

Episode 9: Dale Wrong Burgess: Indiana's most problematic journalist?

Transcript:

Easton: All right. Welcome back, one and all to another episode of the This is Problematic podcast brought to you by Connor Perry Museum.

Hannah: I'm Hannah

Easton: and I'm Easton.

Hannah: And we're excited that you're joining us again for another episode of This Is Problematic. Today we are joined by the rest of our department, minus our incredible director. And unfortunately, she's away at a conference just now. But we are joined by.

Sara: Hi, I'm Sara Schumacher. I'm the curator of Native American life and History here at Conner Prairie

Dylan: and Dylan I'm a curatorial assistant here at Conner Prairie.

Easton: So we're chillin' here at Full Strength in the studio for a very, very atypical and special episode.

Hannah: Today we're going to be talking about a book that was released in 1966 here in Indiana. So you want to talk about why we're talking about Dale and his book?

Easton: So I think it speaks very well to the issue of older scholarship being looked at through our modern lens. Because there's been a change in the historical field. Actors have changed, moments have changed. And if it weren't an issue, we wouldn't have this, of course, 21st century perspectives of questioning these things, whether we like it or not. People are going to cite this book.

It's part of the historiography, how we tell history and how history has been told over time. But this book really gives us the opportunity to show how historiography has changed and our understandings have become much better over time. And/or more importance has been placed on accurate citations and context, which is huge. Our recommendation is that the untrained eye should use gloves when you're about to throw this book in the garbage.

This book was found in a very dark corner of our library. It has been removed from the premises, never, ever to return. Shout out to Rebecca for making that happen. Are you excited? Dylan? Sarah?

Dylan: I have never been more excited in my life than to hear whatever is about to come out of your mouth from this book.

Sara: My expectations are sky high.

Easton: All right, well.

Hannah: Dale will not reach them. And that's why today's episode is rated R. So approach this one with caution and without grandma and the kids in the car.

Easton: The book today that we're discussing is titled *Just Us Hoosiers: And How We Got That Way* by Mr. Dale Wright Burgess.

Sara: Oh, Dale.

Dylan: So is he dead?

Easton: Yes. So Dale is is dead. He...

Hannah: Do you want me to do the background checks.

Easton: We can do his brief history. Why not?

Hannah: So Dale was born in 1910 in Gaston, Indiana. He worked for the Associated Press here in the state for about 32 years in total. And he did take a short break whilst he was serving in World War Two. He was a press secretary for Jimmy Carter and his 1976 presidential campaign. And he died here in Indiana in 1988.

So a couple of the reasons we thought that we needed to tackle this book were that it was highly awarded by the state. Its foreword is actually written by the governor of the time. We get into that in a minute. It won the 1967 Indiana University Writers Conference Award for the most distinguished work of nonfiction. And because of this book, as well as the body of the rest of his work, Adele was actually inducted into the Indiana Journalism Hall of Fame in May of 1972, a position he still holds.

He has had scholarships named after him. He's had awards in the journalism field named after him. So he's highly acclaimed. Let's just keep that in mind. This is edited together from a series of articles across his career. So these are articles he cherry pick.

Easton: And one more thing we do want to keep in mind before we get reading and crack this thing open is that we are in no way supporting or condoning these views or anything. And it's easy to just look at a book written back in the day and be like, Oh, this is so jacked up and problematic. It is. But we also need to understand that the main reason that we wanted to speak on this is because he's still just being honored and he's still held in very, very high regard. And we want to share the complete history of how this man got on the map.

Hannah: Nowhere did we see this book being publicly broken down, acknowledged for its problems. He's still been purely praised and there's been very little criticism. And that's always concerning when it comes to writers and historical. I don't know if I call him a historical writer. He's a journalist, but he certainly is dipping his toe here into trying to tell history.

I think the other important thing to note, this episode is rated R. There will be a great deal of explicit material and explicit language, not from us, from Dale, but in us telling the story we will be quoting from and acknowledging that. So just be careful in listening. I would not listen with younger ones or maybe even grandma in the car.

Easton: We just want to make sure that our library includes accurate material and the best material that can be used for people that are in the institution and potentially outside of the institution as well.

Hannah: I would also like to recognize that we are going to make clear when material is being quoted, and these also don't reflect our own personal opinions either.

Easton: *Just Us Hoosiers: And How We Got That Way*, Written by Dale W Burgess. The preface is written by Governor Roger D Branigan, and he wrote a pretty extensive forward here. Sara is already covering her face. Branigan had this to say, "It may never ascend to Hoosier literary heaven because of the exclusion of politics and sassafras, both close to the heart of a Hoosier. Notwithstanding errors of this magnitude, this volume will be long, tenderly dealt with by those of us who love the land. Northwest of the river, Ohio," Roger de Brannigan, December 9th, 1965.

Sara: Oh, wow.

Hannah: So that's what the governor had to say.

Easton: The very first thing that constitutes the body of this book is a poem called, quote, Injun Summer.

Sara: Oh, good god.

Easton: That is i. n. j. u. n. summer. I'm not going to read all of this. I don't want to read any of it. Here's a quote from Dale, "Yep sunnie. This is, sure enough, Injun summer. Don't know what that is, I reckon, do you? Well, that's just when all the homesick Injuns come back to play. You know, a long time ago, before your granddaddy was born, even, there used to be heaps of Injuns around here.

Thousands. Millions, I reckon. Far as that's concerned. Regular sure enough Injuns. None of your cigar store Injuns. Not much. They was all around here. Right here, where you was standing. Don't be scared. Hadn't none of them around here now. Least the ways. No live ones. They've been gone this many a year. They all went away and died. So they ain't no more left. Boy but every year long, about now, they all come back. Least the ways their spirits do. They're here now. You can see them off 'n across the fields. Look real hard. See that kind of hazy, misty look out yonder. Well, them's Injuns, Injuns spirits marching along." We're going to omit the this next section.

Sara: Oh, good God.

Easton: I'm sorry. "That's when the old Injun spirit gets tired, dancin' and goes up and squats on leaf to rest. And ever once in a while, a leaf gives way under some fat old Injun ghost. But next year, you'll see them dropping back the sky just hazy with them and their campfire smoldering away just like they are now." Words of Dale Wright Burgess Not my own.

Sara: So I would like to say that the term Indian summer is not what that is describing, but I'm assuming it's a permutation of the phrase.

Hannah: Would you like to take a look at it while you give us some perspective Sara? Because there's a cartoon in there, too.

Sara: There is a... oh, good God, why is he drawing teepees? No one in Indiana who lived here, we're using teepees.

Easton: I omitted the part about where he talks about that.

Dylan: So he wrote that poem?

Hannah: Yeah.

Dylan: And that's the opening of the book. I

Hannah: Yeah.

Dylan: It's almost like a weird celebration of Indiana in a weird kind of way.

Hannah: Immediately after our little Prolog introduction. So I'm going to read his next poem.

Sara: There's many?

Hannah: Oh, yes.

Sara: Oh, good Lord.

Hannah: I'm going to read Indiana Primer. Just preparing the children of Indiana for their alphabet. "A is for anthracite. We haven't got."

Sara: How are you going to teach kids the word anthracite?

Dylan: What is an anthracite?

Easton: We're one letter in ya'll.

Hannah: “B is for bituminous smokes quite a lot. C is for chestnuts that of the blight. D is for dogwood springs loveliest sight. E is for elumn blight got it too. F, is for fox girl in pioneer stew. G is for George Rogers Clark dotty lad. H is the hole the first settlers had. I Is the Indian finished and done. J is for Jennings first favorite son.

Dylan: Good old John. You know he died an alcoholic in Washington, DC.

Easton: Thanks, Dylan.

Hannah: “K is the conclaves once held by the clan. L is for Lincoln superior man. **M is for Morton**, who helped squash rebellion or maybe for Morgan hard riding hellion. N is for Nancy Hanks Lincoln. So plucky.”

Dylan: And dead.

