

Sacagawea and Son: The Visual Construction of America's Maternal Feminine

Patricia Vettel-Becker

“Sacagawea is our mother. She is the first gene pair of the American DNA.”

—Sherman Alexie, 2002¹

In his 1900 essay “The Dynamo and the Virgin,” American philosopher Henry Adams laments his nation’s lack of a potent symbol of female force, blaming Puritanism for suppressing appreciation for the power of reproduction, which he considers “the greatest and most mysterious of all energies.” According to Adams, because Americans have no iconic symbol to worship—no pagan goddess or Christian Madonna—they fail to recognize this uniquely feminine energy, so much so that “[a]n American Virgin would never dare command, an American Venus would never dare exist.”² Yet Adams believed that some remnant of such an awesome force would have survived its voyage across the Atlantic, and he concluded that it must have been channeled into the dynamo, a secular sexless machine. In 1900, however, he could not have foreseen the elevation of an almost forgotten historical figure to the status of female icon, the transformation of a captive Indian girl into a national heroine. For over the course of the next century, Sacagawea, the Shoshone teenager who accompanied the Lewis and Clark Expedition from what is now North Dakota to the Pacific Ocean, became the most celebrated “daughter” of the United States, even though never officially a citizen. In fact, more public statues have been erected of Sacagawea than of any



Figure 1: Leonard Crunelle, *Sakakawea*, 1910. Capitol Grounds, Bismarck, North Dakota. Photo: © Hans Anderson, 2004, Wikimedia Commons.

other woman in this country. As Bernard DeVoto, the editor of the Lewis and Clark journals, writes, Sacagawea “has received what in the United States counts as canonization if not deification.”³

As a young girl growing up in North Dakota, I worshipped this saintly young woman, my state’s most honored historical figure. When my family finally took our long-awaited journey across the state, leaving the flat fertile fields of our farm in the east to see for the first time the rugged badlands of the west, we stopped in Bismarck to see the capitol, and of course, Leonard Crunelle’s famous 1910 statue memorializing Sacagawea (Figure 1), whom North Dakotans call Sakakawea, a Hidatsa name meaning “Bird Woman.”⁴ Of the entire trip that summer of 1973, I most remember this visit to that statue on the capitol grounds, a recollection that remained vivid until my second visit in the summer of 2000. My second visit was somewhat different, for I approached the statue with intellectual curiosity rather than awe and admiration. I had encountered other female role models and heroines along the way, and I was no longer so sure I even knew who the “real”

Sacagawea was, a historical figure or a mythic construct. The United States Mint had just issued its new Golden Dollar (Figure 2), which honored this teenager with an image remarkably similar to that produced by Crunelle almost a century ago. Glenna Goodacre’s Sacagawea may appear somewhat younger and perhaps happier, but she is still first and foremost a mother, as she almost always is in the numerous depictions of her that have been produced in a variety of artistic and popular media. Because no visual representation or even physical description



Figure 2: Golden Dollar Obverse © 1999 United States Mint. All Rights Reserved. Used with permission. United States Golden Dollar coin image courtesy United States Mint and used with permission.

of Sacagawea exists by anyone who actually saw her, visual artists have borrowed freely from preexisting iconographic traditions, most notably the Madonna and Child—an adaptation deeply implicated within ideological structures concerning gender, race, and manifest destiny.⁵ Sacagawea is rarely shown without the visual marker of her maternity—her infant son, Jean Baptiste, nicknamed Pomp. This baby has become her attribute, the sign that forces recognition and signifies that for which she is most honored and remembered.

The cultural phenomenon that is Sacagawea has received significant attention throughout both the scholarly and popular press, and this essay draws significantly from that work. It differs, however, in its primary focus on visual representation, specifically commemorative public sculpture. Not only do these works

lend themselves more to the iconic and thus the archetypal, but also this imagery circulates more pervasively within the collective imaginary. Moreover, acts of public commemoration are implicated in the search for a national identity, a continually contested process that originated with the founding of the republic itself. As Kirk Savage argues, “America was then—and to some extent remains—an intangible thing, an idea: a voluntary compact of individuals rather than a family, tribe, or race.”⁶ Of course, attempts to incorporate indigenous Americans into this “voluntary compact” have presented unique historical, political and ideological problems, and it is within this context that Sacagawea’s transformation into a national icon bears significance. As I will argue, she has become the vehicle through which the United States has carried on and reinforced the “maternal feminine,” a concept and practice central to Western civilization, according to psychoanalyst and linguist Julia Kristeva, “in which the *consecrated* (religious or secular) representation of femininity is subsumed under maternity.”⁷ As a young Indian mother, Sacagawea has proven more assimilable than if she were a male warrior, more “civilizable,” yet at the same time, she remains a “primitive,” thus signifying motherhood as the “natural” role for all women.

The lack of biographical details concerning Sacagawea’s life made her especially open to appropriation and malleable to the mythmaking process. Most of what we know about her is found in the journals of Lewis and Clark. She first appears in William Clark’s journal entry dated November 11, 1804, when at Fort Mandan on the Missouri River in what is now North Dakota, he encounters “two Squares of the rock[y] mountains, purchased from the Indians by a frenchmen [sic].” The younger of the two was Sacagawea, who had been kidnapped during a

Hidatsa attack on the Shoshone in the Three Forks region of present-day Montana about four years earlier. She is next mentioned by Meriwether Lewis in his entry of February 11, 1805, relating her delivery of a “fine boy” after a “tedious” and violently painful labor. Lewis refers to her as a “wife” of Touissaint Charbonneau, the French-Canadian fur trader who had been hired by the expedition to act as interpreter and guide. By the time the expedition left its winter camp on April 7, both Charbonneau and his “Indian Squar” are listed as interpreters, and Sacagawea’s infant is included among the members of the expedition party.⁸ As the journey progressed west up the Missouri River, Sacagawea assisted the party by digging roots and picking berries. She was also considered valuable because she was an Indian woman with an infant, a sign to Indians they encountered that the expedition was peaceful, not a war party.

Only a few clues are found in the journals that provide insight into Sacagawea’s character or personality. During a near capsizing on May 14, with Charbonneau at the boat’s helm, panicking and afraid for his life, Sacagawea “caught and preserved most of the light articles which were washed overboard,” an act Lewis praised, ascribing to her “equal fortitude and resolution, with any person onboard at the time of the accident [sic].” The journals also highlight Sacagawea’s curiosity and determination, especially evident when she argued that she had earned the right to “see the great waters” of the Pacific and its “monstrous fish,” thus securing permission to accompany the small party that went in search of the beached whale discovered by the Clatsop Indians.⁹ She also secured a vote as to where the expedition should camp for the winter. However, what will most impress those who first appropriate and mythologize her are the repeated references to her maternal dedication to her infant son’s needs despite often harsh circumstances during the sixteen-month journey from Fort Mandan to the Pacific Ocean and back again.

