English and the indigenous language were known and a period in which the transfer of structural features from the American Indian language was still evident in the English of Lumbees, but we cannot say exactly when these periods might have been. However, a fieldworker's 1934 account of interviewing an American Indian born in Pembroke in the 1860s for the *Linguistic Atlas of the Middle and South Atlantic States* is noteworthy. The fieldworker aborted the interview because of the Pembroke man's slow responses, noting that the subject "preserves traces of the foreign speech." (Kretzschmar, McDavid, Lerud, and Johnson 1994:359). This is also consistent with some reports by older community members who have spoken of grandparents still using expressions from American Indian languages. Clearly, vestiges of an American Indian language may have been evident in the previous century. There may even have been a prolonged period of bilingualism for some Lumbees through the 1800s. Furthermore, if the Lumbee were a conglomerate community living in a transitional American Indian language zone, then some of their ancestral language would have indeed been recorded in the previously noted documentation of Iroquoian, Siouan, and even Algonquian languages in the area.

The Changing Dynamics of Interethnic Relationships

True to the history of American Indian peoples of the Southeast and also in general in the United States, the relationships between the Lumbee and the other groups in Robeson County has evolved from one of persecution to one of isolation and finally to one of tentative association. Prior to the nineteenth century, there were reports of egalitarianism between the Lumbee and the Scots-Irish and Highland Scots. However, if this was indeed true, the nature of this relationship changed rapidly, particularly after the passage of the Revised North Carolina State Constitution of 1835 which mandated that people of color did not have the rights and privileges afforded those who were white. Rights and privileges that the Lumbee might have appropriated prior to the nineteenth century were therefore stripped away by government fiat.

Moreover, this legislation suggested that the Lumbee had no discrete ethnic identity as American Indians—at least in the eyes of government. The Lumbee were classified with other people of color, blacks in particular. Since privilege now came though affiliation with the dominant white group—by whom the Lumbee were now legally disenfranchised—their legal classification with people of color would serve to motivate their disassociation from African Americans, the primary target of the legislation.

The indeterminate ethnic status, cultural isolation, and discrimination that the Lumbee endured as a result of external classification are important background for

understanding the development of Lumbee English. The sociopolitical and cultural context not only exacerbated Lumbee incentive to carve out their distinctive place within the Robeson County community, but also served to fuel a strong sense of Lumbee solidarity in the face of external threats to their peoplehood.

From the 1800s until today, the Lumbee have worked proactively to construct and reconstruct their heritage as American Indians in the face of regular acts that challenge their sense of peoplehood. The Lumbee not only were the first American Indian group in North Carolina to petition the state government and win formal recognition and entitlements in the late 1800s, but were also the first to petition for and receive funds from the state government to create an Indian Normal school whose purpose was to train American Indians how to teach American Indian children. Moreover, the Lumbee have regularly petitioned the federal government for official recognition and entitlements for their American Indian status since the mid-1950s. Lumbee also hold annual powwows and revitalize American Indian arts and crafts in the proactive maintenance and reconstruction of Lumbee identity. These events and activities are all emblematic of group membership that serves to celebrate American Indian identity. Meshed into a society that seems focused on a white/non-white dichotomy, the Lumbee have thus been able to negotiate a cultural identity that is neither white nor black in the context of Robeson County and beyond.

A Profile of Lumbee English

Languages do not exist independently of the people who speak them. Indeed, language uses are epiphenomena of class, gender, ethnicity, and certainly power differences. Dialects, too, symbolically reflect these same facets of culture, so that in many respects, dialects are not much removed, in effect, from discrete languages. The sharp distinction between language and dialects is thus not supported by linguists who would argue that dialects and languages exist on a continuum. In fact, a resolution of the Linguistic Society of America (1997) notes that "the distinction between 'languages' and 'dialects' is usually made more on social and political grounds than on purely linguistic ones." The resolution further notes that the important thing about language variation is not whether different varieties "are called a 'language' or a 'dialect' but rather that [their] systematicity be recognized." Thus, although the Lumbee have lost all traces of their ancestral language or languages, they have nevertheless carved out a distinctive systematic dialect of English that reflects their peoplehood as an American Indian people.

What I refer to as Lumbee English has few features not documented in other varieties of English; its distinctiveness lies not in its exclusive dialect features but in the unique combination of structures that sets it apart from other dialects of English.

In the following tables, I provide a profile of Lumbee English in terms of variations in vocabulary, phonology, and grammar. Each Lumbee feature is

compared with Robeson County African-American Vernacular English and European-American Vernacular English. Lumbee English is also compared with two other historically isolated varieties in the region: the highland dialect spoken in the Appalachian mountain range to the west of Robeson County (Wolfram and Christian 1976) and the coastal dialect of North Carolina, particularly from the Outer Banks of North Carolina to the east of Robeson County (Wolfram and Schilling-Estes 1997; Wolfram, Hazen, and Schilling-Estes 1998). The examination of Lumbee English in this broader framework lends insight into its historical and contemporary dialect affinities.

