2021

Confronting Colonial Violence: Pueblo Women Using Indigenous History for Community Activism and Healing

Sierra Mondragón , '21

Confronting Colonial Violence: Pueblo Women Using Indigenous History for Community Activism and Healing

Sierra Mondragón

History Honors Thesis

Swarthmore College

2021

Table of Contents:

Acknowledgments

I would first like to thank and officially dedicate this thesis to Dr. Christina Castro, Autumn Rose Billie, and Autumn Gomez of Three Sisters Collective, and Dr. Corrine Sanchez, Elder Kathy Wan Povi Sanchez, Chasity Salvador, and Nathana Rae Jaelyn Bird of Tewa Women United. I would also like to thank my father, mother, sisters, aunties, grandparents, and all of my other relatives and ancestors. Thank you for sharing your stories with me, and for your acts of love, survival, and resistance. Learning from you and working with you has been a blessing and an honor and I will carry what I have learned with me for the rest of my life.

Thank you also to my thesis advisor, professor Bruce Dorsey, for your constant dedication to helping me through this thesis. Thank you for all the time you spent helping me search for sources, talking through my ideas with me, and providing your editing expertise. And most of all, thank you for your steady guidance, support, and excitement for my work.

I remember during one of my conversations with Elder Kathy Sanchez—when I had just barely started the writing process and didn't know how to begin my thesis—she was explaining relationaltivity to me for the first time and was talking about all the spaces it encompassed. Dreams were one of those spaces, she told me, and if I did the work of paying attention to them, I could learn something. I was skeptical at first. Are you sure Elder Kathy? Most of my dreams at the time were being overtaken by nightmares of the haunting statistics and terrifying images of colonial violence against Indigenous women, histories past and present that I was trudging my way through and struggling to navigate. It would take time before I learned how to approach these histories, how to listen to them, confront them, and share them; even now, this is still something that I will be constantly learning and negotiating for the rest of my life. Writing this

thesis was not only an academic journey, but a personal one. One in which I—while struggling through my own experiences with violence and my own insecurities about self and identity—had to go through the immensely difficult process of transforming and healing, a process that so many other Indigenous women before me have had to go through for a variety of different reasons. After long conversations with the women of TWU and 3SC, in which I was fortunate enough to learn their methodologies, listen to their stories, laugh with them, and even cry with them, my understanding of history transformed. History, I learned, could be used to confront violence as well as for healing and bringing a community together. In fact, all of those historical processes were inherently connected and dependent on one another.

I don't remember what day it was exactly, I just know that after talking with Elder Kathy and Dr. Corrine Sanchez about the idea of letting go and forgiving yourself in order to imagine a healthy and positive future, I went to bed one night and dreamed about something special. I dreamed about Pueblo Storytellers, and I woke up in the middle of the night after the dream and ran for my notebook. This is how I'll begin, I realized, with storytelling and Storytellers as the perfect figures to represent relationaltivity.

Writing this thesis was a difficult process, but it was also immensely healing because it allowed me the space to prioritize Pueblo Indigenous history and call upon multiple frameworks that engage with such history in order to create a healthy and thriving present and future for Pueblo Indigenous communities. This thesis has also allowed me the unique opportunity to engage with my own Pueblo identity, culture, and community in an academic setting and has reminded me that history and storytelling can be used to help me connect to and sustain my own identity, culture, and community during challenging times. Most importantly, this thesis gave me the opportunity to learn from incredible Pueblo women whose stories and activism helped me

understand what Indigenous historical work could truly do when utilized by and for Indigenous women.

Abstract

Combining a critical dive into the archives of Indigenous history, a survey of Indigenous historiography, and recorded interviews with Pueblo women-led organizations Tewa Women United and Three Sisters Collective, this research focuses on how contemporary Pueblo Indigenous women use Indigenous models of history to confront ongoing forms of colonial violence. The programming and activist efforts of both organizations are highlighted for their ability to confront historical issues of sexual and physical violence, family disruption and trauma, and forced sterilization. The connections made between Indigenous history and the narratives of TWU and 3SC reveal successful models for how Indigenous history can be used to understand and confront contemporary violences with the intention of creating a thriving Indigenous future. Most importantly, by centering the narratives of Pueblo women, this research argues that in order for decolonizing efforts to be successful they must not only be done at the community level, but also actively prioritize and be led by Native women.

Introduction

In 1964, Helen Cordero of Cochiti Pueblo revolutionized Pueblo pottery through a practice that is over thousands of years old. Cordero had always been an artist, but it was not until the 1950s when she was 45 years old that she returned to pottery after exploring other mediums of art for much of her life.[1] Among the common Pueblo pottery vessels, pottery of people, beings, and animals—described as figurative pottery by scholar Barbara A. Babcock—is an ancestral form of pottery whose value was often disregarded by Eurocentric anthropologists and museum curators prior to the 1960s.[2] When Helen Cordero returned to pottery later in life, she learned that figurative pottery came easily to her. After selling her pottery figures and gaining attention for her practice, Cordero thought of her grandfather, "I kept seeing my grandfather [Santiago Quintana]. That one, he was a really good storyteller and there were always lots of us grandchildrens around him."[3] In 1964 Cordero created the first Storyteller in his image, a large ceramic individual, eyes closed and mouth open in song or story, with his grandchildren gathered around him. What Cordero initially made in honor of her grandfather's memory turned into a widespread (re)vitalization that called upon ancestral Pueblo pottery practices to create a new form.

The central individual of each Storyteller can be a man or woman, their dress and hairstyles can be different and often depend on the artist, and the number of child figures attached to the Storyteller can range from five to as many as 30 or more. Within the image of the Storyteller, the central figure reminds us of the importance of personal narrative, of how one

[1] Barbara A., Babcock, Guy Monthan, and Doris Born Monthan, *The Pueblo Storyteller: Development of a Figurative Ceramic Tradition* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1986), 21.

[2] Babcock, *The Pueblo Storyteller,* 15.

[3] Babcock, *The Pueblo Storyteller,* 21-22.

person's story can impact so many others. The children lining the Storyteller's arms, resting on her legs, and laying on her skirts remind us of the intergenerational impact of the individual. It is significant to recognize that Cordero, a relatively contemporary Pueblo woman, created the first Storyteller after calling upon the traditions of figurative Pueblo pottery as well as her familial connections with her grandfather. Therefore, not only did Cordero call upon history and culture in making the Storyteller, but by bringing such tradition into the present in a new form she also created history, proving figurative Pueblo pottery to be an active rather than static phenomenon. The historical substance of Storytellers are at once past and contemporary because they connect people and traditions across time, establishing the idea that Pueblo people, stories, and culture are inherently linked. In *The Pueblo Storyteller: Development of a Figurative Ceramic Tradition* Babcock and her co-authors describe the power of the Storyteller as "regenerative," meaning it contains the unique ability to bridge generations, culture, and narrative.[4]

> The clay Storyteller is itself the material expression of regeneration: the very structure of this large figure alive with small children re-enacts this reproductive dynamic; its proportions are, indeed, social proportions; and its subject is explicitly relationship—between generations, between past and future, and between words and things… among other things, it celebrates the things of ordinary Pueblo experience and speaks in terms of these cultural constants—stories, generations, and the persistent problem of community organization and survival. Like the subjects which they represent, Storytellers themselves have become a significant means of bringing and keeping Pueblo people together.[5]

[4] Babcock, *The Pueblo Storyteller,* 86.
[5] Babcock,*The Pueblo Storyteller,* 86.

[Figure 1. Helen Cordero, *Storyteller with Twenty Figures,* ca. 1985, fired clay with slip and beeweed, Smithsonian American Art Museum, Gift of Chuck and Jan Rosenak and museum purchase made possible by Mrs. Gibson Fahnestock, 1997.124.148]

The Storyteller is just one tangible example of the ideas that run through this thesis, ideas that persist to establish relationships between people, narratives, systems, and history. Storytellers exemplify the reality of the Pueblo experience today, an experience that is built from the fluidity of past, present, and future histories. Thus, Storytellers complicate our understanding of what history is, pushing us to not only reject a linear understanding of history—a worldview that asks us to interpret history as a straight line of progression over time that centers the interpretations and narratives of Western colonialism—but also disrupt such colonial historical frameworks with a Pueblo Indigenous view of history, a view that works to establish past and contemporary Pueblo people as active agents who create and experience a complexly interconnected history. Also key within the image of the Storyteller, is the centering of Pueblo

women. Just as Helen Cordero called upon historical connections to create the first Storyteller, the pottery figure of a large woman speaking her story to younger generations emphasizes how crucial Pueblo women are for shaping intergenerational and historical connections. Babcock's description of Storytellers as "regenerative" and as having the power to illustrate the "reproductive dynamic" of Pueblo culture and Pueblo history—both of which help Pueblo communities connect and survive—is also essential to this thesis. Regenerative speaks to the relationships Pueblo Indigenous history thrives on and utilizes, relationships that emphasize continuity, community, and storytelling. Continuity is an important quality of Pueblo history because, as Babcock explains, it speaks in terms of constants, recognizing Pueblo people, communities, histories, and cultural experiences as continuous and active. Pueblo Indigenous history, like Storytellers, is grounded in the act of passing Pueblo knowledge down from one generation to the next, establishing connections between past historical actors and contemporary storytellers and listeners. Unlike colonial history, Pueblo Indigenous history is created by the Pueblo community, passed down through the Pueblo community across time, and ultimately aims to utilize Pueblo histories for the betterment of present and future communities. Most importantly, Pueblo Indigenous history centers the narratives of Pueblo women and the crucial roles they play in the Pueblo community as creators and carriers of history and culture. Therefore, Pueblo Indigenous history is community focused and, like Storytellers, it is female-centered, being both actively anti-colonial and anti-patriarchal.

Similarly to Storytellers, then this thesis strives to center a Pueblo Indigenous framework of history that inherently centers the voices of Pueblo women and their ability to mobilize and create historical connections. When I first began my research, I was quickly overwhelmed by a past and present of Pueblo women experiencing violence on systemic and individual levels. This

violence spanned generations, influencing the lives of contemporary Pueblo women, including myself. This realization highlights colonial violence as an ongoing force that connects systems and people across time. However, it also clarifies the need for centering Pueblo women within our understanding of history because of their ability to understand the non-linear continuity of history through personal experience and their ability to actively mobilize history to combat colonial violence. By centering Indigenous Pueblo women, this thesis recognizes them as active historical agents, meaning that while history, and consequently violent history, influences the present, contemporary Pueblo women can in turn confront that history and replace its violent systems. Such a process is key within a Pueblo Indigenous historical framework, a framework that weaves together the complex past and present history of the Pueblo people and colonialism, with the intention of providing guidance for the survival and healing of future generations.

To fully understand the role of contemporary Pueblo women in experiencing and creating Pueblo history, I worked with the non-profit organization Tewa Women United (TWU) based in Tewa land in the Pojoaque-Española valley of New Mexico, which began as a grassroots support group for Pueblo women of northern New Mexico in 1989. TWU is an independent Native women's nonprofit that focuses on providing advocacy, intervention, and prevention services, "building beloved families and communities to end all forms of violence against women, girls, and Mother Earth."[6] I also worked with the grassroots organization Three Sisters Collective (3SC), founded in 2017 and based in Santa Fe, New Mexico—traditionally known as Oga Po'ogeh. I have conducted interviews with several leading organizers and founding members of TWU and 3SC and utilized the records and publications by and about both organizations, including project summary reports, scholarly publications, and published statements and

[6] Corrine Sanchez, "Herstories and the Braiding of Environment and Reproductive Justice to Protect Those Most Vulnerable," *Journal of American Indian Education* 55 (Fall 2016): 49.

petitions. These sources have been invaluable for allowing me to participate in the programming of TWU and 3SC during the COVID-19 pandemic. My interviews with TWU and 3SC emphasize the significant role Pueblo women play in engaging with history, while establishing oral narrative as a valid historical source that is essential for conveying the contemporary impact of history on Native women. By interviewing the women of these organizations, my thesis also strives to contribute to the ongoing process of Pueblo history, a process that continues through the healing and activism of Pueblo women and storytelling. Most importantly, the narratives and organizational programming of the women from TWU and 3SC reveal the complexity of colonial violence, pushing us to understand how this violence is an evolving force that takes new forms over time, targeting Indigenous women on physical, cultural, familial, and communal levels. I argue that the historical work of TWU and 3SC is successful in not only revealing the complexities of ongoing colonial violence, but also in creating strategies to combat colonial violence and its many forms at the grassroots level.

The ability of the women from TWU and 3SC to recognize the various manifestations of colonial violence—including sexual violence, reproductive violence, and community and family breakdown— has made their programming so crucial for community healing and activism. In fact, ideas about how history is connected to the present and how this has caused Indigenous people to experience violence in fluid forms are key to both organizations and this thesis. Also key is how Pueblo women mobilize these interconnected relationships with colonial violence in the past and present to disrupt that violence and impart models of community healing. This constitutes the guiding core values of these organizations and the guiding framework for my understanding of Pueblo Indigenous history.

Elder Kathy Wan Povi Sanchez (San Ildefonso Pueblo), TWU Project Coordinator, is one of the key thinkers behind TWU's ability to establish personal connections between the historical and the contemporary, and she is also the innovator behind the language used to describe this process. Elder Kathy calls this a process of "relationaltivity," an idea similar to "regenerative" in that it prioritizes the connections between people, culture, and histories but in a way that emphasizes Pueblo culture and Pueblo women specifically. "The word relationaltivity," she explained, "comes from understanding energy and relatives and relations and activity—the practice of all of it— and then putting them together. Relationaltivity is the practice of having that interaction, that connectivity with wherever you find your presence to be. It's really about being observant and being present."[7]

According to Elder Kathy and Dr. Corrine Sanchez (San Ildefonso Pueblo), Elder Kathy's daughter and TWU's Executive Director, being conscious about language and the power dynamics that words can create has been crucial for constructing the values of TWU.[8] When considering what values to prioritize in TWU, Elder Kathy and other founding members of TWU recalled Pueblo values in Tewa. There are several distinct Pueblo languages throughout New Mexico including Tewa, Tiwa, Towa, Zuni, and Keres, and similarly to other Native languages in the U.S., Pueblo languages have endured despite colonial attempts to enforce European languages. While the Pueblo languages are traditionally oral, contemporarily many of them have transitioned into a written form in order to make it easier for present-day Native youth to learn their Pueblo languages. I mention this because, just as connection, community, and continuity are

[7] Elder Kathy Wan Povi Sanchez (Project Coordinator of TWU), First Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, July 10, 2020.

[8] Dr. Corrine Sanchez (Executive Director of TWU), Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, July 1, 2020.

essential to a Pueblo historical framework, so too are the ideas of fluidity, transformation, and adaptation.

Creating a space where Tewa values could be uplifted has been crucial to TWU, and finding a way to translate these values for a multicultural community has also been essential.[9] When Elder Kathy created the word relationaltivity, she not only translated a core idea that is found throughout Pueblo values, but she also rejected words like "relation*ship*," words that called upon hierarchies: slave ships, colonial ships, captains, and a single direction of travel. Instead, relationaltivity and the core values chosen to represent TWU emphasize balance and reciprocity between people, nature, ideas, and history. "We're all in relation to each other, and those relations are always dynamic and fluid and moving, and relationaltivity captures that flow and multidirectional movement," Dr. Corrine Sanchez explained during our interview. There's a "generational impact," she elaborated, "and that is relationaltivity, because it can travel through time. And it exists in the spiritual realm as well as the physical realm."[10] Relationaltivity is also essential to the work of TWU because it centers Pueblo women as active agents in resistance and healing, where "to resist is to come from our center, our heart, from the grounding of who we are, in our philosophy, spirituality and practices… to (re)claim or retrieve who we are and continue to make ourselves."[11] This approach to history is significant because it establishes history's relationship with contemporary Native people as a continuous and multi-layered process. A Pueblo historical approach also prioritizes Pueblo women as historical agents who have the power to change and create history in constantly evolving ways by mobilizing their familial, communal, and cultural connections. Therefore, just as TWU has used relationaltivity to guide their organizational programming, I will use relationaltivity as the guiding theory for

[9] Elder Kathy Sanchez, First Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, July 10, 2020.
[10] Dr. Corrine Sanchez, Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, July 1, 2020.
[11] Sanchez, "Herstories and the Braiding of Environment and Reproductive Justice," 50.

understanding both Pueblo history and how TWU and 3SC mobilize history. Like Elder Kathy's rejection of the word "relationship," I will use relationaltivity to reject colonial frameworks of history while employing a Pueblo Indigenous historical framework that is non-linear, community oriented, and built upon the connections carried and created by Pueblo women.

Ideas and practices of relationaltivity can be found throughout Pueblo culture and nature according to Elder Kathy, and they are exemplified in the seven core values of TWU. These values include:

1. **A'Gin**, respect for self and others
2. **Wina ta yay**, together we live these values
3. **Seegi ma vay i**, loving and caring for each other
4. **Kwee-wa seng-wa vi tuu**, female/male energy and ancestral knowingness
5. **Nung Ochuu Quiyo**, Our Mother Earth and multiversity
6. **Bin mah padi**, letting go
7. **Wowatsi**, Our breath, our prayer, commitment to live life with purpose and good intentions [12]

The seven core values of TWU guide the practices and programming of the organization at the community level and exemplify the unique and multidirectional connections between Pueblo women and history. TWU's core values also reveal how Pueblo women can mobilize these historical connections for community wellbeing. The values of TWU show us how history can operate in the contemporary lives of Pueblo women at individual, community, and systemic levels to (re)vitalize Pueblo language and culture. These values, which have been essential to Pueblo culture throughout time, also remind us that Pueblo women have been active agents in

[12] "About Us page," Tewa Women United website, accessed November 1, 2020, https://tewawomenunited.org/about-us.

history—in that history impacts them while they impact it—throughout the existence of Pueblo people. These values also exemplify how Pueblo women contain and create history in multiple ways, making the programming of TWU both expansive and adaptive in its utilization of Pueblo values to address constantly evolving community issues. By mobilizing these values through their programming, TWU can create concrete examples of how fluid the experiences of history and time can be, both being forces that can influence people of the present in positive and negative ways, and processes that people of the present can utilize in turn to benefit their communities. This understanding complicates the idea of history, showcasing history to be neither static nor linear, but actually a dynamic and multidirectional experience that has produced reciprocal relationships with people of the past and present in helpful and harmful ways. For example, the value "A'Gin" meaning respect for self and others, is a complex value in that it recognizes the connections between the individual and the community while also recognizing the connections between people and Pueblo culture, land, and history. As we shall see when I investigate how TWU has utilized a Pueblo understanding of history to transform its programming about sexual assault and violence against Indigenous women, A'Gin has played a major role in adapting TWU's programming to be more preventative. This transformation in TWU is successful because it utilizes A'Gin values of connection to understand the relationship between past and present colonial violence and individual and communal healing—relationships that are essential within a Pueblo Indigenous historical framework.

The Historiography of Relationaltivity

"Settler colonialism attempts to permanently and completely replace Natives with a settler population. The process is never complete, and the colonial state's methods for gaining

access to new territories change over time, evolving from a program of outright extermination to one of making Indigenous peoples 'racial minorities' and 'domestic dependent nations' within their own lands, and sacrificing Indigenous lands for resource extraction."[13] This statement from *Our History is the Future: Standing Rock versus the Dakota Access Pipeline and the Long Tradition of Indigenous Resistance* encapsulates Nick Estes' idea that settler colonialism, and consequently the history of it, act as contemporary forces that have never truly ended. Rather, they constantly influence the present experiences of Indigenous peoples through the utilization of evolving forms of colonial violence. Estes powerfully contextualizes present Indigenous activism against the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) within Native history, demonstrating how historical Native struggles for land sovereignty are ongoing and also uniquely tied to issues of violence against Indigenous people and women specifically. The methodology Estes employs is also significant in that it engages with ongoing debates within the fields of Native American History and Native American and Indigenous Studies (NAIS) over what qualifies as valid sources and what are the best practices for interpreting a past that actively influences Native communities today. Applications of these evolving perspectives in history and NAIS can also be found in the scholarly works of Andrea Smith and Sarah Deer, as well as in recent debates, such as the Exchange in the *American Historical Review* (*AHR*) in 2020.

As academic fields such as history are beginning to recognize the work of Native thinkers more, so too are these fields beginning to acknowledge the validity of historical sources that center Indigeneity, including oral history, personal narrative, community activism, and memory. However, due to the colonial roots of history as an academic field, such practices have not been readily accepted by some historians—many of whom are white—who argue that a focus on such

[13] Nick Estes, *Our History Is the Future: Standing Rock Versus the Dakota Access Pipeline, and the Long Tradition of Indigenous Resistance* (London: Verso, 2020), 89.

sources causes a deviation from historical best practices. For example, in April 2020, the *AHR* initiated an exchange among NAIS and historical scholars. This resulted from a critique by historian David J. Silverman, who specializes in Native American history, of the practices of historians Lisa Brooks and Christine M. DeLucia in their respective books *Our Beloved Kin: A New History of King Philip's War,* and *Memory Lands: King Philip's War and the Place of Violence in the Northeast.*[14] Though Silverman begins by saying he supports the scrutiny both authors apply to European sources and past historical scholarship, he ultimately charges them with presentism and abandoning "basic standards for handling evidence to scrub the historical record."[15] Defining presentism as primarily concerned with modern identity politics in which the "sensibilities" of contemporary Indigenous people dictate the study of history, Silverman maligns both historians and NAIS for producing presentist works that are not commendable historical studies.[16]

In response, DeLucia rejects Silverman's critique as an attempt to delegitimize the work of NAIS and new forms of historical inquiry that center Indigenous people.[17] She argues that his charge of "presentism" reveals his misunderstanding of "flourishing scholarship about how the present is always, inextricably, in conversation with the past, and about how communities' modes of knowledge keeping and historical expression serve multiple purposes."[18] Evident in DeLucia's rebuttal is the argument that the Indigenous sources she engages with are valuable not because they are dictated by identity politics, but because they offer a nuanced understanding of a past that has been commonly dominated by colonial modes of historical research and the voices

[14] David J. Silverman, "Living with the Past: Thoughts on Community Collaboration and Difficult History in Native American and Indigenous Studies," *The American Historical Review* 125 (April 2020): 520.

[15] Silverman, "Living with the Past," 522.

[16] Silverman, "Living with the Past," 519-520.

[17] Christine M. DeLucia, "Continuing the Intervention: Past, Present, and Future Pathways for Native Studies and Early American History," *The American Historical Review* 125 (April 2020): 528.

[18] DeLucia, "Continuing the Intervention," 529.

of past colonial agents. Thus, the works of DeLucia and Brooks are not only valid in their historical practices, but crucial to the fields of history and NAIS because they utilize contemporary Indigenous sources such as memory and oral history, recognizing history as not something of the past, but undeniably linked to the present. As DeLucia explains in her response, "We take communities seriously as co-producers and critical interlocutors in the ongoing, shared endeavor of doing history."[19] The best practices of Native history, therefore, must involve contemporary Indigenous people in order to correct the problematic prioritization of colonialist-centric sources, and also to put Indigenous people and their memories back into the histories they lived and currently engage with.

In fact, we can see the success of establishing historical connections between the past and present within Andrea Smith's book *Conquest: Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide.* In Smith's work, she focuses on contextualizing the contemporary crisis of sexual assault against Native women within the history of genocide and colonialism. Smith is one of many scholars who not only see a direct parallel between sexual violence and the process of settler colonialism, but understand gender-based violence as a strategy of colonial genocide. By doing this, Smith expands our understanding of violence against Native women to include other systemic colonial violences such as Indian Boarding Schools and forced sterilization. In her work, Smith not only utilizes colonial sources in order to critically analyze them, but also centers the narratives of Native women, legitimizing their experiences as valid sources that are capable of making connections between different forms of historical violence. Smith concludes that if we establish violence against Native women, and sexual assault in particular, as a tool of genocide, then we can approach decolonization as a process that inherently centers Indigenous women.[20] And it is

[19] DeLucia, "Continuing the Intervention," 532.

[20] Andrea Smith, *Conquest: Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015), 138-139.

by centering Indigenous women within our understanding of history, Smith argues, that we will be able to adequately create responses to sexual violence that go beyond the criminal justice system.[21] Additionally, by utilizing sources that highlight the narratives of Indigenous women, Smith establishes historical connections between past and present colonial violence. These connections do not misinterpret the past through a biased present perspective (or presentism as Silverman might argue), but instead recognize history as an ongoing process that impacts Indigenous women and thus can impact our responses to contemporary violence.