The Centennial Sacagawea

For nearly a century, the journals of Lewis and Clark remained unpublished, except for a paraphrased narrative account published by Nicholas Biddle in 1815. This account, as well as the journals themselves, left room for subjective interpretation and embellishment, enough space to construct the mythic figure that Sacagawea would become, a process that began during those early years of the twentieth century that marked the expedition’s centennial. In 1902, Eva Emery Dye published a novel entitled *The Conquest: The True Story of Lewis and Clark*, based on the original journals, letters, oral traditions, and other archival sources. It is Dye’s promotion of Sacagawea as an American heroine, proof that women had played an important role in the construction of this nation and thus deserved suffrage, which inspired the first visual representations of Sacagawea. As Dye constructs her, Sacagawea is a “beautiful” spirited Shoshone Princess, a “child of elfin locks” who dances along riverbanks, her “long hair flying in the wind.” She is also a “brave,” “modest,” and sometimes “placid” young mother,

“the heroine of the great expedition” who pointed the way through the Rocky Mountains, followed the great rivers, and navigated the continent. Dye describes Sacagawea as having “neatly braided” hair, a nose “fine and straight,” and skin of “pure copper like the statue in some old Florentine gallery.” She refers to her as the “Madonna of her race,” the guide who would lead her people to “a new time.” Dye also prophesized that because the “key that unlocked the road to Asia” had been “intrusted” [sic] to Sacagawea, one day her fame would contend with that of Lewis, for “[a]cross North America a Shoshone Indian Princess touched hands with Jefferson, opening her country.”¹⁰ Dye’s Sacagawea is thus simultaneously Madonna and Princess, her fertile body “opening” up for President Thomas Jefferson, the Great White Father. If Jefferson was the “intellectual father of the American advance to the Pacific,” as Henry Nash Smith asserted,¹¹ then surely Sacagawea has been made to serve as the physical mother, the vessel through which Jefferson’s sacred mission flowed. Sacagawea’s position as interpreter signifies her role as such a vehicle, a conduit between men,¹² as is the repeated assertion that she willingly participated, a claim that suppresses the historical evidence, which suggests that she was essentially a slave. This mythic Sacagawea has thus become the American counterpart to the teen-aged Mary of the Annunciation, who declared: “Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.”¹³ Like Mary, Sacagawea also submitted, in this case to the will of the Great White Father, who called upon her to assist him in a mission of “peace.” Whereas Mary enabled the Old Law to be replaced by the New, Sacagawea enabled the “savage” to be replaced by the “civilized.” As Lewis proclaimed on leaving Fort Mandan, “we were now about to penetrate a country at least two thousand miles in width, on which the foot of civilized man had never trodden.”¹⁴

According to Wanda Pillow, Dye’s novel is one of the key texts that functioned to “whiten” Sacagawea so that she could be appropriated for white colonial projects.¹⁵ Indeed, Dye’s application of the esteemed European designations “madonna” and “princess” to Sacagawea were in keeping with attempts by white reformers in the late-nineteenth century to assimilate indigenous peoples by first “civilizing” their women. Armed with social evolutionist theories, they believed that the advancement of non-white races was dependent on the adoption of patriarchal domesticity, which ironically even white feminists held as the epitome of racial achievement. Stressing a “common femininity,” they argued that Indian women “shared with white women a capacity for morality, sexual purity, and religious devotion, and, most important, they exercised the same kind of ‘influence’ over their husbands that civilized women were presumed to exercise over their men.”¹⁶

The first known visual representation of Sacagawea appeared only two years after the publication of Dye’s novel. A life-sized statue by New York sculptor Bruno Zimm was featured at the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis (Figure 3), standing at the end of one of the esplanades between the Liberal Arts and Manufacturers’ buildings. According to historian Grace Raymond Hebard,

Zimm spent a year studying the literature and ethnology surrounding his subject, and with the assistance of the Reverend John Roberts of the Shoshone Reservation in Wyoming, he secured as a model for his statue, a Shoshone woman named Virginia Grant (Figure 4). Writing in 1907, Hebard described Grant as a “pure type,” one “decidedly typical” of her tribe. Hebard goes on to claim that Zimm’s statue captured Sacagawea’s “true character, the patient, plodding type looking ever westward toward the goal of the expedition.”¹⁷ This interest in capturing a “pure type,” one “typical” of a particular tribe, is in keeping with the strong interest in evolutionary theory in world expositions around the turn of the century, many of which exhibited ethnographic displays of human beings, as did St. Louis in 1904.¹⁸

Accordingly, Zimm’s representation of Sacagawea is not idealized; it does not resemble the image of the Indian princess that had arisen as a symbol of the American colonies around 1755, and which persisted throughout the nineteenth century as a signifier of the United States itself. According to E. McClung Fleming, this Indian princess was usually portrayed as a “handsome” and “vigorous” young woman of “noble visage and bearing.”¹⁹ Zimm’s heroine is earthier, humble rather than proud, as if obediently accepting of her station in life. Even though her head is raised, her eyes focus on her expeditionary goal, her curved back and shoulders, straining under the weight of the child she carries; she tightly grips her walking stick; and her sturdy facial features recall the stereotype of the “Drudge,” as theorized by Åsebrit Sundquist in her analysis of American Indian women in twentieth-century fiction. According to Sundquist, a Drudge is a servant or slave, a woman who endlessly labors at harsh or unpleasant tasks, often under the command of a tyrannical husband who lazes around, proves to be incompetent, and physically abuses her.²⁰ This characterization is in keeping with some of the primary sources concerning Sa-



Figure 3: Bruno Zimm, *Sacagawea*, 1904. Louisiana Purchase Exposition, St. Louis. SPC Basin Shoshoni BAE 1-42 00869500, Smithsonian Institution National Anthropological Archives.

cagawea and Charbonneau. In addition to the journals, which often describe Charbonneau in derogatory terms, Lewis referred to him as “a man of no peculiar merit” in his 1807 recommendation to Congress for additional compensation for members of the expedition, the only one of whom he spoke negatively.²¹ Elliot Coues’ 1893 reissue of the 1814 Biddle edition of the journals makes reference to Charbonneau as “a fool as well as the coward and wife-beater that we know he was.”²² Moreover, in Dye’s novel, Sacagawea is introduced into the narrative by Charbonneau, who explains to Clark: “She my slave.”²³

The following year, however, this “plodding” Drudge will fade from view, for just as Christians elevated Mary from Hebrew maiden to Queen of Heaven, artists and writers began to transform Sacagawea from captive squaw into Indian princess.²⁴ Misapplying the

