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## **Reclaiming Indigenous Intellectual, Political, and Geographic Space: A Path for Navajo Nationhood**

Lloyd L. Lee

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# Reclaiming Indigenous Intellectual, Political, and Geographic Space

*A Path for Navajo Nationhood*

LLOYD L. LEE

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The tribal governance standards of the past are not obsolete. They were focused on maintaining the health and wellness of every member of the community. Safety, health, wellness and protection were facilitated, not by dominance, confrontation, conflict and coercion, but by ethics, communication, cooperation and reverence for the creator and the laws of nature. To continue to preserve our cultural strengths in self-governance, we must renew our cultural teaching and restructure our tribal government according to the spiritual values of the *Holy People* and our ancestors because our children deserve balanced living, harmony in communication, peace in the family, beauty in the environment and joy with our hearts, homes, and communities.

Carol Perry and Patricia Anne Davis, "Dineh Sovereignty Is Spiritual Empowerment and Self-Identity"

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For millennia, Navajo society was self-sufficient.<sup>1</sup> After 1863, beginning with Kit Carson's murderous rampage among the Navajo and the subsequent removal to the Bosque Redondo reservation, Navajo nationhood changed.<sup>2</sup> Navajo society began a slow transformation away from the distinct Diné way of life. In the twentieth century Navajo nationalism was born.<sup>3</sup> Henry Chee Dodge, Deshna Clah Cheschillige, Thomas Dodge, Henry Taliman, Jacob C. Morgan, Annie Wauneka, Ned Hatathali, and many other leaders worked to protect the well-being of the Navajo people. During this process, Navajo government and, more specifically, the Navajo Nation became an institution and agency many ancestors never

envisioned or contemplated. It became a Westernized political organization, a three-branch governmental system that includes 110 chapter houses designed to be community links to the centralized political structure.<sup>4</sup>

Today, many socioeconomic problems exist, and, despite the existence of a Western-style system of political representation designed to address them, the Navajo people—from grassroots activists to writers—are not only disenchanted with the centralized government system but calling for and theorizing sovereignty from intellectual positions grounded in a distinctively Navajo epistemology. For instance, Navajo grassroots leader Norman Brown stated his frustration with the tribal government in 2003: “If we can’t go to our government, we can’t go to our president, where else can we go? We believe the federal government, the Navajo Nation Council and the Navajo president are the same. Look at their policies.”<sup>5</sup> Diné educator Eulynda Toledo-Benalli has called for the need to reconceptualize Navajo sovereignty: “New ideas and thoughts need to be put into our leaders’ heads and also our future leaders.”<sup>6</sup> Diné writer Reid Gomez has also expressed the need for Native people to think about sovereignty in terms of the people’s ability to think, speak, and act on their homelands: “When we practice an intellectual spiritual sovereignty, we step outside those narratives [the ideologies of the conquerors] and work from within our own worldviews and from our own origins and migrations.”<sup>7</sup> As these examples suggest, Diné people are beginning to rethink and reconceptualize the meaning of true Navajo self-determination and how they can ensure its manifestation.

Various concerned Navajo citizens organized a grassroots group in 2002 called Diné Bidziil (Navajo Strength) with the idea of activating hope and action. One of the cofounders, Norman Brown, believes Navajo people must act now to reform Navajo government. Like many academically based Indigenous scholars, he views “sovereign” as a concept foreign to Navajo thought and theory. He advocates reform and leads efforts to reclaim Indigenous space.

What our ancestors have been saying is, we are independent people. We are an independent nation with our own customs, our own culture, our own language, our own science, our own medicine, and our own law. We were independent when Spain first came here, a 150 year war; Mexico, 100 years; Americans, what? 85–90 years, almost a century? We have been fighting for the past 350–400 years,

our Navajo people, because we were independent. We have always been independent. But until we truly develop a government based on the wishes of the Navajo people, based on the historical ancient teachings of our Navajo people—we can't go across the world or even in Congress saying we are sovereign. We shouldn't be talking sovereign. We should be talking independence.<sup>8</sup>