Similar to Smith, legal scholar Sarah Deer establishes historical connections between the past and present in her book *The Beginning and End of Rape: Confronting Sexual Violence in Native America*, but Deer does so primarily through legal history that prioritizes Indigenous women's experiences with rape in the context of Indian law in the United States. Deer investigates the long history of Indian law within the U.S. by putting rulings and laws such as *Oliphant v. Suquamish Indian Tribe,* early American rape laws, and precolonial tribal notions of justice in conversation with one another to develop an historical interpretation for why rape against Indigenous women has gone unchecked and grown so severe. Through this work, Deer is able to examine the jurisdictional gaps of laws such as the 1885 Major Crimes Act and the 1953 Public Law 280, which have made criminalizing the act of sexual assault nearly impossible in tribal communities.[22] Using Indian law and the experiences of Indigenous women as her primary sources, Deer explores the patriarchal and colonial foundations of the United States's legal relationship with Indigenous people, and how this has directly resulted in gender-based and race-based violence throughout history and into the present.[23] Deer persuasively argues that the

[21] Smith, *Conquest,* 139.
[22] Sarah Deer, *The Beginning and End of Rape: Confronting Sexual Violence in Native America* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015), 34.
[23] Deer, *The Beginning and End of Rape,* xiv.

ongoing issue of sexual assault is actually an issue of Indigenous sovereignty at the individual and community level.[24] By establishing the protection of Native women as an issue of sovereignty, and historicizing the sexual assault of Indigenous women in connection with the colonization of Indigenous people, Deer points toward possible methods for ending sexual assault in Native America. "I believe this mission can be successful only if it links conversations from the past to the present and into the future," states Deer, further arguing that responses must be grounded in an Indigenous women-centered understanding of history and law. "We know that Native women have the knowledge and wisdom to reframe the way in which the dominant system responds to rape," Deer argues, "and therefore our tribal nations need to turn to the wisdom of these women in an effort to end this human rights crisis."[25] Centering Indigenous women in legal history not only reveals the harmful consequences of law that is guided by colonial history, but also exposes how the unique relationship between U.S. law, colonialism, and sexual violence make the U.S. justice system incapable of combating violence against Indigenous women.[26] Instead, Deer proposes "indigenous jurisprudence" rooted in tribal traditional values and an understanding of the historical context of colonialism and sexual assault, ultimately prioritizing the experiences and protection of Native women.[27]

While Smith and Deer focus on sexual violence against Indigenous women, Nick Estes draws connections between environmental and physical violence by highlighting the role of the Standing Rock protests within the greater historical context of colonialism. Despite his emphasis on colonial violence and the land, it is important to recognize that Estes does not see environmental violence and violence against Indigenous women as isolated. Rather, Estes

[24] Deer, *The Beginning and End of Rape,* 122.
[25] Deer, *The Beginning and End of Rape,* xxii.
[26] Deer, *The Beginning and End of Rape,* 113.
[27] Deer, *The Beginning and End of Rape,* 115.

explores contemporary and past connections between the land and Indigenous women, calling upon the traditional oral history of Pte Ska Win or White Buffalo Calf Woman within the Lakota, Dakota, and Nakota nations to establish the deep-rooted connections between women and the environment.[28]Additionally, he critically investigates the impact historical systems have had on Indigenous women, citing the fur trade as having an especially violent impact on women individually as well as on Indigenous gender relations.[29] But this violence is not restricted to the past; according to Estes the colonial state's continued attempts to control Indigenous land through extractive industry have resulted in increased violence against Native women. Most notably Estes highlights the connections between "'man camps,' the transient all-men communities of oil and gas workers, as hubs for the exploitation of Indigenous women through trafficking and sex work" and the fur trade. The destruction of land through extractive industries and the history of the U.S. forcibly taking Indigenous land through treaties, removal, Indian termination policy, Indian boarding schools, and genocide are inextricably linked, argues Estes, as are attacks on the land and attacks on Indigenous women.[30]

Estes' research not only prioritizes Indigenous narratives as credible and crucial sources for the connections between past and present Indigenous land sovereignty, colonial violence, and Indigenous activism, but it also employs such sources to provide historical context for contemporary activist movements such as the Standing Rock protests. By situating these protests within history, Estes showcases the longevity of these struggles against colonialism, and he also emphasizes Indigenous grassroots activism as a valid traditional and constantly evolving response to new forms of oppression. Similarly to Estes, Smith and Deer model how Native historians and NAIS scholars can not only expose the historical nature of violence against

[28] Estes, *Our History Is the Future,* 83.
[29] Estes, *Our History Is the Future,* 80-82.
[30] Estes, *Our History Is the Future,* 90.

Indigenous women, but also use such historical knowledge to construct possible responses to ongoing violence. Smith suggests an approach that is anti-colonial and deconstructs European and Anglo patriarchal systems at both the interpersonal and state level.[31] By "anchoring violence against women within the larger context of racism, colonialism, and inequality," Smith argues that community-based organizations can target the root causes of violence while remaining independent from state institutions.[32] Deer also suggests a response that transcends the U.S. government, and that instead reshapes and reclaims tribal law through cultural tradition, the experiences of survivors, and historical knowledge about the influence of colonial law.[33]

With these examples of engaged scholarship as models, my own research utilizes NAIS historical practices that center the culture, experiences, and activism of Pueblo Indigenous women in order to prioritize a Pueblo Indigenous historical worldview. Similar to DeLucia and Brooks, my interviews with Pueblo women from TWU and 3SC explore how these women remember and engage with history in ways that actively confront colonial violence at the community level. The active relationship these women have with history embodies the transformations that NAIS and Native historians are calling for at the academic level. By utilizing Pueblo historical practices that prioritize the narratives of Indigenous women and underscore the historical connections between the past and present within their Native community, TWU and 3SC are able to mobilize such knowledge in a way that confronts various forms of colonial violence. This practice emphasizes the women of TWU and 3SC as active agents who experience and create history in the present, and who use their own narratives and culture to guide the values of their community activism. As Smith, Deer, and Estes have noted, in order to combat issues such as violence against the land and violence against Native people

[31] Smith, *Conquest,* 139.
[32] Smith, *Conquest,* 154-161.
[33] Deer, *The Beginning and End of Rape,* 115-122.

(which are inherently connected) an understanding of the history of such issues is necessary because that history is alive in the present-day experiences of Indigenous communities. By creating community programming that engages with this history, TWU and 3SC are able to not only work outside of colonial government systems, but also target the root of colonial violence. Thus my own research contributes to the ongoing evolution of Indigenous history and NAIS in that my work establishes Pueblo history as a force that contemporary Pueblo women actively experience and impact.

It is also crucial to understand, however, that this nonlinear format of history that TWU and 3SC practice is a process of relationaltivity, meaning their relationship with history is complex, fluid, and reciprocal. To construct this connection between the women of these organizations and history, I turn again to the narratives of Indigenous women in order to highlight the ongoing impact of colonial violence and how contemporary Indigenous communities are combating such violence. The programming and activism of TWU and 3SC exemplify the importance of Pueblo women's narratives, as the leaders and founders of both organizations recognize how Pueblo female narratives can represent and highlight the needs of their communities and guide their approach to change-making actions. I understand these actions—which are based on cultural, intergenerational, and wholistic healing—to not only be significant for their role in creating and confronting history, but also for the ways in which they positively impact current and future Pueblo people. Understanding relationaltivity and Pueblo history as active social, cultural, and historical processes is what makes the work of TWU and 3SC so successful, because these processes recognize Pueblo women as creators and changers of history, who identify colonial violence as a multi-faceted attack on Indigenous people. The Pueblo women of these organizations are actively confronting historical violence, and they are

doing so in historically and culturally significant ways that reject the idea of a linear pattern of history, and emphasize action through healing. Most importantly, these organizations are drawing upon the traditional and ongoing practice that is Pueblo Indigenous history—a practice that inherently centers Pueblo women and serves the Pueblo community.

Centering a Pueblo Indigenous View of History

The rejection of a linear study of history is essential to understanding Pueblo Indigenous history and how contemporary Pueblo women utilize the connections inherent in Pueblo history and relationaltivity to help their communities heal and thrive. A linear or teleological view of history is commonly attributed to the works of Hegel, where history is described as a finite and exclusive process, this process best understood as the ongoing march of progress in a straight line towards the end of history and the height of human perfection and self-awareness.[34] This view of history is an exclusive march in that it prioritizes Western and Eurocentric history—which I will also call colonial— as the main subject of linear progress, purposefully erasing and silencing the historical narratives of non-white and non-Western communities. Linear history attempts to interpret the past, present, and future within a uniform narrative defined by colonial actors who interpret all who do not fall within their strict definitions of history, as a people without history and consequently a people without nation or sovereignty.[35] Linear history has dominated historiography, supported by new schools of thought over time, such as Darwinism, with the intention of capturing specific people, nations, and empires within the one-directional movement of progress. Within this framework of progress, linear history

[34] Prasenjit Duara, *Rescuing History From the Nation: Questioning Narratives of Modern China* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 17-18; E. H. Carr, *What is History?* (New York: Random House, 1961), ch. 4.

[35] Duara, *Rescuing History From the Nation,* 19-22.

simultaneously marginalizes other groups as non-historical agents who either obstruct progress, will never obtain progress, or "disappear" as a result of progress.[36] Racism plays a crucial role in linear history, categorizing white colonial nations as superior within *and* because of the framework of linear history, and subplanting non-white groups as "backwards" races whose colonization, enslavement, and elimination, is justified within the overarching process of teleological history.[37]

Colonial nations depend on this exclusive historical process, specifically in relation to Indigenous populations who have contrasting historical narratives that inherently combat the uniform narrative of white linear progress and refuse to subscribe to a linear definition of nationhood. Joseph Bauerkemper explains how Indigenous nations are not only excluded from linear colonial history, but also do not depend on a linear narrative of history in order to justify their existence and nationhood, unlike colonial nation-states.[38] Nation-states rely on being the exclusive subjects of history where they are the only true images of community and sovereignty, and are the only ones capable of progress—at least according to their own historical narratives.[39] Indigenous people depend on a dynamic and inclusive version of history for their continued survival, while linear history relegates them to a static role that Bauerkemper describes as a "Eurocentrist invention," where "[t]he universal 'Indian' serves as the iconographic foil against which the universal 'Euroamerican' defines itself. This process, of course, simultaneously and paradoxically depends on the presence and disappearance of 'The Indian.'"[40]

This static view of Indigenous people and the idea that they lack history, greatly contrasts with the Pueblo Indigenous history that is investigated in this thesis and mobilized by the women

[36] Joseph Bauerkemper, "Narrating Nationhood: Indian Time and Ideologies of Progress," *Studies in American Indian Literatures* 19 (Winter 2007): 33.
[37] Duara, *Rescuing History From the Nation,* 20.
[38] Bauerkemper, "Narrating Nationhood," 46.
[39] Duara, *Rescuing History From the Nation,* 5 & 27.
[40] Bauerkemper, "Narrating Nationhood," 29.

of TWU and 3SC. While colonial history depends on a narrative that excludes and exploits those who do not fit within its definitions of humanity and history—including Indigenous and Black people—Pueblo Indigenous history is founded on the continual inclusion of Pueblo and non-Pueblo people and their narratives in order to ensure the survival of the Pueblo community. Pueblo Indigenous history also understands Pueblo people and history to be fluid and transformative, containing the ability to influence the past, present, and future. Additionally, Pueblo history understands itself and Pueblo people to be adaptive, having the ability to dynamically address the present and future needs of the Pueblo community through intergenerational knowledge sharing. Unlike the disappearing and unchanging Indian colonial history imagines, contemporary Pueblo people are members of an ever expanding and evolving community that cannot be separated from past or future Pueblo people. In fact the Pueblo community continues to survive because of their ability to engage with knowledge from the past with the goal of healing in the present for the betterment of the future. This Indigenous framework of history not only rejects colonial ideas of exclusion and linear progression, but also colonial frameworks that monopolize exclusive definitions of community and nation.[41]

I believe colonial history works so hard to exclude and exploit Indigenous populations and their historical worldviews because the survival of colonial nations is dependent on the exclusive ideas of humanity perpetuated by linear history. In Michel-Rolph Trouillot's text *Silencing the Past : Power and the Production of History*, he confronts the complexity surrounding the 1790 Haitian Revolution, a revolution that was "unthinkable" within the framework of colonial history—a framework that survived on the belief that enslaved Africans could not envision freedom, let alone organize a revolution to pursue and preserve it.[42] The belief

[41] Duara, *Rescuing History From the Nation,* 4.

[42] Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2015), 73.

that the Saint-Domingue revolution was impossible even as it happened, was grounded in early Western struggles to configure their philosophical understanding of humanity and human rights at a time when colonialism and enslavement were in full force. Ultimately, hierarchies of humanity were developed by Western thinkers where some humans were thought to have more humanity than others. Thus enslavement, removal, and "westernization" of those lowest on the conceived spectrum of humanity were justified through racist historical and scientific worldviews.[43] Racism, colonialism, and linear history are all constructed ideologies with deeply fragile fault lines; they depend on each other for survival and depend on a logical fallacy that depicts Black and Indigenous groups as inferior and thus enslaved and disposable, and because they are enslaved and disposable they are therefore inferior.[44] Neither worldview can exist without the other and both work to secure the constructed straight line of colonial history—a history where Black and Indigenous people are simultaneously excluded and exploited by the teleological narrative. The existence of the Haitian Revolution as well as the Pueblo Revolt of 1680, which I will investigate more comprehensively later, confirm that while such histories are unthinkable within a linear and colonial worldview, Black and Indigenous communities have always been able to interpret history and humanity in ways that are both essential to the regaining of their freedoms and combating colonization and its historical frameworks.

As was the case for the Haitian Revolution, communities who have been marginalized and abused within the framework of linear history have successfully created and mobilized their own historical narratives to disrupt and combat colonial systems. However, this does not mean that communities such as Indigenous peoples are completely isolated from the consequences of linear colonial history. Not only have Indigenous people experienced enslavement, removal,

[43] Trouillot, *Silencing the Past,* 75-77.
[44] Trouillot, *Silencing the Past,* 77.

assimilation, genocide, and sexual assault because of the demands of progressive colonial history, but the worldviews of colonial history have also influenced aspects of Indigenous worldview. This influence can be seen in the participation of some Indigenous people in Western gender constructions and patriarchy, both of which have influenced the ordering of Indigenous society and caused many Indigenous women to experience violence from Indigenous men. Patriarchal worldviews are essential to linear history because they contribute to the construction of colonial narratives that justify race- and gender-based violence in the name of Western progress—ultimately centering the narratives of white men in their historical interpretations and actions.[45] Thus a framework that excludes and exploits Indigenous men, is especially dangerous for Indigenous women and Two Spirit people who are deemed even lesser than in the history of progress and who are specifically targeted for violence. While linear history is problematic, it is still a framework that reinforces many current and past societal structures that Indigenous people experience in various ways.

Ignoring the influence colonial social and historical structures have on Indigenous society only further removes Indigenous people from history and strips away their agency within our current reality. To ignore how linear history has impacted Indigenous people would also invalidate the experiences Indigenous women have had with structures of colonial violence in Indigenous society. Groups such as TWU and 3SC who are rejecting colonial history are doing crucial work in that they are not only combating colonial violence from outside of their communities, but also from within them. By rejecting colonial history, they are also actively working to re(claim) and center Pueblo historical frameworks that prioritize Pueblo women and promote community healing. Thus, Pueblo history not only recognizes horizontal

[45] Linda Heidenreich, "Mobilizing Linear Histories: Violence, the Printed Word, and the Construction of Euro-American Identities in an 'American County,'" *Journal of American Ethnic History* 23 (April 2004): 58.

violence—violence against one's own community—as a product of colonial history, but also disrupts colonial history in order to confront violence at systemic and communal levels. Therefore, Pueblo history acts as a process that works towards preserving the safety, healing, and decolonization of Indigenous women, Two Spirit people, and Indigenous men. This process is inherently anti-colonial and anti-patriarchal and recognizes how the connections between people across time and throughout a community can cause harm, or cause widespread intergenerational and communal healing when mobilized by Pueblo women.

While it is important to recognize how linear history has influenced aspects of Indigenous society and has particularly contributed to violence against Indigenous women, it is equally important to recognize the resiliency and mobilization of Indigenous views of history. For this thesis I will center a Pueblo Indigenous view of history that is grounded in Elder Kathy's theory of relationaltivity—a form of history that prioritizes Indigenous narratives and an expansive relationship between people and history. Pueblo history understands contemporary Pueblo women as historical agents who utilize models of relationaltivity to construct expansive historical interpretations that disrupt colonial history and violence. This means that Pueblo people and narratives have the power to experience, change, and create histories of the past, present, and future in a continuous reciprocal relationship. This is a pattern of relationaltivity as well as a cyclical pattern, where Pueblo women and history are constantly influencing each other and forming and adapting continuously—as opposed to the finite progression of linear history. A Pueblo Indigenous understanding of history is important for not only acknowledging how historical violence can impact the present, but also because it allows room for modes of healing and restorative justice to disrupt violent cycles through the expansive social, cultural, and historical connections that are inherent to the construction of Pueblo ways of being and

community. This historical process is evident in the educational and reproductive programming of TWU and the grassroots activism and collective building of 3SC, all efforts to confront histories of physical violence, assimilationist education, and reproductive violence against Indigenous women.

The idea of cycles in Pueblo history comes not only from the language of TWU—specifically its ideas of balance and relationaltivity—but cycles are also found throughout Pueblo culture and spirituality, both of which are highly nature-based. The idea of balance in nature, life, and gender are also essential to Pueblo culture, imbalance marking a place of violence or illness for an individual and community.[46] In *Rescuing History from the Nation: Questioning Narratives of Modern China*, Prasenjit Duara simply describes a cyclical history as a departure from linear history that primarily focuses on the idea of "return" as opposed to forward moving progress.[47] While I agree that cyclical history is a departure from linear history, I think that Duara's emphasis on "return" is an incomplete analysis of cyclical history—it is a false assumption of only one half of the circle. While cyclical history does prioritize the fluidity between the past and present—the past being able to influence the experiences of contemporary Indigenous people and contemporary societal structures—it also prioritizes the ability of contemporary Indigenous actors to in turn influence the past and the future through their interpretation and mobilization of history. I would further argue that the idea of "return" is detrimental to a cyclical engagement with history, and disregards the fluidity and dynamic character of such a framework and its ability to allow for continuity and change without the constricting narrative of Western progress. The problems surrounding "return" are also evident in the process of decolonization, a process that is often mistakenly construed as a "futile effort to

[46] Gay Alden Wilentz, *Healing Narratives: Women Writers Curing Cultural Dis-Ease* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2000), 87.

[47] Duara, *Rescuing History From the Nation,* 28.

return to the past."[48] Contrary to this interpretation, decolonization is actually an adaptive process that is working to re-center Indigenous knowledge—something that should not be relegated to the past—and uses contemporary Indigenous and non-Indigenous practices to combat colonialism and its harmful impacts on present and future Indigenous individuals and communities. Therefore, "return" is a misnomer for cyclical history because it portrays the past as static and unchanging and ignores the power of contemporary historical agents.

While understanding how cycles are employed by Pueblo Indigenous history and how they contribute to an anti-colonial and non-linear framework of history, my intention is not to simply substitute linear history with cyclical history. While cyclical models of history are useful for understanding the unique oscillating relationship between people and history, Pueblo history recognizes this movement as only one part of its larger historical framework. Pueblo Indigenous history promotes a reciprocal relationship between past, present, and future, a back-and-forth relationship in which contemporary Pueblo women both experience and influence the past with the intention of creating a better future for their communities. Unlike colonial history, Pueblo history requires inclusiveness and does not strive for a uniform narrative or a singular truth. While linear history centers the narratives of colonial powers to ensure their survival and justify their violences, Pueblo history's aim is to utilize a multitude of historical narratives to construct strategies of survival and healing for Indigenous people. A Pueblo Indigenous view of history assumes that while each tribal community and individual have unique histories, there are common themes to their experiences that connect them in a framework of historiography.[49] A framework of Pueblo Indigenous history also involves a Pueblo-specific construction of community, in which community is the result of a continuously expansive and changing story

[48] Susan A. Miller, "Native America Writes Back: The Origin of the Indigenous Paradigm in Historiography," *Wicazo Sa Review* 23 (2008): 15.

[49] Miller, "Native America Writes Back," 11.

that is built upon a process of relationaltivity—or the connections between people, culture, land, and history across time. As said before, Indigenous community does not rely on exclusion and uniformity in the way that Western nations do. Instead, Indigenous community depends on the formulation of connections between people, the environment, and histories. "Indigenousness is a way of relating" and therefore a process of relationaltivity.[50]

Pueblo Indigenous history is exemplified in Bauerkemper's investigation of Laguna Pueblo author Leslie Marmon Silko's use of nonlinear themes in her novel *Ceremony,* where he argues Silko is able to narrate ideas of Indigenous history and community that combat the colonial narrative of progress. He explains that, "Community imagined outside of linear history—that is, amidst nonlinear concepts of history and chronology—can better account for and include peoples, places, times, events, nations, and so forth." Additionally, Silko's use of cycles to construct repeating connections between the different narratives of characters and histories of Laguna Pueblo also lends itself to the anti-colonial work of inclusiveness, relationaltivity, and community.[51] Inclusion and connection are crucial to Indigenous culture, making them essential to an Indigenous understanding of history. Here's how Silko explains a Pueblo understanding of history and community and how this diverges from linear history: "The impulse of the Pueblo culture and of Pueblo people is to include rather than to exclude, and that's how we got into so much trouble when the Europeans came. We were ready to include them. We didn't have that instinctive exclusionary impulse."[52] This worldview of inclusion is foundational to Pueblo history and allows for the possibility of a history that includes multiple and diverse narratives of history that work for rather than against one another.[53] As Bauerkemper explains,

---

[50] Miller, "Native America Writes Back," 11.
[51] Bauerkemper, "Narrating Nationhood," 38.
[52] *Leslie M. Silko,* Dir. Matteo Bellinelli (Films for the Humanities and Sciences, 1995), quoted in Bauerkemper, 43.
[53] Bauerkemper, "Narrating Nationhood," 50.

Silko's narration of Indigenous community through history "invests in the simultaneous unity and diversity of time, in convergence, and in the concurrent meaningfulness—and therefore historical legitimacy—of all things past, present, and future… a far cry from a restricted nationalism that must relentlessly reject and repress those things that have no place in the authorized national narrative."[54] Thus, Pueblo Indigenous history finds its validity not in excluding diverse people and histories, but in understanding how diverse people and their histories can converge throughout time to construct a continuous Pueblo community. Pueblo history also utilizes its expansive and inclusive instincts to not only form connections between people, but also to mobilize past histories—or Pueblo stories and knowledge—within the present for community survival and healing that will also encompass the future. Pueblo women as key social, cultural, and historical leaders find their validity in a Pueblo historical framework because, just like Pueblo history, Pueblo women create and mobilize community connections across time, perform anti-colonial and anti-patriarchal work, and strive for the safety and health of themselves and their community.

Given that Pueblo history is non-linear, inclusive, and community-based, my thesis seeks to investigate how the Pueblo women of TWU and 3SC mobilize their personal narratives and the processes of relationaltivity within a Pueblo historical framework to develop strategies of community organizing for purposes of healing and survival. At the beginning of this introduction, I used Pueblo Storytellers as a tangible example of how intergenerational connections are essential to the continuance of Pueblo livelihood. Yet it is also crucial to understand that Storytellers exhibit how the act of storytelling is itself a process of creating and interpreting history. In Indigenous culture, stories and storytelling are processes of history where a community is able to pass on knowledge about culture and healing to new generations. The

[54] Bauerkemper, "Narrating Nationhood," 41.

significance of storytelling as history is also true for the Pueblo people, and is intentionally mobilized by the women of TWU as a technology of documentation of survival and healing methods.[55] In a 1986 interview with Kim Barnes, Leslie Marmon Silko explains that "When I say 'storytelling,' I don't just mean sitting down and telling a once-upon-a-time kind of story. I mean a whole way of seeing yourself, the people around you, your life, the place of your life in the bigger context, not just in terms of nature and location, but in terms of what has gone on before, what's happened to other people. So it's a whole way of being."[56] Furthermore, Choctaw scholar LeAnne Howe describes Indigenous stories—also meaning Indigenous histories—as a form of "tribalography." Howe, who created the term, describes tribalography as the way in which Indigenous narratives make connections between individuals and communities across time, mobilizing these connections to ensure a positive future for an Indigenous storyteller's community.[57]

Similarly, Gay Alden Wilentz explains how storytelling as a form of history utilizes Indigenous narratives for individual and community healing.[58] Most importantly, Indigenous narratives and their proclivity for tribalography—inclusiveness and community—also understand individual health and wellness as communal. Wilentz explains that "trans-Native American healing is the notion that an individual illness is dialectically tied to the health of the community and the earth."[59] Like Wilentz's interpretation and others that concern Indigenous health and wellness, I understand "illness" to also be an inclusive term that can mean anything from mental health issues in tribal communities, to high rates of sexual violence. This inclusive understanding

---

[55] Sanchez, "Herstories and the Braiding of Environment and Reproductive Justice," 50.

[56] Nancy J. Peterson, "Storyteller as Tribalography," in *Leslie Marmon Silko's Storyteller: New Perspectives,* ed. Catherine Rainwater (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2016), 45.

[57] Peterson, "Storyteller as Tribalography," 51; LeAnne Howe, "Tribalography: The Power of Native Stories," *Journal of Dramatic Theory and Criticism* 14.1 (Fall 1999): 117-125.

[58] Wilentz, *Healing Narratives ,* 81.

[59] Wilentz, *Healing Narratives ,* 83-84.

of healing and illness resists the exclusive and dichotomous framework of a Western and linear worldview in that it interprets an individual's illness and healing as part of a greater communal and historical narrative.[60] Therefore Pueblo Indigenous history relies on the use of narratives for community construction and healing. Storytelling as an act of Pueblo history thrives on the inclusion of various narratives, and utilizes an understanding of time as fluid and dynamic as opposed to progressive and finite. Therefore, the framework of Pueblo Indigenous history and its prioritizing of the relationships between people and history, has been and continues to be mobilized by Pueblo people for individual and community healing from colonial violence through strategies of relationaltivity and storytelling.

Maori Indigenous scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith has stated that "To hold alternative histories is to hold alternative knowledges. The pedagogical implications of this access to alternative knowledges are that they can form the basis of alternative ways of doing things."[61] Tuhiwai Smith speaks to a broader Indigenous history that mobilizes strategies gained from Indigenous narratives for models of healing. But her argument can also be applied to the structure of Pueblo Indigenous history and its understanding of Pueblo knowledge and stories as processes of history and community. Thus, a Pueblo history utilizes its affinity for inclusion and relationaltivity to inherently create strategies for combating colonial violence. These Pueblo histories provide models for a more wholistic approach to healing that incorporates the entire community and its connections, while confronting the pain and violence of the past and present for the preservation of the future. Through cyclical theory and a theory of relationaltivity, we can acknowledge colonial violence as something that impacts Native women throughout time and on multiple levels including physical, spiritual, familial, communal, and ideological. Examples of

[60] Wilentz, *Healing Narratives*, 89.