European notion of royalty to the Shoshone, they assumed that because her brother was a chief, she must be a princess, a designation that would help facilitate her elevation from ordinary mother to sainted Madonna. It also placed her within the longstanding European tradition of using royal or divine female figures as allegories for land itself, such as the Indian Queen as signifier of the Western Hemisphere. According to Fleming, this practice was adopted by the new federal government, which chose the Indian princess to “regally” represent the republic on one presidential and three congressional medals commissioned and executed between 1787 and 1791. It was thus the first symbol of the United States to receive “official sanction.”²⁵ By the turn of the next century, Sacagawea would be used to re-popularize this signifier, supplying a touch of historical “truth” to an artistic culture growing more amenable to realism than generalized allegory,²⁶ and more specifically, providing a heroic model of motherhood to a society immersed



Figure 4: Portrait of Virginia Grant, Dressed to Represent Sacajawea, with Infant in Cradleboard, 1904. SPC Basin Shoshoni BAE 1-42 00868000, Smithsonian Institution National Anthropological Archives.

in the cult of domesticity. Indeed, unlike the Indian princess motif previously favored, Sacagawea and son was more in keeping with the image of American womanhood promoted by artists in the 1890s. As art historian Bailey Van Hook has pointed out, painters such as George de Forest Brush and Abbott H. Thayer adopted the “compositions and configurations” of the Renaissance “Virgin” and “Madonna” to impart an aura of innocence and purity onto their secular female subjects. Paradoxically, the “presence of children” with these young women was “as absent of sexual implications as it was in their Renaissance counterparts.”²⁷ Such was the case with the Sacagawea constructed by Dye and other suffragists—despite the presence of her baby, conceived without the sanction of legal or Christian marriage, she remains an exemplar of modesty and wholesomeness.

Although lacking accoutrements that might signify imperial status, “regal” certainly describes the first statue of Sacagawea to be permanently installed (Figure 5), indeed the first public commemorative statue of a woman to be unveiled in the United States. Alice Cooper’s 34-foot bronze memorial was commissioned by the Women’s Club of Portland for the 1905 Lewis and Clark Expedition Centennial Exposition on behalf of “the women of the United States in memory of Sacajawea and in honor of the pioneer mothers of old Oregon.”²⁸ The official booklet issued by the exposition points to the high esteem in which Sacagawea was now held, even in comparison to the other members of the expedition: “Sacagawea, the Birdwomen, stands out in a peculiarly strong and striking way and invests the exploration with a tinge or flavor that would be sadly lacking were it not for her sturdy, wholesome, virtuous personality. Her white sisters of the Northwest propose to honor her virtues and sacrifices by a statue at the Exposition.”²⁹ Such an honor would ensure Sacagawea a place in the realm of national heroes by sanctioning her as worthy of public enshrinement as a work of fine art. Of course, it would also enshrine the values and ideals associated with Sacagawea, as well as those “pioneer mothers of old Oregon” who were to be honored through her.

Cooper’s noble heroine strides forcefully ahead, her chin raised, her arm lifted and pointing towards the horizon. She appears to be in vigorous motion, her buckskin garments flowing swiftly and gracefully around her, and seemingly unencumbered by the baby casually wrapped around her left shoulder. Unlike Zimm’s earlier portrayal, this romanticized and idealized version of Sacagawea is more in keeping with Dye’s imaginative description—a beautiful and brave Madonna with a fine straight nose and pure copper skin. Interestingly, the statue contains more than twenty tons of Oregon copper, signaling a literal connection between the monumental figure and the land on which she stands. Dye was present at the unveiling of Cooper’s statue, as were Susan B. Anthony and Abigail Scott Duniway, which demonstrates the important role the figure of Sacagawea had taken on in the suffrage movement during the Progressive Era.³⁰ Sacagawea was considered not only the first “American” woman to vote, but also a young woman who could participate in a momentous and arduous mission, hold her own among men, and still perform her duties as a mother. To counter societal



Figure 5: Alice Cooper, *Sacajawea*, 1905. Sacajawea State Park, Portland, Oregon. Photo: © EncMstr, 2006, Wikimedia Commons.

opposition, it had been necessary for the suffragists “to prove that voting would not be detrimental to their health, reduce their fertility, or interfere with their social responsibilities as wives and mothers.”³¹ Sacagawea was thus an ideal prototype for the pioneering “New Woman,” for she demonstrated that a woman could play an important role in public life without sacrificing her femininity. She was brave and strong, yet a nurturing helpmate, a self-sacrificing and uncomplaining mother.

It is Sacagawea's role as American Madonna that also informs Leonard Crunelle's commemorative statue, which was erected in 1910 after five years of fund-raising by the Federated Women's Clubs of eastern North Dakota.³² The fund-raising campaign was promoted through the distribution of 20,000 copies of *Sakakawea (Bird Woman) Statue Notes*, a brochure that explained why a statue should be dedicated to this Native woman. In addition to citing her important contributions to the Lewis and Clark Expedition, the brochure explained that she was the first Indian west of the Missouri River to convert to Christianity, a claim for which there is no historical evidence. The brochure also characterized her as "more erect" and "more slenderly built" than others of her race, "a princess of uncommon grace of mind and of person."³³

Unlike Cooper's monumental bronze, Crunelle's twelve-foot statue stands closer to the earth and is more human in scale; she appears sturdy and stable, rather than energized and swiftly moving. She is both princess and Madonna, stately and proud, yet fecund and nurturing. Although she is treading forward, her steady gaze locked on the western horizon, she reaches one arm upwards to stabilize her baby boy, who rests peacefully on her back. Standing on a bronze evocation of the earth itself, she appears to be arising from it, as if composed of the same material. Annette Kolodny has argued that "America's oldest and most cherished fantasy" is "a daily reality of harmony between man and nature based on an experience of the land as essentially feminine," and thus our nation's "single dominating metaphor" is "regression from the cares of adult life and a return to the primal warmth of womb or breast in a feminine landscape."³⁴ What more fitting visual icon for this fantasy and metaphor than an indigenous Madonna and Child? For just as Mary came to symbolize the Body of the Church, Sacagawea has come to symbolize the Body of the Nation, an association supported by the natural landmarks that bear her name—four mountain peaks, two lakes, and a river—and the numerous human-made monuments to her and representing her that punctuate the American landscape. In a similar vein, Jean Baptiste has come to signify the "New West," the peaceful reconciliation of Indian and European, a fantasy conceived by Euro-Americans only after Native peoples had been secured on reservations. Jean Baptiste would grow up to be a mountain man, scout, explorer and gold seeker in the land of his mother, but would also receive a formal education in St. Louis and spend six years in France, the ancestral home of his father.³⁵ Although Charbonneau's status as Jean Baptiste's biological parent is never disputed, it is often downplayed. What is emphasized instead in fictional narratives is Sacagawea's "chaste" romance with Clark, and his role as adoptive father to Jean Baptiste, a relationship that informally begins on the expedition and becomes an official reality a few years later. This focus on Clark as the "true" father to Jean Baptiste ameliorates anxieties concerning miscegenation and forced sexual slavery, and once again, bears similarities to the Virgin Mary, who chastely bears a son for an entity superior to her physical mate, then gives him over to that entity in the end. Such sainthood on the part of Sacagawea is provisionally acknowledged most emphatically in visual artifacts, such as the ce-