Hannah: O is for the Ohio it belongs to Kentucky.

Easton: Like hell it does.

Dylan: Wait, wasn't there like, major court cases where, like, they had to dispute?

Sara: All I know is, like, bodies of water belong to the Corps of Army Engineers. It's a federal.

Dylan: Because I know there are state issues where it's like, how far does our border go into the water?

Hannah: Who paints the bridge? I know that was part of it. P is for Porter Jean Stratton of Lady. Q is the quinine that saved your granddaddy. R is for Riley, no Poet supreme. S is for Studebaker or Stanley the steamer. T for Tecumseh, Hopeless, but brave.

Sara: Oh, good God.

Hannah: U is the union we bled to save. V is for victory, right over might. W is for Wallace, how that man could write. X is for xanthos the Indian Look. Y stands for you who helped make this book. Z is for zero degrees Fahrenheit, we call that quite mild on a mild winter's night. So we looked up xanthos.

Easton: It means yellow in skin tone.

Dylan: So you're saying Native Americans are yellow?

Easton: Apparently.

Hannah: How do we feel about that poem?

Dylan: I like the squirrel part with squirrel stew.

Sara: I'm not sure how accurate is, but it sounds nice.

Dylan: People eat squirrel.

Sara: Yeah.

Easton: I'm so glad we have your expertise here, Dylan.

Sara: For him.

Easton: Especially for this to be your day.

Sara: I don't know how accurate he is.

Hannah: Was George Rogers Clark, a dotty lad?

Dylan: I don't know what dotty means.

Easton: Ryan saying..

Dylan: Ryan, what does dotty mean?

Ryan: I don't know what dotty means, but I wouldn't use that to describe George Rogers Clark.

Dylan: What does it mean?

Easton: He just says he doesn't know what it means.

Dylan: Oh, im sorry, I thought you said he did.

Hannah: Like pudgy

Dylan: Pudgy. You know, who was pudgy Henry Knox. And he got those canons over from Ticonderoga. Go, fat people.

Ryan: No its like marked by fearless resolution of valiant a dotty warrior.

Hannah: So dotty means brave, valiant.

Easton: Like Tecumseh, apparently.

Sara: No, he was saying

Dylan: Hopeless.

Sara: Tecumseh was hopeless.

Easton: But brave.

Dylan: I find Tecumseh interesting because it's like, for the longest time, he was, like, denigrated. And then he died. And then, like, their schools named after him in Indiana, it's like...

Sara: that's. Yeah,

Dylan: the myth, the mythmaking of Tecumseh's.

Sara: The myth of the martyred Indian is a pattern of behavior that is seen in a lot of places, but particularly in areas where heavy removal happened, especially traumatic removals. Well, all removals were traumatic, but especially particularly fatal ones.

Easton: Well, Hannah, I think. I think you got another one for us.

Hannah: I do. This one's a two pager. I'm not going to read the whole thing. This one's chapter is called *The Boondocks of the Mayan Civilization*.

Sara: I'm sorry, Mayan or Miami?

Hannah and Easton: Mayan.

Sara: Why are we like Mexico?

Dylan: Like Mexico?

Easton: That's a really good question.

Dylan: I've never been to Mexico.

Easton: I have.

Dylan: Really?

Easton: On a cruise. Cozumel and Costa maya. Lovely.

Dylan: Oh, was it nice?

Easton: It was. It had nothing to do with Indiana.

Hannah: To quote from Dale for his reason for tackling this topic, "The prehistoric Indians of this area," referring to Indiana, "weren't very stable. It seems they settled a spot only until the unfertilized soil

ceased to produce good crops or the game became scarce. Let's face it, Indiana was the boondocks of the Mayan and Aztec civilizations.”

Sara: What?

Dylan: They never even got up here... Did they?

Sara: Okay, first of all, the Aztec and the Maya are not in the Midwestern United States.

Dylan: Isn't that like southern Mexico?

Sara: Second of all: Unstable? To a white colonizer capitalist, maybe. But no, no, there are people inhabiting this land for damn near 20 thousand years. And they persisted. They had seasonal occupation. Some of them had permanent agriculture and lived in places year round. There's... even if your opinion of what counts to be stable includes, you know, like localized agriculture for extended periods of time, like years. Look at Cahokia. They grew corn there for like 500 years. 500 years in one place is pretty damn permanent and stable. Dale, Dale didn't do any research.

Dylan: How much did we know about the, quote unquote, prehistoric?

Hannah: Oh, he goes on to tell us where he gets his information from. He likes to take us on to further say as well, that life, for the most part for these native peoples was, I quote, too easy.

Sara: What?

Hannah: Hooting continues, “The tribes couldn't keep out of war and slaughtered one another in vast numbers, also into recorded times. In short, the Aborigines had most of the vices of modern men, except drunkenness came the white man and they swapped tobacco for liquor. Until recently, it was thought the Indians got the worst of the trade.”

Dylan: They had all the vices of other men except drunkenness. Yet all the other men, their lives weren't easy, so it makes their the Native Americans life easy if they are the same as other men with in return. In regards to vices.

Sara: I don't know. I...

Dylan: I'm sorry. I'm trying to put logic.

Sara: I don't know the logics there. I do think A. life's not easy for most people, no matter what your circumstances are. People have their own challenges, no matter where you are or what your privileges are, or blessings that you're born with. All that stuff. If he means like a game was easier to find, yeah, it's because they cultivated their environments and cared for the animals and the and like localized ecosystems that they were participating in. And they did things with reasonable expectations for returns to earth. You know, taking care of stuff, having that reciprocal relationship.

Hannah: Which that's like working harder?

Sara: Yeah, that's of

Hannah: And Smarter.

Sara: I thought. Yeah. And, you know, agriculture in a way that doesn't have to plow down all of the trees nearby and put it out in a flat field. It's pretty difficult to figure out.

Hannah: So apparently these ideas are coming from a man named Ermine W Vogelin, of Greencastle, Indiana. He had done research prior to World War Two.

Sara: Research. Huh.

Dylan: Sounds official.

Hannah: To determine some of Indiana's prehistoric tribes. He decided that they included the Quapaw, Oppo, possibly other Siouzen groups. Algonquin speaking Shawnee.

Sara: which are the Shawnee for some for some people deciding whose family was not.

Hannah: Goes on to list that the Miami may have been an Indiana.

Sara: They were

Hannah: Before the Europeans arrived. But there is some evidence they moved from Wisconsin in the 17th century.

Sara: Okay.

Dylan: That's because Indiana's the best state in the union.

Sara: So what that's about is, is that the Miami have stories which they came from further up and through the Great Lakes and into the southern areas to drive out people who are in this space at one point. As like, you know, a conquering tale of expanding and how great their nation is. Wonderful story. You should listen to people telling it who are actually Miami. But I would love to read Vogelin stuff because it sounds like. Where did he get his information?

Ryan: No, its pronounced Ermine.

Hannah: My bad. I Apologize. I mispronounced then Ermine. Was she a anthropologist?

Sara: Oh. Alright

Ryan: Quick thing, her research was use for a lot of Indian claims cases, so Indians could win back land.

Sara: Oh, good.

Ryan: So there is a good side to her story. Specifically. I do think he may have taken.

Hannah: Her words.

Sara: Out of context.

Dylan: Oh, we wouldn't cherry pick.

Sara: I would love to look into her research and see, you know, what her sources are and maybe get more direct information that's not cherry picked through his lens to see what she's talking about there.

Easton: Absolutely. Speaking of, I'm going to do a very quick brief stop before I give it back to Hannah here. By the time I got to page 23 here and I would like to show you this. Oh, good god. This hunting season reminder cartoon. This right here. This isn't even like, a good, like, fake history book. It's really just articles that ramble on, and then it just sticks a political cartoon doodle in the very bottom, because look at this one. Check this out, Sarah.