[61] Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies* (London: Zed Books, 1999), 34, quoted in Bauerkemper, 37.

these omnipresent forms of colonial violence can be found in the high rates of sexual assault, the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (MMIW) crisis, Indian Boarding Schools, and the forced sterilization of Native women. These phenomena are not inseparable from one another, but intersect and overlap historically. This intersectional approach to colonial violence is significantly an example of Pueblo Indigenous history in that it diverges from the exclusive and progressive format of linear history and understands connections to be the defining quality of both violence, history, and healing. And just as this view of colonial violence is historically expansive and interconnected—in that it recognizes the continuous relationship between Native women and colonial violence across time—so too are the ways in which TWU and 3SC combat this violence on multiple fronts using their personal experiences of history and relationaltivity as their guide.

The ways in which TWU and 3SC combat and disrupt colonial violence through a Pueblo historical framework will first be explored in how these groups have grown as organizations, transforming over time to develop new strategies for preventing violence that are informed by Pueblo history and culture. I will specifically focus on how TWU and 3SC mobilize Pueblo history and culture in order to confront ongoing colonial violence against Indigenous women, specifically in the forms of sexual assault, child abuse, and MMIW. This will be evident in the ways 3SC calls upon Pueblo women histories of violence and resistance in their contemporary activism and in the ways TWU confronts violence against women and girls through its theories and values of relationaltivity and A'Gin. Both are concrete examples of how these organizations utilize Pueblo history and its inherent framework of connection and expansion to promote healing through the cultural and historic education of Native women and youth. As a result of this Pueblo framework of expansion, I will also investigate how TWU and 3SC complicate and

expand our definition of violence, urging us to recognize colonial violence as something that does not exclusively impact us physically, but also targets Pueblo women through its attacks on Indigenous cultural, familial, and communal structures through colonial systems such as Indian boarding schools and forced sterilization.

Chapter One

Creating a Historical Context for Ongoing Colonial Violence and Community Healing

A rosary and dreamcatcher swing in tandem from my friend Kasandra's rearview mirror; a complex duality you can find in many a New Mexican's car. We pull out of her house's driveway, our handmade posters folded together in the backseat with TEWA WOMEN: FIGHTING WHITE SUPREMACY SINCE BEFORE 1598 and ANCESTRAL KNOWLEDGE IS POWER written in large colorful letters. During the car ride Kasandra dons a facemask that says "I long for the drumbeat to guide my steps back home" and I slip on one with a large red handprint. The drive from my friend's house to the plaza is a short one, we pass by a multitude of adobe structures—the old homes of people now turned into art galleries and expensive cafés. We joke together that Kasandra's home is the last Native and Chicano stronghold on her street, built by her family and by some miracle they still live in it today. One of Kasandra's favorite activities is disrupting the small Santa Fe tour buses that like to stop and point at her house, telling a different history about it every time for every new batch of tourists. She loves to call down to the buses and correct their confusions and fabrications.

"You've got it all wrong," she tells them. "Who are you to make up stories about my family's home?" she asks them. I wonder if everyone leaves their tour wondering about the mixed-Native girl yelling down to them from her front porch, making them uncomfortable about a history of land theft and gentrification they did not pay to hear.

We park by the Franciscan church and walk into the plaza, a place that should feel like it belongs to us but often does not. Santa Fe, known in Tewa as Oga Po'ogeh Owingeh or White Shell Water Place, was and still is traditionally a meeting place for the community, a space for

gathering, trading, and the exchanging of stories.[62] Santa Fe was officially colonized between 1607 and 1610 and is considered to be the oldest capital in the United States, though it was passed between the hands of Spain and Mexico long before it became a U.S. state in 1911.[63] Despite these exchanges of colonial governments, Santa Fe has still remained a home to Pueblo, Navajo, Apache, and Indigenous Mexican people. Santa Fe is often considered to be a multicultural hub where Native, Chicano, and Spanish cultures meet, but rooting these cultural intersections in the lives and histories of Indigenous people remains crucial for confronting the ongoing forces of colonialism in the area.

In the ongoing history of Santa Fe, my family occupies a small space. My great-grandma Sarah Mondragón (maiden name Sanchez) lived in two homes downtown, one—which was a short walk away from the Catholic day school my dad attended as a child—has since been razed to make a parking lot for a yoga studio, and the second has been appropriated into an art gallery. The Plaza Café, founded in 1905, still remains and was the primary workplace for my great-grandpa Leo Mondragón who, according to my family, was a fantastic cook and baker. My grandma Mary Sweeney (maiden name Mondragón) shopped in the plaza back when there were stores that sold things Native New Mexicans could actually afford to buy: clothes for my dad and his siblings, milk and eggs from the corner store.

Kasandra and I scan the plaza and further joke that the only thing we could afford in the plaza now is a Frito pie from the Five & Dime General Store. Across from the Five & Dime, a small group has collected in the plaza, surrounding a stage usually reserved for dancing and singing performances during fiestas and Indian Market. The crowd is a mix of young and old. A

[62] F. Richard Sanchez, *White Shell Water Place: Native American Reflections on the 400th Anniversary of the Founding of Santa Fe, New Mexico* (Santa Fe: Institute of American Indian Arts, 2010).

[63] "About Santa Fe: History," City of Santa Fe Website, City of Santa Fe, New Mexico, accessed February 16, 2021, https://www.santafenm.gov/about_santa_fe.

woman balances a child on one hip while holding up a sign in her other hand and a group of teenage girls laugh loudly from the front row. There are even groups of tourists who carefully watch from a distance, curious about whether the display of resistance is just another part of the multicultural Santa Fe aesthetic.

But today is about disrupting the image of Santa Fe, and confronting the one-sided history of continual settler colonialism in a space that has held both home and horror, Native resistance and Native genocide. The plaza rally comes just four days after protests over a statue of conquistador Juan de Oñate in Albuquerque ended in the physical assault of several Native women and the shooting of a New Mexican man by counter-protesters. Today's rally is also a product of Native activist Elena Ortiz's efforts to remove a statue of Don Diego de Vargas from Santa Fe's Cathedral Park.[64]

Today's rally is a call for action and accountability surrounding issues on colonial violence and monuments, police brutality, gentrification, and U.S. immigration policies. At the center is the call by Three Sisters Collective (3SC) and other community members for the removal of two obelisks in downtown Santa Fe, one dedicated to Kit Carson and the other dedicated "To the heroes who have fallen in various battles with savage Indians in the Territory of New Mexico." During the rally, one woman from Taos Pueblo shares a story about her father scratching out the word "savage" on the obelisk's plaque, an action that has become famous among community members in Oga Po'ogeh.

We laugh and cheer as the woman recounts her story, describing how her dad, wearing a bright orange construction vest, scratched out the word uninterrupted, unbothered, and under the nose of an unsuspecting Santa Fe. The story of the woman's father is remarkable not only for its

[64] Daniel J. Chacón, "Activists Protesting Controversial Statues Turn Focus to Santa Fe Plaza Obelisk," *Santa Fe New Mexican,* 17 June 2020.

ability to unite a crowd under one comical retelling, but also because it carries a clear message: There has been a one-sided story told about Santa Fe, and that story is actively being rejected and rewritten by Native people.

One after another, women from 3SC, Tewa Women United (TWU), and others step forward to highlight New Mexico's violent colonial past and present. From ICE detention facilities separating families at the border to Black Lives Matter protests, from the crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women to the gentrification of downtown, no topic that they address is disconnected from another. During the rally, 3SC crafts a web of intersecting violences, targeting the obelisks and other monuments for perpetuating an incomplete memory of New Mexican history. Three Sisters not only confronts the colonial story the obelisks tell but the ones they refuse to speak about. In the plaza obelisk's dedication to heroes fallen in battles against "savage Indians," where is the recognition of the Native lives lost during colonialism? Where is the recognition of the successful Native revolts and rebellions, forms of resistance that persisted to make it known that Pueblo people were never passive recipients of settler colonialism?

The presence of predominantly female speakers at the rally also serves as a reminder of the ways in which Pueblo women have been silenced twice by the histories perpetuated in Santa Fe. Not only are our experiences as Pueblo people ignored, but the unique forms of violence we experience as Pueblo *women* are even further removed. Seeing the women of 3SC on stage in stunning ribbon skirts, speaking their histories into a space meant for gathering and storytelling, connects Santa Fe's violent colonial past with its present and simultaneously uplifts the longevity of Native activism. The rally begins and ends with a drumbeat and prayer song and Kasandra and I follow the crowd over to two large blank canvases hung around the obelisk. Volunteers take our

hands and paint them bright red with a cold wet paintbrush. We reach and take turns splattering a handprint next to those of the other Native women who've shown up today. The red handprints remind us of missing Native women, of violent red acts committed by violent hands. But scattered along the base of the obelisk, the handprints also remind us that the silenced voices of so many Native women can still find ways to reach out and make a mark on monuments meant to erase us.

Relationaltivity: A Pueblo Women's Framework for Historical and Contemporary Connections

Throughout this chapter, I describe how Tewa Women United and Three Sisters Collective embody ideas of relationaltivity through programming and activism that combat frameworks of colonial linear history. The defining frameworks and models utilized by both organizations to implement such work—most importantly the framework of relationaltivity—all emphasize the connections between and the transformation of people, community, culture, and ideas. The evolution of both programs over time illustrates how ideas of connection and transformation guided 3SC to expand from collective building to community activism, and TWU to expand from healing circles and responsive sexual violence programming to non-profit status and preventative programming. Neither organization has lost elements of collective building or responsive programming that characterized their beginnings, but they have expanded beyond this to combat and prevent multiple forms of violence while promoting healing in ever changing and fluid ways.

In this chapter, I then investigate how 3SC and TWU employ the framework of relationaltivity within their activism and programming to draw connections between past and

present colonial violence. TWU and 3SC also use these historical conversations alongside the relationships among people to disrupt historical violence while implementing their own strategies of healing through networks of family and community. This strategy understands the historical and contemporary trauma and healing of the individual to be innately tied to the trauma and healing of the entire community. By understanding and utilizing the interconnected relationships between people, history, and culture, and trauma, violence, and healing, TWU and 3SC are able to target the root of colonial violence at the grassroots level. With a framework of relationaltivity, both organizations are able to experience, influence, and create history as contemporary Pueblo women.

Relationaltivity has served as a guiding framework for TWU and 3SC. It has influenced their growth as organizations over time, and it has led to a process of expansion within their programming and activism. TWU was founded in the late 1980s by a group of women from the six Tewa-speaking Pueblos in Northern New Mexico in order to discuss issues of loss and sexual and domestic violence that were impacting their communities. These women were able to find support from one another in discovering their interconnected experiences with violence as they began to recall stories from their female relatives that centered the crucial role women played (and continue to play) in carrying on Pueblo ways of being.[65] These initial discussions between Tewa women began as support circles where, "in the safe space we created, we transformed and empowered one another through critical analysis and by embracing and reaffirming our cultural identity."[66] In this safe space, these women began to see the complexities of their experiences with violence, and their understanding of violence against Pueblo women expanded to include

[65] "About Us," Tewa Women United website, Tewa Women United, accessed November 1, 2020, https://tewawomenunited.org/about-us.

[66] "Our Story," Tewa Women United website, Tewa Women United, accessed November 4, 2020, https://tewawomenunited.org/our-story.

not only physical violence, but issues of health and addiction, the breakdown of families, colonization, and environmental violence as well.[67] The story of TWU's founding is significant, because it exemplifies how creating connections between women and their experiences can cultivate a space of support and healing.

What's more, by connecting to one another and their experiences, the women founders of TWU were then able to turn to their Pueblo culture for guidance while also affirming their roles as community and cultural leaders. Their Pueblo culture transformed their understanding of their collective experiences and histories, causing TWU to see their experiences with violence through a larger historical and contemporary cultural lens. By investigating their experiences with colonial violence as not individual or isolated happenings, but rather as interconnected acts of perpetuating settler colonialism, the women of TWU were also able to confront new forms of colonial violence as continuations of past colonial violence. By recognizing the historical nature of contemporary colonial violence TWU was then able to turn to their own Pueblo culture, history, and community, to confront ongoing colonial violence at the local level. TWU learned to weave together individual, collective, and historical experiences into an understanding of the root cause of contemporary forms of colonial violence for the greater purpose of their future survival and healing.

Similarly, Three Sisters Collective was founded in Santa Fe by Dr. Christina Castro (Jemez Pueblo/Taos Pueblo/Chicana), Autumn Rose Billie (Acoma Pueblo/Taos Pueblo/Diné), and Autumn Gomez (Comanche/Taos Pueblo) to reclaim Pueblo Indigenous identity by confronting external and internal oppression. The programming of 3SC has continued to expand since its founding, recognizing multiple facets of activism that involve land reclamation, art, and

[67] "About Us," Tewa Women United website.

healing through cultural and community relationships.[68] "Three Sisters began as a series of conversations," 3SC founder Autumn Gomez explained. "As someone who has lived here all my life, in the past three years I became extremely disturbed by gentrification in town because there is a lot of cultural erasure." She further told me that "we need to reassert ourselves in our community. We have no space, absolutely zero Native family-focused events. There's nowhere that is safe for us where we can be ourselves." Building and reclaiming space for their community was essential to the mission of 3SC. "We knew we could create something bigger," Gomez said. "Working as a collective, we are able to shift and change, we can take on what we feel comfortable doing and what we are able to do…We're super blessed to have our autonomy and to create our own spaces and my favorite part is inviting other people into these spaces."[69] Since its founding, 3SC has created various events including community rallies and protests, webinars that center Indigenous history and personal well-being, and cultural workshops that cater to the multicultural Native, Chicano, and Hispano communities of Santa Fe.

Creating expansive spaces that connect community members through social, cultural, and historical relationships is crucial to the mission of 3SC, explained Dr. Castro. "This is what Three Sisters is about, this is what the collective is about, it's about building or weaving. How do we strengthen the fabrics of our communities, and how do we fight all these social things that are happening?" Answering these questions is all about building literal and communal space, according to Dr. Castro, spaces that serve to cultivate relationships with a mind for Indigenous healing and activism. "When I think about it, it's all about relationships and relationship building. And our work looks like all different kinds of things, it looks like actions or making art

[68] Three Sisters Collective Founding Members: Dr. Christina Castro, Autumn Rose Billie, and Autumn Gomez, Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, June 12, 2020.

[69] Three Sisters Collective Founding Members, Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, June 12, 2020.

and murals," Dr. Castro explained. "As Indigenous people, for me, our work is building social capital and investing in people and relationships and strengthening our community so that we have the resistance and the resilience to keep moving forward in spite of obvious attacks on our humanity."[70]

The expansive change in organizational programming, activism, and guiding ideologies of TWU and 3SC could mistakenly be associated with linear historical frameworks that prioritize "progress." However, just because linear history is dependent on the progression of a finite and uniform narrative, does not mean that linearity has a monopoly over all systems of change. The organizations of TWU and 3SC have continually changed and expanded, working to include more ideas and people within their programming, activism, and ideologies, so that they can best respond to and prevent issues of violence in their communities. Additionally, many of the strategies used by TWU and 3SC to adapt their programming to contemporary issues are founded in traditional Indigenous values and culture. Therefore, TWU and 3SC have not advanced in a one-directional movement forward, but instead have called upon community and cultural practices from the past in order to transform.

This transformation further shows the uniquely reciprocal relationship between these contemporary Pueblo women and their history. This practice continues the Pueblo cultural trend of utilizing Pueblo histories—also known as storytelling—as guides for developing strategies of healing and survival that can be adapted to fit the present needs of Pueblo communities. As Leslie Marmon Silko explains, "the ancient Pueblo depended upon collective memory through successive generations to maintain and transmit an entire culture, a world view complete with proven strategies for survival… Whatever the event or the subject, the ancient people perceived

[70] Three Sisters Collective Founding Members, Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, June 12, 2020.

the world and themselves within that world as part of an ancient continuous story composed of innumerable bundles of other stories."[71] TWU and 3SC employ this storytelling strategy by utilizing the historical and contemporary lived-experiences of Indigenous women—including experiences with resistance and violence, cultural resiliency and cultural disruption—in order to create successful grassroots community activism and programming that best meets the needs of local Indigenous people. Both organizations understand that their efforts to confront colonial violence by centering the experiences of Indigenous people allows them to create new and transformative models of healing that will ensure that their communities not only survive, but thrive positively within the present and future.

Therefore, change in TWU and 3SC is not synonymous with a progressive view of history, most significantly because it is not working to serve a colonial nation or promote a narrative of progress at the expense of Indigenous communities. Instead, change and adaptation are inherent in a framework of relationaltivity, a framework that thrives on being dynamic and expansive in order to include a multitude of connections between people, history, culture, and things. Relationaltivity as a model of change is successfully used by TWU and 3SC in expanding the scope of their organizations and in creating strategies for their programming because it calls upon knowledge passed down through Pueblo histories, these histories being the present experiences of TWU and 3SC members and past Pueblo people. "Because we started out looking at the symptoms, like alcoholism, domestic violence, and all the things that are very abusive, [we realized] that they were not ways to be that were named in our Pueblo settings," Elder Kathy explained during our first interview. "So in our core values, if you practice what is being said, then you see a way of being and growing in a beloved community [a term derived from the Civil Rights movement and popularized by Martin Luther King Jr.], and learn how to care for each

[71] Leslie Marmon Silko, "Landscape, History and the Pueblo Imagination," *Antaeus* 57 (1986): 87.

other, how to nurture each other, how to respect each other."[72] These values and practices are directly drawn from Pueblo tradition and culture, meaning that confronting colonial violence and promoting community healing has always been directly tied to Pueblo Indigenous identity and history. Therefore, according to Elder Kathy, by recognizing Pueblo histories and culture as guiding frameworks for creating a beloved community, we can turn to the past to better understand the present and create a positive future. "[T]hat's how [TWU] evolved to address what is lacking or what is missing… We are trying to be Indigenous, trying to live our ways of being through generations of existence."[73] Thus, Pueblo history and relationaltivity provide frameworks for understanding the impacts of colonial violence, but they also imagine a future where Pueblo Indigeneity is thriving.

Actively imagining and creating a healthy future for Pueblo communities by calling upon past and contemporary histories of Pueblo survival and resistance is at the center of TWU's and 3SC's efforts to target the sources of colonial violence. Turning to their activism and programming, we can see how their initial focus on violence against Indigenous women—beginning with support circles and building a collective—expanded to include preventative measures, reclamation and "rematriation" (a process of recentering Indigenous women within spaces and processes of land, community, and culture), and an emphasis on healing. These new strategies are not moving away from the work of spreading awareness and providing responsive support for physical violence against Indigenous women, but instead build upon that initial work, seeking to disrupt and prevent cycles of violence. Since its founding, 3SC has hosted online events as well as rallies at the New Mexico State Capitol Building—also known as the Santa Fe Roundhouse—to raise awareness and demand action for MMIW in New

[72] Elder Kathy Wan Povi Sanchez (Project Coordinator of TWU), First Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, July 10, 2020.

[73] Elder Kathy Wan Povi Sanchez, First Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, July 10, 2020.

Mexico.[74] Dr. Castro has also been a contributor to the 2019-2020 New Mexico Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Relatives task force, created following the passage of House Bill 278 that called for New Mexico state research into the MMIW crisis.[75] Likewise, TWU has also engaged in rallying, protests, and other efforts to raise awareness surrounding issues like MMIW. TWU has done work focusing on preventing violence against Native women and girls since its conception, and continues to do so in their programming. But, as we shall see, TWU's programming surrounding issues of violence against Native women has transformed and expanded since their founding, now more focused on preventative processes instead of responsive ones. This change is perhaps most evident in TWU's transition from their retired VOICES program to their Engaging Young Men and Boys (EYMB) project and A'Gin Healthy Sexuality and Body Sovereignty project.

The transformation of TWU's responsive programming to preventative programming reflects the organization's framework of relationaltivity, their new programs transforming to utilize the connections between the past and present as well as intergenerational community connections to disrupt and replace ongoing patterns of colonial violence.

By transitioning away from responsive programming, TWU has also employed one of its core values: **Bin mah pah di**, letting go. Bin mah pah di has been the most difficult TWU value for me to understand. As someone who has experienced and witnessed violence personally and within my family and community, I at first misunderstood Bin mah pah di to mean something akin to "forgive and forget." Ideas of "moving on" and "letting go" have always frustrated me, especially when concerning issues of violence, because they often ask us to absolve those who

[74] Colleen Keane, "Women Gather at Roundhouse to Honor Murdered, Missing; Demand Action," *Navajo Times,* 7 March 2019.

[75] "New Mexico Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Relatives Task Force Report," Report to the Governor and Legislature on the Task Force Findings and Recommendations, State of New Mexico Indian Affairs Department in partnership with the Native American Budget Policy Institute, December 2020.

commit violence of accountability for their actions. When I began talking with the women of TWU and first learned that they had retired their VOICES program—a program that focused on providing legal information and services, support groups, behavioral health assessments and treatment, and a space for community social activism—I was disappointed. I could not understand why they would let go of such a program, why they would move away from responsive victims' services at a time when it felt like the only solution to crises like MMIW and domestic violence was responsive services and policies. I've come to realize that while responsive actions helped in the moment, they did not imagine a future beyond violence. After talking with Elder Kathy and Dr. Sanchez, I now understand that letting go is not a process of forgetting, but rather a process of continual transformation that calls upon relationaltivity to actively confront ever evolving forms of violence in order to create a better future. And yes, there is some forgiving involved. Bin mah pah di does ask us to forgive ourselves and each other, but in a way that requires accountability. Letting go allows us room to not only transform our strategies of healing—adapting them to fit our ever changing experiences in a continuous Pueblo Indigenous history—but it also understands that to forgive is to acknowledge and uphold our responsibilities to ourselves and to each other, cementing relationship building as a key healing process.

After understanding letting go as a process of community transformation and accountability, I was then able to see that while responsive programming is essential for aiding in the goal to end colonial violence, especially violence against Indigenous women, it cannot succeed alone. To confront systems of colonial violence and all their historical longevity, we must implement intergenerational teaching that prioritizes healthy community relationships and replaces harmful patterns of violence with systems of grassroots-developed healing. TWU's shift

away from responsive programming is phenomenal not only because it confronts the past, but because it works towards a thriving future. Just as storytelling retells us past histories of survival in order to ensure our future, I need to investigate ongoing past and present histories of violence against Indigenous women in order to fully understand how TWU is using preventative programming to create a future.

The Ongoing History of Colonial Violence in New Mexico

Issues of violence are critical to 3SC and TWU organizing—having been the primary reason behind the formation of both organizations— because in the U.S., Indigenous women face a rate of violence that is more than double the rate for all other women.[76] Native women are approximately three times more likely to experience sexual assault, and more than one in three Native women will experience rape in their lifetime.[77] According to the National Crime Information Center database, there were 5,711 missing Indigenous women in 2016, 5,646 in 2017, and 2,758 in the first six months of 2018.[78] New Mexico ranks third in the U.S. for the highest number of MMIW cases, with over 202 reported cases with ninety-six classified as missing, ninety-nine classified as murdered, and seven classified as "unknown."[79] Additionally, when examined at an urban level, New Mexico ranks first with the highest number of MMIW cases within major cities such as Santa Fe, Albuquerque, Gallup, and Farmington.[80] Even these

[76] Steven W. Perry, "American Indians and Crime: A BJS Statistical Profile 1992-2002" (Bureau of Justice Statistics: U.S. Department of Justice, December 2004): iv.

[77] Amnesty International, "Maze of Injustice: The Failure to Protect Indigenous Women from Sexual Violence in the U.S" (New York: Amnesty International USA, 2007): 2-4.

[78] Kimberly R. Huyser, Sofia Locklear, and Gabriel R. Sanchez, "Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls: A Briefing Paper" (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, June 2019): 3-4.

[79] Sovereign Bodies Institute, "MMIWG in New Mexico data, 1914-Present," requested by author, received November 5, 2020.

[80] Annita Hetoevehotohke'e Lucchesi and Abigail Echo-Hawk, "Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women & Girls Report: A snapshot of data from 71 urban cities in the United States" (Urban Indian Health Institute: Seattle Indian Health Board, November 14, 2018): 11.

numbers are considered to be underestimates due to underreporting, racial misclassification, lack of media and law enforcement attention, and poor relationships between law enforcement and Indigenous communities.[81] These incidents of violence are also relatively contemporary, excluding past colonial cases of MMIW and the high numbers of missing and murdered girls and boys resulting from Indian Boarding schools and U.S. Indian adoption policies.

The prevalence of violence against Indigenous women and MMIW has resulted in a crisis impacting other countries as well as the U.S., a crisis rooted in colonization and historical violence against Indigenous people. A unique quality of violence against Indigenous women is that unlike most violent crimes committed in the U.S., the majority of violent crimes committed against Native women are interracial—meaning they are committed by a perpetrator of a different race—with over 70 percent of Native women reporting to have had white male assaulters.[82] The abundance of interracial violence against Indigenous women is significant because it exemplifies the continuance of historical violence against Indigenous women, in which many Native women were and are murdered, kidnapped, and assaulted by men from outside of their Indigenous communities. It also reveals how Indigenous women have continued to be targeted by historical and colonial violence at systemic and interpersonal levels because they live at the intersection of race and gender, because they are both Native and women. Andrea Smith describes the sexual assault of Indigenous women as a tool of colonial genocide, explaining that, "When a Native woman suffers abuse, this abuse is an attack on her identity as a woman and an attack on her identity as Native. The issues of colonial, race, and gender oppression cannot be separated."[83] Similarly, the Sovereign Bodies Institute's MMIWG2S report

[81] Lucchesi, "Missing," 4.

[82] Sarah Deer, *The Beginning and End of Rape: Confronting Sexual Violence in Native America* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015), 6.