Figure 6: Sakakawea ceramic curtain pull/pendant, 1934. Issued by the North Dakota Federated Women's Clubs. University of North Dakota Pottery Collection. Photo: Donald Miller, February 18, 2009.

ramic curtain pulls/pendants made in 1934 for the fiftieth anniversary of the North Dakota Federated Women's Clubs (Figure 6). Although based on Crunelle's statue in terms of pose and dress, the white-glazed figurine includes a mandorla, a halo-like circle surrounding Mother and Child. Like a votive object, it is small enough to "be entirely grasped, enclosed, or comfortably operated by the human hand," a feature that allows the icon's "aura" to be possessed.³⁶ In addition, because this image is on a decorative object to be displayed in the home, the sanctification of motherhood extends to the domestic interior, the space within which these white middle-class clubwomen are to fulfill their patriotic duty, which is to bear and raise the next generation of Americans.

Sacagawea as the Body of the Nation also carries with it the potential for penetration and domination, as hinted at in Dye's claim that Sacagawea "opened" her country for Jefferson. In 1919, a monument honoring Lewis and Clark was placed in Midway Park in Charlottesville, Virginia (Figure 7). Charles Keck's three-figure bronze statue presents Lewis and Clark as heroic and dignified men who, as the statue inscription reads, were "bold and farseeing pathfinders who carried the flag of the young republic to the western ocean and revealed an unknown empire to the uses of mankind." This unknown empire is symbolized by the third figure in the group, a crouching Sacagawea. Unlike the previous public statues of Sacagawea, this figure seems child-like and shy rather than dignified and proud, her eyes downcast, one hand reaching up to hold that of Lewis, the other clenching her braid. Imperialist expansion is here intertwined with protectionist attitudes towards Native peoples, who were considered "children" on the timeline of racial evolution and thus in need of the civilizing influence of whites, a process that included the domestication, thus social subordination, of Indian women.³⁷ Indeed, Sacagawea is depicted as subordinate to the two "pathfinders," and was, in fact, almost an afterthought. Adding Sacagawea to the monument was the sculptor's idea, a pleasant surprise to the man who financed the work, Paul Goodloe McIntire, who later wrote that although the contract specified only Lewis and Clark, "the sculptor threw in the Indian and she is the best of the lot."³⁸ We can only speculate as to why McIntire was so



Figure 7: Charles Keck, Lewis and Clark Memorial, 1919. Charlottesville, Virginia. Photo: Author, June 10, 2002.

impressed by this figure. Perhaps his admiration was due to her idealized facial features, which are in keeping with the Indian Princess iconographic tradition, complete with feather in her hair. She appears as McIntire might expect—not the proud and upright symbol of women’s strength and courage, but the submissive and passive young beauty who hugs the earth she personifies, much like the Indian maiden depicted in a late eighteenth-century figurine representing *William Pitt Receiving the Gratitude of America* (Figure 8). Keck’s sculptural grouping also



Figure 8: Chelsea Factory, ca. 1745-1784, *Figure Group*, Made in London, 1765-1775. Porcelain, height 13¼ inches. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1938 (38.165.37). Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

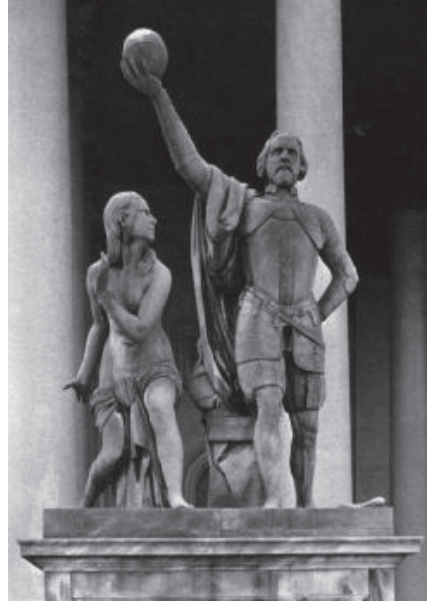


Figure 9: Luigi Persico, *Discovery of America*, 1836-1844 (in storage). Photo: The Capitol Project at the University of Virginia.

recalls Luigi Persico's *Discovery of America*, 1836-1844 (Figure 9), which was situated prominently to the left of the staircase on the east façade of the United States Capitol until placed in storage in 1958.³⁹ Like Persico's Columbus, Keck's Lewis stands boldly upright, his steady gaze fixed on the land to be vanquished, while Sacagawea and her counterpart, the female personification of that very land, cower beneath.

Although not as stereotyped or idealized in appearance, the figure of Sacagawea in Robert Scriver's 1975 commemorative monument *The Explorers at the Marias* (Figure 10), located at the confluence of the Marias and Missouri rivers in Fort Benton, Montana, conforms to this same artistic tradition and is thus evidence of the enduring potency of this ideological construction. Like Keck's monument, Scriver's sculptural grouping is dedicated to Lewis and Clark, not to Sacagawea. Again, she functions primarily in her role as Body of the Nation, embedded in the very matter she represents, the fertile land beneath the erect bodies of the celebrated explorers. Although more mature in terms of facial features, like Keck's Sacagawea, she appears similarly child-like in pose, her feet crossed at her ankles, and demure in expression, her eyes cast down. Even in a



Figure 10: Robert Scriver, *The Explorers at the Marias*, 1975. Fort Benton, Montana. Photo: Author, July 20, 2002.

more recent public monument depicting Sacagawea, Eugene Daub's *Corps of Discovery* (Figure 11), erected in Kansas City in April of 2000, we see this same hierarchical grouping. With one leg kneeling on and the other wrapped around the rock that signifies the western lands, this Sacagawea perches beneath the towering figure of Lewis. She is the most grounded of the figures forming the base of the compositional pyramid, Clark's slave York just slightly higher, but hidden behind Lewis's voluminous cape. In an attempt to be historically accurate, Daub adds a new visual attribute—a basket that alludes to her food gathering on the expedition and thus to her role as caretaker and nurturer, not only of baby Pomp but also of the men on the expedition.

