

APA Newsletters

Volume 01, Number 2

Spring 2001

NEWSLETTER ON AMERICAN INDIANS IN PHILOSOPHY

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR, V. F. CORDOVA

COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIR, ANNE WATERS

PAPERS

DR. DAVID MARTINEZ

“From the Fourth World to the Art World: Dan Namingha and the Question of Hopi Identity”

ANNE WATERS

“Language Matters—A Metaphysic of NonDiscreet NonBinary Dualism”

ARTICLES

V. F. CORDOVA

“An Educated Indian”

STEVE RUSSELL

“Visions and Voices”

ANNE WATERS

“Laura Miriam Cornelius (Kellogg) Oneida (1880-1949)”

BOOK REVIEW

Leonard Harris, Scott L. Pratt, and Anne S. Waters, Eds.: *American Philosophies: An Anthology*

REVIEWED BY LISA HELDKE

SYLLABUS

“Native American Philosophy”

“Native American Women”

ANNOUNCEMENTS





American Indians in Philosophy

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

V.F. Cordova

We also say of some people that they are transparent to us. It is, however, important as regards this observation that one human being can be a complete enigma to another. We learn this when we come into a strange country with entirely strange traditions; and, what is more, even given a mastery of the country's language. We do not understand the people. (And not because of not knowing what they are saying to themselves.) We cannot find our feet with them.

Ludwig Wittgenstein,
Philosophical Investigations

Communicating across conceptual boundaries is the theme sounding through the articles collected for this edition of the AIP/APA Newsletter. Wittgenstein's observation that there is something more than mere language involved in communicating with "strange people" is all too familiar to indigenous peoples. He asks us to "imagine certain very general facts of nature to be different from what we are used to "as a means of understanding that there might be concepts very different "from the usual ones."

Steve Russell, in his "Visions and Voices," offers a glimpse of an indigenous film maker, Valerie Red Horse, trying to get her views across to a society that is unfamiliar with the context of her world. Russell offers an experience from his own life as a means of illustrating the links that bind us to our peculiar explanations for the experiences we portray. Indigenous peoples occupy the same physical world as do the non-indigenous but the meanings underlying the experiences of unlike peoples represent an ephemeral world of "parallel universes."

What if the different contexts underlying the experiences of different peoples involve different conceptual frameworks? Anne Waters explores this issue when she speaks of "discreet binary dualism" in opposition to "non-discreet, non-binary, dualism." The first deals in oppositions that form contradictions; the second with complementarities. Are these two disparate views truly incommensurable? Are these the cause of "not being able to find our feet" with the strangers who, by chance, happened to find themselves on the same land with different ways of interpreting the world?

Naomi Zack illustrates the difficulty of communication, within a feminist perspective, between "indigenist women" and European American women. The definition of what it is to be a 'woman' is called into question. Can it be that the term 'woman' is too vast a generalization to accommodate the differences between cultural perspectives, between conceptual frameworks? The term can only be likened to the term 'cats'—'cats' encompasses lions and tigers and ocelots and house pets. Aside from the physical characteristics that allow the usage of a general term, can one really say that the term says all that there is to say about the life way of each? "Accommodation," is Zack's solution, "make space" for the indigenist perspective.

Richard Simonelli, in his review of Greg Cajete's work on Native Science, offers the view that looking at the world from a different perspective might lead to a greater human adaptation to the planet all peoples occupy. Cajete points to the successes of Native Science in allowing the survival of many diverse indigenous peoples on the American continents. The creation of foodstuffs did not happen by accident, nor were they the product of spirits communicating from another dimension with indigenous robots awaiting such information—there were indigenous horticulturalists. The facts of nature, according to Wittgenstein, are not different between "strange peoples"—even those who worship the sun are practical enough to light a candle in the dark.

Lighting that candle, however, proves to be a difficult thing. Waters chronicles the life work of Laura Miriam Cornelius, an Oneida woman, who attempted to show that indigenous ways of lighting candles was as valid as those of the "dominant society." Her work was a struggle as she tried to move around the "institutional educational systems" in order to opt for indigenous methods of learning. She didn't "fit"; and she didn't stay. But her ideas are not without validity.

V.F. Cordova touches on the same topic. What is to be done with the "educated Indian"—who, like "the children at the gate" in T.S. Eliot's poem, *Ash Wednesday*, "won't pray and will not go away"? (Will the veiled sister pray/For the children at the gate/Who will not go away and cannot pray?) David Martinez introduces us to a Hopi artist, Dan Namingha, who finds it unnecessary to "pray" at only one gate. Namingha finds that this own voice can sound in different tones and still song his own melody. He explores the "voice" of Japanese artists, of Euro-American modernists; he haunts the Chicago Art Institute to absorb the voices of the others and comes away with seeing himself as "a kind of bridge between worlds...trying to find that center line of balance." And, he concludes, "It's not always easy..."

And it isn't, easy. If the concepts of what it is to be a woman, or a human being, differ, how is this to be communicated? How does the "strange being" communicate to the other "strange being" that he is coming from a different conceptual framework when one of the strange beings has already determined that there is only one framework that provides knowledge of the world? That there is only one gate and one prayer?

COMMENTS FROM CHAIR

of the APA Committee on American Indians in Philosophy

Anne Waters

Halito! (greetings!) We are proud to present this third Newsletter on American Indians in Philosophy! Thank you all who continue to support our efforts on behalf of American Indian Philosophy and Philosophers! The APA committee continues to encourage academic programs to develop courses in this field new to academic philosophy, to invite American Indians with a Ph.D. in Philosophy to visit your campus and classes to talk about American Indian Philosophy, and to take time to meet with American Indians in Philosophy at APA Division meetings. We are eager to work with you!

Pacific Division APA Program 2002. In Seattle, Washington, this past March, both the Committee on American Indians in Philosophy and the American Indian Philosophy Association sponsored successful sessions. The Committee session discussed *American/Indigenous Philosophies in the New Millennium*, and the Association discussed *Pedagogies for Teaching American Indian Students and American Indian Philosophy*. Both sessions were well attended, with the latter session continuing on past 10:00 pm. Honored speaker was Ines Talamantez, Apache scholar in Religious Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Dr. Talamantez was invited to meet with Board members, to speak on our programs, and to discuss the field of American Indian Philosophy in the context of American Indian Religious Traditions. She has worked with students in the Religious Studies program to enable them to learn Native American languages, philosophical concepts, community literature, and tradition; she has placed over 25 Ph.d. Graduates in tenure track academic positions. On behalf of the committee I will continue to welcome her sharing with us, and look forward to her continuing support in our efforts within the APA, and our struggle to locate our American Indian Ph.D. Philosophers in graduate degree granting programs. We still do not have a Native American in a philosophy program granting a Ph.D. in philosophy. However, Marilyn Notah Verney (Dine, Gallup, New Mexico) has just received formal admittance (and takes her double degrees in Philosophy and Psychology) to the University of California, Santa Barbara, to work with Inez Talamantez. During this time, Marilyn promises to continue working with us in the APA!

Central Division APA Program 2002. Three program sessions are scheduled for the Central Division Meetings in Chicago. We anticipate good attendance and encourage anyone with

an interest in Native American Philosophy to share time and place with us in each of these sessions. If you are interested in how a native american epistemology might differ from *western* epistemology, we welcome your perspective of our articulations of this difference. So also, if you are teaching contemporary ethics issues you may be interested in sharing your ideas about Native image mascots at the session focusing on the mascot issue. I look forward to seeing you all there!

Eastern Division APA Program 2002. Sessions are being planned for the Washington, D.C. Conference around issues of *American Indians, Free Speech, and Academic Institutions, Language, Geography, and Genocide in American Indian Philosophy* and *Pedagogies of Teaching American Indian Philosophy*. Please contact Anne Waters (brendam234@aol.com) if you are interested in participating in any of these sessions. The Committee also hopes to sponsor an *Authors meet Critics* session for the new *American Philosophies Anthology*, edited by Leonard Harris, Scott Pratt, and Anne Waters (2001). This book was displayed as the *Book of the Month* on Amazon.com last February, and is published by Blackwell Publishers.

Donald Grinde at SAAP in Vermont. This summer, the Society to Advance American Philosophy Summer Institute in Vermont will host Donald Grinde to talk about American Indians. Donald is a well respected American Indian historian and scholar in Indian Country.

Recruitment of American Indians into Philosophy. This past fall I have become aware of a new American Indian graduate student in philosophy at The University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico. As well, there are two undergraduates posting philosophy as their major at The University of New Mexico in Gallup, New Mexico. Anyone wanting contact information about these, or any other of our American Indian students/Ph.D.'s in philosophy, feel free to contact Anne Waters (brendam234@aol.com).

Directory. The Directory of American Indians with a Ph.D. in Philosophy is now in print, and will soon be available. Wado (thank you) to all who have in the past, continue in the present, and will in the future, support our efforts to bring the academic field of American Indian Philosophy. And American Indian philosophers, to the classrooms of our departments. If you have any questions or would like any assistance in these endeavors, feel free to email at brendam234@aol.com, and be sure to visit our APA website!

PAPERS

From the Fourth World to the Art World: Dan Namingha and the Question of Hopi Identity

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Do your work, then step back.

The only path to serenity.

—Lao-Tzu, *Tao Te Ching*

What Mount Fuji was to the Japanese artist Hiroshige, First Mesa of the Hopi reservation would be to Dan Namingha. The relationship that each artist had with the major landmark of their respective environments has less to do with the accidents of birth and more to do with fulfilling the needs of their art. To assume that Dan Namingha has no choice but to create images of Hopi culture is like saying that Namingha's work is no more than the result of his genetic heritage, like the physical traits we all inherit from our parents. Call it a "tribal fallacy," but in the case of American Indian artists it is commonplace to assume that one's aesthetic vision is predetermined by one's tribal heritage, which is nothing less than stereotyping. For even traditional arts have metamorphosed over the generations, including the making of kachina masks and costumes that have recurrently inspired Namingha's work. Granted, traditional arts tend to change substantially slower than their modern counterparts; nonetheless, they have not been immune to the influences of other tribes, not to mention the subsequent arrival of Europeans and Americans.

But this is not an essay about influences; rather, it is about originality. More specifically, it is about the way in which Dan Namingha has incorporated the formal qualities of Hopi sacred art with the techniques of modern painting, and the implications this creative endeavor has for understanding Hopi identity. With this in mind, the first thing that we must do is dispense with the word identity, especially with respect to an individual. Identity is a limiting term that suggests criteria for something being clearly defined and restricting what is defined to that particular definition. Character, on the other hand, is a much earthier term that connotes something that grows or develops over time and by virtue of experience. Moreover, character will be understood as what we express in answer to a calling, in which one's calling is a matter of destiny. James Hillman, in *The Soul's Code*, describes this combination of life and destiny this way:

There is more in a human life than our theories of it allow. Sooner or later something seems to call us onto a particular path. You may remember this "something" as a signal moment in childhood when an urge out of nowhere, a fascination, a peculiar turn of events struck like an annunciation: This is what I must do, this is what I've got to have. This is who I am.

Although Dan Namingha had such a moment, which we will discuss below, the fact that his calling led him into the world of modern art creates an issue, not only for our comprehension of character, but also for the parallel issue of ethnicity. To develop one's character, after all, means doing so within a cultural environment. But what is the relationship between the two? Are we merely stuck once again with the age-old question of nature versus nurture? When looking at Hillman's portrayal of calling, it is easy to assume that what we are alluding to is a moment when one feels compelled to break free from the chains of family and community. The alienated artist is an enduring symbol of Western society, extending from at least Van Gogh to Pollock. These are the hero-artists who remained true to the convictions of their artistic visions, even though most of "mainstream" society could not comprehend what was being expressed. Such artists seem to be the epitome of character and calling. However, what happens when an artist maintains a relation with his culture and heritage? Is it an act of what Sartre would have called "bad faith"? Or is it the case, as I will argue, that the development of character and the pursuit of one's calling are actually enhanced when one accepts their people and homeland as an integral part of who they are?

For the Hopis, character is nurtured by means of the *Hopivotkwani*, which is their unique path in life. According to Emory Sekaquaptewa, the Hopivotkwani "includes every part of Hopi society and culture: kinship and family, religious ceremonies and beliefs, political organization, concepts about ownership, farming, world view, art, and even ideas about the prehistoric ruins of the Southwest." The backbone of any community, of course, is kinship and family, which Robert K. Thomas stipulates is the crucial element in acquiring a sense of self in any American Indian society. "Men who live in a folk world," Thomas wrote, "are defined by other persons. In most American Indian groups...these other persons who give definition to the individual, who tells one who he is, are relatives." By implication, a sense of self is meaningless without any relatives from whom one can derive their purpose in the world. For the family enables one to know to which clan they belong, and how that clan came to be according to the origin story. It is from one's family that one will learn about the world, and why life must be the way it is in the place they call home. Because of the plenary nature of the tribe, and its basis in kinship and family, Thomas refers to this as "a closed, bounded world." More specifically, as Thomas elaborates on his concept:

...notions about the nature of the world are shared only among this group of relatives. A tribal group is a group of relatives. It is a group of relatives who are descended in an unbroken line from time immemorial of other relatives. It is their own experience and their own interpretation of the world that is *the* interpretation of the world for people in a tribal group.

Naturally, this interpretation of the world is made at the exclusion of outsiders, in which "outsider" is defined by dwelling in a different homeland, speaking in a different language, and being related to a different group of people. But can such a perspective be maintained in light of all the exposure to "outsider" culture that American Indian communities have endured since the time of first contact?

What alternative do we have to a kind of American Indian “nationalism,” complete with the rhetoric of “blood and soil”? For Namingha, he is not only related to other Hopis by virtue of kinship, but also to particular members of the community who have played important roles in demonstrating to a range of non-Hopis the beauty of the Hopi tradition. Perhaps the most noteworthy and often mentioned ancestor was Nampeyo, who was Namingha’s great-great-grandmother, as well as one of the most renowned Hopi potters. Furthermore, several aunts, uncles, and cousins have been potters and kachina carvers.

Based on such evidence it seems inevitable that Dan Namingha would become an artist respected for his Kachina images and his adulation of First Mesa. However, if we regard Namingha’s art as solely an expression of his heritage, then we do his work the injustice of overlooking its originality—which as it turns out will be what makes his work all the more authentic. For Namingha creates from a position of sincerity and not for the sake of promoting a theory or ideology. We must therefore recognize and accept that a part of Namingha’s originality as an artist is derived from the way he utilizes the vocabulary and techniques of modern art, enabling him to express an uncommon vision. Indeed, it would be a poignant encounter with works by the hero-artists mentioned above, in this case at the Chicago Art Institute, that would set Namingha down the path he has followed to this day. Namingha is quoted as saying, in the book on his art and life by Thomas Hoving: “Visiting the museum set the tone and direction of my entire career. I walked into those marvelous galleries and knew I had to become a serious painter.” What we must also remember is that before Namingha’s paintings are symbols of Hopi ethnicity, they are first and foremost the personal vision of the artist. They are an expression of character, which at times is incommensurate with the situation in the world we find ourselves. “Let us not imagine,” though, as Maurice Merleau-Ponty reflected on the life of Paul Cézanne, “an abstract force which could superimpose its effects on life’s ‘givens’ or which cause breaches in life’s development. Although it is certain that a man’s life does not *explain* his work, it is equally certain that the two are connected. The truth is that *this work to be done called for this life.*” Our lives are not made up of causes and effects, but rather of hints and beckonings, to which we may either answer or ignore. “The very decisions which transform us are always made in reference to a factual situation,” as Merleau-Ponty continues, “such a situation can of course be accepted or refused, but it cannot fail to give us our impetus nor to be for us, as a situation ‘to be accepted’ or ‘to be refused,’ the incarnation for us of the value we give to it.” The value that Namingha gave to his experience in the Chicago Art Institute was one of self-affirmation. After recounting his admiration for the Impressionists, as well as the works of Van Gogh and Picasso, Namingha goes on to express an even loftier regard for the post-World War Two generation of painters.