Sara: So the political cartoon has the title, quote, Hunting season reminder, unquote. The top half of the cartoon displays a what I can only describe as a very poorly done racist caricature of a Native American with a harpoon and a bow. For some reason and TPs in the background. And the subtitle to that top section says, The Indian took no more than he could use hyphen. Then it goes to the bottom panel and it has a very portly white man, very jolly with a shotgun and a pipe, and he has much more game on him. And it says, Oh boy, got my limit of everything! exclamation point with like a thought bubble about Westerner. Webster's Unabridged Dictionary. The definition of sportsman. One who in sport is fair and generous. So I don't know if that's critiquing white people hunting versus indigenous hunting and I'm guessing that's a reference to indigenous people using every aspect of any game that they hunted for tools, clothes, anything that they needed versus white people. Trophy hunting.

Dylan: Yeah, it almost feels like a critique.

Sara: It does. Its almost...

Dylan: It's a racist critique, but a critique.

Sara: It's a racist critique, but it's got a margin, a kernel of something underneath there where like, hey, if you could just, like, stare the point in the face, we might be able to get somewhere.

Easton: Precisely. It's we'll get more into this later, but it's almost as if this Dale fellow had, like a grain of sand of awareness that things needed to be addressed. But how they get addressed is a different story. I mean, I feel like I read something through going through his history that he was also a.

Hannah: Cartoonist.

Sara: Doodler.

Hannah: A doodler.

Hannah: So I think a section we're going to skip forward to starting on page 128 that I think also makes that point of him kind of getting it and then.

Sara: Completely missing the point.

Hannah: Completely missing the point. This chapter is called Let's Change the Subject. It's all about the 1920s and the Ku Klux Klan here in Indiana. So we get a little bit of an outline of the history of the Klan in the state. Um, he talks about some of the terrible murders that happened because of the Klan. And he talks a little bit about D.C. Stephenson, gives a little bit of history, and then we get to the end and he says that, yes, we'd like to forget the 1920s. Let's change the subject. So it's like, okay, let's talk about it for a second.

Easton: That was his exact quote.

Hannah: But.

Easton: Exact quote.

Hannah: But then he's just not.

Sara: So I'm sorry. He brings up the KKK.

Hannah: Yeah. Yeah.

Sara: And then goes, Let's move on.

Hannah: Yeah.

Easton: He has a very romanticized story. He sticks in there about how in the early days of the Klan, before they became monsters.

Sara: Oh, a burning cross cartoon.

Easton: Right before they became monsters. They kneel, go to their local church and meal and leave a sack of coins and go through the streets with their burning torches like a parade.

Hannah: And he compares the time of the Klan. This is a little bit more I think we should we should outline, too. He compares the Klan to the problems the 1851 constitution creating state debt. And he says we Hoosiers don't like to wash our dirty linens in public. We'd rather dispose of it in the privacy of the voting booth after it's brought to our attention. If we had a choice, we'd like to forget that the state

repudiated millions of dollars in debt in its early history. So he's saying that's the same thing as the history of the KKK and that we should just deal with it privately, as Hoosiers do. No need to. Air it to do it Publicly.

Sara: As a lifelong Hoosier, I got to say. Got to disagree. Gotta Got to deal with your terrible political history out in the open.

Hannah: But it's taken us I don't know that I would say we're even still addressing the KKK as we should be.

Sara: No, I don't think we are.

Hannah: that's true in the state. Like Madison's book came out last year. And I think that was a start. But I don't think it's a topic people like to talk about particularly.

Sara: No, I mean, I don't think a lot of people like to acknowledge that. Just a few generations ago, Indiana was not only blatantly unsafe for many of its citizens, but also the sort of breeding ground for that kind of movement outward, upward into not only the state government but into the federal government. And to acknowledge that we were part of that rebirth of the KKK would be to acknowledge that Indiana isn't always the best place to be.

Easton: So they weren't the best state in the union.

Sara: You know, I don't know if I can judge whether or not what states the best in the union, given that it's all on stolen land. But...

Dylan: Well, we for sure aren't ready to talk about the Klan, because remember, in Noblesville, they found that trunk of KKK membership cards. And there was a big hubbub about whether or not to release the names because there were families that still lived here. And so I remember here reading about that.

Hannah: And that was not long at all.

Dylan: No, it had to be less than a decade ago, I think.

Sara: I mean those people didn't care about their names being written down on those cards when they were doing that. So I say let them be public.

Hannah: Well, I think it's important to know the Dale was from rural Indiana. He was born in . So he would have been kind of in his twenties when all of that was going on. So I'm not suggesting, you know, but he may well have known people who were or, you know, there was that potentially personal connection that would have made it very uncomfortable.

Sara: Well, and they were in our government. Yeah. Not not only like city government, state government, but federal government.

Dylan: Yeah. Because there was an Indiana governor who was I don't think he was outright a member.

Ryan: There were two who were heavily supported by the KKK. And one got...

Dylan: One turned because he didn't Yeah Edward L Jackson I think was but Edward L Jackson.

Ryan: That is obviously a whole conversation.

Sara: Yes.

Hannah: That's a podcast we should do.

Sara: What I'm saying that kind of systemic spread of that ideology doesn't happen overnight and it doesn't happen without a system that allows that to be spread.

Dylan: But yeah, Edward L. Jackson. He was accused of favoring the Klan's agenda when he was in office from 25 to 29. And the guy he replaced, I think the Klan backed him initially, but then he kind of he was a little bit maybe not. And so they turned on him.

Ryan: Well, it's and goes back even to McCrae, because the General Assembly voted to have planned day at the state fair and McCrae vetoed it.

Dylan: Oh, yeah McCrae not Branch.

Ryan: Well then Ed Jackson, who was the secretary of state, gave KKK a charter to be a state organized, recognized organization. Stevenson gets appointed. Then we have the support from the Klan Anti-Catholicism Democrat Samuel Ralston is elected to the U.S. Senate.

Hannah: There you go Ralston.

Ryan: And then wheres Indianapolis Part two, sorry, separated by city, that's how its organized. Mccuaig was pushed out as governor for mail fraud. Long story but KKK was involved. Lieutenant Governor Branch becomes governor. Ed Jackson then becomes governor, supports supported by the Klan. Jackson won, blah blah, blah. Klan supports the Speaker of the House. And then Stevenson works to fill an empty Senate seat. Jackson fills the seat with Stevenson suggestion. So yes, the Senate seat was appointed to by a Klan. So both Yeah.

Dylan: Well, I think it's important to note that with the Klan there are a lot of people associated with the Klan who maybe weren't outright members,

Ryan: Right, and that's the thing.

Dylan: But did the work of the Klan used it for their own political agenda.

Ryan: Yeah. So, yeah. And then Stevenson gets arrested because that's what story,

Dylan: Right.

Ryan: And then eventually McCrae gets pardoned for his tax evasion after the whole Klan thing came out.

Easton: Taking a massive step back.

Hannah: Yeah sorry we kinda skipped forward a bit there. Okay. So we're now in chapter called Not Big Enough, quoting Dale. "Vincennes established the new post and his namesake city in 1732 or 1733. The Chickasaw, who evidently didn't like anybody, went on the warpath against the French in the Deep South, and the result was Indiana's first export of warriors. Vincennes gathered together a thousand or more Indians of various tribes to supplement his eight or ten regular soldiers and marched south." Oh, it keeps going. Sorry. Continuing to quote, "Fortified, Chickasaw villages were attacked, but the wild Indians fought back so fiercely that the tame ones went over the hill." That's...

Sara: the what?

Dylan: Yeah. So the wild ones yeeted the tame ones?

Sara: No, I think that meant that they even though they were tame, as in civilized as in, you know, assimilated that they fought with such fervor that they were no longer considered good, civilized people.

Easton: Those sent them over the hill being symbolic

Sara: Metaphorical

Easton: metaphorical.

Sara: A metaphor for their reversion back to, I don't know, enthusiastic is not the best word,

Dylan: I have a phrase in my head but I don't want to say it on the podcast.

