

EVER TOWARDS THE SETTING SUN THEY PUSH US:  
AMERICAN INDIAN IDENTITY IN THE WRITINGS OF MARY ALICIA OWEN

Greg Olson

Dr. Susan Flader, Thesis Supervisor

Dr. Jeffrey Pasley, Thesis Supervisor

ABSTRACT

Mary Alicia Owen (1850-1935) is best known as a folklorist who studied and wrote about the culture, legends, and folkways of Missouri's African Americans and American Indians. While she is best remembered as the author of two major works of folklore and ethnography, *Olde Rabbit, the Voodoo and Other Sorcerers* (1893) and *Folk-lore of the Musquakie Indians of North America* (1904) she was also the author of several short stories and at least one novel and one play.

In her fiction Owen often portrayed American Indian people as a part of the lively ethnic melting pot that characterized her hometown of St. Joseph, Missouri in the mid nineteenth century. Yet, despite the years of contact Owen had with members of this vibrant mixed community, she ultimately resorted to many of the same stereotypical conventions that many European-Americans of the Victorian era relied on to portray native people. Many of these same stereotypes can be seen her ethnographic work as well. This thesis examines Owen's relationship with the American Indian people she studied and her use of stereotypes—most prominently the Noble Savage and the Vanishing Indian—in characterizing them.

When Mary came back, she looked very red from the sun. She in the sun too long. had lain. lay. was lying. had been lying. In 1912 the Titanic an iceberg on its first trip across the Atlantic, and it sank four hours later. hit. had hit. We TV for ten minutes when the electricity went off. were watching. had watched. Start your review of The Argumentative Indian: Writings on Indian History, Culture and Identity. Write a review. Aug 14, 2008 David Sasaki rated it liked it. India, the largest democracy in the world, is being criticised for the on going Hindutva movement which threatens the acceptance of non-Hindus, particularly Muslims. The BJP's powerful role in the mainstream Indian politics have further s The Argumentative Indian by Amartya Sen is a book which talks about public reasoning and how it is closely linked to the roots of democracy. The book comprises of 16 essays written on various themes over a period of time and then compiled together as this book. The issue of 'American national identity,' reduced to exemplary aspects and illustrated with examples. In order to make an issue as complex and controversial as that of 'national identity' teachable in the advanced EFL-classroom, it has to be reduced to exemplary aspects and illustrated with concrete examples. valid today, when someone's identity as a member of a particular nation is more difficult to define than ever before. towards defining nationhood in terms of descent, which is shown by the fact that blacks and Native Americans were excluded for reasons of race.