I was...overwhelmed by the paintings by Franz Kline, Robert Motherwell, Mark Rothko, and Jackson Pollock. I’d known of the abstract expressionists from books, but I’d never seen the paintings for real. I was shocked at their power and sheer size, but even more by their delicacy and finesse. I was also astonished to recognize distinct parallels of certain

design elements in these works with those of my own culture and tribe. It was only later that I learned the reason for these striking similarities. Abstract expressionists, Pollock and Gottlieb especially, had been influenced by Native American work. Only they had quoted our elements without understanding their meaning.

What Namingha became inspired to pursue in his own work was what Pollock and Gottlieb could not accomplish: invoking those “Native American elements” with their “meaning” preserved. Namingha’s calling, though, would not come all at once but in stages. After attending art classes at both the University of Kansas and the Institute for American Indian Arts, Namingha enlisted in the Marines during the height of the Vietnam War. Fortunately, Namingha was not sent into combat but assigned to a post in Okinawa, from where he was able to visit Tokyo and, in particular, the Tokyo National Museum. Like the Chicago Art Institute, Japan was a turning point in Namingha’s development as an artist, as he found other kindred spirits in the Japanese woodblock artists of the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries. Of these experiences, Namingha would recount when his calling came to him like an annunciation:

My time in the Corps gave me the precious opportunity to think. I spent hours analyzing what my art should become and one day it just came to me. Suddenly, I knew that my artistic mission was to transform the subject matter of Native American art and its customary realism into an abstract, almost minimal, form. I got it one day in the heat, sitting on that strange island of Okinawa. Imagine! I also knew that when I got out of the Marines I had to get into the right environment, one that was full of artistic power and was receptive to artistic sensitivity. That could only be Santa Fe—at the Institute.

Namingha’s path, then, did not lead back to the home of his ancestors, but to a place beyond the boundaries of family and kinship. For it is beyond the boundaries of everyday life that one may discover new medicine, new visions, and new paths to follow. In Namingha’s mind, however, he is not forsaking his culture but rather he is extending it into the modern world. In a work titled “Passage Series III,” Namingha recalls the passages that are integral to the Hopi universe. “At our Hopi shrines,” Namingha observes, “we lay down corn pollen, corn meal, and prayer feathers and we pray for family longevity, health, bountiful crops, good rains for summer, great harvest in the fall, and for a balanced universe.” Each one of these symbols—corn pollen, corn meal, and prayer feathers—connote a passage into the sacred, into the mythical dimensions where the world and the people were created by supernatural beings. Many of Namingha’s pieces portray, as Daniel Gibson writes, the “physical and metaphysical passages and the transitory states between everyday reality and the spirit realm. To Namingha, life is composed of dualities: night and day, darkness and light...life and death,” and so on. “These dualities are not inherently good or evil; they simply exist as counterbalances to one another.” One duality that recurrently comes up in any discussion of Namingha’s work is that of Hopi and White. Insofar as Namingha is a modern artist, in addition to being Hopi, it is obvious that at least one passage in Namingha’s work

passes through the two cultural worlds in which he is compelled to abide. Namingha is not simply a part of the “folk world” that Thomas described above. At the same time, he shares with his family at First Mesa all of the traits of a tribal people: a common homeland, language, kinship, and sacred history. “Living in two cultures simultaneously as he does,” Hoving writes, “Namingha explains that he is constantly made aware of the dual nature of all things,” which Namingha noticed first in the dual nature of his Tewa-Hopi background—a duality created by contact with the Conquistadores. But such bifurcations are not limited to the Hopi or to American Indians in general, as Namingha observes:

Then I realized that this fragmentation had always gone on, long before [Hopis encountered Europeans], because of our migrations over the centuries. From there, it was only one step further for me to recognize that this disruption was universal. It’s not only my people but all peoples of the world who fragmented by time and change.

Accepting one’s fragmentation therefore is the first step to wholeness. Or as Lao-Tzu says, in Stephen Mitchell’s translation of the *Tao Te Ching*: “If you want to become whole, let yourself be partial... If you want to become full, let yourself be empty.” Everything generates its opposite, just as the full-grown plant generates its seed, which is followed by a new crop of plants. “If you realize that all things change,” as the *Tao Te Ching* also states, “there is nothing you will try to hold onto” (p. 74). The same is true for notions of self and people: trying to cling tightly to particular forms or concepts of identity is in the final analysis a kind of idolatry. Just as change and experience are integral to the growth of individual character, so too it is important to the development of a people. Of course, what policies of assimilation did to communities like the Hopi is inexcusable. However, a path to overcoming the effects of these travesties includes accepting that these events have changed a people forever. We all have our scars, but how we treat them is the difference between freeing ourselves by healing and becoming prisoners to our wounds, including the abrasions that may exist between people. “I see myself as a kind of bridge between worlds,” as Namingha reflects on his own passage through life, “trying to find that center line of balance. It’s not always easy, but I don’t think it’s always easy for any human being” (Gibson, 2000, p. 35).

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Language Matters — A Metaphysic of NonDiscreet NonBinary Dualism

Anne Waters

The difference is in the promotion, so to speak. A non-native poet cannot produce an Indian perspective on Coyote or Hawk, cannot see Coyote or Hawk in an Indian way, and cannot produce a poem expressing Indian spirituality. What can be produced is another perspective, another view, and another spiritual expression. The issue, as I said, is one of integrity and intent. [“The Great Pretenders” Wendy Rose in *The State of Native America: Genocide, Colonization, and Resistance*, M. A. Jaimes Guerrero, ed., 416.]

Introduction

In this paper I use gender as an example to explore a nondiscreet ontology of being. To recognize that gender as it is known today among colonized American Indian nations mirrors a notion of gender among American Indigenous cultures five centuries ago may be misleading. Deconstructing contemporary dominant American gender notions against a background of an alternatively conceived ontology of Being through America’s indigenous languages proves fruitful in explicating why and how gender need not be an essentialized concept. This paper first clarifies an important distinction between a discreet binary dualist ontology, and a nondiscreet binary dualist ontology.

In fulfilling the European colonial project in the Americas, a hypersensitively bounded infrastructure of Eurocentric ontology desensitized nondiscreet¹ binary² dualist Indigenist thought. EuroAmericans, while exploiting people, land, and resources of the Americas, comprehended about their experiences and encounters with Indigenous people, only what could be conveniently characterized via their Eurocentric ontology. An ontology of binary, or discreet dualist logic, operated as the colonial framework that deeply embedded EuroAmerican thought and language, and a Eurocentric perspective about Indigenous people, on the North American continent. Eurocentric nonunderstandings, and hence misunderstandings, of precolonial ontology, rationality, beliefs, customs, and institutions of people Indigenous to the Americas has been filtered through this overlay, or template of interpretation.

EuroAmerican institutions, including educational institutions, have placed many nonunderstandings about Indigenous people into the context of EuroAmerican embraced conceptual categories. These categories signify a discreet (limited and bounded³) binary dualist⁴ worldview. This worldview continues to operate as a template into which all EuroAmerican interpretations of Indigenous thought and being are recorded. Hence, much of indigenous philosophy is not easily accessible; though some accessibility is possible via language analysis and semantics of contemporary speakers of indigenous languages. The EuroAmerican binary system of dualist thought empowered and facilitated the misinterpretations of indigenous nondiscreet binary dualist worldview; many of these misinterpretations remain active in contemporary scholarship.⁵

Imposing a closed binary ontology onto Indigenous ideas obstructs communication meaning systems, to such an extent that, for good reasons, indigenous ideas and vision have largely remained closed to outsiders. The seemingly cognitive inability of some EuroAmericans to acknowledge a different ontological system, represented by indigenous thought, continues to perplex and befuddle many American Indians.⁶ It has historically been in this context of blinded EuroAmerican vision, that many American Indians have been denied the learning/use of native languages; and in this way have sometimes been prevented from safeguarding ancient sacred knowledge. This theft, or stealing of native language, and with it, sacred knowledge, fostered many painful losses that remain unhealed today. The losses create gaps of understanding indigenous worldview and ontological being in that world. Retaining sacred knowledge would have nourished Indigenous people during half a millenium of painful colonization. Yet it was denied to most of those American Indians that survived the genocide.

Many American Indigenous nondiscreet notions of nonbinary, complementary dualist constructs of the cosmos have been diminished and obscured by colonization. A nonbinary, complementary dualist construct would distinguish two things: (1) a dualism, eg. male/female that may appear (in a binary ontology) as opposites or different from one another in some important respect; and (2) a nonbinary (complementary) syntax that puts together these two constructs without maintaining sharp and clear boundary distinctions (unlike a binary system). The maintenance of the rigid distinct boundaries of binary logic enable (though may not necessitate) an hierarchical value judgement to take place (eg., mind over body or male over female) precisely because of the sharp bifurcation. A nonbinary (complementary) dualism would place the two constructs together in such a way that one would remain itself, and be also a part of the other. In this way, an hierarchical valuing of one being better, superior, or more valued than another cannot be, or rather, is excluded by the nonbinary logic. Organizing, complimentary ideas of an indigenous ontology, still survive within the ontological horizon of nonbinary, nondiscreet, dualist languages. Complementary dualisms can be found today among such diverse Indigenous people as the Ahnishinahbaeojibway in Canada⁷, to the Mayan in South America, and the Dine metaphysics of the Southwest U.S.A.⁹

Non-complementary, or binary dualist constructs have rigidly constructed boundaries that that do not interact, or “crossover” to other constructs. In the English language, and in Western thought the concept ‘good’ if used together with the concept ‘evil’ is such that one can diminish aspects of the other. Something may be good or evil, but not both at the same time and place, without diminishing the other. They need not be equal in the joining, but rather have the potential for one to be superior to the other. Hence, ‘good’ and ‘evil’ may not overlap, nor may there be any ambiguity of the meaning of one in relation to the other. Things, including actions, must be either good or evil, but not both.¹⁰

For another example with a different twist, consider: the color black and the color white come into contact with one another. Physically, as with paints, a grey appears, obliterating the black and white boundaries; ontologically, a conflict or struggle ensues, each construct vying for its own showing

and placement over that of the other! This is why, in Western thought, it is important to keep sharply divided dichotomies bifurcated with rigid, clear boundaries operating at the margins. These boundaries are what enables value judgement to be applied to the two constructs. that is, value of one over the other can be achieved only if they do not mix.

Western metaphysics of classic Greek thought seems to manifests this bifurcatedness (binariness) of dualist thought; concepts are truncated with sharp, clearly unambiguous, boundaries. This contributes to why Plato, for example is able to play word games with some tightly bounded binary dualist constructs, such as the “like” and “unlike.” To elaborate this point, consider the Humpty Dumpty theory of binary dualism in European thought that reaches back to Greece. In the history of Western philosophical thought since Plato’s fracture, not a single philosopher has been able to put back together the universe for the Western world!

Plato created a notion of reality, or “truth” that was static, of the mind, always being in the abstract¹¹; He redefined the common notion of material substance to be “the unreal” changing, always becoming a different physical illusion. The “true” became an object of worship, existing in total abstraction from physical bodies of the universe. The physical became objects of derogation and want, drawing attention away from the realm of “the true.” This particular way of being and conceiving reality embedded a structure of hierarchical value: the true was to be embraced as the (nonchanging) form of the “good,”; and the formless, constant flux in the universe of matter, was to be rejected as “evil. Objects were “evil” because they drew attention away from the ‘purity’ of abstract mental thought; the flux competed to “tie down” thought in the world of matter, but was destined to loose the battle.

These tightly bounded, clearly differentiated modes of being, good and evil, competed for human attention in continual struggle through human experience. And when the realm of form, of the good won out, the privilege of dwelling in the “land of the forms” was granted in an afterlife. But when the evil, the objects in the realm of the physical won the competition of attention, great human suffering was to be the consequence, in a land of insurmountable suffering “down below” the earth, in an afterlife.

Via neoplatonism, and throughout the middle ages, Plato’s notion of “good” was transformed into a personal Christian “good” named ‘God’ in the creation of a tripartite flat world: the “forms in the abstract heavens—total good-God” were constructed securely up above the earth; and “the physical in the concrete hell— total evil-Devil” were constructed securely down below the earth.” The only way to attain human peace or harmony living in the “earthly domain,” (the alleged flat surface in between the “heaven and hell of good and evil,”) was via prayer or, mentally dwelling in the land of the heavens. Neoplatonic thought cemented Platonic metaphysics in Europe, and served well the purposes of the medieval clergy. They turned their backs on the poor, and spent their time communing with their personal (good) god.

In this context, the only way to attain “human perfection” was through abstract thought. Anything that was not abstract thought, such as physical being, or physical pain, was to be denied the status of real. Pain, in such forms as flagellation, and physical torture, was believed to lead a

person to a mind state where they might exist in complete abstraction. The value hierarchy of a binary dualist thought that valued abstract reason above physical pleasure, enveloped the cosmology of the “great chain of being,” the “Christian hierarchy of being,” and the King commanding through divine right, bringing into being divine plans.

In the 15th century, European perceptions and beliefs cemented this Eurocentric metaphysic and ontology of value hierarchy, supported by the two pillars of binary dualism. Western culture lacked any historical understanding about how to live in balance and harmony (complimentarity) with diverse metaphysical ideas and beings as they encountered in the Americas. Europeans had learned no tolerance for difference, much less how to survive living with (mother) earth. Europeans were their own products of colonization. They arrived in America knowing life only as servants, prisoners, peasants, and soldiers; they were alienated from being in the world. They continued a centuries old colonial imperialist project (their descendants continue to benefit from it).

When Europeans arrived to the Americas, respecting diversity was integral to survival and living in harmony. Europeans showed an intense lack of respect for diverse cultural ways. Their behavior suggested a psychological necessity to impose colonial European culture, with all of its superior and inferior linguistic distinctions, upon Indigenous people. In this way, any conceivable opportunity for dialogue, or communication among the two cultures, was obliterated. In some instances, the very same families who learned from native families how to plant, harvest, and survive the cold winters, forced indigenous peoples to leave the area.

America’s Indigenous people had a history of creating harmony among diverse communities through political relations.¹³ The histories of these relations are many, and are articulated through the oral history of many indigenous groups. On the North American continent, both intercultural and intracultural relations had long histories of communal respect. Indigenous people found a metaphysical place in the structuring of the cosmos for “all our relations,” within the history of “the original peoples.”¹⁴ Upon the arrival of EuroAmericans, a completely different mode of communicating, and being in the world, was imposed on communication context.

The ontological structures of Indigenous people precluded a coherent dialogue with the newcomers. Europeans, having “purified” the mind, and “corrupted” the body, had no sense of physical rootedness to any land, nor responsibility to self, or other relations. Everything in European thought was filtered through a value sieve, and Indigenous people, because different, were not within the realm of positive value for the newcomers. These EuroAmericans, had left any remnants of their own sense of place, of geographical roots of being, in Europe. As they gazed upon the land and the bounty of indigenous foods and resources, they immediately lay claim to America’s shores for themselves.