Sara: heavily uh...

Hannah: There is a little bit more if you want to hear it.

Sara: Sure, go ahead.

Hannah: I continue quoting "Vincennes Jesuit missionary, Father Antoine snapped, and the French soldiers were captured. They were taken to the Chickasaw Capital Village near the presence of Fulton, Mississippi, beaten, tortured and burned alive. So ended the first Expeditionary Force from Indiana on a tragic holy day in another year. Palm Sunday, 1736." End quote.

Sara: Wait, So who was fighting whom there?

Dylan: They took them all the way back to Mississippi to kill them?

Sara: There's there's French people.

Hannah: Yes

Sara: Chickasaw fighting the French.

Hannah: But I also believe he's saying that some Chickasaw.

Easton: Yes, it was like a split. So they were fighting with them.

Hannah: They were fighting with them

Easton: Yes.

Hannah: Yeah.

Easton: So the French had some on their side and were also fighting others in Vincennes.

Hannah: And that's why he's saying that they were the result of Indiana's first export of warriors. So we have two different groups.

Sara: So he's making grand generalized statements about the Chickasaw tribe he has no knowledge of and then saying that their export were Native American fighters? Oh, Christ. So the tame versus wild perception, as written by Dale here, is probably referring to assimilated versus not assimilated, whether this was forced or elective. And in a bid to save their land, their connections to their homelands, their families, there are tribes that were considered by the white occupiers as more civilized versus not civilized usually on the basis of assimilation to European descent groups, standard cultural expectations. And I'm trying to phrase it as inclusively as I can so that way it covers both pre United States government and post United States government, because that gets iffy in there. And this happened for as long as Europeans were coming into this landmass.

You know, as for the burning alive, I don't know what that's about, but it's not good. I don't know why he's remarking proudly upon torture and murder of human beings. I assume it's because he's framing this as we won. But like, is that a when committing what would now be considered war crimes? I know the Geneva Convention does not apply retroactively to prior to, you know, 1954. I think it's when it starts being enforced. But still.

Hannah: And all I can find is Wikipedia and then a bunch of articles in French, which my French is not of a good enough caliber to understand.

Sara: Yeah, I don't know French.

Hannah: And but it seems that at least in U.S. historical interpretation, nothing has changed with the way that Vincennes, whose actual name is Francois Marie Besought Sur de Vincennes. So the official narrative doesn't appear to have changed much from the way that Dale is explaining it, which speaks to me in that they have not done enough digging to truly understand the complexities of that situation. It just seems to be. Vincennes ended up in Mississippi and the Chickasaw killed him.

Sara: Well, and if you think about it in a certain way, the Chickasaw are defending their land from invaders, which they have done for generations. And whether it's another invading indigenous group or it's white guys, it doesn't matter. You know, your your area, your home, your you know, that's your connection to your spirituality, your connection to previous generations. That's your connection to food, to family, to freedom. Like that's who you are. And these guys are coming in and taking it. You're going to defend that.

Easton: We're going to go back to chapter nine, and I use chapter and air quotes. The original inhabitants and the convinced is on page 38, part one of my three stop problematic thing here.

Sara: Okay, I'm going to wait until you're done with all three and then unleash.

Dylan: Well, I wont because I will forget the first one.

Easton: Well, I'm going to do the first two of the first two kind of relate. And then the third one is more of just a really, really sad fact that I've noticed from this book. So here we go. I'm quoting Dale here. "Before the pioneers could establish much in Indiana, the original inhabitants had to be convinced that raiding settlements had gone out of style and settlers were coming in a flood that no human power could stop. The convinces included General Anthony Wayne."

Dylan: That Anthony Wayne!

Easton: "Godfather of Fort Wayne and William Henry Harrison. The convinced included Chief Little Turtle of the and his white adopted son, William Tells warfare between the Americans"

Dylan: Didn't he end up getting killed?

Sara: Which person?

Dylan: I'm sorry. Go ahead, Easton.

Easton: "Warfare between the American frontiersman and the Indians was not romantic. Often it was slashing raids that left whole families lying dead and scalped in the ashes of their own cabin."

Sara: What?

Easton: "It was it was ambushes and hit one. But the Indians could fight major engagements, too, when they had good leaders."

Sara: Oh my god.

Easton: "One of them was Little Turtle." So he goes on this whole like paragraph after paragraph thing saying that really he I guess he thinks little turtle was the only good leader of the Native American.

Dylan: Well, I. I love how there's no agency given to the natives,

Sara: God forbid.

Dylan: Yeah, they can't make, so little Turtle is convinced he doesn't, you know, decide that maybe, you know, the best future is just to work with these invaders. No, he was convinced because the white people we are so convincing.

Easton: The conveners.

Dylan: Convening just means they murdered people.

Sara: Yeah, it literally held a gun up to his head and were like do what we tell you.

Dylan: And they bring you they bring up, you know, white settlers, cabins being raided and families being murdered. But the U.S. Army is doing this to Native American settlements. You know, I'm thinking of Mississinewa or what have you.

Sara: Uh, yeah.

Dylan: And where they're just burning three villages in a row to make a point. And that's that's okay. You know, according to Dale.

Hannah: It's absent.

Sara: Well, and I would also like to say.

Dylan: Well, it's hard to I'm sorry. It's hard to justify killing women and children. But if you're women and children are getting killed, then it's all right.

Sara: It's revenge.

Dylan: It's revenge.

Sara: Well, I'm also say that nine times out of ten, these reports of scalping are not true, especially scalping was a thing for certain groups, but it was not as widespread and it was not across the board, like many white reports will say, many people are convinced that all settlers have to deal with scalping like it's Little House on the Prairie kind of stuff. I asked. I have not read Little House on the Prairie, so I don't know if that actually happens on Little House on the Prairie. But they're very convinced that like, oh, these Native Americans were all sneaky and came out of the woods and burnt down these houses and

killed the women and children. And first of all, why would they do that? They know that you're going to come after them and try to hurt them and their families. Two, you're you came into their home. It's set up shop and then tried to make them leave. So why would they not resist in some way? Thirdly, why would they take any part of your unwashed dirty hair? Like, I cannot, I cannot understand.

Dylan: Hey man can I get some of the Lice?

Sara: I cannot understate the disease that white people were bringing in, mainly because they did not wash as frequently or as sufficiently or efficiently, might be a better word as the indigenous people of the area. They were also spreading diseases that come from European countries like smallpox. Malaria was already here, but diphtheria and certain flus and certain fevers were coming along, being stored in the blood of these white invaders, being they get mosquito bites, those mosquitoes transfer that disease to Native Americans who are also getting mosquito bites and all of a sudden you lose a whole town of human beings.

Hannah: So I think coming back to Dale for a second, an important takeaway is his work is working to continue to justify narratives created in the early days of colonization in this country in order to create fear and, quote unquote, settlers, because that's what scalping that that story would have been created in that way, right. To create fear.

Sara: Well, and also to to bring up the hero value of the white guys doing the same shit to the indigenous people like it is, it functions as a narrative of like, this is so dangerous. I'm so masculine by putting myself in this dangerous position and putting my life on the line. And what essentially they are doing is murder is systematic genocide. And to frame that as a hero is inherently problematic.

Hannah: But you have to do that right in order to just to justify.

Sara: Justify your own actions and to justify the land you occupy.

Hannah: But you also have to dehumanize.

Sara: Yeah.

Hannah: And so it's.

Sara: That's where the savagery, the the, the wild Indian theories and justifications come from. So what benefit was to Dale of continuing to spread this?

Dylan: I think it goes back to dehumanizing because if your history is is built on well we had to kill the Indians because they were attacking us and it was a danger to us. These big bad wolf's at the door. You know, that's okay. But if you look at it goes these were people with families and relationships trying to survive, just like my ancestor was were then it becomes a little bit murdering, you know.

Hannah: And you want to feel good about your history and what you want it to be, something you could celebrate. Just us Hoosiers and how we got that way.