Of all the public statues of Sacagawea, Harry Jackson's ten-foot painted bronze most completely exemplifies the iconic symbol this teenaged mother has become (Figure 12). Erected in 1983 on the grounds of the Buffalo Bill Historical Center in Cody, Wyoming,⁴⁰ Jackson's American Madonna needs no iconographical attributes to designate her identity. This dark-skinned woman with long black hair gazes steadfastly into the distance, as she holds tight to the heavy earth-toned robe that envelops her body and that of her infant son, who nestles contentedly on her shoulder. Dignified and strong, she confronts the wind that threatens to overcome her, her massive form withstanding yet yielding to it, just like the Western landscape itself. She is that landscape; no longer mortal, she exists in a liminal space, having transcended the boundaries imposed on mere historical personages. Consequently, much like the conflicting stories concerning the Virgin Mary's death or assumption, Sacagawea's actual physical remains cannot definitively be located, nor can the date of her death. Such a mystery feeds the aura of sanctity that has come to surround Sacagawea, and it opens her up further for appropriation and mythologizing. In this case, it also underscores the conflict between how Euro-Americans and Native peoples view her, the former solely within the "written" context of Lewis and Clark and the latter allowing her a post-expedition existence on her own terms among her own people.⁴¹



Figure 11: Eugene Daub, *Corps of Discovery*, 2000. Kansas City, Missouri. Photo: Daniel Coleman, 2003. Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, Missouri.

The Bicentennial Sacagawea

In anticipation of the bicentennial of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, which would be celebrated in a variety of events throughout the nation between 2004 and 2006, numerous sculptures of Sacagawea were commissioned and installed,



Figure 12: Harry Jackson, *Sacagawea*, 1980. Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Richard J. Cashman, © Harry Jackson Trust 2006. All Rights Reserved.; 5:80.

further entrenching this maternal body into the very land it had come to represent. This frenzy of commemoration also replayed Sacagawea as “historical trophy,”⁴² claimed as “native daughter” by Montana, Idaho, North Dakota, and Wyoming, and additionally claimed by Washington and Oregon because of her activities there during the expedition. Whereas a century ago Sacagawea was appropriated as a symbol for women’s suffrage, in our postmodern era she functions primarily as a signifier of multiculturalism, a “safer” representative of indigenous Americans than would be such figures as Geronimo or Sitting Bull. Like Clark’s slave York, Sacagawea appears in recent cultural representations “of the Corps to represent the ‘melting pot’ of America and demonstrate to school children and adults that ‘our’ history was always multicultural and thus as a colonized object of history she is ours to consume and celebrate without question.”⁴³ Indeed, to commemorate her is to proclaim one’s state and its people progressive, inclusive of non-white races and women, even though one may argue that the mother-child image serves “pro-life,” thus conservative, ends. It also continues to reinforce an ideology of motherhood that disregards the specific realities of contemporary Native women, whose reproductive rights are often compromised.⁴⁴

Perhaps in an attempt at gender and racial sensitivity, however, some contemporary sculptors have rendered Sacagawea more naturalistic in pose, as an active agent rather than passive object. For example, Mary Michael’s *At the Yellowstone* (Figure 13), a sculptural group installed in 2006 in Livingston, Montana, shows Sacagawea on horseback attempting to balance her son on her lap as the horse stretches its head down to drink from the waters of the river. Others show her gazing at a sand dollar (Sacajawea Cemetery, Wind River Reservation, Wyoming), gathering native plants (Idaho Botanical Gardens, Boise), or as part of a fountain, with water flowing over her upraised arms (Pioneer Park, Lewiston, Idaho). Despite departing from earlier representations, these sculptures still link Sacagawea closely to nature and thus keep her within the archetype of the maternal feminine. What is more, the iconic Sacagawea and son has continued to be popular, the choice for many recent sculptural installations, such as Glenna Goodacre’s *Sacagawea and Pomp*,⁴⁵ Lewis and Clark Community College, Godfrey, Illinois, and Lewis and Clark College, Portland, Oregon; Agnes Vincen Talbot’s *Sacajawea and Pomp*, Idaho Historical Museum, Boise, Idaho; and *Sacajawea Interpretive*, Cultural and Education Center, Salmon, Idaho; and Jim Demetro’s *Sacajawea and Pomp*, Netul Landing, Fort Clatsop, Astoria, Oregon. Of course, it was also the choice for the new Golden Dollar. In fact, of the three designs submitted by Goodacre, only one included Jean-Baptiste. After reviewing the more than 90,000 comments posted by the public on the Internet, this was the design chosen by the U.S. Mint.⁴⁶ Of all the coins commemorating historical figures, the Sacagawea dollar is unique in that it is not based on an actual likeness—it is not a portrait. Thus it does not function so much as an icon of Sacagawea as of what it is she represents. Replacing the Susan B. Anthony Golden Dollar, which honored this influential suffragist and women’s rights advocate, the Sacagawea dollar venerates instead what



Figure 13: Mary Michael, *At the Yellowstone*, installed 2006. Livingston, Montana. Photo: Courtesy of the Artist.

the suffragists who first appropriated her *as*—an icon of motherhood. It is not surprising that the latter was chosen as a replacement for the former following an era that had promoted a return to “family values” after the “feminist” 1970s, the decade that saw a woman like Anthony celebrated and commemorated in a manner previously reserved for presidents.

This bicentennial Sacagawea is more a saint than ever. The romantic heroine of Eva Emery Dye’s fairy tale has become a sacred relic, and competition over her is fierce. The cult of Sacagawea may be a nationwide phenomenon, but it

has split into regional factions, and the stakes are high—tourist dollars, state identity, and tribal pride. The Lemhi Shoshone, who call her Sacajawea, and the Hidatsa, who call her Sakakawea, both claim Sacagawea as their own, and much of their efforts entail restoring the historical figure to what they believe is her rightful position as an esteemed representative of their people,⁴⁷ a process that sometimes includes defending her. Speaking on behalf of the Lemhi, Rod Ariwite responds to other “native people” who “criticize Sacajawea for helping the majority culture travel through our lands and eventually dominate us completely” by arguing that she was just a teenager who could not have predicted “what the future actually held.” Moreover, he maintains that the Lemhi “honor Sacajawea for who she was—not for what she did to help Lewis and Clark. We know she was a good woman and a fine mother.”⁴⁸