Discussion on the significance and meaning of self-determination and tribal sovereignty is not new to Indian Country. Some very prominent Native writers and intellectuals such as Vine Deloria Jr., Taiaiake Alfred, Jeff Corntassel, David E. Wilkins, Glenn T. Morris, Tom Holm, Waziyatawin Angela Wilson, and Simon Ortiz have reflected on the concept of tribal sovereignty and self-determination and, in order to achieve self-reliance and self-confidence, have called Native peoples to return to the positive energy of Indigenous epistemologies that is desperately missing from Native communities. Along the way, for instance, Deloria in *The Nations Within: The Past and Future of American Indian Sovereignty* argues for self-determination:

Assuming responsibility for education and various aspects of social welfare, adopting the use of customary law in tribal courts, and refusing development schemes that would injure lands beyond repair all seem to be steps toward creating a better reservation society that hints at the idyllic vision of the traditional people.<sup>9</sup>

Ortiz, in *Woven Stone*, concurs:

We need to insist on Native American self-sufficiency, our heritage of cultural resistance, and advocacy for a role in international Third-World de-colonizing struggles, including recognizing and unifying with our indigenous sisters and brothers in the Americas of the Western Hemisphere.<sup>10</sup>

Thus, academically-based and community-grounded Native intellectuals and writers alike are expressing the need for Native societies to restore the health and prosperity of the people using historical Native ways of governing.

Alfred and Corntassel provide one approach to reclaiming self-sufficiency in “Being Indigenous: Resurgences against Contemporary Colonialism.” They discuss how Indigenous peoples can resist further dispossession and disconnection to the Indigenous ways of life. In their

view, too many and for too long Indigenous peoples have been on a quest for power and money rather than reclaiming Indigenous intellectual, political, and geographic space. They believe Indigenous peoples have true power in their relationship to the land, relatives, language, and ceremonial life.<sup>11</sup> They build on the peoplehood model (the interconnection of community, language, and cultural practices) first put forth in 1962 by Edward H. Spicer in *Cycles of Conquest* and expanded upon in a variety of ways by Robert K. Thomas in “The Tap-Roots of People,” Vine Deloria Jr. and Clifford M. Lytle in *The Nations Within*, and Tom Holm, J. Diane Pearson, and Ben Chavis in “Peoplehood: A Model for the Extension of Sovereignty in American Indian Studies.” Alfred and Corntassel consider relationships (or kinship networks) to be the core of an authentic Indigenous identity.<sup>12</sup> While they agree that the peoplehood model is an idealized version of Indigenous way of life, they contend that the model is flexible and dynamic in comparison to the static political and legal definitions of Indigenous identity grounded in the constitutional authority of the settler and colonial nation-state. They want a practical way of “being Indigenous.” They call for the individual regeneration of historical Native ways of thought and living, and call for regenerating the Indigenous way of life that starts with the conscious intent to restore one’s indigeneity.<sup>13</sup>

It is time for each one of us to make the commitment to transcend colonialism as *people*, and for us to work together as *peoples* to become forces of Indigenous truth against the lie of colonialism. We do not need to wait for the colonizer to provide us with money or to validate our vision of a free future; we only need to start to use *our* Indigenous languages to frame our thoughts, the ethical framework of *our* philosophies to make decisions and to use *our* laws and institutions to govern ourselves.<sup>14</sup>

Thus, in this model the regeneration of the Indigenous way of life begins with the individual. While most Native nations encouraged individuality and not individualism in their societies, it would be reasonable to assume that reclaiming Indigenous intellectual, political, and geographic space starts with the person. A significant concern in the approach, though, is how the person changes his or her thought processes to reflect a worldview totally different from how so many Natives think today.

Other Indigenous peoples are working to protect their concept of

nationhood. For the past ten years, various leaders have worked to secure the passage of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in the United Nations.<sup>15</sup> The United States, Canada, and several Western nation-states want to make sure the document conforms to the doctrines of U.S. domestic law. Navajo representatives have gone to the Working Group on Indigenous Populations (WGIP) summit for the past twenty years in Geneva, Switzerland. They have provided important insights into the discussion, draft, and meaning of the declaration.