Dylan: Right, and you know, as a nation, we do it on a larger side. You know, the Mexican American War no one talks about because there's no great value to be fighting for. It was land. And...

Hannah: Everybody wants to be a hero.

Dylan: Everybody wants to be a hero. And if you're defending your home, you know, that's something you can be proud of, quote unquote. But if you're just killing people because they're different, that's not as easy to swallow.

Hannah: And steal from them.

Sara: Now, it also puts the pioneers on the defensive rather than the offense. So it allows them to say, well, we were defending our homesteads. What in actuality, you were invading someone else's home. I think there's often that perception of that it was empty or that was wild and this land was heavily occupied. Human beings were here and they were using it to the full need and ability. They just weren't doing capitalistic industrialization. And so in the eyes of the people coming here, they weren't exploiting the land to the full ability and thus weren't civilized.

Hannah: We can talk about this a lot more at the end, but I do want to acknowledge for a second, because I know one of the things that we will hear, because we often hear it when we're interpreting and having studied this history, is that this is a book of its time and Dale is a person of his time. Would there have been a lack of knowledge at the time that these things were wrong?

Sara: I think that with the pervasiveness of indigenous boarding schools and the pervasiveness of lack of accountability for things that happened to indigenous people throughout United States history, there is a certain level of information. We are still learning about what happened on the school grounds to those children and we are finding mass graves that no one has talked about and unpacking that trauma. We are recording this on September 30th, which is currently in Canada, a day of truth and reconciliation, or at least conciliation, dealing with the knowledge and the trauma and acknowledging that it happened and talking about it openly. Otherwise known as orange shirt day. For those who are familiar with that term. But even in the sixties, these narratives that he is pushing, these stories that he's telling, you had to learn that, you know, that was taught to him. And these go back generations, that over 100 years of, you know, these people aren't safe, yada, yada, all that stuff. Yet Native Americans have fought with the United States on every war the United States has been in since the American Revolution. You know, there were Native Americans on the American side during the American Revolution. Native Americans have been a part of every major movement in America, for the most part, except for like things like the KKK, that kind of thing, where they, you know, have been excluded. But LGBTQ rights, civil rights, the Red Power movement certainly was Native Americans, environmental activism, all that stuff is heavily influenced by a group of people who make up a very small percentage of our population. So if Dale had bothered to speak to any indigenous person, he likely would have been corrected on some of these things even at that time.

Hannah: And he was a journalist.

Sara: Yeah.

Hannah: His job should have been to question things. He was taught to ask questions of humanity, of people. Certainly if we're going to keep him in the Hall of Fame for that field of work.

Easton: I'm going to speak a little bit more here.

Sara: You're going to quote Dale.

Easton: Quoting Dale yet again, "When the time actually came for the Indians to go west to new reservations, many refused and were moved forcibly after planting crops. As usual, it was a brutal business and missionary Father Benjamin Pettit's account of a Pottawatomie explosion in 1838 said," quote, This is Dale calling somebody, "sick and dying people on all sides" unquote. From Benjamin still quoting from Dale "Sounds like the Bataan Death March." period. "And these Potawatomi had refused to join in the black war of 1832 against the whites. The Delaware is, and Kickapoo was left in 1818 to 1820. And the w-e-a saying this right wea where we are the we are about the same time the Pottawatomie and most of the Miami's Miami.

Sara: Miami if it smelled like the town.

Easton: M-i- a-m-i-s.

Sara: Miamis. Miami is the other Miami say Miami in their language.

Easton: Most of the Miami's in the late 1830s and early 1840s. We honor the memory of the corn givers to about the same extent we worship Demeter, goddess of the corn." So I think that..

Sara: Why are we comparing indigenous people to Greek goddesses?

Easton: I don't know. I think that end was supposed to be a joke of some sort.

Sara: Might have been. So I know that public education, especially higher education, would have include classics training, especially for white men at the time. I don't understand, like if he's going into college in the 1920s, he would be learning Latin and Greek still, right?

Hannah: I would think so.

Sara: I assume so. From my understanding of the American higher education system at that time.

Hannah: Okay, up until the eighties and nineties, my mom had to do Latin and Greek.

Sara: Certainly would have learned the Myths.

Hannah: Well. And the comparison to the Bataan Death March shall we talk about that.

Dylan: Might be one of those times where he's almost got the point. Like he says, Oh, this was brutal, like the Bataan Death March.

Hannah: But he has to bring white people suffering into it. That's the only way.

Dylan: But that's just his frame of reference, I guess.

Sara: So what bugs me is that the Potawatomi death March was one of the worst events in Indiana State history. In my opinion. It was brutal. It was illegal. And it was genocide. It was it was straight up genocide. There's no sugarcoating way to say it. And like there are many quotes from many people who witnessed this death march because they didn't hate it. And to use a white Christian reverend to be like, Hey, look, we should have empathy for human beings is problematic, especially because you don't need a white guy to tell you to feel bad about people being hurt, for you to feel bad about people being hurt generally.

Dylan: Well, that's why I'm curious. The original dates, if these are all essays collected the original dates, because maybe there's some growth, however minuscule there is. Maybe some of that stuff is the early twenties and which of course is, you know, the Klan and all these things. And maybe by the sixties, as far as we could in the sixties, understand the human element, because I think I think part of it is it's not so much that it's a book of its time, it's just where we were at and willing to acknowledge truth. You know, I think so many people were calling for that, but a lot of white folk were not willing to, especially, you know, if this is published in 66, you're ten years away from the bicentennial. You know, you're not wanting to look at the darker side of your nation's history when you're coming up on the bicentennial. Whereas

Sara: Its funny because it's just sort of the reoccupation of wounded Knee too.

Dylan: Whereas today, I think we're more willing to to tear down that nostalgia and look at it critically. I don't think would have would have really been possible in the sixties.

Sara: I think also to speak a little bit more about how white people might be more or less receptive at the time in the fifties and sixties, those Wild West shows based on the Wild West touring shows of the 50s and early 60s, Era became very popular on TV and in movies you see things like Bonanza, you see movies about cowboys, and the villains are indigenous people or rich, greedy miner guys. Typically

Dylan: I'm going up to them hills to find gold!

Sara: Yes. And, you know, that's that speaks to the nostalgia and the conceptualization of what it means to be American and its nationalism and the propaganda that perpetuates general media. Because, you know, the main three networks that are publishing that all have government contracts, you know, for news and whatnot. And so they would be subject to certain standards.

Hannah: I think sometime we'll get to and and we're we're getting through it. We've got another bit to go and then we'll get to that odds and Ends Point at the end where basically Dale chucks in all the things he finds interesting that he didn't have a place for in his essays.

Sara: It's a bit of a rare moment.

Hannah: Exactly. But I think that our biggest critic of that section is the lack of context. But I think Dale really fails at that the entire way through the book. You know, say he had had some growth that should have been acknowledged up front and then perhaps contextualize your articles with a little bit of commentary. There is no commentary. He's just chucked these all in a book, released it, and the public has gone yay! You go to the Hall of Fame and that's that in and of itself.

Dylan: Was there a particular work that propelled him into the Hall of Fame? Was it this Book?

Sara: I believe it was this book, and his pervasiveness in general.

Hannah: And in journalism, but everywhere his obituary, everything quotes this book, The States Worst Disasters.

Sara: Oh, dear.

Hannah: Quoting dale, of course, who else would we quote? "The 1794 battle in which mad Anthony Wayne broke the Indians up the Maumee River from Fort Wayne was called Fallen Timbers because some colossal storm had leveled the giant trees over a wide area. The big blow may have killed a few Indians, but now when a severe storm"

Dylan: Minor details.

Hannah: "But now when a severe storm hits the Midwest, where suburbs spread farther from the cities every day, the result is calamity."

Sara: As he talk about tornadoes.

Hannah: "As far as Indiana is concerned, the worst natural disaster was the great storm of April 11th, 1965."