Hyper-bounded, value laden, binary dualist constructs of being were projected onto Indigenous people: first, by sharing interpretations of individual actions; then projecting these interpretations onto groups of Indigenous people. Unable to tolerate difference in ways of being, Europeans disrespectfully labelled indigenous people uncivilized,

inferior, dirty, ignorant, savage, primitive, etc. Thus, in ignorance, and at play in their own binary dualist logic system, the belittling of Indigenous people in the colonial mind, made colonizers feel superior to the colonized. And if they were superior to, their logic told them, Indigenous people were inferior, and if inferior, less than fully human. In this way, by ontologically denigrating the “other” to be of lower nature on a hierarchy of being, individuals in the south, like DeSoto and his metal clad warriors and human eating dogs, could brutally slaughter indigeneous people throughout Las Floridas.

Simultaneously, the Spanish Conquistadores, in what was to become Mexico and South America, acted on similar constructs of Indigenous people who were seen as “other,” which meant not human in the gaze of the Spanish. Enslavement of Indigenous people was justified by an Eurocentric ontology (of being) manifested in the King’s orders. Europeans acted as though they believed it were all in accord with a “divine” plan of the universe. The debates at Valladolid were about whether indigenous beings in the Americas could be considered “human” or not.¹⁵ If the natives of the Americas were human, then we had “souls” and had to be saved by being “Christianized.” On the other hand, if we were not found to possess humanity, then the Spanish were free to enslave us as they would any other creature of their non-human world. This debate in Spain clearly shows how an hierarchically structured ontology can be used, to manipulate any type of different being in the world, that is not seen, through the colonizer’s gaze, to suite plans of a colonial empire.

The brutal genocidal treatment of America’s Indigenous people, at the hands of colonial Europe, is related to the ontological structure of the European colonial mindset. By the time of “point of contact” among Indigenous peoples with Europeans, an entire binary dualist worldview of consistently nonequal hierarchical power structures were in place in Eurocentric thinking. This mindset brought with it ideas about a male role as culture bearer in the world, and a female role as culture destroyer in the world. It brought with it ideas about humanity: an upper ruling class, rational and close to deity status; a middle military or overlord class, less rational, more emotional, and capable of some ruling over the lower class; and the lower intensive labor class, from the imperial gaze, thought to be incapable of rational thought, and unable to rule over their own appetitive desires.

It was from this vantage point of human nature, and the European binary dualisms of ontological being in the world, that the newcomers brought a theistic worldview of value hierarchy to America’s shores. The Eurocentric ontological depiction of a disconnected, bounded, rational, cultured male father creator of the universe, stood in antithesis to (what was seen Eurocentrically as) an unrestrained, unbounded, irrational, raw female mother nature destroyer of the universe.

And so (it came to pass that) in the Americas men stood over women, imperialists over the colonized, citizens over the enslaved, adults over children, similarly abled over differently abled, hereditied over nonhereditied, (a lie of) a pure race stood over mixed races, completing the Eurocentric hierarchy of winners over losers, and the valued over the disvalued, empowered over disempowered. All things of the world had a place in this hierarchy of being, and of differing values, according to the types of being, as classified by the rulers ontological structure of power.

These strange and unreal constructs of hierarchical value were built into the ideology of EuroAmericans and some American Indigenous communities by benefitting colonizing enterprises of religion, educations, commerce, etc. From the land of the Salem witchcraft trials, to the missions enslaving California's Indigenous people, missionaries, politicians, businessmen, and the landed gentry played a key role in maintaining this hierarchical Christian ideology. It was well suited to colonial enterprises of trade in goods and people. Thus, EuroAmericans sanctioned genocidal activities that created chaotic ruptures of indigenous ontology.

Upon Spain's acknowledgement that Indigenous people had souls, the means of converting Indigenous people to Eurocentric theism played into the colonial project. But because indigenous people were not easily converted, methods were employed to "kill the Indian and save the soul."¹⁶ These methods included tortures, starvations, killings, burnings, stealing land, children, wives, family, enslavement, confinement, denial of languages, threat of diseases, or rapes and plunders of homes, burning of crops and people, and disruption of any vestiges of humanity until the theism, in exchange for life, or the survival of the community, was announced, and witnessed. Even now, after the signing of treaties, the smallpox blankets, the piles of American Indians lying in deep trenched graves, after the removals of the genocidal remains, the lynchings, rapes, thefts of children, alcoholic drugging of entire communities, and denial of cultural languages and sacred practices, a genocide continues in the name of religious freedom, citizen protection, assimilation, and most important, free trade.

It was in this way that it occurred. In this way agents of EuroAmerican colonial theism forcefully wrenched indigenous ontological constructs (embedded in linguistic structures and thinking of the indigenous mind) from indigenist thought, causing a continental shake down of Indigenous worldview. This ontological destruction was but one more notch on the belt of an ideology that functioned to maintain power over "others." These cultural extortions took a cavernous toll on Indigenous people, our families, communities, and belief systems. In this psychological dismembering, which was eventually fuelled by forced migrations, our fractures of ontology became chasms needing to be filled, gaps in the thought process.

Thoughts About Non-Binary Dualism

Among the gaps, however, there remained kernels of ontology: ideas about ways to be in the world; and ideas about ontological relationships in the world. Our stories held understandings of indigenous human science, technology, relations, and sacred place in the world. The embedded ontology of indigenous worldview has survived for those who have had little else. The metaphysics and epistemology remain intact among many Indigenous people of the Americas.

Hence the colonial project of dismembering the ontology of indigenous thought successfully failed! American indigenous nondiscreet notions of nonbinary, complementary dualist constructs continue to exist. Though in some places they are diminished and obscured by colonization, indigenous ontologies are very active, even if sometimes in more isolated regions of the Americas. These organizing, complimentary ideas, still living within the ontological horizon

of a nonbinary, nondiscreet, dualism hold much information for our future. And it is to this horizon that many American Indians (and environmentalists advocating sustainable development) are looking, for a renaissance of American Indian thought. These ways of being, in an ontological indigenous realm, remain as practical, accessible, and pragmatic tools of understanding place in the world; which is of course, a place of responsibility to "all my relations."

For many Indigenous people, the importance of order and balance, as well as proper (moral) behavior, are part of the cosmological understanding of our universe. If one is out of balance with metaphysical forces, or out of balance within oneself, sickness will surface and remain, until the universe, and person in that universe, are again in balance, or complementarily ordered. The structures of the cosmos are like structures of the mind, in that everything must be balanced and nurtured properly in order for the universe, and us, to survive. In this way, dualism of indigenous thought embraces difference in principle, not as division, but rather, as complementary.

In Dine (Navajo) thought, for example, because the breath of life (air) is constantly being exchanged in the universe, from the cosmos and to the earth, breath plays a central role in complementary metaphysical thought. Not only is breath that which is life giving, but smoke, as manifesting aspects of breath, operates as medium for air to reach the sky, the cosmos, as do words when spoken or sung. The exchange of breath is important because all things in the universe are related through air, and all are made of the same basic elements. Just as we take in air to breathe, so also we let out breath, giving back to that from which we take. In Dine thought, for example, earth, air, fire, and water are the basic elements of the entire cosmos. These elements are continually in a give and take in the universe as spirit (energy) infuses everything. Thus, upon death, after air is released from the body (given back), the body will decompose into the elements, giving itself back, to that from which it was created.¹⁷

In Zuni thought the Twin War Gods are also known as the Evening Star and the Morning Star. The twins embody the principle of dualism, as manifested not in a binary, but in a non-binary, or complementary state of being. Hence a complimentary dualism of life force and death are held together ontologically, just as they are in real life.

"Twins incorporate not only the principle of duality but also that of balance, being...more than complementary yet less than isomorphic: both are of a piece, perceivable as separate but, in truth, inalienable. The Twins share a single breath of life that animates them both separately and together, providing a model for the Zuni in which to cast other perceptions of the natural and created universe as being all of a piece."¹⁸ Metaphysical space, however, is operative also as moral space, hence the providing of breath of life, via singing or talking, back to the universe fulfills a moral connection of nurturing everything in the universe.

Gaps of Meaning

As a young American Indian undergraduate philosophy student in New Mexico, I harbored a deep desire to do well in logic. EuroAmerican professors wanted philosophy students to believe that logic courses presented to us the opportunity to "master" the methodology of philosophy; that

the very structure of human philosophical thought would be revealed to us in our study of logic. It was only later, in graduate school, when I proved lengthy deductions, and contemplated meta-theoretical logic problems, that I began to take seriously my outsider intuitions about the field of logic. Our understanding of philosophy was supposed to be different after that first logic course. It was. Since this time I have taught some sixty-three course sections of logic and critical thinking. And yet, I still struggle, in everyday common discussion, to articulate my discomfort with the discreet binarism of some dualist thought systems.

In 1992, while at a community college in New Mexico, at the suggestion of Terry Abraham, an American Indian (Laguna Pueblo) special needs psychological counselor and administrator, I began working on a project to identify why many Indigenous students were having difficulty passing logic courses. They were opting to “drop out” of the classes. At that time I did not think their problems would be connected to my own ontological issues of binary logic systems. And yet, this work also became an opportunity to gain a better understanding and clarification of my own experience.

And so I began, in small ways, to investigate, and change, the nature of the logic course I taught. Early in the semester I incorporated Native American Studies content into examples used to explain the structure of informal fallacies.¹⁹ The level of Native American student interest, enrollment, and attendance was considerably increased. American Indian students began showing up at the classroom door, and wanting to know who I was, and how they too, could enroll or sit in for the course.

Later in the semester, I also changed my method of introducing formal logic. To eliminate anxiety and stress related to learning a symbolic system, I suggested to students that working with binary logic systems could be thought of as a game of imaginary binary dualities; that these dualities need not relate to world structures. I put special emphasis on the fact that binary dualities, or binary concepts, are used to work with imaginary non-organic thought processes, such as computers. This analogy to computers seemed to make a big difference. We were merely studying the processing pattern of electrical impulses in computers. I emphasized such structures as we imagined them, could be thought of as, but were not believed by everyone, to be the structure of ideas embedded in belief and thought systems of the human psyche. I was teaching students a way of reasoning that humans or machines could use, but in a way that did not place discreet binary logic as a more fundamental (or more valued) ontology than their own, that should be replaced by their own, or which they would have to engage in lieu of their own.

With these two changes, adding Native content and analogizing to computer thinking patterns, changes in Native American grades were dramatic. The motivation and enthusiasm of Native American students was beyond my imagination. For I had discovered that in leaving the box of ontological tools open, all students could more quickly grasp the intuitive creative problem solving of conceptual pragmatic manipulation.

It was from this experience and standpoint that I commenced to think more deeply about researching ontological, epistemological, and metaphysical systems of Peoples Indigenous to the Americas. Changing my teaching

methods was the prelude to uncovering an ontological infrastructure of American Indian scientific speculation. As I continued my research, I began to locate how the assumed Western European binary dualism embedded in what came to be known as Western philosophy (at least as far back as Plato), was not the same ontological system as, for example, Mayan (non-binary) dualism. This revelation changed not only my approach to teaching all of my courses, but my research methods, and the very meaning of my work as a philosopher. No longer was I primarily interested in ethics and social and political philosophy, but more to the point, the underlying ontology of my own Indigenous thought patterns that created a cognitive environment from which I viewed Eurocentric metaphysics, epistemology and worldview.

In 1996 I was invited to keynote a conference at the University of Oregon; the conference theme was “Engendering Rationalities.” As I began to contemplate what the expression “engendering rationalities” might mean in the context of a womens’ (feminist) philosophy conference, my minds’ eye drifted to the concept of what the paradigm case of rationality is for the Western European world (and a fortiori by colonization, most of the world). In my pondering I realized the same gaps of ontology were in the the framework of binary dualist logic that was embedded in the non-process ontology of feminist thought: male/female; masculine/feminine; good/bad.²⁰ And in this context I remembered Adrienne Rich’s importance of the “lesbian continuum” in *Lies, Secrets and Silences*,²¹ and how this model had never been incorporated into conceptual categories of native gender. Racial and ethnic affiliations, and how race concepts are ontologically limited and bifurcated came to mind as well.²²

I then thought about static bifurcations of the discreet binary (bounded) dualities of essentialisms in contemporary feminist thought and recent race theory: male/female, masculine/feminine, man/woman; Black/White, Indian/non-Indian, Hispanic/not-Hispanic, Asian/non-Asian, etc. These discreetly bifurcated and essentialized concepts suggests ways of being in the world that might run contrary to some Indigenous ontology we find remaining in American Indian languages. And the problem seemed to be not so much that “language has gone on a holiday,” but rather, that deep structures of Indigenous thinking about ontological relations in the world conflicted with the discreet binary logic inherent in EuroAmerican reflection about relations in the world.

Critical feminist theory, like critical race theory, pleads for a reconsideration of these categories. And some have already begun this important work. But perhaps more, perhaps reconsidering race and gender categories, will require us to radically reflect on the possibility of altering our ontology. I have no idea how this could be done, but it seems that it might be a possibility.

One of the common laments Caribbean women brought to race theory toward the end of the second movement, was the question: Why can’t I be Black *and* Hispanic? This issue pointed us to the direction of critically analyzing all contemporary American race categories. Paula Gunn Allen, also American Indian (Laguna Pueblo), in raising issues about race in the women’s movement, brought to our attention the American Indian womens’ critique of EuroAmerican Feminist historicity and situatedness. Paula, in asking, “Where are the red roots of feminism?” directed attention not only to a gap of analysis, but to the very denial of human

relationship in the world. These two queries, fuse together in asking “What are the roots of this language/these ideas, that deny my being in the world?”

The point here is that history directs us to a time when there did exist a difference of ontology. With this different ontology, there existed a difference of ways of being in the world. This difference of Indigenist thought, is cashed out in notions about personal and social identity. Epistemic red roots, for example, once existing in words like autonomy, liberty, respect, and equality (in American Indigenist thought), could not be separated from ideas about freedom, responsibility, and peace.²³ Loss of language meaning is a loss of conceptual ontology; it is a loss of a way of being in the world; it is a loss of ways of relating in the world; and in its concrete manifestation, it is a loss of personal, social, cultural identity, or self.

Understanding the permeability of Indigenous constructs of ethnicity, or gender, may assist feminist theory in understanding certain womanist assumptions of indigenism. Indigenous women doing feminist social engineering and healing need to be understood as living two different types of identities. First, the identity of a being in a language that knows only a nondiscreet nonbinary dualist ontology; and second, the survival identity, imposed by highly discreet bifurcated, dualist logic of colonial Europe in the Americas. This second identity is molded in the logic and language of colonization; the identity is constructed in a fixed, racialized, and biologized criterion of identity; it is a political identity that works to protect those in power. It is used to announce the presence of a discreetly gendered person. When critical theory fails to recognize very different identities of American Indian women, the result is a misunderstood articulation of Indian gender and ethnic identity.

Gendered identity standpoints of the dominant culture become for American Indian women a colonial template dictating what our reality is supposed to be; it is stamped on us by both a colonial language and ontology. Colonization has placed American Indians in certain ontological standpoints of perspective, yet it is sometimes from our traditional ontologies of perspective that we see and respond to how others see us. Though we have been and are forced to participate in a colonial game of “picture, picture, who has the picture.” In reality, we know there are many pictures, just as there are many different genders and ontological structures in the world. What we don’t know is why some feminist theorists don’t “get this”.