[83] Andrea Smith, *Conquest : Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015), 8.

on northern California, "To'Kee Skuy' Soo Ney-Wo-Chek' I Will See You Again in a Good Way," states that Indigenous women's "power as life givers and resulting connection to the land meant they were seen as threats to Western colonization efforts because any and all Indigenous claims to the land had to be eradicated to make way for white settlers. Since first contact, subsequent generations of violence and assimilation resulted in significant intergenerational trauma such that most Indigenous women are victims of violence in some form or another in their lives, especially those who are missing or murdered."[84]

To truly center an Indigenous understanding of history, it is imperative to investigate the connections between past historical violence against the Pueblo communities of New Mexico and contemporary issues of violence against Pueblo women. This history of violent colonialism is vast. Much of the written and remembered history of New Mexico has been hesitant to disclose the full extent of colonial violence against the Pueblo people. That violence is often acknowledged primarily through Spanish colonial documents that contain a colonial bias that perpetuate the diminishment of violent acts by Spanish colonizers and erase the narratives of Pueblo women. In order to understand the connections between past and present colonial forms of violence in New Mexico and how the women of TWU and 3SC are confronting them, I will first critically investigate the deficiencies of these historical narratives of Spanish colonization in New Mexico.

The Spanish first entered what we presently call New Mexico in the early 1530s when Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca and a small group survived a boat crash on the coast of Florida during the 1528 Narváez expedition. The group traveled from Florida to New Mexico, building a

[84] Abby JD Abinanti, Angi Cavaliere, Alanna Nulph, Blythe K. George, et al, "To'Kee Skuy' Soo Ney-Wo-Chek' I Will See You Again in a Good Way: A Year 1 Project Report on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two Spirit People of Northern California" (Sovereign Bodies Institute, July 2020): 11.

tumultuous relationship with the Pueblo people, before returning to New Spain—current day Mexico City.[85] Exaggerated stories about the wealth of New Mexico spread after Cabeza de Vaca's return, resulting in numerous authorized and illegal expeditions into Pueblo land throughout the mid-to-late 16th century. Among these was Francisco Vázquez de Coronado's 1540 conquistador expedition. Coronado's expedition is one early example of harsh colonial violence in New Mexico. His group demanded food from many of the Pueblos during the winter months and burned thirty Zuni Pueblo people at the stake when they refused to comply. Pedro de Castaneda, a member of Coronado's expedition, described the strain these violent efforts put on the Pueblo people, saying Spanish conquistadors stole Pueblo resources, "without consideration or respect, and without inquiring about the importance of the person they had despoiled. The Indians resented this very much."[86] Coronado attacked and destroyed thirteen of the fifteen existing Tiwa Pueblos during his expedition over the course of two years.[87]

While Coronado's expedition had devastating effects on the Pueblo population, he found none of the riches he had hoped for and his exploits were considered unsuccessful, resulting in Spain not officially sponsoring a settler-colonial expedition into New Mexico until 1598. This official colonizing effort was led by Juan de Oñate and included a large caravan of Spanish soldiers, Franciscan missionaries, and settlers. Historian Andrew L. Knaut explains that Oñate's attempts to permanently colonize the area, and the missionaries' attempts to religiously indoctrinate the Pueblo people by force established a legacy of colonialism where "[i]ntimidation was the key to Spanish authority among the Pueblo Indians of Northern New Mexico…the native

[85] Andrew L. Knaut, *The Pueblo Revolt of 1680: Conquest and Resistance in Seventeenth-Century New Mexico* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1964), 21-22.

[86] Knaut, *Pueblo Revolt of 1680,* 28.

[87] Knaut, *Pueblo Revolt of 1680,* 28-29.

inhabitants watched and suffered as a pattern of violence emerged that would dictate the nature of Pueblo-European interaction throughout the century."[88]

During Oñate's time in New Mexico, he officially claimed the area in the name of the Spanish government.[89] The Pueblo people, though, were not passive in the face of the pressures of colonial violence, and there were many uprisings among the Pueblos against the severe imposition of the Spanish people and Spanish religion, including a famous uprising at Acoma Pueblo that led to the Acoma Massacre of 1599, which were precursors to the later Pueblo Revolt of 1680. The Acoma uprising occurred when Oñate sent his nephew Juan de Zaldivar and a group of soldiers to Acoma Pueblo where they demanded food and supplies. After the Pueblo refused to comply, Zaldivar and company kidnapped several leaders of Acoma Pueblo before taking the supplies by force.[90] According to Spanish documentation, the people of Acoma retaliated, killing twelve Spanish soldiers including Zaldivar and driving any survivors out of their Pueblo.[91] While the Spanish stealing of food and supplies from Acoma is often credited with being the major reasoning behind Acoma's uprising, within Pueblo oral history it is understood that Acoma attacked the Spanish for stealing their food, kidnapping their tribal leaders, *and* sexually assaulting Acoma women.[92]

During the Santa Fe Plaza rally on June 18, 2020 led by 3SC, founding member Autumn Billie spoke to a crowd of Native and non-Native New Mexicans about the legacy of historical violence in New Mexico—the Plaza being an infamous sight where forty-seven Pueblo Medicine Men were whipped and four hanged in 1675 for practicing their Pueblo religion.[93] While

---

[88] Knaut, *Pueblo Revolt of 1680,* 17-18.
[89] George P. Hammond and Agapito Rey, *Don Juan de Oñate, Colonizer of New Mexico 1595-1628* (Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press, 1953), 314-315.
[90] Knaut, *Pueblo Revolt of 1680,* 38-40.
[91] Knaut, *Pueblo Revolt of 1680,* 40.
[92] John Jota Leaños, "Frontera!" *PBS*, May 16, 2014, https://www.pbs.org/video/pbs-frontera-revolt-and-rebellion-rio-grande/.
[93] Leaños, "Frontera!" May 16, 2014.

recalling this history of colonial violence in Santa Fe, Billie also called upon the history of the Acoma Massacre. "We have not forgotten about Acoma, we have not forgotten how they stole our food and raped our women," Billie said, retelling the story of the 1599 Acoma massacre, centering the sexual assault of Acoma women as the primary reason for the Acoma uprising. Despite Billie's focus on the role of Acoma women, documents written by the Spanish never discuss the assault of Acoma women as a reason behind the uprising. In a letter to Rodrigo del Rio in February of 1599, a Spanish soldier attributed the stealing of supplies, and a turkey in particular, as the "minor incident" that instigated the Acoma uprising.[94] "We forced the Indians to fight and they attacked with great fury," the soldier continued in his description of the massacre, "the result was that more than eight hundred persons died, and the prisoners taken numbered five hundred women and children, and eighty men. The latter were tried and punished."[95]

One fact Spanish documents do note, is the participation of Acoma women in the Acoma uprising and their fighting during the massacre. During the 1598 "Trials of the Indians of Acoma," Oñate, acting as judge and governor, interrogated several Pueblo men, asking each for their reasoning behind the initial attacks. While there is no way for us to know whether these accounts are true or if they were being influenced in any way—most of the men having to speak through a Spanish translator and also facing the threat of punishment for the Acoma uprising—still Oñate mentioned women participating in the fighting in almost every interrogation. While questioning one Acoma man whom the Spanish called "Indian Caoma" about the massacre, the trial record keeper noted that Caoma said he "urged the Indians, both men and women, all of whom hurled stones, to submit peacefully but they refused."[96] During another interrogation of a man from Acoma Pueblo whom the Spanish called "Indian Taxio,"

[94] Hammond and Rey, *Don Juan de Oñate,* 426.
[95] Hammond and Rey, *Don Juan de Oñate,* 427.
[96] Hammond and Rey, *Don Juan de Oñate,* 464.

Oñate "asked why the Indian women threw rocks and helped in the fight." Taxio was recorded responding that "it was because they were together with the men and therefore took part in the demonstrations and fighting."[97]

When combined with oral histories of the Acoma massacre, as recounted by Billie, Spanish confusion about and the documentation of Acoma women participating in the fighting offers evidence of the role of Pueblo women in Pueblo resistance. Additionally, these testimonies also serve as evidence of Spanish soldiers sexually assaulting Acoma women and the agency and possible motivations of Acoma women for defending and fighting for themselves and their Pueblo. Furthermore, the confusion surrounding the agency of Pueblo women in the Spanish documented investigation reveals the cultural blindspots of European colonizers. Similar to Michel-Rolph Trouillot's exploration of the colonial frameworks that deemed the Haitian Revolution "unthinkable," resistance from Indigenous women was incompatible with Spanish ideologies of humanity and gender, so that even after it happened, they struggled to make sense of it.[98] The Spanish colonial government even went so far as to interview several Pueblo *men* about what possible reasons these women could have had for fighting. This reveals something beyond their confusion. It exposes their refusal to document the narratives of any of the women themselves. Spanish colonizers simply could not conceive of sexual assault against Indigenous women as a problem nor fathom any retaliation by those women as possible.

Despite the colonizers' worldviews, oral history still emphasizes the assault of Acoma women as one of the primary causes of the uprising and Spanish archives note Acoma women as having fought alongside Acoma men in the uprising and massacre. Thus, while sexual assault

[97] Hammond and Rey, *Don Juan de Oñate,* 466. And contrary to Spanish narratives of the event, in statements recorded by the Spanish from two Acoma men, "Xunusta" and "Caucachi," both believed that the initial uprising had happened because Spanish soldiers had either murdered or wounded an Acoma person.

[98] Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2015), 73.

was not mentioned in the Spanish narrative of the Acoma massacre, Pueblo narratives tell us otherwise, displaying an Indigenous history of these events in which sexual assault was not only unacceptable, but also a form of colonial violence that was combated severely by Pueblo women and their entire community. The Acoma uprising was met with brutal punishment from the Spanish, Oñate stating that, "If these Indians were not punished… they would form a league, rebel, and destroy us easily."[99] This explains the cruelty of the Acoma Massacre, where over 800 Acoma men, women, and children were murdered. After the massacre and the "Trials of the Indians of Acoma," Oñate enslaved the surviving women and children of Acoma and cut off the right foot of every Acoma man before enslaving them as well.[100]

The Acoma uprising and the brutality of the Acoma Massacre and Oñate's punishment—the Spanish government even calling upon Oñate to resign as governor for his overt violence—are significant examples not only of historical violence against Pueblo people, but also of Pueblo resistance. And within that resistance we can also see the roles that women played, their narratives having the power to spark an uprising that they actively fought in. By centering Acoma women in this historical narrative we have greater context for the gendered history of Spanish colonialism, violence, and Pueblo resistance. Through the emphasis that oral history places on the experiences of Acoma women, we can also understand the sexual attack on Acoma women as an attack on the broader Acoma community itself. Therefore, the Acoma Massacre exemplifies how sexual violence against Indigenous women has been used as a tool of colonial subjugation that targets the entire Indigenous community, warranting justified acts of Indigenous resistance by both men and women. As Sarah Deer explains: "Tribal nations were not mere passive recipients of this violence, however. Many so-called Native rebellions, outbreaks,

[99] Knaut, *Pueblo Revolt of 1680,* 42.
[100] Hammond and Rey, *Don Juan de Oñate,* 462-478.

or uprisings have been linked to the rape of Native women, thus linking resistance of rape to the exercise of tribal sovereignty."[101] The events at Acoma also illustrate how historical narratives—specifically oral histories—that center the experiences of Indigenous women are commonly ignored despite their valuable contributions to our understanding of the inherent relationship between colonial and gender-based violence.

When Autumn Billie spoke to a crowd about the violence against Acoma women that led to uprising and the Acoma Massacre, she was drawing connections between the current crisis of violence against Indigenous women and past violence, establishing New Mexico as a landscape where history influences the experiences of contemporary Native women. Billie was also continuing the practice of storytelling, utilizing Pueblo oral history to make a connection between the pain and resistance of the past and that of the present to promote actions of healing and activism. By doing so during a rally created by Pueblo women that was meant to target colonial monuments and violent historical memory, Billie was also making a lived connection between the uprisings of the past and activism in the present, both of which target the violent impact of colonialism on Pueblo women and their communities. In remembering the Acoma uprising and massacre, Billie was utilizing her memory and storytelling of the events as strategies to validate the contemporary activism of 3SC—contextualizing it within a long legacy of Pueblo resistance—and to imagine a present and future in New Mexico where violence against Pueblo women and the theft of Pueblo resources are unacceptable and explicitly combated by the community. Billie's and others' speeches during 3SC's rally were all efforts to center the narratives of Pueblo women in Oga Po'ogeh and to draw connections between their experiences with violence in present-day Santa Fe, colonial monuments, and past colonial violence.

[101] Deer, *The Beginning and End of Rape,* 49.

Addressing these issues in the form of a community rally is of paramount importance because the women of 3SC as well as other Pueblo people participating were able to invoke the memory and oral tradition of Pueblo resistance and connect this past directly with their contemporary activism. In *Violence Against Indigenous Women : Literature, Activism, Resistance,* Allison Hargreaves explains that, contrary to the idea that colonialism "is a historical phenomenon to learn about, rather than an ongoing set of relationships to be transformed," the narratives of Indigenous women say otherwise. According to Hargreaves, if we focus on the narratives of Indigenous women, we will not only gain an understanding of how historical violence influences the future, but also gain decolonizing strategies for confronting ongoing historical violence through models of resistance.[102] Billie, who is studying to be a filmmaker, described how crucial the narratives of women have been to her life and activism. "I grew up in a household where emotional and intellectual knowledge about social justice and learning about our identity and about who we are and why that's important was all from my mom. She was the one who always framed things for me." Centering community narratives as primary models for social activism, Billie explained, is crucial. And further centering Indigenous women's narratives as key stories for guiding community leadership and survival has been a key interest of Billie's during film school. "Our community are the experts and we have to listen to them because those stories are important. So I took on figuring out filmmaking and storytelling and I'm kind of in that place of being like 'whose story do I want to tell?' and 'why is it important for me to share my story?'"[103]

[102] Allison Hargreaves, *Violence Against Indigenous Women : Literature, Activism, Resistance* (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2017), 166.

[103] Three Sisters Collective Founding Members, Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, June 12, 2020.

When Autumn Billie and I met for the second time to talk on August 11th, 2020, it was the day after the Pueblo Revolt anniversary. Amid nationwide protests surrounding the murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor and the removal of Confederate and colonial monuments, someone in Santa Fe recalls another, older, act of resistance, by spray-painting "1680 LAND BACK" on the New Mexico History Museum.[104] This call back to the 1680 Pueblo Revolt—the most successful Indigenous revolt in North America that expelled European colonizers from Pueblo land—follows continued efforts by 3SC to remove the two obelisks from downtown, something Santa Fe Mayor Alan Webber promised to do over two months previously during the 3SC Plaza rally.

The Plaza obelisk was eventually removed on October 12, 2020—Indigenous Peoples' Day—by community protesters, not the Santa Fe government. Though we did not know how the obelisk would be removed at the time, my August discussion with Autumn Billie about the Pueblo Revolt raised crucial questions about direct community action and resistance, the re-centering of Indigenous history in Santa Fe, and the role of Native women in all of these efforts. "Women need to be leaders, Queer folks need to be leaders… Instead of being romanticized or exploited in this space, because we are definitely in commodity or our culture is a commodity, that's how people get intrigued to visit this area," Billie elaborated. "But at the same time, we're still people and this is our home. And we've been here for a very long time, and [we have to] especially explain to people that the land that they're on, they're literally surrounded by Pueblo Indigenous people." Having these conversations in Santa Fe is especially dubious, the Plaza being a space Billie has already acknowledged for holding both helpful and harmful

[104] Simon Romero, "Why New Mexico's 1680 Pueblo Revolt Is Echoing 2020 Protests," *The New York Times,* 27 September 2020.

histories. As Billie pointed out, Santa Fe has always been an Indigenous space but has grown more multicultural and multiracial in recent years.

Therefore, while recalling the Pueblo Revolt specifically invokes Indigenous resistance, 3SC understands Native activism as innately linked with other BIPOC activism. Instead of seeing these forces as separate, one should understand the pursuit of liberation and safety for Black communities to be interconnected with the pursuit of Indigenous sovereignty and decolonization. Recall that historical narratives of white supremacy depend upon the oppression and erasure of Indigenous and Black people as well as their histories. Thus, historical models of Indigenous resistance, such as the Pueblo Revolt, are not only applicable to contemporary Native and Black Lives Matter protests, but they are also essential. "[O]ther marginalized folks in our communities need to be protected and loved and cared for. Understanding the Black Lives Matter movement and being anti-racist to all people of color and understanding that, it does take work to unpack," Billie explained. "It takes work to show up for one another in a good way… How can we hold those values and turn more of those values into actions, right? How do we situate our beliefs and our values to keep doing the work?"

A crucial aspect of what made the Pueblo Revolt successful was its ability to unite multiple Pueblos across New Mexico and garner support from other Indigenous tribes such as the Apaches. The unified strategy of the revolt provides both a legacy of Indigenous resistance and land claims, as well as a template for creating successful Indigenous movements today. This template prescribes a unified front—one that calls upon the community relationships and activism of Native and non-Native people alike—and action that is grounded in decolonizing efforts, pushing movements to reject systems of oppression and instead turn to community and culture to create new systems of liberation and sovereignty.

Similar to the contemporary Black Lives Matter movement, the Red Power movement of the 1960s and 1970s, and the work of 3SC and TWU, the Pueblo Revolt was a movement that grew out of increasing and ongoing colonial violence. During the 17th century, despite missionizing efforts and the strict rules of Spanish colonial government banning traditional dances, language, and practices, Pueblo culture stubbornly remained, often practiced in secret by the Pueblo people. These efforts to preserve Pueblo culture and life were punished severely when discovered, and as the Spanish settlers—who were outnumbered by the Pueblo people—grew increasingly dependent on the resources and labor of the Pueblos for survival, their violence against the Pueblos also grew.[105] During this time of escalating tensions and colonial violence, several small revolts ensued, including Picuris, Zuni, Hopi, and Jemez Pueblos' individual and organized attacks on Franciscan friars and churches during the mid-1600s.[106] The resistance efforts of all the Pueblos throughout Spanish colonization must be acknowledged in order to understand how a medicine man named Popé (or Po'Pay) and other Pueblo leaders were able to unite almost all of the Pueblos under one common revolution.

In 1675, at a time of heightened starvation, physical and sexual violence, enslavement, and oppression of Pueblo culture by Spanish soldiers, priests, and settlers, Spanish Governor Juan Francisco Treviño demanded that all Pueblo people convert to Christianity. When many of the Pueblos refused and continued their cultural practices, Spanish soldiers were sent throughout New Mexico to arrest Pueblo spiritual leaders and destroy religious items and sacred gathering spaces, called kivas.[107] During one of these attacks, forty-seven medicine men were captured and marched to Santa Fe where they were tried and tortured, resulting in the hangings of four Elder

[105] Ramón A. Gutiérrez, "Franciscans and the Pueblo Revolt," from *When Jesus Came, the Corn Mothers Went Away,* in *What Caused the Pueblo Revolt of 1680,* edited by David J. Weber (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1999), 44-45.

[106] Knaut, *Pueblo Revolt of 1680,* 75-76.

[107] Leaños, "Frontera!"; Robert Silverberg, *The Pueblo Revolt* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994), 95.

medicine men in the Santa Fe Plaza. Popé, who was from Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo, was one of the surviving forty-seven medicine men who, after escaping to Taos Pueblo, began planning the Pueblo Revolt.[108] In order to spread the word to unite the Pueblos, Popé sent long distance runners hundreds of miles across New Mexico with knotted yucca cords and painted deerskins that were used to countdown the days leading up to the revolt, successfully connecting multiple Pueblos across their distances and different languages.[109] Not every Pueblo participated and some disagreed with the revolt's plans to oust the Spanish, and some sources even argue that there were great tensions between different Pueblos and the leaders of the revolt, claiming that Popé threatened many Pueblos with severe penalties if they refused to participate.[110] Some of the disagreeing Pueblos even went so far as to tell the Spanish about the impending revolt, and when two runners from Tesuque Pueblo named Nicolás Catua and Pedro Omnia were captured and tortured by Spanish soldiers, the Spanish learned of the plan to attack days before it was meant to happen.[111] Forced to start a day early, on August 10th, 1680 the Pueblos launched an organized and violent attack on the Spanish, killing many, burning down buildings and churches, and driving the remaining soldiers and colonists out of New Mexico and into El Paso.[112] As a result, the Pueblo people regained control of New Mexico for over twelve years, making the Pueblo Revolt one of the most prominent instances of Indigenous rebellion in American history in which a collective Indigenous movement successfully removed a violent colonial government from their land and re-instated Indigenous power.

---

[108] Joe S. Sando, *Pueblo Nations: Eight Centuries of Pueblo Indian History* (Santa Fe: Clear Light Publishers, 1992), 63.

[109] Matthew Liebmann, *Revolt: An Archaeological History of Pueblo Resistance and Revitalization in 17th Century New Mexico* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2012), 56.

[110] Liebmann, *Revolt: An Archaeological History of Pueblo Resistance,* 57.

[111] Liebmann, *Revolt: An Archaeological History of Pueblo Resistance,* 57-58.

[112] Silverberg, *The Pueblo Revolt,* 119-124.

Similar to Billie's invocation of the Acoma Massacre during the 3SC rally, retelling the history of the Pueblo Revolt not only re-centers Indigenous history in New Mexico, but also legitimizes Indigenous action against ongoing colonial violence. The Pueblo Revolt also puts forward a narrative in which colonial violence can only be truly confronted through grassroots community organizing and action. As explained by Jemez Pueblo historian Joe Sando, "the Pueblo people will defend themselves and have in the past. Their main political weapons have been organization, alliance, effective tribal politics, and good faith."[113]

However, even while examining the Pueblo Revolt as a successful Indigenous unification effort, it is also crucial to point out the tensions and struggles that occurred during the revolt and the resulting gaps in the available historical scholarship about it. One must also investigate why, in this unified movement, the figure of Popé is most famously recognized and primarily discussed. As pointed out by Sando, representatives from each Pueblo played major roles in planning the revolt and the greater Pueblo population were instrumental in driving the Spanish out of New Mexico during the revolt.[114] Many of the other leaders during the Pueblo Revolt were also mixed-blood, or mestizos and "coyotes," despite narratives that often depict the Pueblo Revolt as seeking to expel all things Spanish or not "traditionally" Indigenous.[115] Additionally, why is there no scholarship that investigates the role of Pueblo women in the revolt? Their erasure from the history of the Pueblo Revolt resembles that of Pueblo women in the historical narratives of the Acoma Revolt and Massacre. Arguably, these historical narratives parallel other histories of BIPOC activist movements, histories that emphasized the role of key leaders like Martin Luther King Jr. and Cesár Chavez in community activism while often further marginalizing the efforts of grassroots community activism, especially grassroots community

[113] Sando, *Pueblo Nations,* 65.
[114] Sando, *Pueblo Nations,* 68.
[115] Liebmann, *Revolt: An Archaeological History of Pueblo Resistance,* 54.

activism led by women of color such as Ella Baker and Dolores Huerta.[116] Similar to the events of the Acoma Revolt and Massacre, one can assume that Pueblo women played active roles within the planning and execution of the Pueblo Revolt, just as it's likely that the Pueblo Revolt has been framed by the patriarchal biases of Spanish colonialism, which likely disregarded the influence and power of Pueblo women.

I raise these interpretations of the Pueblo Revolt in the hopes that these added complexities further reveal how and why the work of 3SC is able to successfully utilize the history of the revolt in order to negotiate the contemporary needs of their community. As New Mexico grows increasingly complex with its intersecting histories of Native, Chicano, Hispano, and Black violence and activism, the Pueblo Revolt, when combined with the relationship building strategies of 3SC, serves as a reminder of the need for unified mobilization. Most importantly, as contemporary movements negotiate strategies of decolonization and liberation in the face of ongoing white supremacy, the Pueblo Revolt offers a blueprint for creating unified action within BIPOC communities. The success of such a blueprint can be seen in the 3SC Plaza rally and how the women of 3SC were able to build a community movement and narrative, confronting the local and national violent history of colonialism while (re)claiming downtown Santa Fe. The Pueblo Revolt offers suggestive models for contemporary Indigenous activism not because it was perfect, but because of its tensions. While the Pueblo Revolt's unification of Pueblo people was a useful strategy, so too is it a reminder for present-day activists to question *who* is leading these unification efforts? *Who* gets prioritized in these activist narratives? And as Sando points out, even after the revolt, the Pueblo communities were still rife with interpersonal

[116] Dayo Gore, Jeanne Theoharis, and Komozi Woodard, *Want to Start a Revolution?: Radical Women in the Black Freedom Struggle* (New York: NYU Press, 2009); Barbara Ransby, *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement: A Radical Democratic Vision* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003); Marlene Targ Brill, *Dolores Huerta Stands Strong: The Woman Who Demanded Justice* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2018).

and communal conflicts and experienced great difficulty in their work to navigate and negotiate their lives after the impact of colonization.[117] This raises another question, what must be done in order to ensure the sustainability of a community after a revolt? These questions do not diminish the immense success of the Pueblo Revolt, with the Pueblo people regaining control over their land for over a decade, but I ask these questions because I believe that in order for the Pueblo Revolt to be the most useful model for contemporary activism, one must understand all of its complexities. I also believe that 3SC accomplishes this in two critical ways.

First, by creating a collective of Indigenous women, built from the conversations between Pueblo women, 3SC recognizes the need for activism to be led by and for the community. As Dr. Castro, Autumn Billie, and Autumn Gomez explained in our interview, their work prioritizes building a multigenerational and multicultural collective in order to (re)claim space in Santa Fe.[118] This collective building by 3SC works to call upon past historical and cultural relationships between Indigenous people and Santa Fe, but also works to establish contemporary relationships between the present-day people of Santa Fe. Most importantly, this work is done primarily through the centering of Indigenous women and the relationships that they experience, create, and sustain. Thus, the efforts of 3SC cannot be attributed to any one person, but to a process of relationship building led by a collective of Pueblo women. The prioritization of Indigenous women within this work is especially crucial because it ensures that the efforts of 3SC are inherently rejecting colonial patriarchal systems that have often negatively influenced Indigenous men and communities. The historical example of the Pueblo Revolt, with its different tensions and difficulties shows that Indigenous activism must involve both community action and community building that prioritizes creating a healthy and sustainable community for Indigenous

[117] Sando, *Pueblo Nations,* 68-69.