Dylan: Oh yeah, Palm Sunday, tornadoes.

Hannah: Oh yeah, that's Palm Sunday.

Dylan: Leveled Rushville.

Hannah: Three bands of tornadoes churned across central and northern strips of the state, fatally injuring 140 persons, hurting hundreds of others and causing property damage of possibly 100million.

Dylan: How the hell does this tie into the battle of fallen timber?

Easton: That is exactly what I wrote on that poster. That is exactly what I.

Hannah: Because he has to compare white pain to native pain and say...

Sara: and that the native pain is hypothetical even.

Hannah: Exactly.

Sara: Which is ridiculous. I..

Dylan: Was the storm even part of the battle? Or was the battlefield fort where a storm had gone through.

Sara: Where a storm had gone through.

Dylan: So it wasn't actively storming while they were no fighting?

Sara: No.

Easton: He literally plugged that at the start.

Sara: I believe the storm happened at least a month prior. If not longer before.

Easton: He plugs that at the very beginning and uses it as a Segway.

Dylan: Yeah, that's a weird like a weird stretch....

Sara: Its like a steam of consciousness. It's barely connected. I just I'm trying to follow and it's difficult.

Dylan: Like there wasn't another famous storm in Indiana that you could allude to.

Sara: What didn't the the five state tornado also go through part of Indiana, that big storm that killed like a ton of people in the early 1900s?

Hannah: Could you just talk about the storm in 65 and say they were awful? Like, do you really need to compare them?

Sara: Well, and what I find interesting is they love to mention mad Anthony Wayne, but they don't mention Wayne's war. That was a series of battles that happened in between the American Revolution and the war of 1812.

Dylan: Is that what we call the Northwest Indian War?

Sara: There's different names for it, but that's part of it. Yes.

Hannah: Okay. So tomato juice see anyone?

Sara: Tomato juice?

Dylan: Shout out to Red Gold in Elwood.

Sara: Dylan...

Easton: And it we have finally shifted gears and taken aim at another victim. This chapter, Chapter 35, is titled Tomato Juice Anyone?

Sara: So odd.

Dylan: That's a weird title.

Easton: Quoting Dale. His literal first sentence. As is often the case, "There would have been no civil war if the plantation owners had tried to make the slaves work as hard as the average 19th century Indiana housewife.

Sara: Oh my God.

Dylan: Wowzers

Sara: I was just about to comment on how this is very against Native Americans, but he hasn't said anything blatantly against black people. Nevermind

Easton: We've hit a pivot. There's been a there's been a pivot.

Sara: What the...

Hannah: What he does mostly ignore that black people existed in Indiana.

Easton: He does!

Hannah: We need to point that this is one of the few mentions.

Easton: One of the few mentions. Yes. And how endearing it is.

Sara: And its so incredibly racist.

Hannah: Oh, Hold on.

Easton: I'm only I'm only one sentence out of two here.

Dylan: Was tomato juice a 19th century drink?

Sara: I have no idea.

Easton: “After a couple of days, the field hands would have boiled out of the quarters, massacred the owners and put their mansion to the torch.”

Hannah: If they had been worked as hard as 19th century Indiana housewife.

Easton: So what says to me a black man is that.

Sara: According to Dale.

Easton: That according to Dale.

Dylan: They had too much free time.

Easton: They had too much free time. But had they been subjected to the woes of the Indiana housewife and though I know her woes were probably plenty, they would have fast tracked their rebellions against their masters.

Sara: You know what I would like to say to Dale? You can acknowledge suffering without comparing the two. First of all. Second of all, what in the actual hell? Because I'm sorry, at what point do you think slavery is easier than being a housewife? Like what?

Dylan: Yeah, I mean, being a housewife in the 19th century would suck. But...

Sara: Look.

Hannah: But being a slave?

Sara: Being a slave would suck.

Easton: Let'em let'em let'em. We just hurt conjunction junction. Let him let them get the butt out.

Dylan: But that's not a perpetual state, right? You can...

Sara: Agreed.

Dylan: You know, if you can have your children, you can keep your children, you can, you know, keep the fruits of your labor, figuratively and literally.

Hannah: You can leave.

Dylan: And you can leave if you want to go to town, you go to town.

Sara: Look, there are many newspaper reports of wives disappearing.

Hannah: Yeah.

Sara: And the husbands trying to track them down. We have screened through many of them on microfiche.

Hannah: Divorce wasn't easy, but it was possible.

Dylan: For desertion, yes, they had to have been deserted for two years, according to the 1830s law.

Sara: Yeah.

Dylan: They can get a divorce. It is possible.

Sara: It's possible. And also white privilege exists even then. It exists now. And that's a major factor that Dale does not seem to be conceptualizing here. And he's staring at right in the face, but he just isn't acknowledging it whatsoever.

Hannah: True, that takes us into the odds and ends section, which is right at the end of the book.

Sara: Oh, God, Lightning Round.

Hannah: This is the only place other than that Civil War section where he deigns to acknowledge that black people exist. He talks a little about Madam C.J. Walker. Quote, "Mrs. C.J. Walker of Indianapolis was the first Negro woman in the United States to become a millionaire. She founded the manufacturing company with a hairdressing formula in 1910," unquote.

Sara: That's all he says. I would like to state that she was the first self-made female, millionaire.

Hannah: Female

Sara: Female

Hannah: Of any woman.

Sara: Any any female millionaire in the United States, self-made as well. She started this business from the ground up, came up with her own recipes and did this door to door building a cosmetics empire.

Hannah: Apparently, she's Just an odd and end.

Easton: Dale's hands were tired that day. I guess he didn't feel like... continuing to write

Sara: I am so curious why she's She's an odd and end.

Dylan: Im surprised she's in there at all if being honest.

Sara: She deserves so much more.

Hannah: Dylan makes a good point.

Easton: So you had spoken about this entire section. The reason why this whole book really, but especially this odds and ends section is so awful is because, I mean, there is no context whatsoever. It's just these fancy decorative ellipses things.

Sara: Oh the little stars?

Easton: They look like tiny cog wheels or flowers or daisies or something, but they just they just separate all this stuff. I mean. Look at.. Lets.. I really don't want to, but let's read this one.

Hannah: Oh, and there are no references in the entire book where Dale got this information.

Easton: So uh

Hannah: Could have been some dude on the street corner.

Easton: So on page 160, he begins with...

Dylan: Billy Bob. How do you feel about the Indians?

Sara: Cite your sources!

Easton: The... he begins this odds and ends section by sharing that "the first machine gun, the multi barreled Gatling gun was manufactured in Indianapolis in 1862." The next quote is "Killing Indians wasn't considered murder under any circumstances until a family of Senecas was slaughtered near Pendleton in 1826. Three White men were hanged and the white boy was pardoned on the gallows." And now we're going to talk about the migration of gray squirrels.

Sara: Hold on..

Dylan: We can we can talk about how it wasn't considered murder, but they were only prosecuted. So to prevent a Native American rebellion so they could keep selling land and induce white settlers to move there.

Easton: Dylan, you just added context.

Dylan: Oh, Sorry.

Sara: Also, there are previous incidents where white people have murdered indigenous people in Indiana prior to 1826. And although it may not have been considered murder by the state or the white people in general, I'm pretty sure that that's the word that indigenous people would have used to describe it if they were using English. Why would you like what else is that?

Dylan: Murder is murder.

Hannah: So...

Dylan and Sara: Homicide

Hannah: a couple of points as we carry on, would ya'll like to hear a little bit more about what Dale has to say about civil war.

Sara: Just a moment. I'm sorry. I just I just realized that Madam C.J. Walker gets the same acknowledgment as the great squirrel migration and that really...

Hannah: And the gun.

Sara: And and a gun

Easton: and a singular Gatling gun.

Dylan: Because Gatling guns are cool. You didn't see that. But I imitated one.

Hannah: Oh, and the American beauty rose long, a symbol of romance developed in the girl greenhouses at Richmond. They're all the same level of importance.