States compete in claiming her. Unwilling to entirely relinquish Sacagawea to the Native Americans, but strategically aligning themselves with the tribal nations within their boundaries to bolster their claims, Idaho, which purports to be her birthplace, and North Dakota, which “adopted” her and where Lewis and Clark first encountered her, have been the most active states in competing over her. Within this context, I return to a discussion of my home state and the Leonard Crunelle statue on the capitol grounds in Bismarck. In 2003, the North Dakota Senate and House of Representatives passed a “concurrent resolution” stating that Sakakawea, who was “a traveler and guide, a translator, a diplomat, and a wife and mother,” should be “honored and memorialized with a statue in the National Statuary Hall in the United States Capitol in Washington, D.C.”⁴⁹ At the time, North Dakota was one of three states that still had only one statue honoring a citizen in the Hall; two is the limit, a limit Idaho had already met. North Dakota’s statue was to be a replica of Crunelle’s, not a contemporary original, which is not surprising considering the iconic status it holds among residents of the state. In fact, North Dakota is unique among states commemorating Sacagawea in that this 1910 statue is the only one honoring her to be publicly erected within its borders. Although the model for Crunelle’s original was Hannah Levings Grant (Mink Woman), a Hidatsa living on the Fort Berthold Reservation and Sakakawea’s granddaughter,⁵⁰ tribal people played no part in the fund raising for the statue.⁵¹ In the case of the replica, however, the Three Affiliated Tribes (Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara) of the Fort Berthold Reservation contributed \$50,000 of the \$190,000 cost of the project, and the commission went to Tom Bollinger, a native of Bismarck who grew up on Lakota Sioux Reservations in North and South Dakota.⁵² Moreover, the unveiling and presentation ceremonies in Washington D.C. included the presentation and posting of the Hidatsa Nation flag and eagle staff, the singing of the Hidatsa flag song, and remarks by Tex Hall, the Chairman of the Three Affiliated Tribes.

The inclusion of Native peoples in the replication project was instrumental in designating Sacagawea a Hidatsa and thus a “citizen” of the state of North Dakota, a requirement for acceptance into the Statuary Hall collection. In a

2003 essay published by the State Historical Society of North Dakota, Clay S. Jenkinson writes about the difficulty in “fixing” her tribal identity, concluding:

Thus the famous Sakakawea was probably genetically Shoshone and culturally a blend of Shoshone and Hidatsa when Lewis and Clark met her on November 11, 1804. In recent years her Hidatsa (Minitari) cultural identity has been emphasized. It is likely that she was formally adopted into the Hidatsa world sometime after her capture in Montana.⁵³

However, her status as a “true” North Dakotan would be most cleverly established by U.S. Senator Kent Conrad, who in his remarks at the presentation ceremony, asked:

What did Lewis and Clark see in Sakakawea? I’ll tell you what I think they saw. They saw strength, courage, and determination. These are the same qualities that define our state and bind us as North Dakotans even now. It is a fitting tribute that Sakakawea will represent our state of North Dakota here in Statuary Hall.⁵⁴

By making Sakakawea a North Dakotan through character traits alone, her Native origins are negated, an act that further obfuscates the state’s actions towards its Native peoples—isolation on reservations, segregated schools, and the flooding of millions of acres of Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara land to create what is ironically called Lake Sakakawea. As scholar and activist Andrea Smith argues, the appropriation of Native women for non-Native interests furthers the “project of colonial sexual violence” by establishing “the ideology that Native bodies are inherently violable—and by extension, that Native lands are also inherently violable.”⁵⁵

A year after the presentation ceremony, the Crunelle replica was moved to its permanent location, the capitol crypt beneath the rotunda, a fitting resting place for a national saint. At last, after two hundred years, Sacagawea, in the words of Dye, “touched hands with Jefferson” and officially became an American. The cycle of exploitation, appropriation, and canonization was complete. Also complete was the process whereby the signifier that is Sacagawea became “myth,” for history had evaporated to such an extent that only form remained, a form open to new concepts that could implant new histories into the myth while keeping their ideological motivations camouflaged.⁵⁶ The Christian Madonna had also resulted from such a process. In the words of Marina Warner: “By emptying history from the figure of Mary, all the various silks interwoven for centuries on the sensitive loom of the mind are deprived of context, of motive, of circumstance, and therefore seem to be the spontaneous expression of enduring archetypal ideas.”⁵⁷ Although the archetype that is the maternal feminine faced

difficulty finding form in this predominately Protestant nation, it eventually found a home in the figure of a young Native woman who could be made to embody whatever Euro-Americans sought.

Why the need for an American Madonna? Certainly the timing of her appearance is telling. Once the “Indian Problem” was believed “settled” with the Dawes Act of 1887 and Frederick Jackson Turner officially declared the frontier “closed” in 1893, a romanticization of the West could begin, a process that included elements of mourning and guilt. Kristeva argues that the “representation of the Maternal” functions to “calm social anxiety,” and she points to the manner in which the Christian Madonna served as a “mooring point” for the “humanization” of Western Europe.⁵⁸ Perhaps our American Madonna arose, in part, out of a collective, although unconscious, “longing for redemption,” which Carl Jung considered one of the underlying factors in the appearance of the mother archetype.⁵⁹ Suppressing the historical reality of massacres and atrocities beneath the iconic symbol of an Indian Madonna ameliorates guilt and humanizes both Native peoples and the Euro-Americans who now honor them through her. As Kristeva writes: “Man surmounts death, the unthinkable, by postulating instead—in the stead and place of thought as well as of death—maternal love.”⁶⁰

On the other hand, one could also argue that the imbuing of the Sacagawea mythology with that of the Virgin Mary has been grounded in the need, whether conscious or unconscious, for Euro-Americans to “define and to create themselves as Americans” over and against the Native peoples who had occupied these lands for millennia.⁶¹ By positing the earth itself as a Native female and then transforming it into the foremost European signifier of the maternal feminine, the sacred connection between Native peoples and their lands is symbolically severed. Indeed, like Mary, whose body became a metaphor for the Church, Sacagawea’s maternal body came to symbolize the American frontier and the “birth” of a new nation. Her “willingness” to guide Lewis and Clark on America’s most sacred mission into the wilderness has served to sanctify the “civilized” settlement of the fecund “native” land she represents, as does her giving up of her young son to Clark to be raised, a self-sacrificial act also in keeping with the symbolic and mythic construct of the maternal feminine—a construct that in this case enables historical realities concerning race, miscegenation, genocide, displacement, slavery, and sexual abuse to be submerged.

Notes

1. Alexie Sherman, “What Sacagawea Means To Me (and Perhaps to You),” *Time*, July 8, 2002, 56.

2. Henry Adams, “The Dynamo and the Virgin” (1900), in *The Education of Henry Adams: An Autobiography* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1918), 384-85.