As lawyer Maivan Clech Lam documents in *At the Edge of the State: Indigenous Peoples and Self-Determination*, not all Indigenous peoples seek secession from settle-colonial nation-states but rather free associations within the jurisdiction of these bodies. Current Navajo Nation representatives to the WGIP and Navajo leaders do not want to secede from the United States.<sup>16</sup> Navajo leaders would rather self-determine the course of the nation within the confines of U.S. law. The Navajo Nation council has not discussed the possibility of independence or the understanding of Navajo self-sufficiency for the people.

Discussion by the council on true Navajo nationhood is warranted by several factors. First, the judicial construction of tribal sovereignty grounded in the jurisprudence of U.S. law and in what Lumbee legal scholar Robert A. Williams Jr. has termed the “languages of racism” (and the language of savagery) is inconsistent and limiting.<sup>17</sup> The inconsistency from Congress and the Supreme Court distresses Native nations constantly. Vine Deloria Jr. and Clifford M. Lytle articulate the feeling of exasperation among many Native peoples:

One of the frustrating circumstances surrounding Indian law is, not infrequently, the existence of one set of rules that apply specifically to Indian issues and a different set of rules that apply to the law in general. One judge may apply the Indian law precedent and rules of construction, while another judge may ignore these and incorporate the traditional rules of construction, and a third judge may cite the developed rules of construction traditionally used in Indian cases and then announce that the facts of the situation or other circumstances taken together make it necessary to depart from these rules in this particular case. The decisions emanating from the use of different rules may be in marked contrast—one might favor Indian claimants while the other could destroy their chance of prevailing.<sup>18</sup>

All Native nations know how Congress and the Supreme Court functions, yet many Native individuals do not push for independence. A number of factors explain the scope of the problem. For Navajo society, the philosophical principles of *hozho* and *sa'ah naaghai bik'eh hozhoon* (SNBH) provide the ways to maintain a healthy lifestyle and environment.<sup>19</sup> While historical Navajo thought allows the people to incorporate fresh thoughts and ideas to maintain *hozho*, many people altogether disregard or do not know how to incorporate the historical concepts in their daily lives today. This ignorance has led to assimilation, acculturation, and, for some, even rejecting any cultural connection to Navajo society.

Second, alcoholism, domestic violence, depression, diabetes, poverty, and many other social ills are prominent in Navajo society today. Present-day resolutions have not restored the health and prosperity of all the people. Navajo thought states that *all* Navajo people are integral to the continuance of the nation. Navajo people's spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical wellness is dependent on *all* people of society, not just a few.

Isianti/Ihanktowan scholar and Eastern Washington University professor emerita Elizabeth Cook-Lynn illustrates what has happened to distinct Native thought in her treatment of the Bigpipe case in *Why I Can't Read Wallace Stegner and Other Essays: A Tribal Voice*. In 1989 a teenage Lakota woman was indicted, found guilty, and jailed for neglect of and assault on her third infant. She was an alcoholic mother at the time. The state of South Dakota disregarded her health problems and defined her parental actions as criminal. Cook-Lynn writes: "What the imposed laws have finally done is to declare that what used to be a tribal societal problem, that is, a failure to protect women and children from harm, is now solely a woman's failure, a woman's despair, a woman's fault, a woman's crime."<sup>20</sup> The replacement of Native thought has made almost all Native people focus on their own individual concerns or only those of their close family and thus neglect the problems and ills of the entire Native nation. Kahnawake Mohawk scholar Taiaiake Alfred describes this "colonization of the mind" as "the intellectual dimension in the group of emotional and psychological pathologies associated with internalized oppression recognizable in the gradual assumption of values, goals, and perspectives that make up the status quo."<sup>21</sup> The consequence for Navajo people is that the critical mass now generally accepts the way the Navajo Nation functions today.

