

**The “Authentic Indian”: Sarah Winnemucca’s Resistance to Colonial
Constructions of Indianness [ABSTRACT]**

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Sarah Winnemucca, a Northern Paiute author, lecturer, interpreter, and army scout, exploited the biopolitical fiction of ‘Indian authenticity’ to claim a political, activist space for herself and her agenda. Winnemucca’s work has generated a great deal of controversy over the last century. The ‘authentic Indian’ stereotypes Winnemucca engages are so intrinsic to settler colonial biopower that dealing with either her lecture series or her autobiography within the traditional binary of assimilation/tradition has been counterproductive. I argue that her work constitutes a challenge to Indigenous authenticity as a strategy of settler biopolitics.

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