3. Bernard DeVoto, *The Course of Empire* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1952), 618.

4. The correct spelling and pronunciation of Sacagawea’s name is a matter of dispute. Although her original Shoshone name is not known, the Hidatsas called her “Tsakaka-wias,” which means “Bird Woman.” In North Dakota, “Sakakawea” is the preferred spelling, whereas the United States Geographic Board adopted “Sacagawea” for use by Federal agencies. The latter spelling is the one commonly used by scholars. The Shoshone prefer “Sacajawea,” which means “Boat Launcher” in

their language. See Russell Reid, "Sakakawea," *North Dakota History* 30 (April-July 1963): 101-103.

5. Although the notion of an American Madonna may seem contradictory, by the early nineteenth century, it was not uncommon for Christian, even specifically Catholic, conventions to be used to "sanctify" American heroes, the most notable case being George Washington. For example, Phoebe Lloyd Jacobs, "John James Barralet and the Apotheosis of George Washington," *Wintherthur Portfolio* 12 (1977): 115-137, points out that Barralet relied on Renaissance and Baroque images of the Assumption of the Virgin and the Resurrection of Christ in designing the composition for his 1802 engraving commemorating the first president's death. This image remained popular throughout the nineteenth century, going through four printings. According to Eugene F. Miller and Barry Schwartz, "The Icon of the American Republic: A Study in Political Symbolism," *The Review of Politics* 47 (October 1985): 531, the sanctification of Washington was also enhanced by repeated comparisons to Jesus. Not only were pronouns referring to the president capitalized, but it was often pointed out that both had mothers named Mary and that the two were the only ones whose births were celebrated nationally.

6. Kirk Savage, "The Self-made Monument: George Washington and the Fight to Erect a National Memorial," in *Critical Issues in Public Art*, ed. Harriet F. Senie and Sally Webster (New York: HarperCollins, 1992), 5.

7. Julia Kristeva, "Stabat Mater," in *The Female Body in Western Culture: Contemporary Perspectives*, ed. Susan Rubin Suleiman (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986), 99. (emphasis in the original)

8. Bernard Devoto, ed., *The Journals of Lewis and Clark*, with forward by Stephen E. Ambrose (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997), 64, 80, 93.

9. Devoto, *Journals*, 111, 301.

10. Eva Emery Dye, *The Conquest: The True Story of Lewis and Clark* (A.C. McClurg, 1902; reprint Garden City, New York: Doubleday, Page, 1924), 193, 285, 227, 250, 245, 283, 290.

11. Henry Nash Smith, *Virgin Land: The American West as Symbol and Myth* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1950), 15.

12. For an overview of this cultural motif, see Clara Sue Kidwell, "Indian Women as Cultural Mediators," *Ethnohistory* 39 (Spring 1992): 97-107; and Kari Boyd McBride, "Native Mothers, Native Others: La Malinche, Pocahontas, and Sacajawea," in *Maternal Measures: Figuring Caregiving in the Early Modern Period*, ed. Naomi J. Miller and Naomi Yavneh (Aldershot, U.K.: Ashgate, 2000), 306-16.

13. Luke 1:38.

14. Devoto (ed.), *Journals*, 92.

15. Wanda Pillow, "Searching for Sacajawea: Whitened Reproductions and Endarkened Representations," *Hypatia* 22 (Spring 2007), 1-19.

16. Louise Michele Newman, *White Women's Rights: The Racial Origins of Feminism in the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 51-52.

17. Grace Raymond Hebard, "Pilot of the First White Men to Cross the American Continent," *The Journal of American History* 1 (1907): 472, 482.

18. See Paul Greenhalgh, *Ephemeral Vistas: The Expositions Universelles, Great Exhibitions and World's Fairs, 1851-1939* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), 82-111. On Zimm, see Bruno Hasbrouck Zimm, "Biographical Notes on Bruno Louis Zimm," Bruno Louis Zimm Papers, 1907-1985, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

19. E. McClung Fleming, "The American Image as Indian Princess, 1765-1783," *Wintherthur Portfolio* 2 (1965): 73. See also E. McClung Fleming, "Symbols of the United States: From Indian Queen to Uncle Sam," in *Frontiers of American Culture*, ed. Ray B. Browne, Richard H. Crowder, Virgil L. Lokke, and William T. Stafford (Lafayette, Indiana: Purdue University Studies, 1968), 1-24; and Lester C. Olson, "The Colonies are an Indian," chapter in *Emblems of American Community in the Revolutionary Era: A Study in Rhetorical Iconology* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991), 75-123. On the visual representation of Native American women, see also William H. Gerdtis, "The Marble Savage," *Art in America* 62 (July-August 1974): 64-70; and Susan Prendergast Schoeler, "The Absent Other: Women in the Land and Art of Mountain Men," in *Discovered Lands: Invented Pasts: Transforming Visions of the American West*, ed. Jules David Prown, et. al. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 135-65.

20. Åsebrit Sundquist, *Sacajawea & Co.: The Twentieth-Century Fictional American Indian Woman And Fellow Characters: A Study of Gender and Race* (Oslo: Solum Forlag, 1991), 125-31.

21. As quoted in Stephen E. Ambrose, *Undaunted Courage: Meriwether Lewis, Thomas Jefferson, and the Opening of the American West* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), 424.

22. As quoted in Hebard, "Pilot of the First White Men," 96.

23. Dye, *The Conquest*, 188. On the Mandan and Hidatsa slave marts and the purchasing of wives by fur traders, see Albert L. Hurtado, "When Strangers Met: Sex and Gender on Three Frontiers," *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* 17 (1996): 60-62. For a challenge to the characterization of Sacajawea as a captured and bartered Shoshone argued on the basis of "traditionalist perspectives and oral tradition sources," see James V. Fenelon and Mary Louise Defender-Wilson,

“Voyage of Domination, ‘Purchase’ as Conquest, Sakakawea for Savagery: Distorted Icons from Misrepresentations of the Lewis and Clark Expedition,” *Wicazo Sa Review* 19 (Spring 2004): 85-104. The authors maintain that she was actually a Hidatsa, and that the slavery narrative was based on a misunderstanding perpetuated initially by Lewis and Clark and then reiterated by Euro-Americans who projected their own gender biases onto the Hidatsa and other Native peoples.

24. Donna J. Kessler, *The Making of Sacagawea: a Euro-American Legend* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1996), 98, cites nine cultural texts produced between 1902 and 1918 that characterize Sacagawea as an Indian princess, including novels, plays, and poems. On the myth of the Indian princess, see also Rayna Green, “The Pocahontas Perplex: the Image of Indian Women in American Culture,” *The Massachusetts Review* 16 (Autumn 1975): 698-714.

25. E. McClung Fleming, “From Indian Princess to Greek Goddess: The American Image, 1783-1815,” *Winterthur Portfolio* 3 (1967): 39.