Third, the historical Navajo way of life is dissolving. Increasing numbers of young Navajo children speak only English. Few know the creation narratives. Other cultural rituals are practiced less today than twenty years ago. While the Navajo Nation council has made attempts to maintain cultural practices, the people are losing bits and pieces as they move into the future. Developing true Navajo nationhood would provide an opportunity for the people to first strengthen and then maintain their cultural identity. For instance, true Navajo nationhood would require education standards that all Navajo children would have to attain. Currently, in the United States, state standards and the “No Child Left Behind” federal legislation guide public school education. Those standards and guidelines create a curriculum designed to promote and teach American thought and disciplines.<sup>22</sup> Education mandates legislated by the U.S. Congress do not promote and teach *hozho* and SNBH. Navajo-controlled school systems can mandate that the Navajo language, culture, history, and worldview be taught to all Navajo children. In the summer of 2005 the Navajo Nation council passed the Navajo Sovereignty in Education Act. It established a Navajo Nation Board of Education that would oversee operations of all schools under its jurisdiction. Theoretically, the Navajo Nation would control policy, curriculum, and education standards. This is a key step to what Alfred and Corntassel call “being Indigenous.” The Navajo Nation can create an education system based on the idea of reclaiming and restoring a Diné way of thought.

Finally, based on what has unfolded up to the present through U.S. efforts to “educate” Navajo young people, Congress will continue working to ensure that Navajo thought is annihilated and the people assimilated into the dominant culture and status quo. The legal concepts of “doctrine of discovery,” “domestic dependent nation,” and “plenary power” historically have been and continue to be destructive tools used by the invader to constrict and conform Native nations, including Diné. Any brand of the U.S. version of Indigenous self-determination “must be exercised within the existing state.”<sup>23</sup> The Navajo Nation can work to ensure they define the meaning of self-determination and not accept the American definition.

Navajo people can restore and reclaim Diné self-determination. They can overcome the notion of a “domestic dependent nation” and not be

held captive by dominant culture and power except as they decide to do so on terms grounded in the authority of Diné peoplehood. It will be a long, tiresome, and challenging but achievable process. The next section envisions how the nation can restore true Navajo nationhood.

#### STEPS TO ACHIEVE DINÉ NATIONHOOD

Achieving true self-sufficiency is an enormous goal, and the people will need to have patience and commitment. Navajo people can work on four areas to move closer to true nationhood. First, Navajo people can secure the passage of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples by the UN General Assembly. The Human Rights Council in the UN adopted the declaration on June 29, 2006; however, the General Assembly postponed its vote until September 2007. In 2005 the UN declared a second Indigenous peoples' decade.<sup>24</sup> This acknowledgment presents an opportunity to continue the discussion on the significance and importance of self-determination for Indigenous peoples. The Navajo Nation should continue to provide critical insights on the meaning of self-determination. For instance, Diné professor Kathryn Manuelito in "A Dine (Navajo) Perspective on Self-Determination" writes that self-determination exists in a space that honors and respects women, both animate and inanimate.<sup>25</sup> This respect and honor create interactions and relationships based on *hadine'e baa haajinizin* (having compassion for your people), *hadine'e ayoi'ojoni* (having love for your people), and *hadine'e hwil niliigo* (respecting your people). Historical Diné thought can detail how self-determination can function in the twenty-first century.

Diné Bidziil should also offer perspectives on the meaning of nationhood and not leave it to the tribal government alone. While the goal for Indigenous peoples is to develop free associations within settler-colonial nation-states and not secession, the meaning of the declaration is to warrant Indigenous peoples' right to self-determination. In the future, the practicality of the document might change. For instance, Western nation-states might be willing to discuss and grant nation-state status to Indigenous peoples. U.S. federal Indian policy has changed throughout history, so critiquing and discussing the meaning of the declaration is key.

Second, Navajo people must change the way they think of Navajo nationhood. This is a realistic goal that cannot be ignored. For the last

sixty years, Western education has either acculturated or assimilated Navajo people. The education policy, curriculum, and standards currently in use must be radically amended to incorporate historical Navajo principles. The people can take control of the education system on the Navajo Nation.