Table 2 is adapted from a more extensive dialect vocabulary detailed in Locklear, Wolfram, Schilling-Estes, and Dannenberg (1999) and it is intended simply to demonstrate how lexical items may unify or separate groups of speakers. In this and in the following tables, a check ✓means that this item is found in this particular variety; in a few cases, parentheses around the (✓) indicate that the item is found but to a very limited extent. In some cases, different dialects may share an item but the level of usage is much more prominent in one dialect than another.

Table 2.
A Comparative, Selective Lexical Profile of Lumbee Vernacular English

LEXICAL ITEM	Lumbee	RC Af. Am.	RC Euro. Am.	App.	Outer Banks
Lum 'Lumbee person'	✓				
on the swamp 'in the neighborhood'	✓				
Juvember 'sling shot"	✓				
ellick 'coffee'	✓				
sorry in the world 'badly'	✓				
chawed 'embarrassed'	✓			✓	
kernal 'bump'	✓			✓	
jubious 'strange'	✓			✓	
gaum 'mess'	✓			✓	
toten 'sign of spirit or ghost'	✓			✓	✓
mommuck 'mess'	✓			✓	✓
kelvinator 'refrigerator'	✓	✓	✓		
cooter 'turtle'	✓	✓			
tote 'carry'	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
swanny 'swear'	✓	✓	✓	✓	
carry 'accompany, escort'	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
young 'uns 'children'	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
mash 'push'	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Of note is the fact that the Lumbee maintain a unique set of vocabulary items that are not shared with other local and regional contact varieties of English. Some of these are local innovations which obviously have a community-based origin, such as *on the swamp,* a metaphorical extension of the swampy terrain found in the area to refer to a neighborhood, and *Lum*, referring to a Lumbee person. Other unique expressions, such as *sorry in the world* for 'doing badly' or 'not feeling well', *juvember* for 'slingshot' or *ellick for 'coffee' indicate more subtly the autonomy of the Lumbee community in relation to other communities.*

Terms like mommuck, *toten*, and *gaum*, which can be traced back centuries in the English language, however, have been retained in Lumbee Vernacular English just as they have in other historically peripheral dialect areas to the east and west of Robeson County. At the same time, some meaning shift has taken place in the respective regions. Thus, *mommuck*, which is documented in the writings of Shakespeare, had an original, literal meaning of 'tear to shreds' during the 1600s. On the Outer Banks, this meaning has been extended figuratively to mean 'harass physically or mentally,' while among the Lumbee and Appalachians to the west its meaning has been extended to mean 'make a mess,' as in *You sure mommucked the house.*

The term *token*, which can be traced back a millennium in the English language, is another relic form that has undergone a meaning shift in different regions. In Lumbee English, where it is usually pronounced as *toten*, it refers to a spirit or ghost, while it means a sign or presage of death on the Outer Banks of North Carolina, again suggesting relic status.

The phonological comparison in Table 3 of Lumbee English again shows the overlapping but distinctive arrangement of Lumbee English pronunciation features in relation to other varieties of English.

Table 3.
A Comparative Profile of Lumbee Vernacular English Pronunciation

PRONUNCIATION STRUCTURE	Lumbee	RC Af. Am.	RC Euro. Am.	App.	Outer Banks
[ay] raising, backing e.g. [tʌˈd] 'tide'	✓				✓
[h] retention in 'it', 'ain't' e.g. [hIt] 'it'	✓		(✓)	✓	✓
[æ] lowering prec. R e.g. [ðar] 'there'	✓		(✓)	✓	✓
intrusive [t] e.g. [wʌnst] 'oncet'	✓			✓	✓
[Iz] following s+stop [postIz] 'posts'	✓			✓	✓
[ayr]/[awr] reduction e.g. [tar] 'tire'	✓		✓	✓	✓
intrusive r, unstr. final [o] e.g. [fɛlr] 'feller'	✓		✓	✓	✓
Palatalization [raitšið] 'right here'	✓		(✓)	✓	(✓)
unstressed initial [w] del. [yʌŋənz] 'young unz'	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
[I]/[E] prec. [+nas] merger e.g. [pIn] 'pin'/'pen'	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
lax vowel gliding e.g. [flˈš] 'fish'	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
[ay] ungliding e.g. [tam] 'time'	✓	✓	✓	✓	
final ð labialization [bof] 'both'	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
postvocalic r loss [ka] 'car'	(✓)	(✓)	✓		

Few if any of the pronunciation features of Lumbee Vernacular are unique to English varieties, but the array of pronunciation traits set it apart. The particular pronunciation of the /ay/ vowel of words like *time* or *side* (more like *toim* or *soid*) which characterizes some older speakers from Prospect (Brewer and Reising 1984; Schilling-Estes 1998), for example, aligns Lumbee English with a distinctive pronunciation of speakers from the Outer Banks. At the same time, the retention of an *h* in words like *hit* (*it*) or *haint* (*ain't*) and pronunciations like *bear* and *hair* something like *bar* or *har* are characteristic of isolated varieties in diffuse areas throughout the southeastern region.