Many Indigenous gender categories are ontologically without fixed boundary. They are animate, nondiscreet, and grounded in a nondiscreet and thus nonbinary dualist ontology. That is, the ontology, as animated (continuously alterable), will be inclusive (nonbinary) rather than exclusive (discreetly binary), and have nondiscreet (unbounded) entities rather than discreetly (bounded) entities. In this way, it is possible to have a nonbinary (nondiscreet) dualist thought system, or a nondiscreet nonbinary dualist thought system, of gender. Understanding how a nondiscreet ontology of gender operates, and being able to imagine it, may be a crucial step toward comprehending gender²⁴ politics of American Indian women.

The ontological gender difference, made manifest in linguistic difference, discloses a way to embrace our world. This embracing reflects deep ontological alterity. The

overlapping categories of Indigenist ontology create an experience of the world distinct from, but in every way equal to, the Western European ontology of discreet bounded entities. This alterity gives rise to a different worldview, from which a very real standpoint comes into being. This standpoint discloses a difference of politics. It signifies a manifest site of change that would have been necessary to undergo, in the process of adapting to ontological gendercide within the American Indian genocide in the Americas. For many, because the genocide of indigenous languages was never metamorphosed, this nontransformed ontological site reflects a nondiscreet, inclusive, living nonbinary dualism, inclusively celebrated in articulations of “all my relations.”

Because ontological difference can give rise to metaphysical difference, Indigenous concepts of gender may sometimes stand outside a sharply demarcated ontology of binary, dualist thought. That American Indians have, against incredible odds, maintained this different ontology, is a marvel and wonder. The presence of this ontological memory suggests a vital malleability and animation of gender worldview may be preferred by Indigenous people, over a categorically fixed, sharply bifurcated, limiting worldview. If this is the case, we can expect to encounter a general shift in disciplines that engage Indigenist thought and ontology; they will need to move toward comprehending a continuum of nondiscreet nonbinary, dual metaphysical systems. However, the first site of interpretation may be those disciplines embracing cross and multi disciplines, cultures, methods, and dimensions.

An Indigenous manifold of complexity, resembling a world of multifariously associated connections and intimate fusions, might not be expected to easily give way to a metaphysics of sharply defined (bounded) and limited binary dualist constructions of gender. Nor may such yielding serve our situated survival in an actively complex, continuously changing, and hence precarious metaphysical world. But identifying and naming diversely intertwined active gender ontologies (multigender ontologies), may turn out to be a prerequisite to understanding gender worldviews as they have developed in the Americas. This may especially be true for American Indians.

Gender Becomes

Henry Sharp, in “Asymmetric Equals: Women and Men Among the Chipewyan,” notes how fuzzy logic appear in Chipewyan (Ojibway) language.

“One legacy of the history of the development of our [sic] language [English], and the role of binary thought in our philosophy, is the assumption that categories are discreet (Needham 1975), that they are discrete bounded entities. A and not-A cannot be the same. Chipewyan categories are, to a far greater extent than is the case in our culture, nondiscreet (Needham 1972, 1975). Chipewyan symbolic logic is not binary. A and not-A can be the same, or, since neither A [n]or not-A have discrete boundaries, they can overlap. It is the case of fuzzy logic in which the degree of resemblance between categories can be zero.”²⁵

Sharp claims that if colonial categories are discreet (discreet bounded entities), then it may be exceedingly

difficult, in such a value system, to think about categories and not assign an hierarchical relation. In Western thought hierarchy exists between every linked A and not-A. This is because emotional (affective) reasoning that parallels rational (inferential) thought “projects hierarchy onto categorical differences (Hobart 1985, Parkin 1985).”²⁶

Sharp goes on to note that gender is a cultural construct “imposed on the phenotypical expression of the chromosomal diversity present in human beings” [68] Because there is a variety of genetic construction of the human species in the biology of sex, binary categories need not necessarily arise. Moreover, as there is variation in genetic construction of the human biology of sex, binary cultural categories ought to be demonstrated rather than assumed. This burden falls upon Western Eurocentric culture; and will need to use genotypes, as well as phenotypical expression.

EuroAmerican culture, to explain binary sex/gender categories, will likely have to first presume discreetly fixed categories, essentialized (tied down) as ahistorical, and unchanging throughout time and place. This presumption might exclude other possible sex/gender speculations about historical, temporal, and regional cause and effect inferences with respect to gender role. As example, grasping interactive and complementary, nondiscreet nonbinary dualist gender categories could be a function of a specific history of a human group in a particular temporal or geographic region.

A Chipewyan perspective of gender explanation, as a particular instance of general explanation, requires linking alternate explanations together, thus combining a context of many illustrative factors without reducing them to a single concept of cause and effect. Contrast this to the “modern” scientific enterprise of seeking singular (tied down) necessary and sufficient conditions of explanation, as found in the history of Western European and EuroAmerican culture. The framework “is a triadic system, involving male, female, and a third category/context in which male/female is not relevant.”²⁷ This third category retains the rudimentary ambiguity of non-fixed categorization: “who and what the being is is not knowable from what it is, but only from what it later became.”²⁸ Male and female cannot be presumed; the nature of the cause/effect relationship between adult/child may be the equivalent to gender classification, i.e., it is something one attains.

In some contexts Male may be an achieved status, and Female an ascribed, rather than achieved status. For example, the Chipewyans do not distinguish between physical and supernatural causality; cause and effect are one. “Inkoze” is a Chipewyan concept that describes the “collective knowledge of supernatural causality.”²⁹ Males must achieve the status of maleness by attaining Inkoze. They do so by displaying behavior appropriate to having the knowledge of Inkoze. Having Inkoze is to attain respect; it is achieved via performance. Prior to attaining Inkoze, men do not have gender. Because women already have respect and status, ascribed via teaching skills, women do not need to perform in order to attain Inkoze.³⁰ In sum, Sharp tries to show how gender relevancy can be interculture context laden. Yet historical records of gender relevancy may depend upon a logic of the recorder’s ontological understanding of a particular event, as well as that recorder’s attitude and ability, to understand Inkoze ontology.³¹

Thus we see that the concept of gender can be malleable, and differs not only across cultures, but can be context dependent within a culture. Gender constructs can be used to interpret the meaning of behaviors appropriate to, for example, menstrual taboos for young women, and root oven taboos for young men. Lillian A. Ackerman, in “Gender Status in the Plateau” notes that among Plateau Indians, once children matured, taboos were not so strict, as measures could be taken to neutralize gender influence.³² Understanding gender construct in Indigenous America, may require not only nondiscreet malleability, but that they be understood in appropriate personal, social, political, economic, domestic, spiritual, or even sexual contexts. At its best, it will not be uni-definitional or a-contextual.³³

Gender Status

The status of American Indian women and gender is an important issue to raise in the context of social, cultural, and political relations. Much ink has been spilt the past several years since the second wave of the feminist movement trying to prove the Confederacy created by the Iroquois Nations (Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, Seneca, and in the early 18th century, the Tuscarora), dating back as far as 1000 A.D., was a matriarchy. Admittedly, the clan system of the Haudenosaunee was matrilineal; but this does not necessarily translate into a matrifocal nor matriarchal framework. Again, the discreetly binary imposition of Western European logic has assumed that if a culture is not patriarchal, it must be matriarchal, and if not patrilineal, then matrilineal. In making claims about aboriginal people, Western European scholars have not been able to conceive egalitarian societies with protean (a Delorian word) binary constructs.

Joy Bilharz, in “The Changing Status of Seneca Women,” notes that the status of Haudenosaunee women in the Confederacy has been continuously debated since 1851 to the present.³⁴ Bilharz claims that men cleared the land, and women worked it, and it had to be abandoned every ten to twenty years for more fertile soil, timber reserves, and animal access. What we are not told by Bilharz is whether the men/women and male/female constructs were polymorphous. Nonetheless, any notion of ownership of the land was always ephemeral. In this context both horticulture and hunting were complementary (and value equivalent) activities. And although we don’t know the nature of the gender constructs, because a concept of geographical space was associated with gender, the

“Iroquois world divided into complementary realms of forest and clearing . . . the former being the domain of men, the warriors, hunters, and diplomats, and the latter the domain of women, the farmers and clan matrons.”³⁵

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, many things changed for Iroquois women. The eventual reliance upon EuroAmerican trade for metal tools and cooking pots, the presence of alcohol to abet genocide that thwarted a sense of community, the preclusion of traditional roles by new responsibilities of nontraditional ways, the eventual transition from a matrilineal extended family household to a patrilineal nuclear family household, and the mirroring, in the mid 19th century, of contemporary EuroAmerican values and customs, created a somewhat different Seneca Nation of American Indians. Significantly, these events did not defeat Indigenous

values and customs, though they contributed to the waning of womens' traditional tribal power. "Women were disenfranchised: only males could vote, and only males could hold office."³⁶ It was not until 1964 that native women were again enfranchised, and took up empowering political roles in housing, education, employment, and political councils. The current renaissance of Indigenous peoples' culture can at least partly be attributed to rebuilding women's' traditionally powerful tribal roles in an urban context. Bilharz maintains that women still hold control over the "clearing," or public policy, outside the home.

Gender construction appears malleable in at least some American Indian cultures. The Chipewyan concept of a gender becoming, or acquiring Inkoze by the performance of stepping out from a third enigmatic gender construct, evidently appears to be, from an EuroAmerican worldview, a unique and unconventional slant on gender. Yet Chipewyan gender notions present only one, among multifarious indigenous gender roles.

Another example of a variegated nondiscreet gender identity can be seen in the Taino Peoples, at one time from the Southeastern United States. Taino have rites for girls and boys upon attaining puberty; they generously grant young adults an autonomous option of gender selection. And a further illumination of Indigenous gender autonomy can be gleaned from the notion of the "manly hearted" women (*ninauposkitzipxpe*) among the Blackfoot, and the "nadlee" of the Southwest. In Dineh thought, the nadlee remains a mixed gender status—the hermaphrodite of mythic trickster and creator, highly coveted, and always treated with respectful awe—and dignifies the marvel of creation and all relations. I can think of no similar concept in EuroAmerican thought.

Various supplementary examples could be cited. The presence of traditionally admired gendered beings endures. Peoples Indigenous to the Americas and elsewhere, suggest that we can secure at least one credible inference about differently gendered beings. That inference is this: that cultural values of at least some Indigenous people have continued exceptional sanctuary to an attitude about gender that cherishes a wide arena of personal autonomy and freedom. In the Americas this sanctuary has been exceptional because it has withstood over five hundred years of cultural attack.

Alice Kehoe, in "Blackfoot Persons," explains the importance of autonomy as context for gender roles,

"What really matters to a Blackfoot is autonomy, personal autonomy. Blackfoot respect each person's competence, even the competence of very small children, and avoid bossing others. People seek power to support the autonomy they so highly value. Competence is the outward justification of the exercise of autonomy. If a person competently engages in work or behavior ordinarily the domain of people of the other sex, or of another species, onlookers assume the person has been blessed, either uninvited or through seeking, by spiritual power to behave in this unusual manner. A woman who wanted to go to war, and there were many such, was judged as a man would be by her success in counting coup or seizing enemy weapons.

Conclusion

The colonization of the Americas brought severe sanction to anyone exercising an opportunity to exert individual gender autonomy. Previously known cultural exuberance of autonomous gender decision and polymorphous constructs became significantly erased by tightly defined, delineated, and discreet European and EuroAmerican gender roles. To transgress the hypersensitive boundary in the presence of the colonizer was to flirt with death.

Feminists have argued that European gender roles, via rigid and discreet boundary constructions, have limited human experiencing of sex and gender potentials. Certainly we do not find among Indigenous people of the Americas an utopia of sex and gender roles, anymore than we find a romanticized patriarchy, in which women were worshipped as the center of the world. And yet, even when some cultures may appear to have women at the center of a cosmos, it is not yet clear how under and over determination affected interpretations of what passed for gender dichotomy in the eyes of the beholder. Certainly in the Americas, the ontology of translation as practiced by EuroAmericans did not adequately bear the ontology of Indigenous thought. It appears that it is as difficult to define gender among Indigenous people today, as it is to define other discreet binary dualist concepts carried within Western European ontology.

Although I would disagree that a common ontology stands behind Western European and American Indigenous thought, there is still some common ground here. If concepts of personal autonomy and equality are linguistically interdependent in Indigenous languages, this may help explain something about ambiguous and multigendered identities and humanly lived relations. And if this is the case, then gender may be a more kaleidoscopic and protean concept than EuroAmerican culture has yet to imagine.³⁸

Endnotes

1. An earlier draft of this paper used 'polythetic' and 'monothetic' rather than 'discreet' and 'nondiscreet'. 'Poly' meaning "many contained" rather than 'mono' meaning "one (self) contained". Monothetic logic would be one place predicate logic (monadic), polythetic logic would require many place predicate logic (polyadic). I later changed to use the distinction between 'discreet' and 'nondiscreet' binaries for clarity.
2. A "binary" system has a base of two, and everything is expressed using only two symbols, eg. a binary logic system of computer programming uses only the powers of two, i.e., '0' and '1'; and all programs are created using only these two symbols. Another example would be binary stars (sometimes referred to as a double star), where two stars revolve around a common center of gravity; there are never more than two, and each remains within the common gravitational pull, yet retains their own boundary. In binary logic systems the two values are the "true" and the "false" and all meaning is put into this value system. By contrast a non-binary system may have bases of three or more, and may or may not be open to emergent change, eg. a deontic logic system would use a value of the "true," the "false" and the "unknown," and meaning would be put into these categories.
3. Val Plumwood refers to the "boundedness" of the logic of colonization and oppression as being part of a dualism (or binary opposition) that constructs conceptual identity in terms of exclusionary contrasts, eg. male/female. She indicates that feminist psychology has a term that she will use to designate the "gulf" inherent in dualised (note the 's' in the word 'dualised') categories. The term is 'hyperseparation'. Plum indicates that the hyperseparation is a form of identity constructed by maximum exclusion from the "other's" qualities, which she adds, are conceived

as inferior. Val also notes that Marilyn Frye claims that the members of dualized (note the 'z' here) classes assume they are both hyperseparated from "others" (who constitute the opposition), and also homogenized, i.e., very like one another in one's own group (Plumwood 1998, Fry 1983). 'Dualized' means to make or consider dual.

4. A "dualistic" system (of or based on dualism) is a system composed of two parts, or kinds, like or unlike. Hence, dualism per se does not give rise to unlikes (opposites), nor to the "inferiority" of one in relation to the "other." For example a dualist ontology might hold that reality is composed of two elements, mind and matter, but need not make these kinds exclusive of one another, nor place value in one to the exclusion of the "other." Thus the denigration of "mind" over "matter" as we see manifest in some forms of rationalism, is not a natural byproduct of dualism, but rather the product of a value intentionalism; similarly for a theological dualism holding that there are two antagonistic principles in the universe, the "good" and the "evil." Of particular note is that members of colonizing groups generally do not see themselves as members of a colonizing group, but rather, only as "superiors to" the "others."

5. See for example *Two-Spirit People: Native American Gender Identity, Sexuality, and Spirituality*, edited by Sue Ellen Jacobs, Wesley Thomas, and Sabine Lang (1997).

6. Throughout this paper I use 'American Indian' to refer to Indigenous people of the Americas (North, Central, and South) and their descendants. Thus an American Indigicentric perspective is used analogously to the notion of an Eurocentric, Africentric, and EuroAmericentric perspective; i.e., it is seen from the "eyes of" Indigenous people of the Americas.