Sara: Yeah. A flower, a human being, murder, squirrels.

Dylan: But she was first.

Sara: She was.

Hannah: Shall we hear about what Dale had to say about Civil War? So I'd like to point out at this point, we had that conversation a little while ago about Dale's level of knowledge. I would like to think that Dell's level of knowledge about the civil war would have been higher. We're going to recognize that he would have been raised again early 20th century, the height of the lost Cause mythology. But by the sixties, public knowledge would have been better about the history of the Civil War. So let's hear what he thinks about it.

Sara: I would also like to say that a lot of people who existed in his early career, who he probably interviewed and interact with, would have been alive at the time of the Civil War.

Hannah: Yeah

Sara: So would be getting first person information.

Hannah: His own parents.

Sara: People who lived through this historical event would have been able to speak to him about it. So he has no excuse to have certain informational deficiencies.

Hannah: Quote, "It's not idle phrase making to say that the Civil War was the last fought by gentlemen."

Sara: What??

Hannah: "On a bitterly cold night in 1862, it was obvious that many Confederates soldiers probably would die in unheated Camp Morton Prison in Indianapolis. Private citizens offered to take the young men, many of them wounded, into their homes. Colonel Richard Owen, the commandant, let them go on their honor to return, and every one of them was back in camp the next day. The colonel later was captured at Munford, Kentucky, and the Confederates sent him home with their blessings. Some of them and their descendants took up a collection half a century later and bought a bust of the Colonel, which now stands in the Indiana State House Rotunda", unquote.

Sara: There is also a monument to Morton at Indiana University in the Student Union. Morton's get his own statue for that particular event that you mentioned.

Hannah: But the Confederates, they sent him home with their blessings and they all returned. They were such honorable gentleman.

Sara: Yes. That's what happens when you're injured and you can't run.

Hannah: Mm mm. So we know what Dale thought of those confederates.

Dylan: Well, I do want to point out that a civil War prisoner of war camps, there seems to be, even today, a competition like Confederate sympathizers, like Union War prisons were the worst in the union. The Northerners would be like, I know the Southern prisoner war camps were the worst. It's like they're both pretty bad.

Sara: I mean, disease was rampant amongst everywhere during the Civil War, I mean, particularly amongst units in barracks, but also in prisoner of war camp.

Dylan: Stick thousands of people into a small camp that was never designed for that.

Sara: Yeah. I mean, you're going to get a disease spread that is astronomical.

Dylan: You're not you don't want to spend money on them.

Sara: Yeah.

Dylan: Not your guys.

Sara: Yeah. Well, and also, how much money do you have for prisoners of war?

Hannah: Well, and why is the one thing that Dale is spending more time on than any.

Sara: Anything else.

Hannah: Is the welfare of these Confederate soldiers.

Dylan: Because that looks good on Indiana. Like, oh, look at Indiana. We are genteel, we are civil. We...

Sara: We care for our enemies just as much as ourselves.

Dylan: Yeah, it's it's self serving.

Hannah: Fought by gentlemen.

Sara: I guess you didn't like the Spanish American War.

Easton: Swashbuckling gentlemen like John Hunt, Morton.

Dylan: Jesus, be a fence.

Hannah: Oh, we did talk by him in the primary didn't we? What did he have to say about Morton?

Easton: M is for Morton, who helped squash rebellion or maybe for Morgan a hard writing Hellian.

Hannah: Hard writing hellian.

Dylan: Hard writing hellion got shot in the back. Good riddance.

Easton: I'm really happy to report that this is one of the last things I will say about this book.

Dylan: forever?

Easton: Hopefully.

Dylan: I will buy you a copy of this book for Christmas.

Easton: I will. I will politely declined. I would like to quote Dale one more time. Page 168, "One of the many highly respected Negroes in Indiana history was James S. Hunter of East Chicago. He had served 24 years in the General Assembly. He died in 1965 at the age of 63 and had been Democratic caucus leader

in the House in 1944 to 1955 and in 1965, a native of New Orleans, he found Indiana in a state of opportunity when he came as a steelworker in the 1920s. That's all this, this, this says right here.

Hannah: That's the note we end on. That's what the book finishes up on.

Easton: That's it.

Hannah: Indiana.

Easton: A state of opportunity.

Sara: That's the bit he wanted to highlight?

Hannah: For people of color.

Dylan: Well, you don't want to publish a book about your state that's like, man, this place fucking sucks.

Hannah: We do! no.

Sara: I would love to read actual history instead of just conceptualizations.

Hannah: So why did we just an hour and a half talking about this piece of utter crap?

Easton: Well, I can at least speak on my takeaways from this book.

Hannah: Mm hmm.

Easton: They give me a better understanding of what it truly means to be a product of your time and place, quote, unquote. This book is likely only popular because of the time and place. It's not even good lazy history. It's just this weird, pseudo satirical, blunt lump of paragraphs. It's hard to discern what exactly is actually historically accurate and what's actually like racism tainted law. I wanted to call it like folklore nostalgia, but it's almost too valid because some nostalgia is valid and factually sound and folklore is almost mislabeled. And both of them can at the very least hold elements of truth about the people who contributed to it. This right here is pandering garbage of the worst kind. The chapters barely exceed two and a half pages. The titles are just ambiguous enough to inspire curiosity to keep, but they don't hold any substance. It's just biased, bloody stories that Burgess handpicked on a whim. And they punctuated with these like uncharacteristically curt factoids or romanticization on random historical figures from Indiana's past. It's riddled with tiny sneak disses towards the Soviet Union that don't flow well at all. And one thing that

Sara: I'm Sorry of all.

Easton: We skipped it.

Dylan: Where are the Commies?

Hannah: There were so many!

Sara: We haven't even gotten into that.

Easton: We skipped it. But there there

Dylan: Fucking Soviets

Easton: is there is a there is a point in there where it's just these random like, look at all these wonderful, vast ears of corn over and over as far as the eye can see. You don't get that where the Soviets live.

Hannah: Yeah, yeah,

Sara: Yeah. Well, and you fun fact by that corn genetically engineered by indigenous populations it was originally a grass.

Hannah: Not back in the USSR though.

Easton: You wonder what patrons did his PR.

Sara: Whoever whoever boosted the popularity of the book.

Dylan: How long is this paragraph you're reading?

Easton: It's it's not a... Are we really doing this now? We're almost finished. Can. Can you just let me...

Dylan: Hurry up and finish or I'm going to lose the thought.

Easton: I have two more sentences.

Dylan: Its going to die of loneliness.

Easton: I have two more sentences to read.

Sara: Okay. Okay. Let's listen to the rest of the... Why don't you start that last sentence over so that we can we can get the whole thing.

Easton: You wonder what patrons did is PR and altered the image of what's considered, quote unquote, good writing. You know, you would think with all of his acclaim and accolades, he still holds, you know, the Hall of Fame, the awards and scholarship, that he'd be able to at least slightly connect his points. And he doesn't. Dylan you look like you have something you would like to say.

Hannah: It looks like he's going to explode.

Dylan: No, I just want to say that I don't want the listeners to get the idea that this is not this is a this is something that only happened in the 1966. Right? Today, you still see so much history that's written that's pretty bad. It is very one sided. It is very under contextualized. But these books still regularly sell and make it on to bestsellers lists. Now we can talk about how they make it there with groups favoring that author buying large quantities, but they are still they are able to put that label on their cover and a non-discerning reader could pick it up and think that a Brian Kilmeade book on history is good and not realize that, oh, this might be coming from a certain perspective or who, you know, this guy is not a real or a trained historian, you know. So this is not a phenomenon that is only in the past. It is still there.

Hannah: I think what's important to note as well is that what gives those books as you're talking about weight is often that they have that star on the front, that the author is awarded such and such a prize or is recognized by such and such an organization. So the fact that Dale has has been recognized by such organizations as IU and the Indiana Journalism of Fame, and the fact he still continues to hold those prizes 50 years later, no one has ever done the work to look back this and say, why was this man awarded this stuff?