The comparative profile of grammatical structures shown in table 4, suggests an affinity between Lumbee English and more isolated varieties of English such as those spoken on the Outer Banks and in Appalachia. For example, *a-* prefixing in constructions such as *She was a-huntin' and a-fishin'* is a fairly common retention of a relic form of English found in a number of historically isolated rural dialects, as is the attachment of *-s* to verbs occurring with plural noun phrases as in *The dogs barks* or *People gets upset.*

Table 4.
A Comparative Dialect Profile of Lumbee Vernacular English Grammar

GRAMMATICAL STRUCTURE	Lumbee	RC Af. Am.	RC Euro. Am.	App.	Outer Banks
finite *bes* e.g. *She bes there*	✓		(✓)		
Perfective *I'm* e.g. *I'm been there*	✓				
Perfective *be* e.g. *They might be lost some inches*	✓				
weren't regularization e.g. *She weren't here*	✓				✓
a-prefixing e.g. *He was a-fishin*	✓		(✓)	✓	✓
copula absence e.g. *They nice, She nice*	(✓)	✓			
3rd sg. absence e.g. *She like_ cats*		✓			

GRAMMATICAL STRUCTURE	Lumbee	RC Af. Am.	RC Euro. Am.	App.	Outer Banks
Plural noun phrase agreement e.g. *The dogs gets upset*	✓		(✓)	✓	✓
plural absence with measurement nouns e.g. *twenty mile_*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
completive *done* e.g. *She done messed up*	✓	✓	✓	✓	_
double modals e.g. *He might could come*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
for to complement e.g. *I want for to get it*	✓			✓	(✓)
irregular verb					
(1) generalized past/part. e.g. *She had came here*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
(2) generalized part./past e.g. *She done it*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
(3) bare root as past e.g. *She give him a dog*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
(4) regularization e.g. *She knowed him*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
(5) different irregular e.g. *He retch up the roof*	✓			✓	
was/is regularization e.g. *We was there*	✓	✓	✓	✓	(✓)

At the same time, there are a couple of distinctive structures in Lumbee English which are quite restricted in terms of present-day American English dialects. One is the regularization of past tense forms in which the form *weren't* may occur with all subjects (e.g. *I/you/(s)he/we/y'all/they weren't*) (Wolfram and Sellers forthcoming). This pattern is relatively confined in present-day American English dialects, and is found predominantly in isolated dialect areas such as those on the Outer Banks of North Carolina (Schilling-Estes and Wolfram 1994) or in the Chesapeake Bay (Schilling-Estes 1997b).

Another distinctive form which sets Lumbee Vernacular English apart from other vernacular dialects in the immediate area is the use of *be* as a kind of perfect form. That is, Lumbee English may use constructions such as *I'm been there* or *We're got it already* where other dialects would use *have* as in *I've been there already*

or *We've got it already.* The use of the perfective *I'm* is particularly frequent among some speakers of Lumbee English, as an apparent vestige of an earlier period in the English language when *be* and *have* alternated in this way (Wolfram 1996).

One other grammatical form shows how Lumbee English has molded forms derived from particular donor dialects and accommodated surrounding contact dialects to carve out a unique dialect niche (Dannenberg and Wolfram 1998). This is the form *be(s)* in sentences such as *She bes here* or *Sometimes babies bes born like that.* The shaping of finite *be(s)* in Lumbee Vernacular English shows how a dialect community can be resourceful in utilizing present and past linguistic resources and language contact situations to mold and maintain ethnolinguistic uniqueness through changing sociolinguistic circumstances.

The overview of the basic levels of language organization, lexicon, phonology, and grammar, illustrates rhat Lumbee English is not distinguished primarily by structures that are unique to this variety. Rather, Lumbee English is distinctive precisely because it maintains a distinctive collocation of features, some of which are utilized in this dialect, but most of which are shared by surrounding contact varieties.

Conclusion

The Lumbee are not alone in striving to maintain cultural traditions in the face of language loss. In the Southeast, few American Indian tribes currently sustain a viable ancestral language. At the same time, as the case study with the Lumbee has illustrated, cultural cohesiveness cultivates distinctive language varieties. Those varieties, in turn, provide testament to the cultural identity of those groups. Language identity is not a static, uniform object that can be transferred from generation to generation. It is instead a negotiable, fluid entity that reinvents itself, despite loss. American Indian groups of the southeastern United States are daily renegotiating. The American Indians in the Southeast are a testament to cultural survival through upheaval and invasion, and that survival has been instantiated in their distinctive language varieties.

Notes

1. Information from this section is based on Dannenberg and Wolfram (1999), Wolfram and Dannenberg (2002), and Dannenberg (2003).

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