Brazilian educator Paulo Freire in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* called for the liberation of the oppressed by developing a critical consciousness.<sup>26</sup> This critical consciousness is defined as learning to perceive social, political, and economic contradictions and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality. Navajo people can develop a critical consciousness to the oppression they live in now and change the education system to promote the humanization of the people on Diné terms. The current education system teaches Navajo people to acculturate to American society and develop a loyalty to the settler-colonial nation-state. It does not teach them how to balance historical Navajo thought with American education. Freire states that liberation for the oppressed will come in the form of a humanizing pedagogy in which revolutionary leadership establishes a permanent relationship of dialogue with the oppressed. No manipulation can take place, and critical consciousness becomes the norm for all Navajo people. A fresh education system can be based on dialogical teaching and cognitive approaches and can ensure that Navajo children learn the ability to think critically and to be creative. Navajo ancestors prior to the European invasion had those abilities and skills. Navajo people today and in the future can reacquire those abilities and skills. Grassroots leader Norman Brown recognizes the need to find fresh leaders:

We have to go back into our communities and find true leaders, true warriors whose best interests are the people. That's the way we can change this. We'll find true warriors that speak from the heart. They listen with heart, they see with their heart. Those are leaders. We need those leaders. We need to remind our people that the strength of the nation is within themselves. We have to teach them to participate. We have to re-teach them our Navajo way of thinking, and that Navajo way of thinking is that it's always for the benefit of everyone, that we are one family regardless of what clan.<sup>27</sup>

Michael Yellow Bird, at the University of Kansas's Center for Indigenous Nation Studies, offers a model that Native societies might adopt in

developing critical thinking centers.<sup>28</sup> These centers, once established (in theory), would transform the education of Native people and create the opportunity for them to develop critical thinking skills. At the moment, Western education does not teach all Native students to develop the critical thinking skills necessary to perceive social, political, and economic forms of oppression. Most Native students in college today are trained to learn the skills necessary to work for institutions that tell their workers what to do and to negate the distinct and diverse humanity of the individual. A balance must occur between teacher, student, and community. It cannot be a banking system like Freire describes where education controls thinking and action, leads men and women to adjust to the world, and inhibits their creative power.

Third, Navajo people need to demand a change to the current government structure. The current government structure is rooted in American values and ideas—the ways of being and relating that disproportionately benefit the settler-colonizer. A fresh government can incorporate historical Diné philosophies and ideas. Alfred in *Peace, Power, Righteousness: An Indigenous Manifesto* and *Wasáse: Indigenous Pathways of Action and Freedom* calls for such changes in Indigenous governance.<sup>29</sup> He urges Native communities to return to their historical political values and educate fresh leaders committed to preserving Indigenous nationhood. He details how Indigenous people can develop a powerful and unifying force to overcome colonization today.

Alfred draws upon the Rotinohshonni condolence ceremony to theorize one example of how Native peoples might free themselves from colonialism. He equates the “requickening” portion of the ceremony to bringing something back to life. That something rests upon recognizing the discomfort in our societies. He writes, “The question being addressed here is, what’s wrong in our community? What is the fundamental concern that we’re dealing with as a people?”<sup>30</sup> Areas to focus on, according to Alfred, include reclaiming Indigenous space (intellectual, political, and geographic), developing the Indigenous consciousness, having a commitment to bettering Indigenous society, looking out for the dangers that might entice leaders, communicating ideals to the community, keeping in touch with historical teachings, and ensuring people are safe on the journey. Decolonizing the way Navajos have done things to this point is integral to changing the government structure. Alfred

provides a way to go about this when he states: "Adapt, change, go forward, but always make sure you're listening to the traditional knowledge at the same time. Commit yourself to uphold the first principles and values. We have to refer to both the past and the future in our decision-making."<sup>31</sup>

Navajo society can incorporate some historical aspects of governance along with using the creative mind to imagine a government that encourages harmonious cooperation, coexistence founded on respect for autonomy, and the principle of self-determination. In order to create a government radically different from today, Navajo people can relearn the historical concepts of *hozho* and SNBH. These philosophical concepts can be included in the development of the natural community leadership. Fresh leaders can learn to be responsible to the natural community and not their own personal political life.