[118] Three Sisters Collective Founding Members, Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, June 12, 2020.

people. The women of 3SC recognize this, and understand that their activism is best mobilized by a strong and healthy community that works to center Indigenous women and healthy Indigenous practices as well as reject colonial forces. "What does a healthy community look like? Why, when I go to Santa Fe, do I never see any other Native women? Why, when we know there are plenty of Native women who live in Santa Fe and have lived in Santa Fe, why do we not see them represented?" Autumn Gomez said, posing some of the questions that have guided the work of 3SC. "The main goal [of 3SC] was to create space for Pueblo and other Native women in this town. And we've done this to a point where there's more of a community now. And hopefully that grows and continues to be a thing… it was from us really starting to think about, how can we create that space for us that is safe and loving and vibrant. How can we get together and do this?"[119] As the efforts of 3SC illustrate, unification through community relationship building is a constant process, sustained before, during, and after Indigenous activist actions.

From Responsive to Preventative Programming: TWU's Expansive Cultural Models

Three Sisters has recognized the power that Pueblo women have in being able to create new historical relationships while confronting violent ones through their grassroots community organizing and activism. This work can also be seen in Tewa Women United's founding as a Pueblo women support circle and in the evolution of its programming over time. One of TWU's first programs regarding sexual violence against Pueblo women and children was its VOICES program, a community and Pueblo culture-based response for children and adults who experience sexual violence. Since the retirement of the VOICES program, as Dr. Corrine

[119] Autumn Gomez (Founder of 3SC), Individual Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, August 7, 2020.

Sanchez explained, much of the current work of TWU to confront issues of sexual violence and colonial gender-based violence is preventative. “In the past 20 years we've seen this upsurge of tribes and other organizations providing direct services,” Dr. Sanchez noted. “We've done a lot of work in direct services, but now there's other people and other programs to carry that forward… And so for us, there was a need to figure out, how do we prevent this?”[120] The transition from responsive to preventative work in TWU’s sexual assault programming has prompted a focus on providing sexual education to women and girls as well as men and boys that promotes consent and targets historical violence while being rooted in Tewa practices.

Although Indigenous women experience high rates of sexual assault and violence from men of a different race, an ongoing impact of colonial violence, we must also address the high numbers of Native men who commit violence against Native women.[121] Similarly to Indigenous women, Indigenous men also face higher rates of violence in the U.S. than any other racial or ethnic group, with over forty-three percent having experienced some form of physical violence in their lifetime.[122]

TWU’s work begins with the radical principle that modern American ideas about gender are a product of colonialism. Traditionally in Pueblo culture, gender is viewed in terms of balance, evident in one of the guiding core values of TWU: **Kwee-wa seng-wa vi tuu,** female/male energy and ancestral knowingness. The Tewa value Kwee-wa seng-wa vi tuu recognizes not a dichotomy between genders—which is inherently colonial—but instead a balance that can only be achieved through the knowledge and skills of different genders, through the cooperation and collaboration of all community members. In fact, for many Indigenous tribes

[120] Dr. Corrine Sanchez (Executive Director of TWU), Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, July 1, 2020.

[121] Smith, *Conquest,* 27.

[122] Dayna Olson, “Protecting Native Women from Violence: Fostering State-Tribal Relations and the Shortcomings of the Violence Against Women Act of 2013,” *Hastings Constitutional Law Quarterly* 46 (2019): 823.

women served (and continue to serve) crucial roles as social and cultural leaders. These traditions of balance between men and women in Indigenous communities were disrupted by colonialism, causing men and women to both suffer under the dichotomous and exclusive worldviews of white patriarchy.[123] The framework of patriarchy was often forced upon Indigenous people through colonial governments, colonial religions, social systems, and later through Indian Boarding schools. Lakota scholar Hilary N. Weaver explains the consequences of such patriarchal values where "violence is often linked to the introduction of alcohol, Christianity, and the hierarchical and patriarchal family structure common among European settlers." Weaver cites as evidence a court case from 1968 where a statute was upheld asserting that a Native man being convicted of rape on a reservation would receive a lesser penalty if his victim was also Native.[124] Social scholar Catherine Burnette describes the violence that Indigenous women experience from Indigenous men as "intersecting forms" of historical oppression where the violences of colonialism, racism, and sexism intersect and cause Indigenous populations to adopt colonial tactics of violence that undermine the status of Indigenous women and increase intimate partner violence (IPV) within Indigenous communities.[125]

As a survivor of child sexual abuse and domestic violence, Dr. Corrine Sanchez explained during our interview her personal experience with the evolution of TWU's programming surrounding sexual violence, and that TWU's ultimate goal is to center women and girls while working to encompass and embrace their communities and families. TWU was the first space. Dr. Sanchez said, that she felt truly allowed her to speak about the sexual abuse she

[123] Hilary N. Weaver, "The Colonial Context of Violence: Reflections on Violence in the Lives of Native American Women," *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 24 (September 2009): 1554-1555.

[124] Weaver, "Colonial Context of Violence,"1555-1556.

[125] Catherine Burnette, "Historical Oppression and Intimate Partner Violence Experienced by Indigenous Women in the United States: Understanding Connections," *The Social Service Review* 89 (2015): 534.

experienced, a notably difficult undertaking because her story, like those of others, revealed violences being committed between Native relatives and community members. “It's our old people that are committing these silences, and also non-natives, but I think it's more of the people that we know, not necessarily strangers.” Confronting the violence she experienced at the individual level was essential to Dr. Sanchez’s healing, but establishing connections between herself and her community, between her experiences with violence and a broader history of colonialism, truly transformed her ability to create community change. “[L]earning to deal with the anger that I had for my parents, that I had for my community, that I had towards myself, and then moving through that ceiling and learning more about colonialism, learning more about genocidal tactics, and more about how rape has been used to take over Indigenous peoples and land,” she explained, “that really helped me move through a lot of that anger and really develop ways that were more positive to make a difference.”[126]

Most importantly, by putting her and others’ experiences within a historical framework that prioritized relationaltivity, Dr. Sanchez along with the other women of TWU realized the need to center Native women and girls within their programming. “Just because we focus on women and girls, doesn't mean we're not serving men and boys. Right, because I feel like as you service women and girls, then they're taking what they're learning and what you're sharing, and they're taking it into their spheres of influence, which is their friends, their family, and the community.”[127] Dr. Sanchez not only highlighted the need for addressing men, boys, and older relatives in conversations about sexual violence in Indigenous communities, but she also centered the roles of Indigenous women and girls as key leaders in their communities who hold the unique ability to promote a healthy and positive culture. The women-and-girl-centered work

[126] Dr. Corrine Sanchez, Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, July 1, 2020.
[127] Dr. Corrine Sanchez, Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, July 1, 2020.

of TWU promotes an understanding of cyclical violence that is not passive but active in the ways it utilizes historical knowledge and theories of relationaltivity to combat colonial violence and transform Pueblo community through the relationships and leadership of Pueblo women.

The need to center Indigenous women is also the founding mission of TWU's environmental justice work, which Dr. Sanchez described as their Protect Those Most Vulnerable campaign.[128] The Protect Those Most Vulnerable campaign not only recognizes the unique physical impact environmental pollution and contaminants have on women's bodies, but it also recognizes that as people who hold important roles as cultural, familial, and community leaders, women hold the position of being both the most vulnerable to environmental violence and the most knowledgeable when it comes to guiding environmental justice actions. A similar understanding of women both as those most vulnerable and those who can best guide actionable community work is applied to TWU's sexual assault programming. Thus, TWU's efforts to encompass families and community through the relationships of Native women and girls have been crucial to their transition from reactive programming surrounding issues of physical and environmental violence and sexual assault, to preventative programming that seeks to "weed out and uproot this culture of violence to (re)plant a culture of peace."[129]

By structuring their programming around Indigenous women, TWU is invoking their relationships, their intergenerational and interpersonal connections with their entire community. This process of relationaltivity allows TWU to conduct their work at multiple levels, impacting the individual and the family, the family and the community, while also confronting greater structures of colonial violence. "Women gathering of all ages in circles and having conversations, we've continued to do that throughout our thirty years," Dr. Sanchez explained,

[128] Dr. Corrine Sanchez, Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, July 1, 2020.

[129] Corrine Sanchez, "Herstories and the Braiding of Environment and Reproductive Justice to Protect Those Most Vulnerable," *Journal of American Indian Education* 55 (Fall 2016): 49.

"now it's become multiracial, multicultural, multigender, multigenerational." Therefore, modeling their programming around relationships and positive relationship building is key to the historical and community activism of Pueblo women.

The programming of TWU has successfully mobilized these connections through action, practice, and continued dialogue that involve women, men, youth, and elders while maintaining a women-and-girls-centered approach.[130] "[W]e believe in the transformation of our men and we've been doing a lot of working around engaging men and boys. Which is hard, right, because they get a whole different patriarchal experience in the Western way."[131] Recognizing the different experiences Native people have had with white patriarchy is crucial for prioritizing Native women who experience violence uniquely at the intersections of Indigeneity and womanhood. But further recognizing how white patriarchy also targets Native women by negatively impacting Native men, community, and family structures has allowed TWU to operate its programming on multiple intergenerational and interpersonal levels. "[P]atriarchy has landed really hard on our communities with the silencing of women's voices," Dr. Sanchez said, "so we've developed our programming to focus on all age ranges," describing the importance of working with young generations specifically. "For us, the investment in our young people is because that's where I feel like the transformative energy is really going to happen. Then they're aging and taking all of that with them into adulthood and becoming adults that hold to those values."[132]

For their intergenerational and multi-layered programming, TWU implements strategies of relationaltivity through the practice of **Opide**, a Tewa theory of braiding or weaving things

[130] Dr. Corrine Sanchez, Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, July 1, 2020.
[131] Dr. Corrine Sanchez, Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, July 1, 2020.
[132] Dr. Corrine Sanchez, Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, July 1, 2020.

together.[133] The social, historical, and cultural practices of relationaltivity and Opide thus guide TWU's work in addressing the interconnections between different forms of violence and healing to protect women and girls and thereby protect their entire community.[134]

By focusing on the transformation of Pueblo community through cultural and educational engagement with Pueblo youth, TWU is utilizing intergenerational strategies found throughout the practices of storytelling and Pueblo history that recognize the deep connections and influences that Pueblo youth have on the entire Pueblo community. TWU's engagement with Native youth exemplifies key characteristics of Pueblo Indigenous history, its proclivity for being continuous and community-centered, understanding intergenerational connections as key to maintaining Pueblo culture, history, and life throughout time. The mobilization of these intergenerational and multigender components of Pueblo history are most apparent in TWU's use of relationaltivity and Opide (braiding/weaving) to guide the curriculum of its A'Gin Healthy Sexuality and Body Sovereignty project. The A'Gin Healthy Sexuality and Body Sovereignty project is described as a program meant to empower body sovereignty and healthy relationships at all stages of life for young girls and boys as well as their older family and community members.[135] And the cultural, social, and historical connections that A'Gin is grounded in can be witnessed through its programming activities.

In a short anecdote from the A'Gin project's program report, a past A'Gin facilitator described one of her lessons where she passed pottery water around a group of young students. "When I [began the lesson], I started with something tangible, some pottery with a little bit of water. The students — I didn't have to say anything, or even instruct them, they immediately all

[133] Sanchez, "Herstories and the Braiding of Environment and Reproductive Justice," 49.
[134] Sanchez, "Herstories and the Braiding of Environment and Reproductive Justice," 52.
[135] "A'Gin Healthy Sexuality and Body Sovereignty project," Tewa Women United website, accessed December 12, 2020, https://tewawomenunited.org/agin-tribal-prep.

drank some water and then passed it around the class carefully, almost like a family." The facilitator then explained how she implemented this cultural strategy in order to call upon the Pueblo cultural connections. "I let them know [that] ... this is how it was presented to me when I have an adult talk with my family members or with people older than me. They sat me down with a glass of water, pottery water, and let me know that this talk/discussion is going to be very important and [I could] brace myself with water. It's rejuvenating…They understood that."[136] As the facilitator described, by establishing these connections within her A'Gin programming she was working to provide space for serious discussions as well as healing and "rejuvenating" cycles. Though A'Gin is a contemporary program, the foundation of its curriculum lies in TWU's ability to recognize the ongoing impact of history, and how cycles of historical trauma surrounding sexuality, abuse, and power can be combated utilizing education grounded in Pueblo Tewa culture, values, and history.[137]

The A'Gin project focuses on the transitory stage of adolescence, using educational models grounded in the Tewa language and culture that exemplify intergenerational knowledge-sharing as historical in its ability to end ongoing cycles of trauma. Projects such as this—culturally grounded, community based, and youth focused—are essential because they can provide Native youth of today with culturally sourced tools to combat violent histories to ensure prosperity for themselves, their communities, and future generations. According to the project report, after over a year of assessing the needs of their community, TWU determined that in order to achieve their goal of a beloved community they would need to address issues faced by Native youth such as high rates of poverty, tensions surrounding racial and ethnic identity,

[136] "Tewa Women United A'Gin Project, Healthy Sexuality and Body Sovereignty: Part Two of Three," A'Gin Healthy Sexuality and Body Sovereignty Project, Women's Leadership and Economic Freedom Program, Tewa Women United, accessed October 13, 2020, https://spark.adobe.com/page/tDffIbPvA7eHF/.

[137] "Tewa Women United A'Gin Project, Healthy Sexuality and Body Sovereignty: Part Two of Three."

substance abuse, lasting impact of historical trauma and violence, as well as issues of sexual health and relationships.[138] TWU understands the historical context of these issues, poverty being a consequence of Spanish and U.S. colonialism that stripped the Pueblo people of New Mexico of their land, resources, and traditional methods of trade, agriculture, and leadership.[139] When investigated at an intergenerational level, poverty points to the cycles of violence and trauma experienced by Native youth, their families, and communities that have gone untreated due to the inaccessibility of social and economic resources. Similarly, the violence of colonialism, evident in the violent treatment of Pueblo people—and women in particular—by Spanish colonialists through enslavement, massacres, and cultural genocide, have actively contributed to the violence Pueblo people experience today.[140] The historically significant impact of Indian Boarding Schools is also critical to understand because of its disruption of Pueblo family patterns as well as systems of cultural knowledge.[141]

Within the A'Gin curriculum, TWU has created three models that specifically rely on cultural education, showing Native youth how they can successfully use their Tewa culture to navigate the historical complexities surrounding Indigenous identity. These models are: the Corn Model, the Butterfly Model, and the Trauma Rocks model. TWU argues that cultural grounding is essential to the work of the A'Gin project because they believe feeling secure and safe in one's community and cultural identity helps youth feel protected as they transition into adulthood. The program also provides alternative life courses for Native youth who resist colonial constructs of gender, power, and adulthood.[142] Nathana Rae Jaelyn Bird (Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo/Kewa

---

[138] "Tewa Women United A'Gin Project, Healthy Sexuality and Body Sovereignty: Part Two of Three."

[139] Burnette, "Historical Oppression and Intimate Partner Violence," 536.

[140] Sanchez, "Herstories and the Braiding of Environment and Reproductive Justice," 57.

[141] Weaver, "Colonial Context of Violence," 1555.

[142] "Tewa Women United A'Gin Project, Healthy Sexuality and Body Sovereignty: Part Two of Three."

Pueblo), the Associate Director of TWU who used to be a project coordinator of the A'Gin program, described her experience as an A'Gin facilitator to me, saying, "We really take the young people through this process of understanding [Tewa] values and incorporating Tewa language." Bird not only highlighted the primary role Tewa values and language play in the A'Gin curriculum, but also emphasized how the A'Gin program encourages adult community members like Bird to live those same values so that they can be positive leaders, mentors, and community members. "The curriculum is based on healthy relationships, and decision making, and goal setting, and parent-child communication. For me, that space of facilitating and working with young people and doing evaluation really allowed me the space to also question my own values and make connections to how I was living these values."[143]

One of the approaches facilitated by the A'Gin program is the Trauma Rocks model, an aspect of the A'Gin curriculum that specifically asks Native youth to investigate historical violence and trauma and their contemporary impact. According to Michelle M. Jacob, an Indigenous professor of education studies, historical trauma is an Indigenous theoretical framework that contextualizes contemporary issues of violence and trauma in Indigenous communities as the consequences of long-term colonialism.[144] For Pueblo and many other Native communities, this trauma includes the loss of language, culture, land, people (through disease and violence), spirituality, and family structure.[145] Though Jacob points out the various critiques of historical trauma—most notably critiques that argue historical trauma only situates Indigenous people based on their relationships with colonizers—she ultimately argues that the framework is still successful in helping Indigenous communities understand and confront the ongoing violence

[143] Nathana Rae Jaelyn Bird (Associate Director of TWU), Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, June 11, 2020.

[144] Michelle Jacob, *Yakama Rising: Indigenous Cultural Revitalization, Activism, and Healing* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2013), 11.

[145] Sanchez, "Herstories and the Braiding of Environment and Reproductive Justice," 58.

of colonialism.[146] Jacob further explains that historical trauma frameworks are useful because they understand that contemporary social problems faced by Indigenous people are both rooted in settler colonialism as well as the traumatic responses to settler colonialism.[147]

While conducting my research, I was fortunate enough to interview Andrea Verswijver, a clinical licensed therapist who is currently a Violence Response and Resiliency specialist for hospitals, working with cases of domestic violence, child abuse, and sexual assault. Much of Verswijver's twenty-five years of experience as a Victim's Advocate within the New Mexico criminal justice system has involved working with Indigenous women due to the high rates of domestic violence in Native communities in New Mexico. Of her experience with violence relating to Indigenous women, Verswijver explained that, "[T]rauma is an emotional experience that changes the way you see the world… And so when you've had major cultural trauma, such as Boarding Schools or eradication events throughout history, then you are going to remember that, your parents are going to remember that, and they're going to tell those stories and you as a person are never going to know whether or not you're safe."[148]

A key point in Verswijver's description of intergenerational and historical trauma is her emphasis on story being a process that can allow for the perpetuation of trauma, a process that retells past traumas through each generation. While I have highlighted storytelling as a method of history making and survival, it is crucial to note that how the stories being passed down are told, utilized, and understood is essential for not simply retelling trauma, but confronting it. As Verswijver explained, witnessing can be its own form of trauma and can easily become learned behavior, thus resulting in generational trauma and violence.[149] In professor Eden Wales

---

[146] Jacob, *Yakama Rising,* 11.
[147] Jacob, *Yakama Rising,* 11.
[148] Andrea Verswijver (Violence Response and Resiliency specialist), Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, October 9, 2020.
[149] Andrea Verswijver, Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, October 9, 2020.

Freedman's *Reading Testimony, Witnessing Trauma: Confronting Race, Gender, and Violence in American Literature,* she explains that while many critics argue "traumatic witnessing" (speaking about or otherwise acknowledging your trauma) is necessary for healing, yet witnessing or speaking alone are not enough.[150] Though the personal and communal harm of ignoring or suppressing traumatic narratives is evident, Freedman argues that witnessing trauma is a process in which both speaker and listener must be involved.[151] There are many types of witnessing, some helpful and others harmful if not overtly violent, Freedman argues, but storytelling must be a multidirectional process that involves action and response, speaking as well as listening.

By understanding the power that storytelling has generationally, it is also essential to implement positive stories that disrupt narratives of trauma and violence and instead teach lessons about positive relationship building. So, not only is TWU successfully confronting historical trauma, but by teaching new models of healing and community building to younger generations they are witnessing and resisting. They are speaking up about traumatic histories while actively replacing the violent cycles those histories have created.

In order to confront such historical trauma through their Trauma Rocks programming, TWU initiates and leads conversations with Native youth about colonialism and genocide that center the experiences of Pueblo women. Centering the experiences of Native women in a historical and colonial context is crucial because their narratives provide the framework for community resistance, survival, and healing.[152] By structuring their Trauma Rocks framework (as well as their other models) around the narratives of Pueblo women, TWU employs the theory of relationaltivity—that people, ideas, and things are connected throughout the community and

[150] Eden Wales Freedman, *Reading Testimony, Witnessing Trauma: Confronting Race, Gender, and Violence in American Literature* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2020), 3-5.
[151] Freedman, *Reading Testimony, Witnessing Trauma,* 7.
[152] Sanchez, "Herstories and the Braiding of Environment and Reproductive Justice," 60.

across time—along with Gay Alden Wilentz's theory of trans-Native American healing. Recall Wilentz's investigation of healing in Leslie Marmon Silko's novel *Ceremony* where he argued that individual illness is inherently tied to community and environmental health. Thus, TWU is calling upon the relationships at play within Pueblo community, on Pueblo land, and throughout Pueblo history in order to implement positive strategies of relationship-building that will heal illness (mental, physical, spiritual, and cultural violence) at the individual and community level.

TWU also understands this process to work expansively across time and space, resulting in a healthy present and future for Pueblo people and for other Indigenous communities as well. Furthermore, Dr. Sanchez explained, "the challenges that our families and communities face are magnified, not only by historical trauma and institutionalized oppressions but by intergenerational and complex individual traumas, resulting in disproportionate levels of violence and abuse between men and women."[153] While such inherent and expansive connections among a community can magnify colonialism's intergenerational and historical violence, TWU's A'Gin project demonstrates how those same connections can be mobilized for healing. Hence, by working to create and confront historical connections on multiple intergenerational levels, TWU's A'Gin project is not only retelling history, but actively performing critical historical work in which they are re-centering Pueblo women in historical narratives with non-linear models of Indigenous history.

But what does replacing violent historical patterns look like? According to Elder Kathy Sanchez, healing takes many social, cultural, and historical forms within the programming of TWU. TWU began as a healing circle for Tewa women, a space where they could feel safe and supported and heal by relying on their connections to one another and their (re)clamation of their Pueblo culture. Elder Kathy described healing, similarly to relationaltivity, as a process, a

[153] Sanchez, "Herstories and the Braiding of Environment and Reproductive Justice," 60.

practice, and a responsibility. "[I]f healing does not happen on both sides, then how can you move towards beloved communities? If you're not finding or creating that space that allows you to catch your breath, to catch your happiness, to really be in that good way, then you can't heal."[154] To heal individually, one must help the community heal, and to heal as an individual the community must make efforts to create positive relationships and spaces.

In Silko's novel *Ceremony,* Silko's main character Tayo, a mixed-blood Pueblo war veteran with PTSD, learns that "witchery" (her word for violence, trauma, and illness) can exist in anyone and come from anywhere. Confronting witchery requires ceremonies that are constantly and repeatedly adapting to best fit the needs of the community. Healing from witchery cannot be a one-time thing, instead it takes continual practice and adjustment across generations of people.[155] Just as Silko believes healing to be a continual tribal process and practice, Elder Kathy also explained that Pueblo culture holds strategies for healing that can be passed on to ensure that this necessary and recurring process is continued with the help of younger generations. "I think healing is knowing that we're in spirit… it's an ever evolving circle of trials and tribulations that are going to be happening for different generations," Elder Kathy said. "It doesn't mean we're taking away all the hurts and pains… but it's giving them tools so that they grow inwardly and are able to live in a good way."[156]

Similarly, as Chasity Salvador (Acoma Pueblo)—who was the Executive Assistant at TWU during the time I interviewed her—explained ideas of healing that guide TWU's approaches to confronting the past and building positive communities in the present and future. "How are we seeking justice in this very toxic and draining world? By planting seeds of hope," Salvador explained. "Because that's part of the resistance, is the hope and the love… because if

[154] Elder Kathy Sanchez, First Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, July 10, 2020.
[155] Leslie Marmon Silko, *Ceremony* (New York: Penguin Books Group, 1977).
[156] Elder Kathy Sanchez, First Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, July 10, 2020.

we don't envision communities that are loved and full of healing, then what are we envisioning?"[157] Evident in my discussions with Elder Kathy Sanchez and Chasity Salvador is the fluidity of healing over time and throughout the connections between the individual and their community.

Some might mistakenly understand TWU's goals of creating a positive future through the transformation of present young generations as a linear and progressive framework. However, TWU's work concerning the transformation of contemporary Native youth is done so through a framework of relationaltivity. Unlike a linear or progressive framework that depends upon an exclusive and uniform forward-moving narrative, relationaltivity calls upon not only the connections between past, present, and future historical narratives, but it also calls upon the connections between people across time and people across their communities—expanding from the contemporary Pueblo individual to the contemporary Pueblo community, and from the contemporary Pueblo community to the past and future Pueblo community. Dr. Sanchez explained that "the power of [this model] is mobility," having mobility between different models of healing—some traditional and cultural and others not—and mobility between different levels of community across time.[158] Akin to Silko's image of the Pueblo people perceiving "the world and themselves within that world as part of an ancient continuous story composed of innumerable bundles of other stories," TWU mobilizes Pueblo Indigenous history to center the stories of Native women and girls knowing that this work will help the entire Pueblo community confront past historical violence, disrupt contemporary colonial violence, and ensure healing for future Pueblo people.[159]

---

[157] Chasity Salvador (Executive Assistant of TWU), Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, June 10, 2020.

[158] Dr. Corrine Sanchez, Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, July 1, 2020.

[159] Silko, "Landscape," 87.

Why This Work Must Center and be Led by Pueblo Women

In their article "In Between Missing and Murdered: The Need for Indigenous-led Response to Trafficking," Brianna Olson-Pitawanakwat and Cyndy Baskin investigate how responses to violence against Indigenous women—specifically sex trafficking—must be led by Indigenous women whose personal narratives can better speak to the complexities of and contextualize this violence within a broader colonial history. Additionally, Olson-Pitawanakwat and Baskin argue that the active suppression of Indigenous women's voices by colonial systems and histories contribute greatly to the violence they experience. The dangers of not having the space or power to define one's own narratives evident in the violent stereotypes colonial nations construct about Indigenous women, depicting them as "dirty, promiscuous, and deviant," makes them vulnerable targets for acts of sexual violence including trafficking.[160] By understanding the dangers of such colonial narratives and their context within a history of land theft, removal, Indian Boarding schools, and other forms of colonial violence, Olson-Pitawanakwat and Baskin maintain that contemporary issues of violence, such as sex trafficking, are in fact ongoing forms of colonial violence. The people who can best address these historical and contemporary issues of colonial violence, they argue, are Indigenous women who have personally experienced them. This means both centering stories about experiences with trafficking and other violences and intentionally giving Indigenous women who have experienced violence the space and power to create change in their communities that prioritize their needs, safety, and knowledge.

