Creating A Frontier War

Prophetstown for Their Own Purposes
Violence and American Expansion

Violence as empowering

Factionalism
  o French and Miamis
  o Miamis
  o Americans

Miami Identity
William Wells
- U.S. Indian Agent
- Once a captive

The Prophet as a threat

Miamis in trouble

Identity

Rumors and fear

Damned
French traders
  - Troubles
  - Varied allegiances

Spring of 1809

Estimates
“Nine tenths of them prefer the interests of the Indians to that of their employers.”

- Harrison to Secretary of War William Eustis
The Indian woman had been killed by “by Some of the Prophets Party to carry on the deception and to prevent us from taking the alarm at the force he is collecting . . .”

- Toussaint Dubois to Harrison
Territorial Election and the Treaty of Fort Wayne (1809)
Self-defense
The Treaty
  - Factions of Miami
Elihu Stout and *The Western Sun*
The Prophet intended “to come [to Vincennes] with a large body of men that 4 or 5 would be assigned to each House and himself with 12 or 15 would enter [Grouseland] and having destroyed [the governor] a signal would be given by a person posted for that purpose to commence the Massacre in the Town –This fellow [the Prophet] has boasted that he would follow the footsteps of the Great Pontiac.”

- Harrison to Eustis
Why did Harrison fear the Prophet?

Factionalism
  - Slavery
  - Anger
  - Treaty of Fort Wayne
  - Outrage

Visions of Prophetstown

Paranoia
Reframe the debate

Ethnic factions
NOT nations

Marginalized, but not powerless

Three narratives