Brian Calliou in "The Culture of Leadership: North American Indigenous Leadership in a Changing Economy" argues that Indigenous leaders need to revitalize historical principles and concepts of leadership and combine them with modern competencies, knowledge, and skills required for managers and leaders. His examination of Indigenous leadership revealed the competencies that are necessary today to help lead communities into the future. These include knowledge of culture and history of community, spiritual harmony and a personal balanced lifestyle, and a holistic, global worldview; someone who is a strategic thinker-planner, a responsible leader accountable to his or her followers, a team builder, a visionary, and a risk taker; someone who can implement plans and take action, has strong integrity, delegates authority and shares power, has the ability to resolve disputes, has strong communication skills and business management skills, is objective and open minded, has a strong Indigenous identity, and has problem-solving and decision-making skills.<sup>32</sup> These "fresh" learned leaders might gather together at least four times a year to discuss issues pertinent to the Navajo people. The goal of this "fresh" leadership would create what Alfred describes as the characteristics of an ideal strong Indigenous nation: (1) wholeness with diversity, (2) a shared culture, (3) communication, (4) respect and trust, (5) group maintenance, (6) participatory and consensus-based government, (7) youth empowerment, and (8) strong links to the outside world.<sup>33</sup>

Finally, the people need to continue to communicate to the American people the meaning of true Navajo nationhood. Navajo people can educate and show others how the Navajo Nation can work together with the American people so that Navajo society has true self-sufficiency. Freire states that the oppressed can free themselves and the oppressors, too, through engaged dialogue. Dialogue is needed to achieve liberation. The people need to stress that the Navajo Nation seeks true self-determination. Navajo people should also stress the need for Indigenous peoples to continue as distinct peoples. If an understanding can be conveyed to the American public, over time the federal government will acknowledge Navajo nationhood. It will take time. The people need to show the U.S. government that the Navajo Nation can physically exist within the political boundaries of the United States and, at the same time, practice true self-determination.

#### CONCLUSION

Henry Chee Dodge, Jacob C. Morgan, Peter MacDonald, Peterson Zah, and other former leaders worked to better the Navajo Nation. Each had goals and aspirations. Some goals and aspirations were accomplished, while others still need to be fulfilled. One future goal is reclaiming true Navajo nationhood. Prior to colonization, Navajo society had true self-sufficiency. The people could direct their way of life without outside intrusion.

The Navajo people can strive for a true Navajo Nation. They can have an independent government for the future if they take the necessary steps to change their mind-set as well as that of the American people. Alfred and Corntassel provide a guide to accomplish this today. Navajo individuals can think, speak, and act with the conscious intent to relearn, restore, and reclaim the philosophical principles of *hozho* and SNBH.

A Navajo prophecy foretells the Diné way of life transforming into another culture. Modern Navajo life is helping the prophecy become reality. Navajo society can change so that true nationhood progresses. Navajo people should not ignore their ancestors' struggle for survival. They must continue to confirm the Diné way of thought. If they do not, then the Diné will no longer exist as a distinct people. The time of the end is beginning, and the people need to decide what they want: true nationhood or to continue as a domestic dependent nation.

## NOTES

1. Self-sufficiency is defined as the ability to self-determine the Navajo way of life. It is freedom from the unwanted and oppressive influences of the U.S. government, particularly Congress. It is freedom from the concepts of domestic dependent nation and plenary power. Other terms and phrases that equate self-sufficiency include self-determination and being Indigenous.

2. Vine Deloria Jr. and Clifford M. Lytle define nationhood in *The Nations Within: The Past and Future of American Indian Sovereignty* (1984; reprint, Austin: University of Texas Press, 1998) as a process of decision making that is free and uninhibited within the community, a community in fact that is almost completely insulated from external factors as it considers its possible options. The meaning is extended with the peoplehood model and the Fourth World theory, which Alfred and Corntassel contextualize in their article on what it means to be Indigenous. Navajo nationhood is about restoring the distinct way of life utilizing historical thought.

3. Nationalism in the Western context is defined as the policy of asserting the interests of one's own nation within clearly bounded jurisdictions, viewed as separate from the interests of other nations or the common interests of all nations. It is a desire for national advancement or independence. In the Navajo context it is a realization of a Western political identity. Navajo nationalism is about common ideology, customs, institutions, and controlling territory.