26. According to Michele Bogart, *Public Sculpture and the Civic Ideal in New York City, 1890-1930* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 221-231, by the late nineteenth century, American sculptors were being trained primarily in France, not Italy, and were thus adopting the French interest in capturing the “modern spirit” in their subjects. The result was a preference for live models rather than classical precedents and for historical examples of moral ideals rather than traditional allegorical figures.

27. Bailey Van Hook, “‘Milk White Angels of Art’: Images of Women in Turn-of-the-Century America,” *Woman’s Art Journal* 11 (Autumn 1990-Winter 1991): 28.

28. As quoted in Grace Raymond Hebard, *Sacajawea: A Guide and Interpreter of the Lewis and Clark expedition, with an account of the travels of Toussaint Charbonneau, and of Jean Baptiste, the expedition papoose* (Glendale: The Arthur Clark Company, 1933), 297.

29. Olin Dunbar Wheeler, *The Lewis & Clark Exposition: Portland Oregon, June 1 to October 15, 1905* (St. Paul: Northern Pacific Railway, 1905), 17.

30. See Michael Heffernan and Carol Mendicott, “A Feminine Atlas? Sacagawea, the Suffragettes and the Commemorative Landscape in the American West, 1904-10,” *Gender, Place and Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography* 9 (June 2002): 109-131.

31. Newman, *White Women’s Rights*, 39. On the important role visual images honoring motherhood played in garnering support for the suffrage movement, see Maria Caudill Dennison, “Babies for Suffrage: ‘The Exhibition of Painting and Sculpture by Women Artists for the Benefit of the Woman Suffrage Campaign,’” *Woman’s Art Journal* 24 (Autumn 2003-Winter 2004): 24-30.

32. On the fund-raising and the public reception of Crunelle’s statue, see Kessler, *The Making of Sacagawea*, 90-97.

33. *Sakakawea (Bird Woman) Statue Notes* (Fargo: Porte Company), 1906.

34. Annette Kolodny, *The Lay of the Land: Metaphor as Experience and History in American Life and Letters* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1975), 4, 6.

35. On Jean Baptiste Charbonneau’s life after the expedition, see Harold P. Howard, *Sacajawea* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1971), 169-174.

36. George Basalla, “Transformed Utilitarian Objects,” *Winterthur Portfolio* 17 (Winter 1982): 197-198.

37. Newman, *White Women’s Rights*, 116-131.

38. Undated clipping, *Charlottesville Daily Progress*, quoted in “The Making of the Monument,” American Studies at the University of Virginia, http://xroads.virginia.edu/~CLASS/AM483_97/projects/hall/Making1.html (accessed September 7, 2007).

39. Vivien Green Fryd, “Two Sculptures for the Capitol: Horatio Greenough’s *Rescue* and Luigi Persico’s *Discovery of America*,” *American Art Journal* 19 (Spring 1987): 16-39, places the commissioning of this statue within the context of government policies advocating westward expansion. She also places the protests that led to the removal of the statue within the context of changing attitudes towards Native peoples after the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 and the granting of tribal sovereignty and full citizenship in 1953.

40. On the commissioning and production of this statue, see Larry Pointer and Donald Goddard, *Harry Jackson*, with foreword by Peter H. Hassrick and introduction by John Walker (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1981), 131-148.

41. Most historians believe Sacagawea died in her twenties and was buried at Fort Manuel, which is located along the Missouri River in present-day South Dakota. They cite as evidence two journal entries: Henry Brackenridge’s April 2, 1811 notation claiming that he had traveled with Charbonneau and his wife, the one who had accompanied Lewis and Clark, on a keel boat from St. Louis to the Arikara, Mandan and Hidatsa villages in what is now the Dakotas; and a December 20, 1812 entry in a Fort Manuel clerk’s journal relating the death of a wife of Charbonneau. For an overview of this debate, see Reid, “Sakakawea,” 105-109. However, personal testimonials by Shoshones, Comanches, and Shoshone agents compiled by Hebard, *Sacajawea*, 153-281, have Sacagawea living to be nearly one hundred and claim that she is buried on the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming.

42. Heffernan and Medicot, “A Feminine Atlas?,” 124.

43. Pillow, “Searching for Sacajawea,” 8.

44. Andrea Smith, *Conquest: Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide* (Cambridge: South End Press, 2005), 79-107, cites numerous instances of sterilization and contraception abuse and argues that the “pro-choice” framework is inadequate as a reproductive justice paradigm for women of color, who often lack the social, political, and economic conditions necessary to truly “choose,” and who are often targeted by the population control advocates that are aligned with it.

45. Glenna Goodacre used the same model for both the Golden Dollar and the life-size bronze, Randy L He-Dow Teton, a Shoshone woman.

46. “Sacagawea designs picked for dollar coin,” *Billings Gazette* (18 December 1998): 4A.

47. A recent publication that attempts to “uncover” the historical figure through the native traditions that would have informed her life is Joyce Badgley Hunsaker, *Sacagawea Speaks: Beyond the Shining Mountains with Lewis & Clark* (Guilford, Conn.: The Globe Pequot Press, 2001).

48. Rod Ariwite, “A Message from the Lemhi Shoshoni People” in Kenneth Thomasma, *The Truth about Sacajawea* (Jackson, WY: Grandview Publishing, 1997), 9-10.

49. *Sakakawea’s Journey to Washington, D.C.: North Dakota’s Presentation of the Statue of Sakakawea to the U.S. Capital National Statuary Hall* (Bismarck: State Historical Society of North Dakota, 2005), 7.

50. *Sakakawea’s Journey*, 25.

51. Kessler, *The Making of Sakakawea*, 91.

52. *Sakakawea’s Journey*, 10, 29.

53. Clay S. Jenkinson, “The Challenge of Sakakawea,” in *A Vast and Open Plain: The Writings of the Lewis and Clark Expedition in North Dakota, 1804-06*, ed. Clay S. Jenkinson (Bismarck: State Historical Society of North Dakota, 2003); reprinted in *Sakakawea’s Journey*, 15.

54. *Sakakawea’s Journey*, 52.

55. Smith, *Conquest*, 12.

56. Roland Barthes, “Myth Today,” *Mythologies*, trans. Annette Lavers (New York: The Noonday Press, 1970), 117-119.

57. Marina Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1976), 335.

58. Kristeva, “Stabat Mater,” 101, 107.

59. Carl Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, trans. R.F.C. Hull, 2nd ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), 81.

60. Kristeva, “Stabat Mater,” 111.

61. Sam Gill, *Mother Earth: An American Story* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 155. Gill analyzes the notion that Native Americans collectively worshipped “Mother Earth,” and concludes that it is primarily a Euro-American construct that has been projected onto Native peoples.