Though both Indigenous women and men experience violence in various forms, Indigenous women experience a uniquely heightened level of violence that stems from the

[160] Brianna Olson-Pitawanakwat and Cyndy Baskin, "In Between the Missing and Murdered: The Need for Indigenous-Led Responses to Trafficking," *Affilia: Journal of Women and Social Work* 36 (August 3, 2020): 3.

intersections of racism, sexism, and colonialism. These intersecting forms of violence cause Indigenous women to be especially vulnerable to trafficking and domestic violence, Verswijver explained during our interview. "[D]omestic violence is a result of historical and generational trauma," she said, "and if those historical traumas are coming down, little girls in their life are being traumatized through adverse childhood experiences, child abuse, sexual abuse… then you add on misogyny and prejudice and those things will lead to domestic violence." Verswijver further explained that colonialism's racist as well as sexist influence on the status and safety of Native women is most evident in the high rates of domestic violence and sex-trafficking in Indigenous women's experiences. Akin to TWU's understanding of Native women as being both "those most vulnerable" to violence and those with the best tools and understanding to confront violence, Verswijver explains that "traffickers are specifically targeting the most vulnerable women in society… and they tend to be women who have a lot of trauma… And so Native women, because of the historical trauma and then the generational trauma and possibly trauma from criminal or foster care systems, are really vulnerable."[161]

Consequently, ending colonial and patriarchal violence requires the full involvement and leadership of Indigenous women in order to guarantee that Indigenous sovereignty is restored without the replication of dominant colonial systems of violence.[162] Indigenous women are in the best position to confront and replace these systems because of their roles as leaders within their families, cultures, and communities. The relationships that Native women build and maintain are foundational to Indigenous sovereignty, history, and healing (which are not exclusive from one another), making the Indigenous women-centered historical work and activism of TWU

[161] Andrea Verswijver, Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, October 9, 2020.
[162] Olson-Pitawanakwat, "In Between Missing and Murdered," 12.

translatable to the anti-colonial efforts of their entire Pueblo community and a broader Indigenous community.

Initiatives to combat colonial violence that are led by Native women are unique in their ability to go beyond responsive work and mobilize preventative actions that are grounded in the expansive connections and influence Native women have in their communities socially, culturally, and historically. Nathana Bird explained how TWU made space for women to have conversations around their powers, vulnerabilities, and responsibilities as community leaders. Creating this space was essential, Bird said, especially due to remaining patriarchal structures outside of and within tribal communities. "Our Pueblo tribal entities are really male-dominated… it is really suppressing the voices of women and over the years, not recognizing the presence of a woman's power or even a woman's perspective and understanding and how we contribute to community," Bird explained. "For me it's about giving women the power and the knowledge and skills that they need to build better communities here in northern New Mexico and across their families."[163]

The founders of 3SC echoed this sentiment when Dr. Christina Castro explained that, "as Pueblo women, we do have a lot of strong responsibilities and expectations to uphold our communities and our families. We hold everything together. So, my goal with the work is to see women step into that leadership role and to really own that power because I think right now we have to take ownership of that power that we already have."[164] Founder Autumn Billie added, "Pueblo Indigenous women need to be doing work for Pueblo Indigenous women. No one else is

[163] Nathana Rae Jaelyn Bird, Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, June 11, 2020.

[164] Three Sisters Collective Founding Members, Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, June 12, 2020.

going to understand the context. It might be interesting to them, and they may have questions or a lot to think about, but would they ever understand it at the level that we all connect at?"[165]

Expanding Our Understanding of Violence

While this chapter has focused primarily on physical violence against Native women—specifically sexual violence, domestic violence, MMIW, and all of their intersections—TWU and 3SC are successful not because they focus exclusively on one form of violence, but because their work targets a transformative and inclusive definition of violence. This definition recognizes violence against Indigenous peoples as something that occurs in various forms, overlaps in multiple ways, and evolves over time, while advancing settler colonialism and genocide. Violence against the land through extractive industries as well as gentrification and Indian removal policies are also ongoing strategies of colonialism. Government policies that promote Indian Boarding schools, forced sterilization, and racist adoption and foster care systems are also forms of colonial violence. These violences are not exclusive from one another nor from the physical and sexual violence against Indigenous women. In fact, they are so intricately tied together that in order to confront any of them successfully, one must confront them all at their roots. This is where we can see the true power of TWU and 3SC as well as the power of the Pueblo history and culture they mobilize. A Pueblo Indigenous approach to history and preventing violence against Indigenous women must include frameworks of relationaltivity-based community action that utilize the connections between people, history, and ideas while confronting the connections between past and present colonial violence in order to successfully target the roots of such violence. By creating a framework like

[165] Three Sisters Collective Founding Members, Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, June 12, 2020.

relationaltivity—a non-linear and non-colonial historical worldview—TWU has created transformative programming that continuously adapts and expands to prevent colonial violence on multiple fronts. Similarly, as an independent grassroots collective, 3SC has the freedom to expand their work and activism to address issues of physical, cultural, spiritual, and land-based violence.

TWU and 3SC both began as small support groups and collectives meant to help Pueblo women. After these women connected with one another it became clear that not only were they experiencing similar forms of violence, but that this violence spanned across history and was being replicated in new forms contemporarily. Hence, these organizations realized that colonial violence harms Native women on individual and communal levels by also disrupting family patterns, targeting reproductive and birthing systems, and stealing Indigenous land and its resources. Thus, in order to prevent violence against Pueblo women, TWU and 3SC not only work to prevent physical violence, but all forms of colonial violence as we shall see in their activism and programming surrounding positive and culturally-grounded intergenerational education, and reproductive justice and birthwork.

Chapter Two

Indian Boarding Schools, Native Feminisms, and (Re)Vitalizing Possibility

In *Why Indigenous Literatures Matter,* Cherokee scholar Daniel Heath Justice explains that generational continuity—including the continuity of relationships, stories, ceremonies, and languages—is how a People survive. For Indigenous peoples, continuity is both a metaphorical and critically literal truth, because as Heath Justice states, with the physical devastation of colonialism and all of its violences, one of the greatest traumas is the feeling of lost possibility, the "crushing weight of possibility unrealized, of what might have been, had we not lost so many members of our families and nations. What are the stories that disappeared in those losses? What opportunities were lost, alternatives foreclosed upon, traditions unshared, voices unheard?"[166] While the weight of this seeming loss is terribly painful, Heath Justice contends that "loss" is not a complete or even accurate depiction of Indigenous people, a people who are still very much alive and who are actively using their narratives to create and imagine a future.[167]

By focusing on a narrative of loss, one risks diminishing Native people and their continuity of being, relegating them to static figures of the past who have been removed, forgotten, or erased completely by colonialism. As Hoopa Valley scholar Cutcha Risling Baldy points out, narratives of loss perpetuate histories that incorrectly depict Native people and their cultures in an eternal state of death or dying, ignoring their stories of survival and resistance while dismissing their traditions as static.[168] Additionally, if one emphasizes only a narrative of loss, then one is also limiting decolonizing efforts to a narrative of return, a return to whatever is

[166] Daniel Heath Justice, *Why Indigenous Literatures Matter* (Canada: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2018), 115.

[167] Heath Justice, *Why Indigenous Literatures Matter,* 115-116.

[168] Cutcha Risling Baldy, *We Are Dancing For You: Native Feminisms & The Revitalization of Women's Coming-of-Age Ceremonies* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2018), 5.

deemed "authentically" Indigenous or "traditional." Not only is a return to a pre-colonial context impossible, but Indigenous history and tradition are neither about being unchanging nor exclusive. Instead, Indigenous history and tradition—like Indigenous people—are contingent on their ability to transform and adapt. According to Heath Justice, narratives of loss or "deficiency" are most harmful because they attempt to undo the work of Indigenous narratives (histories, stories, ceremonies) that strive to actively imagine and create blueprints for Indigenous possibility.[169]

Generational continuance is crucial for the construction of Indigenous possibility. The survival of Indigenous people is dependent upon intergenerational relationships, having someone to pass down life, history, and culture to who will in turn pass those things on to the following generation. The efforts that Tewa Women United (TWU) and Three Sisters Collective (3SC) make to end violence against Indigenous women, as I have argued, are dependent upon creating and sustaining positive intergenerational community connections. Indigenous women and children remain integral to Indigenous possibility and future. Since Indigenous women are responsible for shaping tradition, family, politics, economy, and intergenerational connections throughout Indigenous communities, in order to successfully confront and replace colonial violence and its influences, tribal communities must (re)vitalize what Risling Baldy calls "Native Feminisms."

In *We Are Dancing For You: Native Feminisms & The Revitalization of Women's Coming-of-Age Ceremonies*, Risling Baldy quotes her mother, Lois Risling, describing the key role Native women play in shaping Indigenous communities of the past, present, and future: "Women occupied powerful roles as healers, leaders, and regalia holders… Traditionally our cultures are tied to the land and rooted in nature, always the best teacher. Nature strives for

[169] Heath Justice, *Why Indigenous Literatures Matter,* 4.

balance, and the feminine is central to existence. Women are central to Hupa culture. They are central to our spirituality. We respected women, we knew they were important to our future."[170] Likewise, Ojibwe historian Brenda J. Child explains that Indigenous women are considered essential to the material and cultural well-being of their communities, not only because of their abilities to reproduce, but also for their roles as crucial familial, cultural, and communal leaders—their power grounded in their own years of lived-experience as well as the lived-experiences passed down to them from their female ancestors.[171]

The experiences and practices of Native women past and present— or Native feminist practices—inherently confront colonial violence. This is possible, according to Risling Baldy, because the histories of Native women are not only "interpretations and documentations of the past," but are actively theorizing and implementing practices of decolonization in order to construct thriving Indigenous futures.[172] Centering Native women in history and thus (re)vitalizing Native feminisms in Indigenous history is essential for understanding past colonial violence and Indigenous resistance and for addressing and replacing contemporary colonial violence with positive systems and frameworks of Indigenous community. As Tanana Athabascan scholar Dian Million states, Native women must lead this work because of their central role as the pillars of community connections and because, "[w]e engage in questioning and reforming those stories that account for the relations of power in our present. That is theorizing. It offers new experiential frames, in our case, often from our lives, from our own felt experience, from our stories, from our communities, from our languages."[173]

---

[170] Risling Baldy, *We Are Dancing For You,* 29.

[171] Brenda J. Child, *Holding Our World Together : Ojibwe Women and the Survival of Community* (New York: Viking, 2012), 19 & 63.

[172] Risling Baldy, *We Are Dancing For You,* 34.

[173] Dian Million, "There is a River in Me: Theory From Life," in *Theorizing Native Studies,* ed. Andrea Smith and Audra Simpson (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014), 33.

Consequently, because Native feminisms make up the foundation of Indigenous culture and community success and well-being, Native women and their feminist community practices are specifically targeted for violence by colonialism.[174] Acts of colonial violence against Indigenous women and their roles in Indigenous community can take different forms, but they always share the goal of harming Indigenous women in order to eradicate Indigenous peoples as a whole. This has been evident in U.S. Indian policy since the nineteenth century. The changes in U.S. Indian policy—particularly the transition from government sanctioned warfare to assimilationist education systems and forced sterilization policies—highlight the purposeful and ongoing colonial attacks on Native women and how these attacks in turn disrupted Native families, communities, and landholdings. The history of U.S. colonial violence, therefore, is a story about Indigenous women— their trauma, survival, and resistance.

In the early 1800s, white Americans believed that while Native people were considered a "lower rung of human society" they could eventually, if educated, obtain a higher level of civilization (although always a level where they were still inferior to white civilization). Such reformist thinking subsided by the 1820s, resulting in the violence of Indian removal. Yet, after the U.S. government officially declared Native people wards of the federal government in 1871, reformers again posited the idea that education and assimilation were the best responses to the United States's "Indian problem."[175] The greatest barrier in efforts to reform Native people, they argued, were the traditional family and community structures of Native people as well as life on Native land. In 1887, Congress passed the General Allotment Act (known as the Dawes Act), which divided tribal landholdings, distributing Native land in individual allotments to Native households and paving the way for non-Native people to buy and occupy private lots of Native

[174] Risling Baldy, *We Are Dancing For You,* 35.

[175] David Wallace Adams, *Education for Extinction : American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1995), 6-8.

land.[176] The Dawes Act disrupted traditional matrilineal systems of tribal landholding by only acknowledging men as the leaders of Native households—when in many Native societies women kept charge of the home—and by disregarding Native family patterns that emphasized connections between extended family members in favor of white patriarchal views of nuclear family structures. While Removal and the Dawes Act are key instances of U.S.-sanctioned attempts to claim Indigenous land, it was during the Indian Boarding School Era and the Eugenic Sterilization Era where one can truly see how the U.S. government attempted to eradicate Indigenous society by specifically targeting Indigenous women.

Describing the special attention Indian school educators applied to Native girls and women, one administrator from the Presbyterian BFM Mission School in Odanah, Wisconsin stated, "The girls will need the training more than the boys [and] they will wield a greater influence in the future. If we get the girls, we get the race."[177] Though voiced about a school for Chippewa children, this sentiment was widely held in all Indian boarding and day schools across the United States. Settler colonial systems specifically targeted Indigenous girls for forced assimilation and education, and, as this statement reveals, did so fully conscious of the influential roles Native women played in their Indigenous communities. While Indian education and forced sterilization practices may seem disconnected—one worked to assimilate children and the other to prevent Native women from having children altogether—I argue that these systems intersect in their shared missions to erase Indigenous people by targeting Indigenous women. If Indigenous possibility—the ability to exist and continue generationally through people, culture, and language—is essential to Indigenous community wellbeing, and Indigenous women and children are the most crucial agents of possibility in Indigenous society, then it is not an overstatement to

[176] Adams, *Education for Extinction,* 16-17.

[177] Carol Devens, "'If We Get the Girls, We Get the Race': Missionary Education of Native American Girls," *Journal of World History* 3 (1992): 225.

say that both Indian boarding schools and systemic forced sterilization attempted to destroy Indigenous possibility by targeting Indigenous women and children. These systems were able to target Indigenous women explicitly and implicitly by disrupting Indigenous family structures, of which Native women play an essential role, introducing white colonial and patriarchal social structures to young generations of Native youth, and by attacking Native women's ability to reproduce. Thus, by targeting Indigenous women, these colonial systems worked in tandem to violently disrupt Indigenous communities and destroy Indigenous futures. These violences had real long-lasting impacts on Native people, causing ongoing trauma, for which organizations such as TWU and 3SC have made deliberate efforts to confront this colonial legacy.

Indigenous Women and the History of Indian Boarding Schools

Richard Henry Pratt is often credited as being the mastermind behind U.S. Indian boarding school policy, but the removal of Indigenous children was not a new concept. Indigenous children of the Southwest had experienced removal and forced assimilation beginning with Spanish colonization in the 1500s when Spanish missions sought to separate families with the intention of teaching Christianity.[178] Additionally, the removal of children was also a common practice by Spanish colonizers who then sold those Native children as slaves along the Old Spanish Trail connecting Santa Fe to California. The kidnapping of children, women, and elders was also often used as a colonial strategy against Indigenous resistance, as seen in the kidnapping and enslavement of Pueblo people before and after the Acoma Massacre.[179] In fact, practices of child removal in slavery, in which children were consistently

[178] Clifford E. Trafzer, Jean A. Keller, and Lorene Sisquoc, *Boarding School Blues: Revisiting American Indian Educational Experiences* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006), 7.

[179] James F. Brooks, *Captives and Cousins: Slavery, Kinship, and Community in the Southwest Borderlands* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002).

taken from Black mothers in order to maintain white control over the intimate aspects of Black lives, echoes the colonialist strategies of U.S. policies of Indigenous child removal.[180]

Pratt's construction of Indian boarding school policy, then, was a continuing legacy of, rather than a deviation from, violent settler colonialism. As historian Margaret D. Jacobs asserts, "It was the element of removing Indigenous children from their families and communities," that made Indian boarding schools "instruments of violence, punishment, and control." Indigenous child removal thus functioned, Jacobs argues, "not as a benign alternative to the earlier policies of military subjugation, but as a more nuanced weapon in the arsenal of administrators," who sought to "complete the colonization of Indigenous peoples."[181] Thus, while reformers argued that Indian boarding schools were a departure from past violent Indian policies, the true goals of the boarding schools and even the language of "saving" and "civilizing" used to justify them are actually "part of a continuum of colonizing approaches, all aimed ultimately at extinguishing Indigenous people's claims to their remaining land."[182]

The continuum of colonization within Indian boarding schools begins with overt violence and U.S. military occupation of Indigenous land. In 1875, during the U.S.'s violent struggle to address the "Indian problem," Kiowa, Comanche, and Cheyenne prisoners of war were incarcerated at Fort Marion in St. Augustine, Florida in response to their tribes' continued resistance. The imprisonment of the Native POWs reveals the true concerns of the U.S.'s "Indian problem": the continued survival of Indigenous people on Indigenous land, and the continued resistance of Indigenous people against settler colonialism. This event marked a shift in U.S. Indian policy, where, due to the government's inability to completely erase Indigenous people or

---

[180] Margaret D. Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race: Settler Colonialism, Maternalism, and the Removal of Indigenous Children in the American West and Australia, 1880-1940* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), 51-55.

[181] Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race,* 149-150.

[182] Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race,* 25.

crush resistance through overt military violence, government and reformist thinkers turned to a new strategy: education. While overseeing their imprisonment, Pratt sanctioned what he called a "rehabilitation" experiment, in which he attempted to assimilate the Native POWs through military discipline, Christian teachings, basic education, and the transformation of their appearances.[183] Considered a success, Pratt's model of assimilation through education became central to U.S. Indian policy at a time when the U.S. government's use of military force against Indigenous people faced severe scrutiny. In 1879 Pratt opened the first off-reservation boarding school, Carlisle Indian Industrial School, in Carlisle, Pennsylvania.[184] By 1885 the government had opened twenty-seven off-reservation boarding schools and by 1900 there were over 350 U.S. Indian boarding schools teaching over 20,000 students. By 1925 the number of students enrolled in boarding schools had tripled to over 60,000.[185]

Indian boarding schools intended to take children while they were young, during their formative years right when their own families and communities would have begun teaching them.[186] Pratt, who infamously described the schools' purpose as "Kill the Indian, save the man," regarded removal of Indigenous children from their families, community, and homelands and placing them in institutions designed to disrupt and replace their tribal identities as a way for Native people to enter into white civilization.[187] Reformers flouted this assimilationist education as a way to make Native people self-reliant citizens of white civilization, relieving the so called "burden" that Native communities had imposed on the U.S. government. These "burdens," according to reformers, included high rates of poverty and hunger among Native communities,

---

[183] Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race,* 26.
[184] Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race,* 28 & 30.
[185] Ranjani Chakraborty, "How the US stole thousands of Native American children" Youtube video, Vox Missing Chapters Series, 14 October 2019, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UGqWRyBCHhw.
[186] Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race,* 31.
[187] Trafzer, et al., *Boarding School Blues,* 13-14.

although reformers purposefully ignored the role colonialism and colonial government policy played in creating such economic, environmental, and communal hardship.[188] Additionally, these attitudes harshly stigmatized Indigenous social and communal structures that would have otherwise been successful had it not been for the violent influence of colonialism.[189] Thus, according to Jacobs,"[t]he intimate lives of Indigenous people—the ways they cared for their children, their dwellings, their sexuality, their marriage practices, their gender relations, even the ways they adorned their bodies and styled their hair—eventually came under the scrutiny and condemnation of their colonizers."[190]

Indian boarding schools occupy a contentious part of Indigenous history in that the experiences of Indigenous children at the schools varied widely and were rife with contradictions and tensions. Albuquerque Indian School and Santa Fe Indian School are especially unique within boarding school history because of the schools' proximity to many of the Pueblos, allowing Pueblo parents and students to negotiate some of the terms of their education.[191] Much of the scholarship about Indian boarding schools still struggles to convey the complexity of the experiences of Indigenous students at boarding schools, balancing an interrogation of the violence of U.S. Indian education policy while uplifting the agency and survival of its Native students. Historian John Gram's book, *Education at the Edge of Empire: Negotiating Pueblo Identity in New Mexico's Boarding Schools* (2015), for example, is among the scholarly work that, in its efforts to highlight the agency of Pueblo students and parents, fails to adequately acknowledge the inherent violence of Indian boarding school policy. According to Gram, Indian boarding schools "were not merely something that happened to the Pueblos, but also something

[188] Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race,* 49.
[189] Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race,* 42.
[190] Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race,* 24.
[191] John R. Gram and Theodore Jojola, *Education at the Edge of Empire: Negotiating Pueblo Identity in New Mexico's Indian Boarding Schools* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2015), 6.

that they profoundly shaped," and while the schools had their own colonial assimilationist agenda, students and parents still enacted their own forms of resistance and agency in order to survive these schools and even use what they learned for their own benefit.[192] Gram's description of Pueblo agency within the boarding school system is, in part, true, but it also prompts a deeper interrogation: how did Native students adapt to and survive a system meant to destroy their identities and disrupt their communities, and how did these learned behaviors result in violence within Native communities?

While Native students and parents found ways to positively negotiate their identities and agency within these school systems, they did so *despite* the objectives of the schools not because of them. Many students enjoyed aspects of their time in boarding schools and even formed life-long relationships while attending, and many suffered under harsh assimilation, neglect, and physical and emotional abuse. As Child notes, combining the true agenda of Indian boarding schools with the lived-experiences and actions of students within the schools leaves behind a complicated history of Native trauma, resilience, and transformation. "In part, it is the history of people who experienced forced assimilation, and who to varying degrees lost control over important aspects of their own lives." This was true for students, parents, and communities, Child explains. "At the same time, Native students and their families resisted and frequently triumphed over that bureaucracy, and they used government boarding schools for their own advantage."[193] Even now, Santa Fe Indian School is still in operation but is under the complete control of the nineteen New Mexican Pueblos who use the school to explicitly teach Native children about their Native histories, communities, and identities. Overall, it is important to emphasize that in targeting Indigenous children for removal and assimilation, Indian boarding

[192] Gram, et al., *Education at the Edge of Empire,* 21.

[193] Brenda Child, *Boarding School Seasons: American Indian Families, 1900-1940* (University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 7-8.

schools were a part of a continuous system of colonialism and genocide. However, as Mvskoke/Creek Nation scholar K. Tsianina Lomawaima explains in her text on the Chilocco Indian School, "boarding school students had the resilience of children" and this resilience allowed them to form relationships, preserve their identities, survive, and even find happiness within the Indian boarding school system.[194]

Nothing better illustrates this complex history and how "Native feminisms" of contemporary Pueblo women in TWU and 3SC utilize history to confront such violences, than a critical analysis of how Native girls and women were specifically targeted by the U.S. assimilation education policy. Recall that, Indigenous women play a crucial role in ensuring the success of Indigenous community through the connections they create and sustain between people, the environment, and history. Consequently, by targeting Indigenous children for assimilation, Indian boarding school policy purposefully sought to disrupt the roles of Indigenous women in education, family, and community, the foundation of Indigenous women's power. They wanted to stop the continuous chain of Indigenous girls being nurtured in the values of Indigenous womanhood. Conscious of the power Indigenous women had in Indigenous society as agents of relationaltivity and reproduction, boarding school reformers believed that by assimilating Indigenous women they could assimilate (or erase) all of Indigenous society.[195]

This belief was grounded in Victorian principles that emphasized women as mothers and wives who were responsible for educating their families and communities on being good citizens of white civilized society.[196] But as I shall later explore, while Victorian principles of

---

[194] K. Tsianina Lomawaima, *They Called It Prairie Light: The Story of Chilocco Indian School* (University of Nebraska Press, 1995), xiv.

[195] Adams, *Education for Extinction,* 174-175.

[196] Louise Michele Newman, *White Women's Rights: The Racial Origins of Feminism in the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999); Jane E. Simonsen, *Making Home Work Domesticity and Native American Assimilation in the American West, 1860-1919* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006).

womanhood were called upon in Indian boarding school policy, in reality Indigenous women were not educated so that they could occupy influential roles within white society, but were instead educated so that they could occupy an inferior status in white society, laboring under white people and without their traditional power or influence.[197]

The ways in which Indian boarding schools targeted Native women are not only evident in the mission and justifications of the system, they are also apparent in the day-to-day experiences of Native female students. The severe surveillance, violence, and assimilationist pressures that Indigenous girls experienced simultaneously attempted to subjugate them within white society while also disrupting the important roles and values assigned to them within their own communities. This process began, like it did for most students, with the initial removal of Indigenous children. It was essential to remove Indigenous children from their homes, reformers argued, for if " they grow up on Indian reservations removed from civilization, without advantages of any kind, surrounded by barbarians, trained from childhood to love the unlovely and to rejoice in the unclean; associating all their highest ideals of manhood and womanhood with their fathers who are degraded and mothers who are debased, their ideas of human life, will, of necessity, be deformed."[198] This statement captures the practical goal of separating students from their families, communities, and land, but also showcases an essential aspect of justifying assimilationist education: stigmatizing Indigenous society and its structures of gender and community.

For many Native students and their families, attending Indian boarding schools was not a choice. For most schools, their budgets relied heavily on student attendance, as was the case for Santa Fe Indian School and Albuquerque Indian School. As a result, administrators often took

[197] Sarah Deer, *The Beginning and End of Rape: Confronting Sexual Violence in Native America* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015), 37.