7. Wub-E-Ke-Niew, in *We Have The Right To Exist: A Translation of Aboriginal Indigenous Thought (1995)* has referred to this as an "...unresolvable dualism in their [English] language...: "Because I cannot conceive of a language with dualism, I use notions of binary and nonbinary to expose an important distinction here..." (p. 236).

8. See Michael Ripinsky-Naxon "Shamanistic Knowledge and the Cosmology," in *Tribal Epistemologies: Essays in the Philosophy of Anthropology*, edited by Helmut Wautischer: Ripinsky-Naxon discusses one of the roles of a "shaman" as bringing together the abstract idea with the concrete reality: "The Maya principle of polarity finds, in many ways, an intellectual resonance in Niels Bohr's "Principle of Correspondence" in which a single entity can be both matter (a particle) and pure energy (a wave); its nature is determined by its behavior at a given moment of observation. The observation of such physical behavior is subject to laws, formulated by Werner Heisenberg in his Uncertainty Principle, that are an inescapable property of the universe...such cosmological systems are not, in essence, incompatible descriptions of the world (at 155)." Vine Deloria, Jr. has remarked to a similar effect, in *Reason and Spirit* that it may be possible to replace the Western word "Spirit" that was imposed upon indigenous thought, to that of "energy" and reconcile at least some of Western scientific thought with American Indigenous thought.

9. "In Navajo they say like, whatever that goes on within your world it is moving. It is just like a flow, everything is in flow. There are no solid objects or anything. Everything...goes through transformation. It goes through manifestations. There is wear and tear, there is, but there is no addition or there is no loss to anything. It is just a transformation. You are in that. You are participating in that, so everything is alive. So that is how the Navajo would interpret (Hanson Ashley, Sonto, Arizona, 7/27/93)⁴" *Molded in the Image of Changing Woman: Navajo Views on the Human Body and Personhood*, by Maureen Trudelle Schwarz; Univ of Arizona Press: Tucson (1997) p.18 (cf. p 93 regarding pairings of contrasting but complementary components to make a whole (where each half is necessary) in the web of interconnectedness formed by relationships in the universe, with self and all relations.)

10. In binary dualist logic, if something appears to be both good and evil, rigid boundaries must come into play to clarify which one is to be dominant. Time and place function as language markers in the English language in such a way that something cannot both be and not be in linear time or geographical space. What is commonly known

as "Indian Time" on the other hand, is measured by events, and because events can recur, the "same" event may be in many places, or occur in many times.

11. As I use the concept 'abstract thought' it means thought apart from any particular instances or material objects as semantics.

12. quote Wub E Ke Niew p. 219.

13. *Linking Arms Together, American Indian Treaty Visions of Law and Peace 1600-1800*, Rob Williams

14. Both the phrase "all our relations" and "the original peoples" have deep structural meaning in indigenous cultures. Indigenous people of the America's philosophical thought generally incorporates an acknowledgement of "the" people, in origin stories, as human people, as distinct from different kinds of people, like animal people, tree people, etc.

15. *A Study in Race Prejudice in the Modern World*, by Lewis Hawke Indiana university, Bloomngton 1959. Although the humanity of Indigenous people of the Americas was at issue in the Valladolid debates, other issues as well provided impetus for the colonization of the continents: Vitoria (Francisco de Vitoria at Salamanca) denied the right of mistreatment of indigenous people; Vitoria also argued that to prevent Indigenous people of the Americas from denying trade to Europe, however, in a world where "God" had intended all nations to trade, any nation or group had a divine right to conquer America in the interests of uninhibited trade. Vine Deloria discusses this in *God is Red*, and notes that "The doctrine that the pope had been given total control over the planet by God was soon secularized into justification for European nations, definitively Christian, to conquer... Once the doctrine became secularized, it was impossible for anyone to question its validity..." (277).

16. Ibid.

17. Consider "...the daily occurrence of the dawn as the sun returns symbolizes the continuation of time and of life itself. Dawn (associated with the white and the east) is one of the four cardinal light phenomena, along with the blue of day—sky (associated with the South), the yellow of evening twilight (West), and the black of darkness (North). Each of these four light phenomena serves as a guide to people's movements and activities (Griffin-Pierce [Navajo-Dine]1988)." *In Earth and Sky* at 284.

18. Epilogue to *Earth and Sky: Visions of the Cosmos in Native American Folklore*, ed. Ray A. Williamson and Claire R. Farrer (Mescalero Apache); University of New Mexico Press: Albuquerque (1992) at 285.

19. When *Red Earth, White Lies* by Vine Deloria, Jr. was published, it became the perfect medium of text examples to use to teach about how modern science was rampant with informal fallacies!

20. And in this context I remembered Adrienne Rich's importance of the "lesbian continuum" (*Lies, Secrets and Silences*); Naomi Zack's work about racial and ethnic affiliations, and how race concepts could ontologically limit and bifurcate; and Maria Lugones' presentation in 1983 about our need to unwrap conceptual frameworks.

21. *On Lies, Secrets, and Silences*, Adrienne Rich...

22. Zack, Naomi. *American Mixed Race* (1995); *Race and Sex* (1996); and *Thinking About Race* (1998).

23. See Wub-E-Ke-Niew, *We have the Right to Exist*, NYC: Blackthistle 1995, and Jack Weatherford in *Indian Givers* at NY: Ballantine 1989.

24. Recent texts that have attempted articulations of indigenous multigenders include: *Living the Spirit: A Gay American Indian Anthology* edited by Will Roscoe (1983), *Changing Ones: Third and Fourth Genders in Native North America* by Will Roscoe (1998), and *Two-Spirit People* edited by S.E. Jacobs, W. Thomas, and S. Lang (1997).

25. *Women and Power in Native North America*, Laura F. Klein and Lillian A. Ackerman, eds., Norman: U of Okla Press (1995) at 68.

26. Ibid.

27. Ibid.

28. Ibid. at 69.

29. Ibid at 66

30. From an American Indian multigendered perspective, it might make sense that a multigendered person would need to attain “Inkotze” (which is a concept we find in many indigenous communities); but I have not yet thought about this very much.
31. Ibid at 67.
32. Ibid at 95
33. See Tafoya Principle of Uncertainty in *Two-Spirit People*, p. 198.
34. Ibid, at 102
35. Ibid at 103
36. Ibid at 109.
37. Ibid at 122
38. See attached bibliography for some of the works by Alice Kehoe and Bea Medicine that might begin to help clarify gender in Native North American Communities.

ARTICLES

An Educated Indian

V. F. Cordova

“It just sticks in their craw, don’t it?”

Jolene pulls out a chair and tiredly plops down across the table from me in the school cafeteria. She has just participated in a panel discussion before incoming freshmen. She, as usual, represents the minority contingent at the university. Her use of the “down home” jargon indicates that she is about to launch into discussion of an “Indian problem” in academia.

I grant her permission to begin by leaning toward her.

“It happens every time,” she says. “The introductions begin and its ‘*Doctor So and So*’ and ‘*Doctor Such and Such*’ but when it gets to me it’s always ‘...and *my good friend* Jolene Masters.’”

“Half the time,” Jolene says, “they don’t know me but I’m always their *good friend*.”

Jolene has a doctorate in education and, previous to her present position, has taught at colleges in U.S. protectorate nations, trained teachers from elementary grades through university. In order to come home she has taken on a job for which the requirement is usually only a Bachelor’s degree and “experience.” She is a counselor in the minority recruitment and retention department at a State University. I have a temporary teaching job, brought in to up enrollment, appease administrators, or draw in minority students—I’m not sure which—it may be all three.

“They just can’t get those words out, ‘*Doctor Masters*,’ they act like I got my doctorate in a Crackerjack box!”

“Next time,” I tell her, “wear your robe and mortar board.” She laughs, “Wouldn’t that blow their minds!?”

Being an Indian on a college campus isn’t an easy position to hold. We aren’t usually hired for our qualifications, we’re hired as *Indians*. Sort of like one hires a clown for a spoiled child’s birthday party. My friend Charlie says, “You shouldn’t educate an Indian anyway. It just makes ‘em angry.” Charlie is a graduate from an Ivy League school with a couple of degrees in anthropology, got tired of being a “token Indian” and now squires tourists around the town square on his reservation. He also serves as a consultant whenever he can

get the job, “I just tank up on Esso and Coors and for a thousand dollars I say ‘Ugh’ in all the appropriate places!”

Most of the educated Indians I know are funneled into academic departments of anthropology, social work, education, or literature. In anthropology we are like the butterflies in the glass cases, anesthetized, mounted, and shown as examples. Social work and education try to train us to help our fellow Indians assimilate into the mainstream. Literature trains us to scream in artistic pentameters. There is nothing more palliative to white guilt than to listen to an Indian poet bemoan the fate of his or her people. “Dead Baby poetry” my friends and I call it, as in, “I got drunk / fell on my baby / smothered her ’twixt coats filled with vomit, beer, and despair.” White folks eat that stuff up.

Of course not all of us become poets. There is one who spent his dozen years of study in mastering the field of literary criticism. He can quote Derrida, Foucault, and pronounce words like ‘hermeneutic’. He is a director of Ethnic Studies. Another tried Analytic Philosophy; he got saddled with ‘Native American Philosophy’. “What, exactly, is that?.” I asked. “Damned if I know,” he replied, “I just make it up as I go along.” I also ran into a Navajo who was studying physics. “Why physics?,” I asked him. “Navajo theology,” he says, “touching the Sacred.” “Don’t tell anyone,” I caution him. “I won’t,” he says, and grins.

I thought I’d take a different tack. Invade Academia and check out its “roots.” Whenever anyone in my family ran into a conflict between our description of ‘the way things are’ and the way white folks described ‘reality’, my father always told us, “*They* (meaning white folks)...have a different *idea* about that... .” I thought I’d check out those *ideas*. I studied philosophy, particularly ‘the history of...’

I thought of myself as a plumber, the university as a fountain. Some people came to the fountain to drink, others to enjoy the view, still others to mingle with those at the well. I would check out the water supply. Find out where the *ideas* came from. *Ideas* that were alien to me, such as ‘soul,’ and ‘God,’ and ‘creation,’ ‘progress,’ ‘free will,’ and ‘individualism,’ the latter of which seemed, in comparison to our own view, mere solipsism. Maybe egocentrism. Or narcissism.

My friends teased me. Once a campus minister came into the office of Native American Studies to use the copier. He hadn’t met me before and commented on this. My friends introduced me as a “white expert.” “Oh,” he says, “she isn’t Indian?” “Yeah,” says one of the staff, “she’s Indian all right, she just studies white people—you know like white people study Indians? Well, you got ‘Indian experts’ and we’re about to get us a ‘White expert’.” He didn’t get the joke. Gave me a blank look, shook my hand and walked away with just a brief glance in the direction of the staff, who were all suppressing their laughter.

Nobody else got the joke either. If I had enrolled in a philosophy program with the intention of translating Descartes’ *Meditations* into an Indian language I would have been given a hardy welcome. Instead I decided to explore the *invention* (instead of *discovery*) of major Western concepts.

Talk about *Indian problems!* I had never met an Indian in a philosophy program, in fact, there were few minorities of any sort in philosophy departments. After I had been in the program for a few months I happened to run into a Hispanic

that was in the program. I ran into one of the few professors who was willing to pass more than just the time of day with me shortly after meeting the Hispanic student. “I just met Manuel,” I exulted. The professor gave a snort, leaned conspiratorially toward me and muttered, “Not one of *them* has ever made it through the program!” He leaned back and gave me a smile of such satisfaction that I was visibly appalled. The professor must have felt an apology was in order, “He failed one of his comps,” he said, “couldn’t complete the program.” But Manuel had just informed me that he was a teaching assistant in the department. How could that be? I found out later that the department had kept him on to fill their “minority quota” (though there was no such thing). He taught introductory courses in the department and was paid through funds from a Hispanic research institute.

The next time I ran into Manuel he seemed perturbed. Perhaps perturbed at me. “How’s it goin’ Manuel?,” I asked, attempting to defuse whatever it was that was bothering him. He gave me a stony glare, turned to his departmental mail box and said, “They’ll never let you through the program!” He turned to look at me and said, “Not one of us has ever been allowed to get through the doctoral program. What makes you think they’ll let you?” I was stunned. I could think of nothing to say, and Manuel, clutching his mail to his chest, walked off.

I later learned, from other graduate students and staff members, that Manuel had come to the university after an undergraduate degree from a prestigious college and a Masters degree from a Catholic university. He had been in the doctoral program for ten years and failed one of the seven comprehensive exams required by the department in order to move on to the dissertation stage. The exam he failed was in an area of study that was not even required by the department and was later dropped as part of the comprehensive exams. The ten year schedule was not unusual, of the three students who received a doctorate while I was there none had been there for less than ten years. “Cheap labor,” said one student. “Gotta keep those doctoral students,” said another, “justify the program.” Manuel though, all agreed, had gotten a “bum deal.” I learned of other minority students that had been “weeded out.” In the entire history of the school, in a State that had one of the highest minority populations in the country, not one minority student had ever been granted the doctorate in philosophy. Manuel, it turned out wasn’t perturbed at me, he was angry that the department had allowed in another “sucker.”

I got to know Manuel fairly well, philosophically rather than personally. He talked to me about phenomenology, an area of philosophy that I hadn’t explored. The names of the thinkers rolled off his tongue as though he knew them intimately: Husserl, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty. And then one day I learned that he had died of a heart attack, at the age of 32.

“Those fuckers!,” said a student and slammed his coffee cup down on the counter in the student’s lounge. “Goddamn them!” He began to list the things the department had done to Manuel in “weeding him out.” “You gave him some hope,” said the student. “He was going to re-enroll in the program, start over again.” The student knew that Manuel had a conference with one of the professors, that it hadn’t gone well. That Manuel had come out angry and overturned every chair in the lounge and stomped out without speaking to

anyone. He suffered a heart attack in his car on his way home. “Sons of Bitches,” said the student. Others nodded in agreement. They talked about the other minority students that had been similarly treated. All I could think of was Manuel saying, “They’ll never let you through.”

“The fuckers” attended the memorial service held on campus. I looked at each one of them, really looked at them, both friend and foe. The next day I went to the faculty member who had recruited me into his program. “I have tried,” he said, “to get a minority through the program.” “Well,” I informed him, “I *will* get through the program. If anyone, anyone, slams a door in my face, I will kick the fucking door down!” He was behind me, he said, “to the extent of his ability.” Some faculty members who weren’t adverse to having a minority in the program would, when no one was looking, give me words of encouragement, “Keep it up,” “Keep doing what you are doing,” “Get the administration behind you.” One administrator referred to the philosophy department as the “Black Hole” of the university—“something goes in,” he said, “but nothing ever comes out!”

Six years later, I had a doctorate and a job. I did not so much *earn* the degree as I declared war on the department and won. I also learned the meaning of a “Pyrrhic victory.”

After battling faculty for so many years, I discovered that I was one of them. It was flattering, at first, being on the opposite side of the lectern in a classroom. It was not a position unfamiliar to me. I had been a teacher for most of my life. The University, however, was not a Junior High School.

After a few weeks on the job I was asked to write up a proposal for an Ethics course that would be required of all students in their Junior year. I wrote it up, submitted it, and found that it was not only accepted but went in under another name. The faculty member who submitted the proposal with his name on it called me and wanted to know what I thought of “our” victory. I was stunned. “I think,” I said, “that your submission of ‘our’ plan was actually plagiarism.” There was a long silence at the other end of the phone line. “I drew up the outline for the course,” I reminded him, “I don’t see my name anywhere on the proposal.” Again, another silence, then, “I’ll correct that right away.” He hung up. The other faculty members in my department were laughing so hard they could barely stand. I wondered what they were laughing at. “No one,” one of them said, “no one has ever had the nerve to call that bastard on his habit of taking credit for other people’s work!”