Sara: Well, and also things are in his name scholarships are in his name.

Hannah: Yeah.

Sara: So they're saying that there is being given to this person we think is going to be a really good writer or make our university look good or whatever. And we want that name associated with that success.

Dylan: Yeah, I just don't want people to think that there wasn't good history being made in the 1960s.

Sara: No,

Hannah: No.

Sara: There was.

Dylan: That this is not typical. I think of good history from that period. It is definitely not representative.

Sara: Well, and I also think that there's a difference between good history written for academic audiences like peer publishing, that kind of thing, versus the general public consumption. Think this book is very much for the general public. It would not fly if you brought it to a history department and we're like, Hey, isn't this a good piece of like, like that's their that's their livelihood, that's their work that they do the field that they, you know, work. And I feel like if someone wanted to call him a historian, it might be a bit disrespectful to that profession.

Easton: These are originally columns for the Associated Press were lumped together to form this book.

Dylan: So it's geared towards a public audience. But then again, history books from that period that were also geared to public audience, I'm thinking of Bernard Ballard's ideology of the American Revolution. It was geared to popularize, but it's still considered good history.

Sara: You can do public history and work that for the general public and do it really well and research. It takes a lot of work and a lot of effort, and I don't want to diminish the work that Dale may have put to this work, given that it was his magnum opus. But I do feel that real good history takes a lot more than newspaper articles slapped together in a book.

Hannah: To take some references, at the very least, right where you get information from

Sara: context.

Hannah: Context. I do think one of the reasons we this episode I want to acknowledge that is that often works like this one. I don't know if I even want to call it public history, but but stuff that might be phrased as history for the public is often ignored by academic historians and academic departments. And yet sometimes texts like this, actually have a lot more impact on the public perception of history than what we would class as good academic history. And so it is important, I think, to talk about what people would have been reading in the newspapers. It's still in so many libraries. That's what takes me back. And if you stumbled upon this even today as a person with very little historical knowledge, you Google him and he's got these awards. Why don't you think Dale is trustworthy?

Sara: You might think it's a more reliable source. Yeah.

Hannah: Yeah. Than it actually is. And that in and of itself, we are saying that books need to be put in context and that people need to understand the dangers that they can hold within their covers. And this is a dangerous text.

Sara: Yeah and that collections, not everything that comes into a particular collection needs to stay there forever.

Hannah: Accurate

Sara: Yeah

Hannah: Some things can do in the Goodwill pile.

Sara: Yeah. Especially sometimes, you know, books that are outdated. Or perhaps you could find a history on the state of Indiana that might have clearer sources, more accurate information. It doesn't mean that the book needs to be removed, but it can the job can be done better by a book in its place. And if you only have so much space, it makes sense to limit that collection.

Dylan: Don't read this book. Free the bookshelf space.

Ryan: We worked at the same newspaper.

Dylan: you worked at the same newspaper?

Hannah: Congratulations. Oh he went to Ball State.

Ryan: Yeah he worked at the DOE

Easton: It's good for you Ryan. You're now connected to Dale.

Hannah: So before we finish, we have had the take aways that we are not condoning book burning, that we are simply here to contextualize this book, ensure that people are paying attention to sources of public history's most academic history and really questioning where those sources come from. We're saying that perhaps this man is no longer worthy of some of the accolades he was given and that certain institutions probably should be recognizing the troubles of Mr. Burgess's work as well as that there's very little benefit that we found. But you know what? Maybe he did something great out there somewhere that hasn't been found out yet.

Easton: I'll let you know when I find it.

Hannah: But is there is there anything more that we've missed from this conversation?

Sara: I don't know if we've missed it, but I definitely want to make clear that the harmful stereotypes and blatant, incorrect statements Dale makes about indigenous people in the United States are incredibly racist and destructive towards indigenous rights and sovereignty as well as you know just acknowledging that they exist and respect for their cultures and the people who are part of them. Native Americans still exist. So, Dale, you got that one wrong. Native Americans still exist in Indiana. So Dale, you got that one wrong, too. Thirdly, there was no time when Native when it became time for the Indians to be removed, I think is how he phrased it. That's when white people started to value and sell the land and survey it in a certain way that made it profitable.

So as soon as the land that you're that the indigenous group is on, as soon as that land becomes profitable, that's when Native American tribes are removed from their homeland through either a series of skirmishes, battles, wars, false treaties, or promises of, you know, we'll rent the land from you in this area for just a little while. And then they're like, No, this is ours forever now. In the case of the Cherokee Nation, the Cherokee Nation had sovereignty and recognized by the Supreme Court and by the federal law of the land. But the state of Georgia found gold underneath the Cherokee land and decided that white people should be moving in there and so they disregarded federal law and the Supreme Court ruling and essentially started the beginning of what became the foundation for the Trail of Tears under Jackson's Indian Removal Act. I'm sure you can speak more about the actual laws there, but because I'm I'm not a law expert and I'm certainly not an 1830s law expert, but just there are harmful perspectives and biases being baked into everything. And if academic histories behind that paywall and all you're getting is this in his newspaper articles or in his book, I would be concerned for how you conceptualize indigenous people in the United States after reading this.

Hannah: We've also talked about this a little bit, but we also have to acknowledge that Dale is attempting to tell the story of Just us Hoosiers and how we got that way whilst completely missing the fact that there were black people in this space from the time of statehood onwards, most likely in areas.

No, actually, certainly there were there were always people of African descent in Indiana, in the land that became Indiana. His...

Easton: Some of them even helped found cities.

Hannah: Exactly his few acknowledgments very much away and his underplaying of suffering.

Sara: As people of color outside of black and indigenous people

Hannah: Who are completely absent.

Sara: Yes, we are completely absent from the narrative that Dale constructs. And although I'm not experts on those communities and I'm not comfortable speaking for them in their history, I do think that their stories, if you're going to tell the story of a Hoosier, their stories need to be included because they are Hoosiers too.

Hannah: There are also almost no women in this book.

Sara: Except for apparently the housewife.

Hannah: Yes. Whose lives were...

Dylan: Hard going in the 19th century.

Sara: God forbid you be anything else. So, Yay. Not to mention genderqueer people.

Hannah: Oh, no, no, no

Sara: that's that's just completely off the table.

Dylan: It's a very etiological book. It is very you know, when it came time for the Indians to be removed, you know, it was never guaranteed the Indians would be removed. You know, it was never foreordained, by God that things would play out the way they did, that there were actors and there were people with agency that were there and doing the things. So it was not just a forward progress of time, right. Or of achievement that there were setbacks and there were times things got a little hard and it wasn't always going to be, you know, it wasn't always guaranteed to end up pretty. So...

Sara: I think also you've mentioned this a couple of times, talking about conceptualizations of pioneer life, that there's this idea of individuality and isolation that does not actually coincide with the real history.

Hannah: I would say that's definitely a topic we should sit down, talk about at some point, given given the history we're telling here.

Sara: I think I think Dale's book with his individual highlights of particularly individual white guys who are pioneering or whatever the hell they're doing.

Dylan: Occupation: Pioneer.

Sara: Yeah.

Dylan: It's a full time job.

Easton: Sorry that you all had to go through this, but thank you all for taking some time out of your day and spend some time with us.

Hannah: Perhaps we will highlight one more problematic book next year.

Dylan: One problematic book, a season.

Hannah: Perhaps. Make sure to leave us a review wherever you get your podcasts and to like us and share us on social media.

Dylan: Only leave a review if it's good.

Easton: We're still where you can always find us. Apple Podcasts, Spotify, and eventually the Conner Prairie website.

Hannah: Mm hmm. And you have not checked out our Instagram and Twitter. They have been living kickin' for a while now. You can find us on Instagram, but this is problematic Podcast one and on Twitter at Problematic Pod two. Bye

Easton: Take care.

Dylan: Yeeee!