[198] Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race,* 42.

children from their communities by force or threatened to withhold rations from their families if they were not turned over.[199] In other instances, families sent their children to boarding schools because of economic hardship, as was the case for many students during the Great Depression.[200] Some children were even taken because the school system argued they were orphans, revealing not only the breakdown of family caused by colonialism through disease, poverty, and violence, but also the complete disregard for extended family systems in Indigenous communities.[201] Though a majority of students were coerced or kidnapped, many chose to attend school, some hoping for adventure, education, or wanting to go to the schools their relatives had attended.[202]

Despite the agency some students had in attending boarding schools, the traumatic and violent forced removal of Indigenous children is important to highlight because it had a profound impact on Indigenous communities. In an interview with scholar Sally Hyer, one former student, a Pueblo woman who lived with her relatives at San Juan (Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo) when she was taken for school, remembered the day when SFIS officials came for her. "I was all ready and my grandmother and mother were crying. I can still see my mother and grandmother just crying their hearts out," she recalled. "I saw the tears coming out of that brave man, my grandpa, who was brave and strong. I still picture my folks to this day, just standing there crying, and I was missing them."[203] While what lay before this girl from San Juan was terrifying and unknown, she most remembers the impact her leaving had on her family. Another Pueblo woman from Taos recalled her experience on the train taking her from her community to Santa Fe, stating "when we were climbing down the hill from Taos Junction in the train, when we were seeing the big [Taos] mountain up there for the last time, the boys used to tell us, 'Look at the mountain for the

[199] "How the US stole thousands of Native American children" Vox Missing Chapters Series.
[200] Lomawaima, *They Called it Prairie Light,* 32-33.
[201] Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race,* 46.
[202] Lomawaima, *They Called it Prairie Light,* 35.
[203] Sally Hyer, "Remember Santa Fe Indian School, 1890-1990" (Ph.D. diss., University of New Mexico, 1994), 189.

last time, sisters!' And we started crying. We thought we were going someplace that we would never come back."[204]

Pueblo students also attended a number of Indian boarding schools outside of SFIS and AIS, including Carlisle and Chilocco. While there were important differences between faraway off-reservation schools and SFIS and AIS, the regimented practices and harsh assimilation procedures of all Indian boarding schools were remarkably similar. One of the first changes students experienced was the forced transformation of their appearance, though the assault on students' appearances remained a continuous part of boarding school life. Upon arrival, students' clothes were taken and replaced with a military-style uniform, they were bathed, and their hair was cut short.[205] The Indigenous names of many students were changed, though many Pueblo students who already had Spanish names or who had both a Spanish and Indigenous name were not required to receive a new name.[206] Students were also not allowed to speak any language other than English, including their Native languages or Spanish, and the breaking of this rule resulted in severe punishment.[207] The transformation of students' appearances was a strategy meant to remove everything familiar from a student, but it was also a way for boarding schools to exert control over every intimate aspect of their students' lives.[208]

Though boys and girls both experienced similar attacks on their Indigenous identities, I wish to highlight the extreme severity with which boarding schools targeted the appearances, values, and intimate lives of Indigenous girls. Indian boarding schools sought to "construct the ideal Indian Woman" when teaching Indigenous girls, by changing everything about the girls, from their appearances and physical mannerisms, to their habits, skills, and practices. According

[204] Hyer, "Remembering Santa Fe Indian School," 187.
[205] Margaret Archuleta, Brenda J. Child, and K. Tsianina Lomawaima, *Away from Home : American Indian Boarding School Experiences, 1879-2000* (Phoenix, Arizona: Heard Museum, 2000), 26.
[206] Gram, *Education at the Edge of Empire,* 107-109.
[207] Archuleta, *Away From Home,* 26.
[208] Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race,* 252.

to Lomawaima, "the acute, piercing focus on Indian girls' attire, comportment, posture, and hairstyles betrays a deepseated, racially defined perception of Indian peoples' corporal physical bodies as 'uncivilized.'" The intense fixation on changing the physical appearances and mannerisms of Native girls makes sense, says Lomawaima, when combined with the belief that Native people were less intellectually incapable, thus making physical skills and looks the priority of boarding school assimilation practices.[209]

While searching the Carlisle Industrial School archives, I was at first surprised and overwhelmed by the number of photos there were of Native students. In a system meant to erase Native people, there I was, finding so much evidence of Native children's existence within the schools. But these photos only offer a narrow glimpse of student life at Carlisle, and while they display the faces and in some cases even the names of students, the photos betray the obsession that Indian boarding schools had with capturing and changing the physical bodies of Native children.

In a photo titled "Seventeen Young Female Pueblo Students" (fig. 2) taken by Carlisle photographer John Choate, the unsmiling uniformity of the black and white print is chilling. Each Pueblo girl, whose names are not listed, has her hair cut short in a bowl-cut fashion that was common for girls at almost every boarding school. Every girl wears the same thick plain dress and white apron, their school uniforms reflecting the domestic training they would undergo and the strict enforcement of uniformity by boarding school officials. The girls arrived at Carlisle in 1884 according to the Carlisle archives, but neither their ages nor Pueblos are specified, though I guess them to be between seven and ten years old. This photo was taken from Choate's *Souvenir* collection and was likely sold to white people, advertising the so-called success of Carlisle's assimilation process. The photo, among the many others housed in archives, is proof of

[209] Lomawaima, *They Called It Prairie Light,* 82.

the obsessive control boarding schools attempted to have over the bodies of Native children, and in this case Native girls specifically. Such photos were meant to document the physical changes Native students experienced at boarding schools, correlating their transformed appearances to the successful erasure of their identity. What did Carlisle hope to portray in this photo? Maybe the school hoped to show that, even at such a young age, these Pueblo girls were already becoming domestic workers, the influence of white patriarchy making them uniform, clean, quiet. Whatever the photographer hoped to illustrate with this photo, upon closer examination, I can see past the domestic and civilizing facade. I see the ages of the young girls and how their aprons fit them loosely, the too big sleeves sliding down their small shoulders. I see the way the girls huddle close together (maybe they did come from the same Pueblo?) and I notice how some of the girls lean into each other and hold onto each other. One girl in the far left corner of the second row who looks older than some of the others has her hands around two of the smallest and youngest looking members of the group. A few of the girls look directly into the camera, but some stare off to the side. I wonder what they are looking at, I wonder who they were, and I wonder what happened to them.

[Figure 2. Choate, John N., photographer, "Seventeen Young Female Pueblo Students [version 1]." Glass Plate Negative Photograph, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, c1885. From the *Carlisle Indian School Digital Resource Center*. NAA_73332; Photo Lot 81-12 06810600.]

The surveillance of the intimate lives of female Native students did not end with the transformation of their physical appearances, other aspects of the girls' bodies having to do with sexuality, reproduction, and relationship-building were also severely targeted by officials. Such preoccupation with the private bodies and lives of Native girls is evident in the ways boarding school officials tracked the girls' menstrual periods.[210] The tracking of Native girls' periods highlights the intense stigmatization and fear surrounding Indigenous women's sexuality as well as the overwhelming control boarding schools hoped to establish.[211] Indigenous women and their sexuality were often the subjects of colonial violence and scorn, and Indigenous girls in boarding schools suffered from these harmful views. Indian school officials often believed Indigenous women to be promiscuous, stupid, dirty, and oppressed by their male counterparts and would use these beliefs to yet again justify Indian boarding schools as providing Indigenous women with the chance to gain a better status through assimilation.[212] Students who came from Indigenous societies where young women were usually celebrated and had their coming of age celebrated were thus exposed to patriarchal views that attempted to disfigure and devalue the lives and experiences of Indigenous women.[213] According to Risling Baldy, boarding schools aimed to disrupt Indigenous world views of gender and sexuality and Indigenous ceremonies that celebrated Native girlhood and womanhood. "Specifically, the boarding schools shamed young women into believing that their menstruation should be private and hidden. What at one time had been a community celebration, bringing young women to the forefront as important foundations

[210] Risling Baldy, *We Are Dancing For You,* 70.
[211] Lomawaima, *They Called it Prairie Light,* 90-92.
[212] Adams, *Education for Extinction,* 174.
[213] Risling Baldy, *We Are Dancing For You,* 15.

of their communities, was now associated with shame," explains Risling Baldy. "This disruption affected not only young women but the entire community, which was taught to devalue women and their contributions to culture, ceremony, and spirituality."[214] Boarding schools aimed then to disrupt the respected roles of Indigenous women and influence Indigenous society with patriarchal views surrounding women and their sexuality.

In addition to the harmful stigma boarding schools attached to menstruation and other aspects of the intimate lives of the girls themselves, boarding schools also harmfully impacted the relationships between Indigenous girls and boys who would then grow up with harmful learned behaviors about gender and sexuality. After arriving, girls and boys were immediately separated by school officials, including siblings and relatives, and were strictly segregated.[215] The strict separation of genders contrasted greatly with Pueblo views of gender and gender relationships as balanced and collaborative, both requiring each other without oppressing each other. It is no coincidence that children, at vulnerable and developmental ages, were being taught dichotomous and oppressive views about gender and sexuality. The strict segregation and surveillance of boys and girls likely resulted in the disruption of many students' healthy development, causing them to grow up with harmful ideas about Indigenous women and without the proper tools needed for creating positive interpersonal and communal relationships.

The patriarchal beliefs enforced by Indian boarding schools as well as the true intentions of these teachings are also apparent in their vocational education curriculum and outing programs. The domestic training of Indigenous girls and women had always been a feature of boarding schools, but was intensified through the efforts of boarding school official Estelle Reel and her publication of the *Uniform Course of Study for the Indian Schools of the U.S.* (1901),

[214] Risling Baldy, *We Are Dancing For You,* 70-71.
[215] Adams, *Education for Extinction,* 177-178.

which explicitly called for gender-specific training with a special emphasis on domestic trainings for girls in order for them to work as servants within white domestic spheres.[216] The emphasis that boarding schools placed on teaching Indigenous women to be "good wives and mothers" who would "transmit the cultural values of white society to their husbands and families" is rife with complications.[217] On one hand, by attempting to assimilate all of Indigenous society through the assimilation of Indigenous women, boarding schools were acknowledging the incredible power and influence that Indigenous women had in their families and communities. The focus on transmitting white ideals of womanhood also reveals how boarding schools stigmatized Indigenous ideals of gender and pushed a colonial form of education that differed greatly from Indigenous peoples' own systems of knowledge. By contrast, Indigenous models of education emphasized the role of the entire community in educating and ensuring children the safety and happiness of children, who would in turn learn to be collaborative and supportive community members.[218] Women were especially essential to Indigenous systems of education, with mothers and grandmothers being active participants in transmitting knowledge and the education of young girls being foundational to the success of their communities.[219] But while boarding schools argued they were training girls in the domestic arts to transform them into influential white civilized wives and mothers, domestic training also sought to force female Indigenous students into a lower economic sector of white society.[220] The domestic training of Native girls

---

[216] Archuleta, *Away From Home,* 32.

[217] Sally Hyer, *One House, One Voice, One Heart: Native American Education at the Santa Fe Indian Schools* (Museum of New Mexico Press: Santa Fe Indian School, 1990), 17.

[218] Margaret Connell Szasz, "Through a Wide-Angle Lens: Acquiring and Maintaining Power, Position, and Knowledge Through Boarding Schools," in *Boarding School Blues*, ed. Trafzer, et al. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006), 208.

[219] Child, *Holding Our World Together, 2-3.*

[220] Archuleta, *Away From Home,* 34.

actually intended to sustain the school institution and white society instead of helping the women achieve access into society as "contributing equals."[221]

Outing programs at Indian boarding schools further prove the true intentions of such domestic training, since these programs were being designed to employ female students in white households where they would work as domestic servants. The outing program was a common feature in all schools, including SFIS and AIS where young boys worked agricultural details while young girls worked in the white households of Santa Fe.[222] "It was training in dispossession under the guise of domesticity, developing a habitus shaped by the messages of subservience and one's proper place," explains Lomawaima. The goal of such domestic training was ultimately to serve the federal government, the domestic work of female students at boarding schools (sewing, cleaning, and cooking) not only being used as free labor to sustain the institutions themselves but also being used to alter Indigenous communities and their world views. Additionally, because Indigenous women are essential to creating and maintaining familial, communal, and cultural connections, they are also integral to maintaining Indigenous connections to land, land being foundational to Indigenous sovereignty, identity, and livelihood. Thus, by removing Indigenous children from their communities and targeting Indigenous women for white patriarchal assimilation, boarding schools were not only disrupting Indigenous gender, familial, and communal relationships, but they were also disrupting Indigenous land relationships and sovereignty.[223]

To create a complete picture of the lasting trauma of boarding schools, one must look beyond the schools' curriculum, surveillance, and rules and examine as well how the sexual, physical, and emotional violence of boarding schools, including their high death rates, created

[221] Lomawaima, *They Called it Prairie Light,* 83.
[222] Gram, *Education at the Edge of Empire,* 121-122.
[223] Lomawaima, *They Called it Prairie Light,* 86.

harmful coping mechanisms, and negative learned behaviors in Indigenous communities. Hunger, sickness, neglect, and emotional, physical, and sexual abuse, had devastating effects on students, stemming from the boarding schools commitment to eradicating Indigenous identity and community. According to Sarah Deer, the forced removal of Indigenous children is inherently tied to sexual violence and violence against Indigenous women, boarding schools being spaces where the sexual, mental, physical, and spiritual abuse of children has caused intergenerational trauma and violence.[224] In Canada—where sanctioned Indian residential schools were extremely similar to U.S. Indian boarding schools—sexual violence of Indigenous students was publicly acknowledged in 2001 by the Canadian Truth Commission on Genocide. Though the United States has not publicly acknowledged the violence of Indian boarding schools and while the extent of sexual and physical violence in Indian boarding schools is still under investigation, one can assume that children in U.S. boarding schools experienced violence on par with those of Canadian Indigenous students.[225]

Not only did boarding schools enact colonial violence through the removal of Indigenous children and the disruption of Native family and community life, but the schools and their curriculum actively taught harmful ideals and behavior. As scholar Catherine Burnette explains, violence is a learned behavior and early experiences of violence at young ages often leads to more violence later in life.[226] While boarding school officials regularly argued that they were saving Native children from poverty, malnourishment, neglect, abuse, and "exposure to sexual immorality," they were ironically forcibly placing them in government-run schools where

[224] Deer, *The Beginning and End of Rape,* 70.

[225] Andrea Smith, *Conquest : Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015), 40.

[226] Catherine Burnette, "Historical Oppression and Intimate Partner Violence Experienced by Indigenous Women in the United States: Understanding Connections," *The Social Service Review* 89 (September 1, 2015): 545-546.

children were actually being exposed to such abuse and mistreatment.[227] If a person grows up—removed from their home, family, and community—in an environment where they are exposed to violence and white patriarchal ideals at a young and transformative age, then they will likely grow up internalizing such violent ideals and behaviors that will in turn influence how that person interacts with other people. Therefore, we must establish boarding schools as a hotspot in Indigenous history where violence was taught to and imposed upon Native children over time, resulting in internalized and normalized behaviors of violence within Indigenous communities, thus creating a historical and intergenerational context for violence against Indigenous women.[228]

In *Bad Indians: A Tribal Memoir* Ohlone/Costanoan-Esselen scholar Deborah A. Miranda posits an important question: "Those who will not change do not survive, but who are we, when we have survived?"[229] By posing this question, Miranda calls attention to what is left after survival, causing us to question how adaptation and survival—despite the eradicating efforts of colonialism—change Indigenous people. Miranda asks this question as she works to navigate the violence within her own family and the broader violence experienced by and even perpetuated by Native people. After surviving a history of violent Californian missionization, Miranda is interested in interrogating how such violence can continue to harmfully impact a surviving people unless properly confronted.

Just as narratives of loss treat Indigenous people as static and disappearing, narratives that ignore the historical contexts of violences committed within Indigenous communities similarly depict Indigenous people as unchanging and incorrectly attribute violence to Indigenous practices. On the contrary, within most traditional Indigenous societies—especially

[227] Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race,* 256.
[228] Burnette, "Historical Oppression and Intimate Partner Violence," 531.
[229] Deborah A. Miranda, *Bad Indians: A Tribal Memoir* (Berkeley, California: Heyday, 2013), xiv.

Pueblo Indigenous society—violence against Native women, children, and elders was not only uncommon but extremely disparate from community structures and practices. As Dr. Corrine Sanchez stated, while much of the violence Indigenous people, and specifically Indigenous women and children, experience are from outside forces and people, a significant portion of Native people commit violence within their own families and communities.[230] In New Mexico, eighty-eight percent of Native survivors of sexual violence reported that their assaulter was also Native.[231] Among Native youth in New Mexico, over sixty percent have been exposed to violence within their homes, schools, and communities.[232]

It is crucial to emphasize that unlike white colonial and patriarchal systems of power, Indigenous community structures did not sanction the oppression of Indigenous women. Instead, most Indigenous societies highlighted women as being central to Indigenous society with important spiritual, cultural, economic, and political influence.[233] According to the Coalition to Stop Violence Against Native Women, violence, especially sexual violence, is not traditional to Indigenous practices or societal structure, yet has profoundly impacted Indigenous people because of colonization. Dr. Sanchez explains that the impact of colonialism has resulted in violence within Indigenous communities and families that derived from a "culture of violence" first introduced into Indigenous homelands and cultures by colonial forces and systems.[234] Colonial violence first works to physically, spiritually, and culturally harm Indigenous people in

---

[230] Dr. Corrine Sanchez (Executive Director of TWU), Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, July 1, 2020.

[231] Betty Caponera, "Sex Crime Trends in New Mexico: An Analysis of Data from The New Mexico Interpersonal Violence Data Central Repository," New Mexico Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs Inc., January 2016.

[232] "Domestic Violence," Coalition to Stop Violence Against Native Women website, accessed April 17, 2021, https://www.csvanw.org/resources/what-is-domestic-violence.

[233] Deer, *The Beginning and End of Rape*, 17-20.

[234] Corrine Sanchez, "Protecting Those Most Vulnerable: Building Beloved Families and Communities To End Violence Against Native Women, Girls and Mother Earth" (Ph.D. diss, Arizona State University, April 2015), 4.

the moment, and then the influences of such violence continue generationally, disrupting Indigenous structures of gender, family, community, across time. The resulting learned behaviors and influence of such colonial violence cause Native women to suffer disproportionately high rates of violence from both Native and non-Native people and systems alike.

In order to address violence committed within Indigenous communities, especially against women and children, one must first understand survival to be neither an exclusively positive or negative process. As Miranda points out, without adaptation, survival would be impossible, and thus an Indigenous future would be impossible. However, even within transformation and survival the violences of colonialism and white heteropatriarchy can have significant influence. Recall Andrea Verswijver's explanation about intergenerational trauma and violence where she argues that even storytelling can cause generational violence when one only hears and witnesses negative stories.[235] "Today, the challenges that our Pueblo/Tewa families and communities face are magnified," according to Dr. Sanchez, "not only by historical trauma and institutionalized oppressions, but by factors of intergenerational, and complex individual traumas resulting in disproportionate levels of violence and substance abuse."[236]

The Native youth who attended Indian boarding schools, as Lomawaima reminds us, had the resilience of children. Lomawaima's statement, I think, best summarizes the complexity of boarding school history and the experiences of boarding school students. The Indian boarding school system must be understood as a continuation of violent settler colonialism. The true intentions of boarding schools were to physically and ideologically disrupt Indigenous society through the removal of Indigenous children from their land, families, and tribal communities.[237]

---

[235] Andrea Verswijver (Violence Response and Resiliency Specialist), Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, October 9, 2020.

[236] Sanchez, "Protecting Those Most Vulnerable," 41.

[237] Archuleta, *Away From Home,* 18.

The fact that boarding schools failed to eradicate Indigenous people and their cultures and failed to destroy the value and influence of Indigenous women is a testament to the survival and resiliency of the Native students who navigated through the system. Indigenous students found numerous ways to resist the goals of Indian boarding schools, many running away to return to their homes and often taking others with them, and others practicing their languages and cultures in secret.[238] And though often undervalued, the relationships Indigenous students formed with each other, often crafting pan-tribal connections, must be recognized not only as a key strategy of survival but also a powerful form of resistance to a system meant to isolate Indigenous people from each other and their identities. It is important to highlight the resiliency and even happiness many students enacted and experienced in Indian boarding schools, and the complexity of students' experiences within the schools and their experiences in life after the schools still requires more discussion and investigation. Regardless of the conflicting experiences surrounding boarding schools, understanding the negative impact such a system had on Indigenous society is crucial for understanding the relationship- and community-building work of organizations like TWU and 3SC.

Women (Re)Building Positive Pueblo Family and Community Structures

Understanding such contemporary issues of violence being experienced by Indigenous people within a historical context is crucial to the programming work of TWU and 3SC, both organizations recognizing the need to address lateral violence by confronting intergenerational trauma and violence. The work of TWU and 3SC is also essential because while they are continuing Indigenous practices of transformation with the intention of creating possibility and sustaining Indigenous future, they are doing so in a deliberately conscious way that emphasizes

[238] Jacobs, *A White Mother to a Dark Race,* 229; Trafzer, et al., *Boarding School Blues,* 22.

positive community relationship building and healing that explicitly confronts and rejects the harmful influences and violences of colonial systems like boarding schools. It is through critical historical engagement that both organizations are able to accomplish this work. Through the practice of storytelling and relationaltivity, they are able to recall Indigenous histories of the past and connect them to contemporary colonial violence, highlighting how the experiences of Indigenous women illuminate the ways in which these violences overlap and transform over time. The experiences of Indigenous women also reveal how these violences explicitly impact the Indigenous community at the individual, familial, and communal levels, giving us the stories we need to confront a system of colonial violence and replace them with frameworks of Indigenous healing and relationship building.

In order to address the impact colonial systems such as Indian Boarding schools have had on Pueblo families and communities, Tewa Women United has created several programs that center the healthy cultural and social education of local Indigenous families. These programs work with Native children alongside parents to uplift the valuable roles of Indigenous women and the ways in which their lived-experiences act as intergenerational models for creating positive families and communities. In order for the community programming of TWU to be successful, Dr. Sanchez explains, as Pueblo women they first had to engage with the *history* of boarding schools' impact on Indigenous communities—centering their shared lived-experiences while acknowledging the harm of intergenerational trauma and violence. Conversations about past colonial violence and its contemporary impacts began with TWU's founding in Pueblo women support circles. By engaging with history, "TWU began to discuss how we could start healing the historical traumas, intergenerational traumas and individual/complex traumas inflicted on our Pueblo/Tewa peoples over time and over our lifetimes." Within these circles

TWU created a historical context for their contemporary experiences with violence, recognizing that in order to speak about the sexual and physical violence committed within their communities, they needed to find the root causes.[239] Doing history—specifically, *Indigenous* history which involves intergenerational storytelling and shared personal narratives—and healing communities constitute the same work of social activism and decolonization.

Thus, as Dr. Sanchez explained, when creating TWU's programming, it was necessary to understand the ongoing impact of the boarding school system on Native families in order to confront violence within Indigenous communities and families and replace such violent patterns with healthy ones. "It was really coming from that perspective of wanting to end child sexual abuse and addressing child sexual abuse. Because we were asking: how do we prevent this? How are our parents becoming parents? How have we come to look at children as objects even though we say that children are sacred?" It was having the historical perspective of "Understanding how boarding schools, and you know, tactics of genocide and colonialization have really had an impact… It [took] kids away from their parents, it forced them into an educational system…" The women of TWU understood that the Indian boarding school system attempted to violently assimilate Indigenous society by targeting Indigenous women and children. In doing so, boarding schools actively disrupted Indigenous models of social and cultural education and created a breakdown in intergenerational knowledge sharing systems that were primarily led by Indigenous elders and women.[240] Removing Indigenous children—who were foundational to the future continuation and success of Indigenous society—from their families and communities during a critical period of social and cultural development resulted in intergenerational ramifications for Indigenous communities.[241]

---

[239] Corrine Sanchez, "Protecting Those Most Vulnerable," 17.
[240] Szasz, "Through a Wide-Angle Lens," 225.
[241] Szasz, "Through a Wide-Angle Lens," 204.

This history consciousness, Dr. Sanchez said, allowed TWU to research how the devaluing of women had a severe impact on the worldviews of Native men. "It dehumanized them. It really eroded their whole idea of manhood, what it means if like, I can't protect my women and children then who am I, right? All of that comes into play and impacts the psyche."[242] TWU understood that the direct attack on and exploitation of Indigenous women's roles and influence in Indigenous society resulted in the harmful disruption of Indigenous gender ideals, consequently devaluing Indigenous women and creating violent patriarchal learned behaviors in Indigenous men.

The programming TWU created in response to the impact of boarding schools, thus, needed to (re)vitalize the valuable roles of Indigenous women as educators while actively teaching positive relationship building strategies grounded in Pueblo culture. This work had to not only (re)build community and family connections, but do so while being historically conscious of the intergenerational personal and communal violence resulting from systems such as Indian boarding schools. TWU's goal to create and sustain connections was of the utmost importance. One of their surveys of the six Tewa-speaking Pueblos shows that approximately twenty-seven percent of Tewa women said they frequently think about lost family ties due to boarding schools and fifty-three percent think about the loss of tribal culture.[243] The work to (re)vitalize Pueblo women's roles in community building and community education constitutes the (re)centering of Native feminisms, this work being inherently anti-colonial and necessary for the preservation of community healing and future possibility in the wake of historical violence. Such efforts of historical engagement through Native feminisms is evident in TWU's A'Gin

[242] Dr. Corrine Sanchez, Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, July 1, 2020.

[243] Tewa Women United, "Tewa Birthing Project Maternal Health Survey Final Report: A Community Survey of Tewa Women," (Tewa Women United, 2010): 7.

Healthy Sexuality and Body Sovereignty project, Sayain (Circle of Grandmothers in Tewa), and their Yiya Vi Kagingdi Doula project.