“Well,” I said, “what he did was *wrong*.” They were still laughing when I walked back into my office. They laughed again the next day when we received the “corrected” proposal AND an apology from the plagiarist. “We ought to frame this,” one said, “hang it up on the wall where everyone can see it!”

My father had three years of formal education; my mother graduated from the eighth grade when that was as far as the local school went. Attending a university was never within the realm of their imagination. My earning a doctorate would have been an accomplishment beyond their belief. Both had died before I had finished my educational experience.

“Man!,” I would have said to my father, “you can’t imagine what I got myself into!”

I had a bit of trouble imagining it myself.

I discovered the turf battles of departmental politics; the competitiveness between faculty members in jockeying for

position; the contempt for the administrators that kept the whole institution functioning so that faculty could play their games. Students were merely numbers and the numbers counted not as persons educated but as departmental pawns.

I thought faculty should work together to create a well-rounded student. I actually was foolish enough to suggest that faculty dealing with freshmen students and required courses should meet together to coordinate their expectations of students for the benefit of students and faculty. Mathematicians, for instance, could tell English professors what they expected from students and vice versa. They could work together, I suggested, to give the student a better feeling about how the various studies to which he was subjected would hang together. After a few meetings the attendance fell off. With the exception of a few *real* teachers the rest couldn't be bothered with trying to talk to someone outside their own discipline. I was called an "idealist", a "dreamer." Faculty went back to assuming that their own course was the only important facet of a student's life.

I was a token minority professor, my hiring was a jab at the new turn to "diversity" studies among the faculty. "Diversity" seemed to consist of the same old professors now including the writings of non-white authors. My department derided such attempts: "When we opted for diversity," a colleague commented to another department faculty member, "we went out and *hired* another voice." The other faculty were insulted, as, of course, they were meant to be.

My initial contact with faculty outside my own department consisted of offerings of help in teaching and suggestions on how to deal with students. Underneath the offerings and suggestions I detected a paternalistic, condescending, attitude. When I offered my own suggestions they stopped offering their own. I heard someone say of me that I "wasn't a *real* Indian." A *real* Indian, I assumed, would not have had the audacity to offer suggestions to *real* faculty.

There were many Indian students on campus. I discovered that they "belonged" to various departments: The College of Education had "their" Indian students; so did Cross-Cultural Studies and the Native Studies Department. They considered my association with "their" students an interference. The various "owners" of native students thought me a radical for suggesting that Native American students broaden their horizons by majoring in something other than the expected fields. "Your groups need various experts, why not become geologists, doctors, administrators...?", I recommended. Once a "native" instructor of languages came to me and after engaging in a few friendly pass-the-time-of-day comments leaned toward me and said, "We don't need your kind here! You ain't nothin' but a damn reservation Indian! Go back where you belong! We don't need you messing with our kids!" I discovered that he had given the same speech to two other Indian professors that came from out of state. He objected, they said, to the fact that we were "pagans"—he happened to be an ordained Lutheran minister and had a degree in religion rather than in linguistics or languages.

I complained to a Dean about his comments but I had been preceded in his office by various other professors that complained about my own effect on the Indian students. One of the complaints was that I didn't treat the students like "real" Indians and this was because I "wasn't a *real* Indian" myself. Other Indian faculty members had encountered this

complaint also. *Real* Indians, it seemed, did not come with Ph.D.s and the confidence of their disciplinary accomplishments. *Real* Indians responded to their mentors in the teaching profession. *Real* Indians sought out the assistance of their "betters." *Pseudo* Indians thought they had something to offer, not only to other Indians, but to non-Indians!

The other Indian faculty members laughed bitterly over this dilemma: Before we had Ph.D.s we were *nothing but* Indians; *after* we earned Ph.D.s we weren't *real* Indians!

Jolene Masters, *Doctor* Jolene Masters, wasn't alone in her dilemma as an educated Indian. I had a story for her. A couple, in fact.

Once, I said to Jolene, I was invited to attend a panel discussion on Stephen Hawking's *Brief History of Time*, after the panel members' comments, I asked a few questions which led to some interesting discussion in the room. When the meeting broke up for refreshments one of the panelists asked someone in my department, "Who is the new Jewish woman in your department?," referring to myself. "Why do you think she's a Jew?," asked my colleague. "Well," said the panelist, "she's very bright." My colleague laughed; "She's a Native," he said. The panelist, with a bit of a shock, recovered quickly and responded, "Surely, not one of *Ours!*"

I waited for Jolene to stop laughing and told her another. I was at this conference and ended up sitting at a bar set up for participants. There was a man sitting next to me and he began a discussion, wanted to know what I did, what I studied. We ended up talking about Seventeenth Century philosophy and about an hour later I started to leave. The man startled me when he slapped his open palm on the bar counter. He began to laugh. "By damn!," he said, and he shook his head as he laughed. "By Damn! I always heard you couldn't educate an Indian!" "Oh, you can educate 'em," I said, "you just can't get 'em to change their minds!"

Doctor Masters liked that one, too. She finishes up the final crumbs of her sandwich in a much better mood than when she arrived in the cafeteria and gathers up her things to leave. "Goodbye, *Doctor* Cordova," she grins at me. "Goodbye, *Doctor* Masters," I reply.

(Names have been changed to protect the innocent.)

Visions and Voices

Steve Russell

When I was very young I had a recurrent dream, or maybe it was a vision, because I saw it from several points of view.

A woman is walking, stumbling in a line of other people. It is cold. The path she walks is icy mud and there is snow drifted around the tree trunks. There is no sound even though there are lots of people and when she looks down at her feet wrapped in rags the mud looks like a pudding beginning to set: there should be a crunching sound.

The woman falls and she thinks a snow drift beside the path looks like a soft downy pillow. She is sleepy. There is no sensation of cold. She closes her eyes.

She wakes with a sharp pain in her side. A man is standing over her, a soldier. He has poked her in the side

with the barrel of a rifle. He shouts something and menaces her with the rifle, but there is still no sound. She climbs laboriously to her knees and then to her feet and stumbles back into the line.

Sometimes I watch this scene from above, sometimes from up or down the trail. Sometimes I am the woman and sometimes the soldier. The other people are many but faceless.

When I am the soldier, I feel no hatred. I move with a dispassionate efficiency, but with no more feeling than my grandmother had toward the chicken when she wrung its neck for Sunday dinner.

It was many years later and after many viewings of this scene that I learned how my family got to Indian Territory, now called Oklahoma. They could have been Old Settlers, who moved to Arkansas to escape colonial expansion, clashed with the Osage, and wound up in Oklahoma. They could have been survivors of Duwali's band, massacred in Texas and chased North.

No, my great-great-great grandmother walked what the perpetrators have come to call the Trail of Tears, a loose translation from the Cherokee. It was even after learning that, and after getting a law degree, that I learned how the Trail of Tears came in defiance of a United States Supreme Court ruling that the removal of the Cherokee people to Indian Territory was without legal authority. "John Marshall has made his decision," President Andrew Jackson is rumored to have said of the Chief Justice, "now let him enforce it!"

So it was that a people who were wealthier and better educated than their white neighbors were rounded up at gunpoint and force marched through a winter for which they had not been allowed to prepare. So it was the wife of Chief John Ross died in Arkansas after, the story goes, giving up her blanket to another. So it was that a third of our Nation perished and that I was born in Oklahoma.

If I am linked with that history, what does it matter to how I walk in the world? Are the Cherokee people something more than their grievances? If so, does that mean their grievances are without significance?

These kinds of questions roiled in my mind when I saw Valerie Red-Horse's film, "Naturally Native," during a conference at the University of New Mexico. I have since read several reviews of the film, including one alleging that the script (by Red-Horse) was "contrived" to raise Indian issues. That reviewer saw contrived issues where I saw my life, or the fundamental question of what it means to be Indian.

The making of the film contains much of the reality portrayed on the screen. Red-Horse received primary funding for the project from the Mashentucket Pequot Nation after futile attempts to take more conventional paths. She wound up with credits as producer, writer, director, and actor. Positive notice at the Sundance Film Festival led to offers from commercial distributors that would have meant loss of control over the project. As a result, the producer and writer and director and actor became her own distributor, starting on the campus circuit. This story of the making of the film is as compelling as the film itself.

The film has since had limited commercial runs and is available on video. "Naturally Native," and the struggle to make it, was honored last year in Tahlequah, Oklahoma by the Wordcraft Circle of Native Writers and Storytellers.

The film can certainly be criticized. It lacks the high production values of a work product from another member of Wordcraft Circle, Sherman Alexie's "Smoke Signals." It tries to take on too many issues and therefore does none of them complete justice.

I have questions more than criticisms: Does this film really speak to a non-Indian audience? Will persons who do not identify as Indian give it a chance? Does the meaning I find in the film resemble the one Valerie Red-Horse intended to put there? I could have asked her in Tahlequah but I did not. The work is done, and it will have whatever impact it has.

Of this I am certain: Wordcraft Circle did the right thing in calling attention to "Naturally Native," because the purpose of the organization is to help the voices of Indians be heard, and we have not heard the last of Valerie Red-Horse, producer, writer, director, actor, and survivor.

Laura Miriam Cornelius (Kellogg) Oneida (1880-1949)

Anne Waters

Laura Miriam Cornelius (Minnie Kellogg) is credited with being, among her generation, the best active Native language speaker and best orator of the Iroquois. Her ability to talk in proper syntax bestowed her with a political advantage and power. She was most influential in re-establishing the League of Iroquois Confederacy (Six Nations) by reconstructing the traditional political offices at the Onondaga Reservation, the historic capital of the League. Cornelius received Oneida titles of recognition associated with matrilineal lineages; she installed nine sachems of the Confederacy, which continue today.

Avoiding the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Indian boarding schools of military discipline at Carlisle and Hampton, Cornelius graduated with honors from Grafton Hall—a private womens boarding school of the Episcopal Diocese. This school, only sixty miles from her home—was predominantly nonIndian. An ardent opponent of BIA schools, she was a believer in traditional American Indian educational methods of learning by observing and doing. This method of teaching and learning might be part of the reason Cornelius never quite "fit in" with the established institutional education systems in the U.S. After graduating from Grafton Hall, for twelve years she drifted from one college to another, travelling to Europe, as well as Stanford University, Barnard College, the New York School of Philanthropy (later the Columbia University School of Social Work), Cornell University, and the University of Wisconsin.

One of the original three theorists of the Society of American Indians (along with Arthur C. Parker and Dennison Wheelock), the white press compared Cornelius' ideas to those of Booker T. Washington in her call for "self help" for American Indians.

Turning against the property accumulation and inheritance economics of white society that produced child labor and sickness, sweatshops, dirty and unsafe working conditions, Cornelius advocated a communal development project for each indigenous tribal village, taking account of the diversity of resources. Equity, self sufficiency, and special

consideration of individual tribal resources and needs are the marks of her theoretical work. In her book, *Our Democracy and the American Indian: A Comprehensive presentation of the Indian Situation as it is Today*, Cornelius criticizes Indian Services for destroying natural American Indian leadership, fostering dependence and pauperization. She recommends that Indian Affairs be placed in a trust, and governed in a balanced way by individuals of national and international standing, to serve as experts and consultants in administering, protecting, and developing American Indian wealth.

Cornelius took on a very large legal project seeking to have some six to fifteen million acres of New York land returned to the Iroquois. Based on a 1922 report to the Everett Commission, finding that the Iroquois were legally entitled to six million acres of New York state, she hired an attorney to file a claim to have these lands returned. This case, initiated in 1925, was *James Deere vs St Lawrence River Power*. To support this legal action, Cornelius collected, among other contributions, many hard earned dollars of her people, for which she later could not account. In this action she fostered great financial hope in American Indian communities, that, because the case was lost, never came to fruition. Cornelius legal claim, in the instant case, was that there were indigenous rights inherent in the Treaty of Fort Stanwix of 1784 between the Iroquois Nation and the state of New York.

In summary judgment, her arguments were rejected on grounds of “lack of jurisdiction.” Appeals were fruitless. As a well respected leader in the American Indian community, had Cornelius won this most significant land claims case ever to be filed, because of her efforts, “Indian Country” today would look very different, as would tribal economics, and sovereign nations. After experiencing this legal loss, which was brought about by the many governmental actions of legal genocide against her people, Cornelius suffered from severe depression. In the context of American Indian culture and history, however, she remains a leader among Nations, and can be honored for having the foresight to keep active the legal status of American Indian treaty rights, laying a foundation for later legal struggles.

Cornelius “Lolomi” plan, a Hopi term meaning “perfect goodness be upon you,” was her other major theoretical construction. This plan was to develop American Indian communities and restore pride, self esteem, and self sufficiency. A blueprint for restoring traditional values, the clan system, tribal sovereignty, and sustainable community development, she held that each individual community would need to assess its resources and needs in relation to the environment and the growth of the community.

Cornelius theorized that finding an American Indian place in history, meant looking at how to live and share an indigenous philosophy of life, through traditional knowledge keeping, via an education of learning by doing. Finding an historical place meant developing pride of heritage in youth, and sharing that heritage through communal activities. In the Lolomi plan, Cornelius held out three fundamental strengths she hoped to re-energize, that were shared by all American Indian nations: a unique power of abstraction; seasoned oratorical skills, and a special sense of humor. These characteristics were to be incorporated into American Indian education and lifestyles, honoring the traditional wisdom of ancient tribal leaders.

As a leader in the American Indian community, Cornelius was known to sometimes hold uncompromising positions

with a stamina of argument. Yet her traditional values and knowledge helped transform legal actors and activities of American Indians into the 21st century. The work of Vine Deloria, Jr., for example, continues the legal revolutionary and activist vision of her efforts by calling for: an increase in the number of American Indian lawyers in Indian Country; for this new cadre of lawyers to pursue Treaty rights; and to pursue sovereignty and use of the law for sustainable development.

Cornelius inability to stay at any one university for any length of time is perhaps indicative, not so much of her uncompromising nature, but rather, of her vision that could not be tamed by educational institutions, of her visionary concerns to raise American Indians out of their imposed genocidal restraints in the educational process, and of her economic theories of nonaccumulative sharing and communal living. She passed on in 1949, but her American Indian philosophy, her ideas about the meaning, values, and ways of living life, continue to influence not only American Indians, but global indigenous thought, as American Indians have entered this international dialogue.

BOOK REVIEW

American Philosophies: An Anthology Edited by Leonard Harris, Scott L. Pratt, and Anne S. Waters

Reviewed by Lisa Heldke

For some years now, I've been trying to teach my department's History of American Philosophy course as something other than a survey of the “Big Three” pragmatists (Peirce, James and Dewey), and, not to be whiney or anything, but it's hard!

I don't mean just that it is hard to reeducate yourself about the history of American thought—to start to learn about Alaine Locke and Jane Addams, to start to reshape my conceptual map of the important ideas that have come out of this continent. Learning about new philosophers and new ideas is hard—*really* hard, sometimes—but, well, it's my job, so it hardly seems appropriate to complain about it. (“Damn! I had to read a new philosopher this year to teach my class!”)