4. For a thorough description of the Westernized Navajo central government see David Wilkins, *The Navajo Political Experience*, rev. ed. (Lanham MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003).

5. "Navajo Grass Roots Fed Up with Tribal Government," *Farmington Daily Times*, October 8, 2003, final ed.

6. Eulynda Toledo-Benalli, e-mail message to author, January 26, 2005.

7. Reid Gomez, "The Storyteller's Escape: Sovereignty and Worldview," in *Reading Native American Women: Critical/Creative Representations*, ed. Inés Hernández-Ávila (Walnut Creek CA: AltaMira Press, 2005), 150.

8. Kathy Helms, "Activist Calls for Reform," *Gallup Independent*, December 19, 2005, final ed.

9. Deloria and Lytle, *The Nations Within*, 264.

10. Simon J. Ortiz, *Woven Stone* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1992), 27.

11. Taiaiake Alfred and Jeff Corntassel, "Being Indigenous: Resurgences against Contemporary Colonialism," *Government and Opposition* 40, no. 2 (2005): 597–614, quote on 605.

12. Alfred and Corntassel, "Being Indigenous," 609.

13. Alfred and Corntassel, "Being Indigenous," 614.

14. Alfred and Corntassel, "Being Indigenous."

15. Maivan Clech Lam, *At the Edge of the State: Indigenous Peoples and Self-Determination* (Ardsley NY: Transnational Publishers, 2000).
16. The term *accede* is employed by Glenn T. Morris. He states that Native nations cannot logically secede from an entity whose creation they played no part in developing.
17. Robert A. Williams Jr., *Like a Loaded Weapon: The Rehnquist Court, Indian Rights, and the Legal History of Racism in America* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005).
18. Vine Deloria Jr. and Clifford M. Lytle, *American Indians, American Justice* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983), 50.
19. *Hozho* and *sa'ah naaghai bik'eh hozhoon* are epistemological understandings of how a Diné person must live life. Both teach how human beings are to interact with others, the animals, the plants, the Earth, and the universe.
20. Elizabeth Cook-Lynn, *Why I Can't Read Wallace Stegner and Other Essays: A Tribal Voice* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1996), 115.
21. Taiaiake Alfred, *Peace, Power, Righteousness: An Indigenous Manifesto* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 70.
22. See Arizona's and New Mexico's academic standards for a public high school education. All public high school students are required to learn math, science, social studies, and English language arts. All of these subjects are non-Navajo in origin.
23. Glenn T. Morris, "Vine Deloria, Jr. and the Development of a Decolonizing Critique of Indigenous Peoples and International Relations," in *Native Voices: American Indian Identity and Resistance*, ed. Richard A. Grounds, George E. Tinker, and David E. Wilkins (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2003), 121.
24. The Third Committee of the General Assembly of the United Nations called for the proclamation of the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples to commence January 1, 2005.
25. Kathryn Manuelito, "A Diné (Navajo) Perspective on Self-Determination: An Exposition of Egalitarian Place," *Taboo: The Journal of Culture and Education* 10, no. 1 (2006): 22.
26. Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York: Continuum, 2000), 35–40.
27. "Activist Calls for Reform."
28. Michael Yellow Bird, "Tribal Critical Thinking Centers," in *For Indigenous Eyes Only: A Decolonization Handbook*, ed. Waziyatawin Angela Wilson and Michael Yellow Bird (Santa Fe NM: School of American Research Press, 2005), 9–29.
29. Taiaiake Alfred, *Wasáse: Indigenous Pathways of Action and Freedom* (Petersborough ON: Broadview Press, 2005).
30. Alfred, *Peace, Power, Righteousness*, xxi.

31. Alfred, *Peace, Power, Righteousness*, xxii.

32. Brian Calliou, "The Culture of Leadership: North American Indigenous Leadership in a Changing Economy," in *Indigenous Peoples and the Modern State*, ed. Duane Champagne, Karen Jo Torjeson, and Susan Steiner (Walnut Creek CA: AltaMira Press, 2005), 58.

33. Alfred, *Peace, Power, Righteousness*, 82.