“Truant” Dispositions and Inclinations: Alternative Masculinities in Cooper’s The Last of the Mohicans

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Abstract

In this paper I flesh out and call to appreciation these queer spaces of masculine freedom—freedom to be “a man” outside the rigid, stultifying, and hegemonic constrictions imposed by modern heteronormativity. In Mohicans, I argue, a culture’s progress—indeed even its survival—is dependent upon the acceptance of diverse masculinities. Homogeneity and compulsory conformity—the establishment of a masculine orthodoxy—lead to stagnation and even annihilation.