It's been all but impossible to teach the history of philosophy in this country as anything other than a history of pragmatism, no matter how earnestly one might have wanted to do so. Or, to be more precise, it's been impossible to do it in an *affordable* way that didn't require someone (usually me, the department secretary and an army of student workers) to spend hours finding out where articles were published, finding out if they were still under copyright, finding out if we could get permission to reprint them, blah, blah, blah. It's been hard to hand students a messy pile of articles (at least three of which are guaranteed to be missing the crucial page), and say “That'll be thirty dollars please.” It's been hard to pass up the allure of those nice, tidy, already-printed anthologies, filled with all those familiar articles....

Until now. Now that we can choose *American Philosophies: An Anthology*, edited by Leonard Harris, Scott L. Pratt and Anne S. Waters.

That this anthology is different from the other offerings in this category is evident already in the title—*American Philosophies**, not *American Philosophy*—and in the introduction, in which we find the following assertion: “The editors mutually reject the terrible history of American philosophy that has presented it as a project created, sustained, and voiced by whites, particularly by privileged white males. The entitlement to speak the truth, receive status, and acquire income from faculty positions and book contracts has been historically controlled by a narrow group of intellectuals and schools falsely parading as the only existing or legitimate voices able to address substantive issues about the nature of knowledge, existence, and the universe. ... [This anthology] promotes a new vision: American philosophy as a complex reality, enlivened by historically marginalized, but never silent, voices” (2).

There are a few anthologies out there—usually billed as intellectual histories of the United States—that move beyond pragmatism and transcendentalism, the two philosophical movements most commonly conjured up by the term “American philosophy.” But even these ostensibly more inclusive works rarely include more than a single article by an African American (man, usually), and a couple by (white) women. There is almost never anything at all by a Native American thinker in such collections.

American Philosophies attempts, in 455 pages, to represent some of the diverse philosophical traditions that have coexisted in this country. The book is divided into six topical sections, each of which is internally organized chronologically (mostly). I think the organization of the anthology will be inviting to the instructor who might feel wary, unsure or even suspicious about the project of expanding the American philosophical canon. The six main sections of the book are almost all focussed on philosophical topics that are as mainstream as Plato—topics such as cosmology, epistemology, and philosophy of mind and person. Someone unsure about how to proceed with texts that are unfamiliar in style, subject matter, or approach is thus given helpful guidance, in the form of companion texts that address the similar kinds of issues.

At the same time, the book clearly challenges received conceptions of these standard philosophical questions, often recasting them in ways that address the specificities of the United States situation. There is, for example, a section devoted to philosophical responses to slavery and freedom. While the concept of freedom is certainly familiar to academic philosophy, the texts in this section address the very concrete reality of chattel slavery in the United States.

This is all part of the editors’ project to reconceive the history of American philosophy as (in Leonard Harris’s words) “a complex, rugged, incongruous and winding history of reflections. The resulting ‘field’ of American philosophy can be understood as a process of complex cultural exchanges, not always successful and sometimes disastrous” (6).

The book wastes very little space on introductory matter. There is a brief introduction to the whole volume, in which the editors sketch their own (disparate) conceptions of American philosophy and state their goal to present “American philosophy as a complex reality, enlivened by historically marginalized, but never silent, voices” (2). Each section begins with a one-page introduction, and each reading includes a one-paragraph biography of the author. There is

also an index (thank you!). But the bulk of its 450-plus pages is devoted to primary texts.

There is never more than one text by any given author. Ever. That means that, yes, many of the old warhorses of the classical pragmatist tradition are not to be found here. But you know what? You can buy excellent, affordable anthologies containing those works already.

But what if you don’t want to? What if you want to make this the only text in your survey of American philosophy course? (Its 38 articles would certainly provide ample reading for a semester course at my institution.) I have to admit to feeling just a tiny wave of panic when I realized that, if I used this book, my students would spend, probably, about two days each on my beloved Big Three—Peirce, James and Dewey. These are the kinds of “gulp” realizations that teachers of American philosophy will have to grapple with, as we continue to work to teach that history in ways that give students the opportunity to encounter the multiple strands of thought that it contains.

This is not a textbook for someone teaching 20th century American philosophy; the selections end (with one exception) in 1944. It would probably work well in a course devoted to 19th and 20th century American thought—although a considerable amount of material does date from before 1800. I mention this because in many institutions, American philosophy is currently billed as a course that covers a time period similar to Analytic philosophy—since Pragmatism and Analytic philosophy are roughly coterminous. This is not a criticism of the anthology, which has good reason to begin its readings with the 1493 letter to the Taino/Arawak Indians from King Ferdinand. Nevertheless, its 450 year time span will present a challenge to some instructors’ use of the book.

I wish the book had included a list of additional readings at the end of each section. This would be helpful for the instructor who wanted to discuss just some of the topics addressed in the anthology—just cosmology and epistemology, for instance—but wanted to use more readings that moved outside the mainstream American tradition. I have no doubt that the editors have a long list of texts they *wish* they could have included—perhaps a future edition of the book could include an annotated list of some of them.

I am only beginning to learn about indigenous traditions of philosophy in the United States, and thus I’m not in a position to say whether the approximately eight texts by Native thinkers and/or about indigenous philosophies adequately introduce those traditions to students. Those readings include the 1912 “Traditional History of the Confederacy of the Six Nations,” written by the Committee of the Chiefs; “Impressions of an Indian Childhood,” by Zit Kala Sa; “What the Indian Means to America,” by Luther Standing Bear; and “An American Urphilosophie,” by Robert Bunge (a Euroamerican). I can say, with confidence, that it is eight more texts by or about Native philosophy than you will find in most historical anthologies on American philosophy. And that, I believe, is one of its greatest strengths. Of course the book has left out many wonderful readings—and we can quibble about which ones should be jettisoned to make room for them—but this is a book that is important first and foremost for what it has brought in. We will have made progress in reaching the editors’ goal of a multistranded American philosophy when the quarreling about which Native texts should have been included is every bit as enlightened—and

heated—as the arguments about which Dewey essay is most important.

*But while they were at it, it would have been nice if the editors had named it *North American Philosophies*, since there are, in point of fact, no Central or South American philosophies represented here.

SYLLABUS

Native American Philosophy

(Possible Cross Listing with American Indian Studies)

Course Level: 300-500

Spring 1999 - Anne Waters, J.D., Ph.D.

email: brendam234@aol.com

Course Description. This course will study philosophy indigenous to North America through an examination of native and nonnative historical and contemporary oratory, argument, letters, addresses, and texts. From the influence of Aristotle on Native Americans during the 16th century Spanish debates at Valladolid, to the contemporary writings of Vine Deloria, Jr., we will study the interplay of native and nonnative philosophical concepts upon one another. The currently popular thesis that contemporary American philosophy has been influenced by its indigenist American roots will be examined. We will also consider whether indigenist and European thought merely collided against one another without complementary influence, or had an impact, one upon the other. Finally, we will undergo an investigation as to whether there might be influences of African, Native, and European American philosophical thought on one another.

Course Requirements. Attendance will be presumed. A journal of informal comments on each reading topic (eg., personhood, naturalism, etc.) will be kept and collected at the end of the term. All students are expected to arrive at class prepared to discuss the assigned materials. Questions will be provided for a midterm exam of no more than 10 double spaced typed pages. A formal research paper, on an APPROVED topic selected from a list (on reserve at the library), will be due the second half of the semester—minimal 10 pages for undergraduates, and 20 pages for graduate students. Precis papers may also occasionally be required of graduate students.

Grading. A 100 point scale. Attendance = 15; Journal = 10; Midterm = 25; Research Paper 50%. All assignments must be completed to receive a passing grade. No incompletes without prior written approval.

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Required Texts.

Wub-E-Ke-Niew, *We Have The Right To Exist: A Translation of Aboriginal Indigenous Thought—The first book ever published from an Ahnishinahbaeo’jibway Perspective*. New York: Black Thistle Press, 1995.

Deloria, Vine. *God Is Red: A Native View of Religion*, Golden, Co.: Fulcrum Publishing, 1994.

Hanke, Lewis. *Aristotle and the American Indians*. Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1959.

Warrior, Robert Allen. *Tribal Secrets: Recovering American Indian Intellectual Traditions*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995.

On Reserve in the Library.*

Waters, Anne. *Readings in American Indian Philosophy* (unpublished collection of published articles).

Schedule Of Topics And Reading.

Weeks 1-3

“On Personhood, Naturalism, and Cultural Difference”

*Berger, Thomas R. *A Long and Terrible Shadow*. Seattle: Univ. of Wash. Press, 1991.

Lewis Hanke. *Aristotle and the American Indians*.

*A. Irving Hallowell. “Ojibwa Ontology, Behavior, and World View.” From Stanley Diamond, editor, *Culture in History: Essays in Honor of Paul Radin*; New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1960. Reprinted in *Teachings From the American Earth: Indian Religion and Philosophy*, edited by Dennis Tedlock and Barbara Tedlock; Toronto: George J. McLeod Ltd. 141.

*Alice B. Kehoe. “Blackfoot Persons.” *Women and Power in Native North America*. Edited by Laura F. Klein and Lillian A. Ackerman. Norman: Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 1995; 113.

*Henry S. Sharp. “Asymmetric Equals: Women and Men Among the Chipewyan.” *Women and Power in Native North America*. Edited by Laura F. Klein and Lillian A. Ackerman. Norman: Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 1995; 46.

*Robert A. Williams, Jr. *Gendered Checks and Balances*. 24 Georgia Law Review 1019.

*Ward Churchill. “Nobody’s Pet Poodle: Jimmie Durham, An Artist for Native North America.” From *A Native Son: Selected Essays on Indigenism, 1985-1995*. Boston: South End Press. 1996; 483.

*Carl Sweezy. “The Indian Concept of Time: A Cultural Trait.” Carl Sweezy, as told to Althea Bass, in *The Arapaho Way: A Memoir of and Indian Boyhood* (New York: Clarkson N. Potter, 1966, 5-6, 17-18. Reprinted in *This Country Was Ours: A Documentary History of the American Indian*, Virgil J. Vogel. New York: Harper and Row; 1972; 263.

Weeks 4 - 6

“Free Will, Sovereign Nations, and Indigenism”

*Cornplanter (Seneca) Letter to the Governor of Pennsylvania”, February, 1822. From Samuel G. Drake, *Biography and History of the Indians of North America*, 11th Ed. (Boston, 1841) pp.611-613. Reprinted in *Great Documents in American Indian History*, edited by Wayne Moquin with Charles Van Doren. New York: Da Capo Press. 1995; 143.

*George W. Harkins (Choctaw). “Farewell Letter to the American People, 1832.” *The American Indian*, December 1926. Reprinted in *Great Documents in American Indian History*, edited by Wayne Moquin with Charles Van Doren. New York: Da Capo Press. 1995; 151.

*John Borrows. “Frozen Rights in Canada: Constitutional Interpretation and the Trickster.” *22 Am. Indian L. Rev.* 37 (1997). Norman: Univ. of Oklahoma College of Law.

*Michael Grant. “Seminole Tribe v. Florida—Extinction of the “New Buffalo?”.” *22 Am. Indian L. Rev.* 171 (1997). Norman: Univ. of Oklahoma College of Law.

*Anne Kass. “The Better Way: Navajo Peacemaking.”

*Ward Churchill. "I Am Indigenist: Notes on the Ideology of the Fourth World." From *A Native Son: Selected Essays on Indigenism*, 1985-1995. Boston: South End Press. 1996; 509.

*Ward Churchill. "Defining the Unthinkable: Towards a Viable Understanding of Genocide." *A Little Matter of Genocide: Holocaust and Denial in the Americas, 1492 to the Present*. San Francisco: City Lights Books. 1997; 399.

*Jewell Praying Wolf James ("Se-Sealth"). "Testimony: Ecocide and Genocide." *Ecocide of Native America: Environmental Destruction of Indian Lands and Peoples*. Edited by Donald A Grinde and Bruce E. Johansen. Santa Fe: Clear Light Publishers. 1995; 246.

*Virgil J. Vogel, "The Indian in American History, 1968." *This Country Was Ours: A Documentary History of the American Indian*, Virgil J. Vogel. New York: Harper and Row; 1972; 284.

Weeks 7 - 8

"Origins, Cosmogony, Power"

*"The Beginning of Newness: A Zuni Creation Legend." From *Thirteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology*, p.379. Reprinted in *Great Documents in American Indian History*, edited by Wayne Moquin with Charles Van Doren. New York: Da Capo Press. 1995; 7.

*"The Origin of Arikara." From George A. Dorsey, Ed., *Traditions of the Arikara* (Washington, D.C., 1904). Reprinted in *Great Documents in American Indian History*, edited by Wayne Moquin with Charles Van Doren. New York: Da Capo Press. 1995; 10.

*"Journey to the West in Search of Tribal Origins," Moncachtape (Yazoo). From Samuel G. Drake, *Biography and History of the Indians of North America*, 11th Ed. (Boston 1841), Chapter 5. Reprinted in *Great Documents in American Indian History*, edited by Wayne Moquin with Charles Van Doren. New York: Da Capo Press. 1995; 16.

*"On Freedom." Sitting Bull (Hunkpapa Sioux). A Message for the President of the United States, 1881. From W. Fletcher Johnson, *Life of Sitting Bull* (1891), pp.162-67. Reprinted in *Great Documents in American Indian History*, edited by Wayne Moquin with Charles Van Doren. New York: Da Capo Press. 1995; 252.

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*"What the Indian Means to America" (1933) Luther Standing Bear (Sioux). From Chief Standing Bear, *Land of the Spotted Eagle* (Boston 1933), Chapter 9. Reprinted in *Great Documents in American Indian History*, edited by Wayne Moquin with Charles Van Doren. New York: Da Capo Press. 1995; 306.

Whitt, Laurie Anne. "Indigenous Peoples and the Cultural Politics of Knowledge." *Issues in Native American Cultural Identity*. Edited by Michael K. Green. New York: Peter Lang, 1995, 223-272.

Midterm Exam Due: _____

Weeks 9 - 10

Ethics, and Preservation Maintenance of Native Values

*George Copway (Kah-ge-gah-bowh). *The Life of Kah-ge-gah-bowh*. Chapter 3: Spirits; Ojibwa Worship; Description, etc., and Chapter 17: Appeal to Christians in America. Reprinted in *Masterpieces of American Indian Literature*, edited by Willis G Regier. New York: MJF Books, 1993; 23, 109.

*Charles Alexander Eastman (Ohiyesa) *The Soul of the Indian*. Chapter 3: Ceremonial and Symbolic Worship. Reprinted in *Masterpieces of American Indian Literature*, edited by Willis G Regier. New York: MJF Books, 1993; 164.

*Pedro Naranjo, San Felipe Pueblo. "Burn the Temples, Break Up the Bells." From *Revolt of the Pueblo Indians of New Mexico and Otermin's Attempted Reconquest 1680-1682* by Charles Wilson Hackett. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1942. Reprinted in *Native American Testimony*, edited by Peter Nabokov. New York: Penguin Books, 1978, 1991; 54.

*Janitin (Kamia). Janitin Is Named Jesus. "Testimonio de Janitil" from *Apuntes Historicos de la Baja California* by Manuel C. Roja. Berkeley: Bancroft Library (Mss. #295). Reprinted in *Native American Testimony*, edited by Peter Nabokov. New York: Penguin Books, 1978, 1991; 58.

*William Jones (Fox). *Black Hawk Stands Alone*, from "Black-Hawk War" by William Jones, *Journal of American Folklore*, 24:235-27, 1911. Reprinted in *Native American Testimony*, edited by Peter Nabokov. New York: Penguin Books, 1978, 1991; 98.

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*Osceola et al. (Seminole). Edited Transcript, Seminole Agency, Florida Territory, October 23, 24, and 25, 1834; "Osceola Determined" from *The War in Florida: Being an Exposition of Its Causes* by Woodburne Potter, Baltimore: Lewis and Coleman, 1836. Reprinted in *Native American Testimony*, edited by Peter Nabokov. New York: Penguin Books, 1978, 1991; 124.

*Medicine Horse et al. (Otoe). "We Are Not Children." from U.S. National Archives, Office of Indian Affairs. Letters Sent: Otoe Agency (1856-1876). Reprinted in *Native American Testimony*, edited by Peter Nabokov. New York: Penguin Books, 1978, 1991; 133.

*Chairman Sloan. Discussion of Legal Conditions. "The Best and the Brightest" from *Report of the Executive Council on the Proceedings of the First Annual Conference of the Society of American Indians*, October 12-17, 1911, Columbus, Ohio. Edited by Arthur C. Parker, Washington, D.C., 1912. Reprinted in *Native American Testimony*, edited by Peter Nabokov. New York: Penguin Books, 1978, 1991; 286.

*Gertrude S. Bonnin et (Zitkala-sa) et al. "Scandal in Oklahoma" From *Oklahoma's Poor Rich Indians: An Orgy of Graft and Exploitation of the Five Civilized Tribes—Legalized Robbery Philadelphia: Office of the Indian Rights Association, 1924*. Reprinted in *Native American Testimony*, edited by Peter Nabokov. New York: Penguin Books, 1978, 1991; 300.

*Chief (Simon) Pokagon (Pottawattamie Chief). "The Red Man's Rebuke." Hartford: C.H. Engle, 1893. Reprinted in *Indian Nation: Native American Literature and Nineteenth-Century Nationalisms* by Cheryl Walker, Durham: Duke Publ, 1997;

Weeks 11 - 12

Phenomenology of Indian Otherness, Spirituality, and Difference

*Vine Deloria, Jr. "Others," *We Talk, You Listen*. New York: Macmillan; 1970; 85.

*Vine Deloria, "Circling the Same Old Rock" in *Marxism and Native Americans*, edited by Ward Churchill. Boston: South End Press, 1984; 113.

*Frank Black Elk, "Observations on Marxism and Lakota Tradition" in *Marxism and Native Americans*, edited by Ward Churchill. Boston: South End Press, 1984; 137.

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*James Mooney. "The Doctrine of the Ghost Dance." From James Mooney, *The Ghost Dance Religion and the Sioux Outbreak of 1890. Fourteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology* (1896). Reprinted in *Teachings From the American Earth: Indian Religion and Philosophy*, edited by Dennis Tedlock and Barbara Tedlock; Toronto: George J. McLeod Ltd.; 75.

*Dennis H. McPherson & J. Douglas Rabb, Chapters 1-3 of "Indian From the Inside: A study in Ethno -Metaphysics." Thunder Bay: Centre for Northern Studies; 1993. p. 1-83.

*Colin G. Calloway. *New Americans and First Americans in New Worlds for All: Indians, Europeans, and the Remaking of Early America*; Baltimore: Johns Hopkins; 195.

Ortiz, Alfonso. "American Indian Philosophy: Its Relation to the Modern World." *Indian Voices: The First Convocation of American Indian Scholars*. San Francisco: Indian Historical Press, 1970, 9-47.

*Scott Pratt, "Native American Thought and the Origins of Pragmatism." *Ayaangwaamizin: The International Journal of Indigenous Philosophy*; Spring 1997; 55.

Weeks 13 - 15

Religious and Political Worldviews

Vine Deloria, *God is Red*.

Wub-E-Ke-Niew, *We Have the Right To Exist*

Warrior, Robert Allen. *Tribal Secrets: Recovering American Indian Intellectual Traditions*.

Week 16

SUMMARY PRESENTATION. Most Recent Work in Philosophy by native and nonnative persons holding a Ph.D. in Philosophy.

Native American Women

Course Level: 300-500

Anne Waters, J.D., Ph.D.

email: brendam234@aol.com

Phone: (505) 265-3912

Course Description. This course will study works of Indigenous North American Women through an examination of native and nonnative historical and contemporary oratory, argument, letters, addresses, and texts. From the influence of precolonial indigenous culture on Native women's lives, through colonization via slavery, force of weaponry, policies of removal, allotment and disease, to such turn of the century works of Laura Cornelius Kellogg and Gertrude Simmons Bonnin, and contemporary writings of Alice Kehoe, Winona Laduke, Annette Jaimes, Wilma Mankiller, Clara Sue Kidwell, Laura Whitt, and Marilou Awiakta, we will explore the interplay of Native women's voices. We will learn how Native women have influenced American women's lives, and how certain philosophical concepts like gender, race, class, nation, genocide, indigenism, and progress, have impacted Native women's lives. Traditional and contemporary North American Indigenous Women's values will be examined in contexts of survival, ecology, law, reproduction, and education.

Course Requirements. Attendance will be presumed. A journal of informal comments on each reading topic (eg., removal, education, etc.) will be kept to be collected at the end of the term. All students are expected to arrive at class prepared to discuss the assigned materials. Questions will be provided for a midterm exam of no more than 10 double spaced typed pages (6 pages if taking course at 300 level). A formal research paper, on an APPROVED topic selected from a list (on reserve at the library), will be due the second half of the semester—minimal 10 pages for undergraduates, and 20 pages for graduate students. Precis papers may also occasionally be required of graduate students.

Grading. A 100 point scale. Attendance = 15; Journal = 10; Midterm = 25; Research Paper 50%. All assignments must be completed to receive a passing grade. No incompletes without prior written approval.

Required Texts.

Native American Testimony: A chronicle of Indian-White Relations from Prophecy to the Present, 1492 -1992, Peter Nabokov, ed. Penguin: New York. 1991.

Women and Power in Native North America, Laura F. Klein and Lillian A. Ackerman, eds. University of Oklahoma Press: Norman. 1995

Negotiators of Change: Historical Perspectives on Native American Women, Nancy Shoemaker, ed. Routledge: New York. 1995.

Recommended Texts.

Messengers of the Wind: Native American Women Tell Their Life Stories, Jane Katz, ed. Ballantine: New York. 1995.

Selu: Seeking the Corn-Mother's Wisdom, Marilou Awiakta (Cherokee). Fulcrum Pub." Golden, Co. 1993.

On Reserve in the Library.*

Ecocide of Native America: Environmental Destruction of Indian Lands and Peoples, Donald A. Grinde & Bruce E Johansen, eds. Clear Light: Santa Fe. 1995.

Annette Jaimes, *The State of Native America Tribal Secrets: Recovering American Indian Intellectual Traditions*. Robert Allen Warrior, ed. University of Minnesota Press: Minneapolis. 1995.

Readings in *American Indian Women's Text* (unpublished collection of published articles), Anne Waters.

Words of Today's American Indian Women: Ohoyo Makachi. Ohoyo Research Center: Wichita Falls. 1991.

Schedule Of Topics And Reading.

Weeks 1-3: Native Women Create Historic Testimony

A. Cultural Difference—ENCOUNTERS, DISPOSSESSION

Reading Nabokov I: The Buffalo Go, Old Lady Horse (Kiowa), 174; No Dawn To The East (Anonymous), 181; Gone Forever, Buffalo Bird Woman (Hidatsa) 182; This Awful Loneliness (Anonymous), 184; The Way Agents Get Rich, Sarah Winnemucca (Paiute), 198; Annie Makes Her Choice, Annie Lowry (Paiute), 204; He-na Tom, the Hoodwinker, Lucy Thompson (Yurok), 251.

B. Cultural Struggle—RESERVATIONS, RESURGENCE

Reading Nabokov II: Life On the Checkerboard, Ruth Muskrat Bronson (Cherokee), 262; The Hopi Push of War, Helen Sekaquaptewa (Hopi), 271; The Best and the Brightest, Society of American Indians, 282; Scandal in Oklahoma, Gertrude

Bonnin (Zitkala-sa) (Sioux et. al.) . Reducing Navajo Sheep, The Blind Man's Daughter (Navajo)330; On Relocation, Bennie Bearskin (Winnebago) [w/Watt Spade, Cherokee], 348; The New Indian Wars, Laura McCloud (Tulalip) 362; Dark Sky Over Black Mesa, Asa Bazhonooodah (Navajo) 397; Indian Children in Crisis, (Anonymous, Hopi girl of 13) 403; Restoring Life to the Dead, Rosemary Cambra (Muwekma), 424.

HANDOUTS: *"The Indian in Wartime," by Ella Deloria (Sioux) 1944; *A Winnebago Father's Instructions to His Son, (1923); *A Pawnee Mother's Advice to Her Son, Lone Chief.

C. *"Our Democracy and the American Indian," Laura Cornelius Kellogg (Wynnogene)

Weeks 4 - 6: Native Women, Gender, And Feminism In The 80's

The Following Articles are in the Ohoyo Makachi Text.

"Past Positives and Present Problems," Shirley Hill Witt (Akwesasne Mohawk) 11.

"Squaw Image Stereotyping," Nancy Butterfield (Red Lake Chippewa) 20.

"Racism-Sexism Characteristics," Ramona T. Sandoval (Winnebago/Sac & Fox) 114.

"Indian Women and Textbook Omission," Rayna Green (Cherokee) 117.

"Changing Times and Changing Roles of Alaska Native Women," Rosita Worl (Tlingit) 134.

"Steps Toward Native Leadership," Shirley Hill Witt (Akwesasne Mohawk) 139.

"Indian Women as Change Agents for Indian Policy," Ethel Krepps (Kiowa/Miami) 146.

"Historical Perspectives: The Dakota Woman," Yvonne June Wynde (Sisseton-Wahpeton Dakota) 151.

"Indian Women Challenge the '80's," Lenore Sweet (Winnebago) 156.

"Indian Women and Feminism," Leslie Wolfe, 160.

"Retrospect and Prospect: The Past, Present and Future of Indian Women," Helen M. Scheirbeck (Lumbee) 171.

Midterm Exam Due: _____

Weeks 7 - 9: Native Women As Negotiators With Power

Week 7:

*Winona Laduke, "They always come back" (An Interview)..in *Gathering of Spirit: Writing and Art by North American Indian Women*, Beth Brant (Degonwadonti) ed. Sinister Wisdom: Rockland. 1984.

*Robert A. Williams, Jr. *Gendered Checks and Balances*. 24 Georgia Law Review 1019.

*Ward Churchill. "Nobody's Pet Poodle: Jimmie Durham, An Artist for Native North America." From *A Native Son: Selected Essays on Indigenism*, 1985-1995. Boston: South End Press. 1996; 483. 972; 263.

Week 8:

Readings below are from our Text, *Women and Power in Native North America*, Edited by Laura F. Klein and Lillian A. Ackerman. Norman: Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 1995.

Introduction; Gender In Inuit Society (Lee Guemple); Mother as Clanswoman: Rank and Gender in Tlingit Society (Laura F. Klein); Asymmetric Equals: Women and Men Among the Chipewyan (Henry Sharp); Complementary But Equal:

Gender Status in the Plateau (Lillian A. Ackerman); First Among Equals? The Changing Status of Seneca Women (Joy Bilharz); Blackfoot Persons (Alice B. Kehoe).

Week 9:

Evolving Gender Roles In Pomo Society (Victoria D. Patterson); The Dynamics of Southern Paiute Women's Roles (Martha C. Knack); The Gender Status of Navajo Women (Mary Shepardson); Continuity and Change in Gender Roles at San Juan Pueblo (Sue-Ellen Jacobs); Women's Status Among the Muskogee and Cherokee (Richard A. Sattler); Gender and Power In Native North America (Daniel Maltz and JoAllyn Archambault).

Weeks 10 - 12: Women, Genocide, Sovereign Nations, Indigenism

Weeks 10-12:

*John Borrows. "Frozen Rights in Canada: Constitutional Interpretation and the Trickster." 22 *Am. Indian L. Rev.* 37 (1997). Norman: Univ. of Oklahoma College of Law.

*Michael Grant. "Seminole Tribe v. Florida—Extinction of the "New Buffalo?." 22 *Am. Indian L. Rev.* 171 (1997). Norman: Univ. of Oklahoma College of Law.

*Ward Churchill. *Defining the Unthinkable: Towards a Viable Understanding of Genocide. A Little Matter of Genocide: Holocaust and Denial in the Americas, 1492 to the Present*. San Francisco: City Lights Books. 1997; 399.

*Ward Churchill. *I Am Indigenist: Notes on the Ideology of the Fourth World. From A Native Son: Selected Essays on Indigenism*, 1985-1995. Boston: South End Press. 1996; 509.

*Jewell Praying Wolf James ("Se-Sealth"). *Testimony: Ecocide and Genocide. Ecocide of Native America: Environmental Destruction of Indian Lands and Peoples*. Edited by Donald A Grinde and Bruce E. Johansen. Santa Fe: Clear Light Publishers. 1995; 246.

*Whitt, Laurie Anne. "Indigenous Peoples and the Cultural Politics of Knowledge," *Issues in Native American Cultural Identity*. Edited by Michael K. Green. New York: Peter Lang, 1995, 223-272.

*Whitt, Laurie Anne. "Biocolonialism and the Commodification of Knowledge," *Science as Culture*, Volume 7, Number 1, 1998.

Weeks 13-16. Articles from Annette Jaimes text, upcoming issue *Hypatia: Native American Women*, and student semester project presentations.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Invitation To Present Papers At American Philosophical Association

Both the American Philosophical Association (APA) Committee on American Indians in Philosophy and the American Indian Philosophy Association (AIPA) invite scholars to submit papers or an outline of a presentation for inclusion in the Eastern, Central, and Pacific Division Conferences in the fall of 2002 and spring of 2003. Information about these conferences can be seen on the APA webpage. Possible topics include: All Traditional Areas of Philosophy. Especially invited are philosophical thought related to Epistemology, Metaphysics, Ontology, Science, Math, Logic, Social, Political, Ethics, Aesthetics, Gender, Sovereignty, Identity, Indigeneity, Economics, History, Religion, Spirituality, and other areas of philosophical concern. We welcome papers from any philosophical tradition. Submissions must be limited to 20 double-spaced pages. References should follow the Chicago Manual of Style. Please submit 2 copies of manuscripts:

As attachment to email send to:

Anne Waters: brendam234@aol.com

As hard copy send a copy each to:

V. F. Cordova
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For the Central Division only, send papers/presentation outline to:

Dr. Thomas Michael Norton-Smith
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Invitation to Join The American Indian Philosophy Association

The American Indian Philosophy Association exists in order to promote research, writing and teaching of American Indian philosophy, and philosophical analysis of issues specifically relevant to American Indians. This organization, involving hundreds of philosophers and many more students, seeks to facilitate understanding of America's indigenous philosophy in all educational curricula in the Americas, and especially curricula used to educate American Indians. This association, although affiliated with the American Philosophical Association, is an autonomous organization, academically and financially responsible to itself.

If you would like more information, or are interested in joining this association, please contact our current Secretary-Treasurer Thomas Norton Smith about details: Dr. Thomas Michael Norton-Smith, Associate Professor of Philosophy, 310 B Main Hall, Kent State University, Stark Campus, 6000 Frank Avenue NW, Canton, OH 44720, Phone: (330) 499-9600, ext 53302 or Fax (330) 494-6121 or email tnorton-smith@stark.kent.edu; or Dr. Anne Waters at email brendam234@aol.com or phone (505) 265-3912.