The A'Gin project is a program that teaches healthy relationship building primarily to young Native girls and boys through a curriculum that utilizes TWU's theories of Opide and relationaltivity and is grounded in Pueblo cultural, social, and historical connections. By teaching Native youth specifically, TWU can directly confront the negative legacy of Indian boarding schools, actively replacing harmful learned behaviors that have permeated Pueblo Indigenous communities with positive social and cultural development that contemporary Native youth will spread to their families and communities. TWU is thus able to utilize intergenerational connections to reinforce an Indigenous model of social and cultural education that is community-centered and engaged in confronting the past while creating a positive Pueblo Indigenous present and future. This directly confronts the lessons of Indian boarding schools and their attempts to destroy an Indigenous future—or Indigenous possibility—by targeting Indigenous women and children for assimilation and colonial violence.

In addition to the previously discussed Trauma Rocks model, TWU's Corn Model and Butterfly Model exemplify the work TWU is doing to (re)create family and community connections that colonial systems like boarding schools attempted to eradicate through social and cultural education. Similarly to the Trauma Rocks model, both of these frameworks depend upon an understanding of past and present colonial violence and intergenerational trauma *combined* with a consciously positive educational experience that finds its foundations in Tewa culture and community. Through the Corn Model, TWU's A'Gin program provides young people with a cultural grounding in Tewa values and language, encouraging students to recognize their value in an Indigenous cycle of life and understand how the decisions they make can impact their own

role (and others') in the cycle of life. As Chasity Salvador explained, the Corn Model is based on traditional Pueblo knowledge of farming, seeds, and language where planting corn is akin to the life-changing decisions youth can make that will ultimately impact themselves and their entire community.[244] While much of the A'Gin curriculum focuses on sexual education, its methodology, grounded in Tewa values such as the Corn Model, is applied to all aspects of life, highlighting how one's actions can work to harm or heal an entire family and community. "[I]t's about, you know, me and me in service to everybody else and understanding and respecting each person's individuality and diversity and knowing that we all play a role in our families, our communities," Dr. Sanchez explained. "[W]e're giving our young people that foundation" from the first breath, she continued, "so that young people know that they're connected to this place, to this community, to these families. And we're nurturing that all the way through their development so that they're getting more and more competent in who they are."[245]

The second approach used by the A'Gin program, is the Butterfly Model. Created by Elder Kathy Sanchez, the Butterfly Model uses the image of the butterfly—a symbol of transformation, mobility, and vulnerability—to teach the three T's of Culture: Thought, Technology, and Technique.[246] In this framework, Technology means different methodologies of culture, including storytelling as a method of learning about the world. Within the Butterfly Model, Thought represents cultural values and beliefs, Tewa knowledge about community, relationships, and life cycles. Lastly, Technique represents the actual practice or activity of culture, which includes listening, observing, and participating.[247] According to the A'Gin report, the goal of the Butterfly Model is to use Tewa culture to guide students "toward effective ways to

[244] Chasity Salvador (Executive Assistant of TWU), Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, June 10, 2020.

[245] Dr. Corrine Sanchez, Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, July 1, 2020.

[246] Corrine Sanchez, "Herstories and the Braiding of Environment and Reproductive Justice to Protect Those Most Vulnerable," *Journal of American Indian Education* 55 (Fall 2016): 55.

[247] Sanchez, "Herstories and the Braiding of Environment and Reproductive Justice," 50-51.

maintain their wholeness in the midst of multiple, sometimes contradictory ways of being."[248] The Butterfly Model also heavily embodies the theory and practice of relationaltivity and Opide, asking students to call upon their relationships with each other to heal and help.[249]

In direct contrast to the harmful assimilationist education of Indian boarding schools, the relationships and connections that the A'Gin program seeks to teach through their models also work to introduce positive ideas of gender and sexuality to Native youth and their families. As Dr. Sanchez points out, colonial societies emphasize the structuring of society around white patriarchy that is inherently violent.[250] By contrast, TWU works to reintroduce Pueblo ideals of gender and community where men and women fulfill different but equally valued roles in society without colonial hierarchical values.[251]

In addition to TWU's A'Gin program, the Sayain or Circle of Grandmothers works to (re)center female Indigenous elders as crucial family and community leaders whose knowledge—informed by their lived-experiences—strengthen the connections and guide the behaviors and beliefs of Native individuals, families, and communities.[252] Within the Sayain, female Pueblo elders provide support for trauma survivors, organize and lead community education sessions, host intergenerational support groups, and share traditional knowledge about Pueblo language, arts, and practices.[253] The actions of the Sayain also serve to provide spiritual and cultural guidance to TWU as they create their programming, promoting "reciprocity of intergenerational learning and sharing" while supporting the vital roles of women and elders in

---

[248]"Tewa Women United A'Gin Project, Healthy Sexuality and Body Sovereignty: Part Two of Three," A'Gin Healthy Sexuality and Body Sovereignty Project, Women's Leadership and Economic Freedom Program, Tewa Women United, accessed October 13, 2020.

[249] "Tewa Women United A'Gin Project, Healthy Sexuality and Body Sovereignty: Part Two of Three."

[250] Sanchez, "Protecting Those Most Vulnerable," 53.

[251] Sanchez, "Protecting Those Most Vulnerable," 52.

[252] "Sayain / Circle of Grandmothers," Tewa Women United website, accessed March 21, 2021, https://tewawomenunited.org/sayain-circle-of-grandmothers.

[253] "Sayain / Circle of Grandmothers," Tewa Women United website.

Indigenous community building.[254] "And that's also a big piece," Nathana Bird of TWU explained, the Sayain "is really trying to turn to those traditional practices that have existed in our communities for years."[255] According to Bird, recentering traditional practices through programs like the A'Gin project and the Sayain has helped to confront the impact of boarding schools and ongoing colonial violence by providing children with healthy relationship skills and parents with classes. "So in our program," Bird elaborated, "we talked about boarding schools and the historical trauma that existed when families were disrupted when they took away children and how these kids that were taken into the boarding schools became parents and they were never taught any way of parenting because they were only parented by those that raised them in the boarding schools. The level of parenting that they got was totally different from what their parents or grandparents got because of the disconnection to family and community. And so really, we are providing this alternative space so parents and the community are given those skills to raise children in a healthy and safe environment."[256] TWU's work to create space for positive and culturally grounded knowledge sharing for both parents and children is historical work as community activism because of its ability to directly confront the consequences of the colonial violence of boarding schools. "Relationships can be harmful and hurtful as we see in inter- and intra- personal/familial violence, while simultaneously providing comfort and resistance to grow," said Dr. Sanchez. "In a relationship, one must communicate. The women of TWU practice this through dialogue in circle. They used dialogue to share realities they faced in their families and communities. They spoke unspoken truths, acknowledging hurt, pain and sorrow but also beauty and strength. They supported one another through their own

[254] "Sayain / Circle of Grandmothers," Tewa Women United website.

[255] Nathana Rae Jaelyn Bird (Associate Director of TWU), Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, June 11, 2020.

[256] Nathana Rae Jaelyn Bird, Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, June 11, 2020.

epistemological development, working to change their lives."[257] The importance of dialogue and relationship building is of special importance, according to Dr. Sanchez, when it involves the work that older Indigenous women do to aid in the healthy and safe development in the lives of young Indigenous women. The (re)vitalization of such relationships directly confronts and replaces the colonial violence of boarding schools that disrupted Indigenous women's roles in community education.[258]

TWU's A'Gin program and Circle of Grandmothers use the theories of relationaltivity and Opide to understand contemporary Indigenous experiences of violence and trauma within a historical context of colonialism, while also replacing violent systems with the explicitly positive and nurturing education of Native youth. TWU's focus on creating safe, intergenerational, and culturally informed educational spaces, according to Dr. Sanchez, reaffirms their responsibility as Indigenous people in maintaining an understanding of history and cultural worldviews in order to pass on positive Indigenous "*knowingness*."[259] Pueblo people see education as a continuous process: "It is action oriented. It is alive. *Knowingness* inspires and radiates from the inside out," Dr. Sanchez explains, "it discusses our wholeness of being, using identity, language, and spirituality as strength that leads to our mobility (fluidity) in changing and challenging times."[260]

Both programs also illustrate the paramount importance of their focus on (re)centering Indigenous women as key holders and creators of Indigenous knowledge and history. Such work prioritizes the needs and experiences of the entire Indigenous community by centering the lived-experiences of Indigenous women through a process of relationaltivity while interpreting

[257] Sanchez, "Protecting Those Most Vulnerable," 50
[258] Sanchez, "Protecting Those Most Vulnerable," 51
[259] Sanchez, "Protecting Those Most Vulnerable," 5.
[260] Sanchez, "Protecting Those Most Vulnerable," 5.

and confronting experiences with past colonial violence. Professor Dian Million describes this practice as *felt theory*, a form of analysis that creates a more complex context of understanding by centering the lived-experiences and emotions of an individual or community, in this case Indigenous women.[261] In her article on felt theory, Million examines the ways in which the narratives of Canadian First Nations women not only revealed the violences of Canadian Indian residential schools, but also created an entire new language for their communities to talk about colonial violence, a language that specifically called upon their intersectional felt experiences with racism and sexism in order to uncover and confront a continuously adapting colonial system.[262] For Indigenous women this can be an especially difficult process, because their experiential narratives reveal the ongoing violence of colonialism and the abusive behaviors learned through systems like boarding schools. Thus felt theory is an inherently political process because the narratives of Indigenous women actively work to rearticulate individual, familial, and communal structures and powers by investigating colonialism and history through those who have felt it personally.[263] Million argues that emotion is a form of embodied knowledge that understands the past as "always already positioned as the field of our contested now" and moves to "ground a present healing in a past properly understood, *felt,* and moved beyond."[264]

Million's felt theory is useful for interpreting the work of TWU, because it highlights the ways in which the lived-experiences of the women of TWU—including their individual and collected culture and histories—inform their programming and work, confronting an ongoing colonial history to understand the needs of their community. By addressing and confronting the past history and present influence of Indian boarding schools, the A'Gin program explicitly

---

[261] Dian Million, "Felt Theory: An Indigenous Feminist Approach to Affect and History," *Wicazo Sa Review* 24 (2009): 54.

[262] Million, "Felt Theory: An Indigenous Feminist Approach to Affect and History," 54-55.

[263] Million, "Felt Theory: An Indigenous Feminist Approach to Affect and History," 57-58.

[264] Million, "Felt Theory: An Indigenous Feminist Approach to Affect and History," 68 & 73.

works to create positive educational experiences for Native youth surrounding issues of culture, identity, sexuality, and social skill development knowing such knowledge will positively influence present Indigenous people but also result in a future where Indigenous community members have the skills to create and sustain healthy cultural and social practices.

Considering the impact Indian boarding schools had on Indigenous families, communities, and the roles and relationships of Indigenous women on an *emotional* level, TWU's Circle of Grandmothers's work in putting community members in contact with female elders for emotional, spiritual, and cultural guidance is invaluable for connecting the Pueblo past to the present. "I think that the importance of that intergenerational teaching and learning, it's about the fluidity of our communities and our lives and really seeing how it's the different generations and the different experiences that really make our Pueblo communities," Chasity Salvador explained. "I think that both the elders and the young people have so much knowledge because they're plugged into so many ways of learning. Our elders provide a lot of spiritual learning," she added, "they provide a lot of understanding visions, they provide a lot of understanding of the history of our community. Our young people provide a lot of understanding of current reality."[265] Salvador continued by describing how Elder Kathy Sanchez has guided TWU's processes of intergenerational education by emphasizing learning as a fluid and ongoing process of exchange between people.

Much like Million's felt theory, Elder Kathy's understanding of intergenerational knowledge sharing is dependent on centering the lived-experiences of Indigenous people, especially women, understanding these felt narratives to be key for confronting and replacing the violent influences of colonialism. "When we were trying to write down our story, instead of saying just 'sharing your story,' we said 'sharing your life narratives,' because that's what it is,

[265] Chasity Salvador, Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, June 10, 2020.

your life experiences. And then early on when we were doing domestic violence prevention," Elder Kathy emphasized, "they always say, 'Tell your story,' and they were asking about history, and so early on we started to say 'her story' instead of history. In English, everything is very male-dominated… it's like insidiously there," Elder Kathy explained. "So it's *her story*, her life narrative… And with that said, then we become the experts with our life narratives and so there's no shame or guilt or whatever in telling how we see it from our perspective and how we've experienced it."

The lived-experiences that are centered by the A'Gin program and Sayain operate on an intergenerational level because they are shared through Native women's spheres of influence which are inherently expansive and interconnected. "Our families are the first ones that we have in our sphere of influence for support and for how we are experiencing life. Intergenerational work came about because… in Indian country, we're all relatives, we're all extended family," Elder Kathy told me. "Extended families make your community… not just the immediate, but the extended family and community and all relations and all life forms." As I listened to Elder Kathy, I understood what she was telling me to be at once both the work of historical thinking *and* community activism—an example of how history could be utilized by and for Indigenous people. "So with that question of intergenerational knowledge sharing and what does it look like," Elder Kathy concluded, "it's bringing together who I am, who I was, bringing together your knowingness which is the Indigenous wisdom from lived-experiences."[266]

According to Elder Kathy it is important to highlight the complexity of lived-experiences, especially when understanding the influence of ongoing colonial violence and past colonial systems like boarding schools. While colonial systems like boarding schools did not completely

[266] Elder Kathy Wan Povi Sanchez (Project Coordinator of TWU), Second interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, July 17, 2020.

destroy Indigenous community, family structures, or the influential roles of Indigenous women, acknowledging the historical ways that Indigenous models of community, family, and gender have been violently attacked by colonialism is crucial for ending violence within Indigenous communities. And understanding the tensions that result from living within a context of ongoing colonialism is crucial for confronting colonial violence. "While it is certainly true that the realities of our lives are more complicated than simply transcending pain and that pain is not the only measure of our existence, we cannot deny its impact on our experience," writes Spokane scholar Gloria Bird, "it is a place of ending the cycles of abuse, or any of the damaging cycles that are quickly becoming primary concerns in Indian communities."[267] As described by Elder Kathy, understanding the tensions and contradictions within Indigenous lived-experiences is crucial to the work of TWU's A'Gin program because such work strives to acknowledge the agency of Indigenous people in navigating, surviving, and confronting colonialism while balancing this knowledge with the reality of how colonialism has harmfully influence Indigenous people. This work is evident in the ways in which TWU has analyzed the history of boarding schools and other past colonial systems and in the ways in which they understand how contemporary Native youth juggle the tensions of Indigenous values with the felt realities of present-day colonialism.

With this practice in mind, Elder Kathy explained that TWU's models of intergenerational knowledge sharing must equally address the tensions and complexities of different Indigenous lived-experiences past, present, and future. Intergenerational knowledge sharing is "to be informed and have equal value for what we're experiencing and what impacts us, especially with the younger generation. Because, with genocide and assimilation and

[267] Gloria Bird, *Reinventing the Enemy's Language: Contemporary Native Women's Writings of North America* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1997) quoted in Million, "Felt Theory: An Indigenous Feminist Approach to Affect and History," *Wicazo Sa Review* 24 (2009): 63-64.

acculturation, we were told you have to choose, and even now our young people they're still being told you have to choose between your cultural way and an American way," Elder Kathy said. "So how do you manage contradictions? How do you manage these contradictions of 'They say this in Indian country,' but they don't really live through their values, or you're hearing about [these values] in your American context… There's multiple realities and multiple ways of being present… and so we Native people can really be past, present, and future at once."[268]

[268] Elder Kathy Wan Povi Sanchez, Second Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, July 17, 2020.

Chapter Three

(Re)claiming Indigenous Reproductive Health and Justice

"What does wealth mean to you?" Jean Whitehorse begins during her interview with Mary Alice Tsosie. "In the Navajo way, wealth is your children, your bloodline. At my age now, when you get older you think 'I have this many children, so I have this many homes. I don't have just that one home,'" Whitehorse explained. "So I ask, how important is a family, how important is your children?"

Jean Whitehorse is a notable figure in Indigenous history and became the subject of Alice Tsosie's interview for the Center of Southwest Research's Native American Oral History Program because of her work with the Navajo Code Talkers and her experiences with the federal government's boarding school, relocation, and forced sterilization programs.[269] In her interview, Whitehorse explains the harmful relationship between tribal nations and the U.S. government, her lived-experience with government Indian policies and programs revealing the colonial agenda evident in the targeting of Indigenous women through assimilationist education policies and eugenic health care services.

"First they put all the children in boarding schools to assimilate them into their society so they can take care of themselves, they can get educated, continue, find a job, and be on their own and not on welfare. But a lot of children suffered from that. The next plan was to relocate young Native families into the major cities, to assimilate them again into the major cities," Whitehorse continued. "That didn't work out again so they said ok, let's control the population. The Native

[269] Native American Oral History Program, "Whitehorse, Jean - Part 3," (2019) https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/cswr_na_interviews/9.

American population is expanding and we don't have enough funds to take care of all of them. So that's when this Native American sterilization act was passed."[270]

The act that Whitehorse refers to is the Family Planning Services and Population Research Act of 1970, an act that resulted in the sterilization of at least twenty-five percent of Native American women of or below childbearing age.[271] However, many claim that this percentage is an underestimate and organizations such as the Women of All Red Nations (WARN) have argued that as many as eighty percent of Indigenous women were sterilized on some reservations.[272] The colonial motives of the Family Planning act are clear to Whitehorse, as were the ways in which forced sterilization targeted Indigenous women. "Who is your target then? Young Women. And this procedure was done on young women without their knowledge, they were never told, and without their consent."[273]

Whitehorse was twenty-two years old (my age) when she returned to Crownpoint, New Mexico after being relocated by the federal government to Oakland, California. Whitehorse had a two-year-old daughter at the time, and after several months in New Mexico, Whitehorse began to experience severe pain in her side. When the pain got worse, Whitehorse drove herself in her father's truck to an IHS clinic before being transferred to an IHS hospital in Gallup, New Mexico. There they learned that she had appendicitis that needed immediate medical attention. But IHS staff told Whitehorse she needed to sign paperwork or else they would not proceed with the operation or give her anesthesia. "Of course I was in pain, I wanted my appendix to be taken out…So I signed paper after paper. I did not know that they did this to me." It was not until over a year later, when Whitehorse began trying to have another child, that she discovered she had

[270] Native American Oral History Program, "Whitehorse, Jean - Part 3," (2019).
[271] Brianna Theobald, "A 1970 Law Led to the Mass Sterilization of Native American Women. That History Still Matters," *TIME Magazine*, 28 November 2019.
[272] Barbara Gurr, *Reproductive Justice: The Politics of Health Care for Native American Women* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2014), 125.
[273] Native American Oral History Program, "Whitehorse, Jean - Part 3," (2019).

been sterilized. “They told me ‘you’re sterilized, they sterilized you.’ I said I don’t know about that… From there they said it was irreversible, you can’t correct that. It’s already done. You will never have any more children.”[274]

Even after this discovery, Whitehorse did not know her experience with sterilization was part of a larger policy targeting other women of color until at Indian activists conferences she began to talk with other Indigenous women from the U.S. and Canada who had also been sterilized. A member of the American Indian Movement (AIM) who also participated in the Alcatraz protests, Whitehorse says the insight of other women’s experiences with sterilization helped her see the sterilization of Indigenous women as a broader systemic issue. Most importantly, as Whitehorse explains, sterilization revealed how the colonial government specifically targets Indigenous women. “Native women were labeled as unfit to carry their kind into the world, incapable of caring for their own children, uneducated, poor, and on welfare,” Whitehorse explains. “They always target a certain group and not only the ethnic group but within that ethnic group, the young women. The young Indian student that graduated, let’s relocate them. The young children, let’s get them out of the house and put them in the boarding school and assimilate them. But to go beyond that, the target was Native American women.”

Whitehorse’s sterilization had a lasting impact, not only because it caused her to distrust the IHS and federal government, but because it also impacted her family, causing her to feel lonely and without a support system due to the disruption of her family structure. “They sent me to boarding school, they sent me on relocation, now they did this to me… They put that anger in me,” said Whitehorse. “I wish I had more children. I wish I had sons that would help me when I need help. It goes back to this, I didn’t know I was sterilized. When I found out, it was too late.” By targeting her as an Indigenous woman, the government sought to disrupt her family and

[274] Native American Oral History Program, "Whitehorse, Jean - Part 3," (2019).

disrupt their system of intergenerational support and knowledge sharing. “When a baby is born, regardless of whether it's a boy or a girl, they are who their mother is,” Whitehorse explains, adding that as a grandmother and great-grandmother she can see more clearly the role of Indigenous women in sustaining intergenerational connections as all the more critical. “I told [my daughter], one day when I’m no longer telling my stories you're going to be telling my stories, Alyssa [her granddaughter] is going to be telling my stories, because that’s where you’re coming from.”[275]

From Boarding Schools to Forced Sterilization: Pueblo Women and Reproductive Justice

Understanding where you come from is what constitutes intergenerational storytelling that results in the healthy and positive continuance of Indigenous people and their cultures. As explained by Whitehorse, knowing where you come from involves but also goes beyond place, and invokes the lived-experiences of your family and community members. This is inherently a historical process, and one that is necessary for not only continuing cultural practices but also for understanding past colonial violences and confronting their contemporary repercussions. Thus, it is important to investigate the connections between U.S. boarding schools and forced sterilization policies as well as their ramifications on Indigenous family and community structures from the perspective of Indigenous women—those who have been targeted by these policies because of their intergenerational power in Indigenous society.

Recall my argument about Indigenous possibility and how colonial forces of violence seek to destroy such possibility by targeting Indigenous women because of their ability to reproduce and because of their crucial roles as social and cultural leaders. While seemingly

[275] Native American Oral History Program, "Whitehorse, Jean - Part 3," (2019).

contradictory, Indian boarding schools and Indian forced sterilization policies both attacked Indigenous possibility by targeting Indigenous women and their children, and both have consequently caused long-term disruptions in contemporary Indigenous family and community structures. By connecting these two colonial policies historically, one reveals that their true agenda was never to incorporate Indigenous people into society or provide Indigenous people with avenues for social success through education, health care, or family planning services, but instead their agenda was extermination. Establishing this historical relationship between boarding schools and forced sterilization policies also strengthens my claim that Indigenous women have been the primary target of colonialism.

According to historian Brenda J. Child, Indigenous women are essential for teaching the next generation, and Indigenous youth must learn positive social and cultural behaviors from Indigenous women in order to ensure the success of their entire community.[276] While white feminist thinkers might balk at the idea of Indigenous women's power being grounded in family and community, Native feminism argues that such attitudes incorrectly impose colonial gender hierarchies on Indigenous society. If one actively works to confront patriarchal ideals of gendered hierarchies that were imposed upon Indigenous people through colonialism, the centrality of family, community, and reproduction in Indigenous society no longer falls within the reductionist limitations of white feminism but transcends it.[277] By doing this, family becomes not a devalued and isolated domestic sphere, but instead the core of Indigenous society with the power to shape the social and cultural behaviors of the entire community. As a result, Indigenous women are not seen as subordinate, but as having essential influence and power because they

[276] Brenda J. Child, *Holding Our World Together: Ojibwe Women and the Survival of Community* (New York: Viking, 2012), 2-4.

[277] Cutcha Risling Baldy, *We Are Dancing For You: Native Feminisms & The Revitalization of Women's Coming-of-Age Ceremonies* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2018), 54.

hold primary roles within family and community as agents of social and cultural knowledge sharing and relationship building.[278]

Thus, in order to (re)establish Indigenous women's roles within Indigenous society, a critical interrogation of the history of colonial policies of forced sterilization is required. Furthermore, investigating the history of forced sterilization also helps us understand how organizations such as Tewa Women United (TWU) are working to disrupt the history of forced sterilization and replace its harmful influences on Indigenous family and reproduction systems. "This work is not about the reproduction of individual people; it is also about the reproduction of a culture," explains Dr. Corrine Sanchez. "Through birth and childbearing mothers are connected intimately to our children. It is this umbilical cord that was severely injured generations ago with the implementation of various genocidal, gynocidal and Indian Education strategies, including boarding schools."[279]

Indigenous Women and the History of Forced Sterilization

While Whitehorse, whose own sterilization occurred in 1972, contextualized her experience within the passage of the 1970 Family Planning Act, the sterilization of women as a means of population control began much earlier. Arguably, some forms of population control can be traced back to Plato and Thomas Malthus. Sir Francis Galton, cousin of Charles Darwin and the creator of the Eugenics Education Society, continued this legacy of population control, arguing that certain people were unfit to reproduce and that genetics could be controlled in order

[278] Laura F. Klein and Lillian A. Ackerman, *Women and Power in Native North America* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995), 14-15.

[279] Corrine Sanchez, "Protecting Those Most Vulnerable: Building Beloved Families and Communities To End Violence Against Native Women, Girls and Mother Earth," (Ph.D. diss. Arizona State University, April 2015): 19-20.

to improve the human race.[280] Galton's eugenics argument also proposed that "social ills" including mental illness, immorality, and poverty were inherited and could be prevented through population control, thus ushering in an era of "negative eugenics" where sterilization was proposed as a strategy for controlling unfit populations.[281]

Eugenics theories surged in popularity in the United States during the early twentieth century when American medical professionals, scientists, and politicians turned to ideas of population control and natural selection, combining their beliefs about race with their worries about overpopulation and economic difficulties.[282] Scientific racism received heightened attention at this time, further pushing racist ideologies that used science to justify racial inferiority and superiority.[283] In response, as early as 1907 states began authorizing sterilizations for those deemed "unfit" or social and economic burdens on the nation, primarily targeting poor, mentally ill, institutionalized women, and women of color.[284] These sterilization policies disproportionately sterilized lower-class women and women of color, including women who were on welfare and even incarcerated women and men.[285] Black and Latina/Hispanic women were among those most targeted for sterilization by the U.S. during the early period of sterilization. Indigenous women, though also targeted during the early twentieth century, experienced heightened sterilization pressures during the 1960s and 1970s.[286]

---

[280] Sally J. Torpy, "Native American Women and Coerced Sterilization: On the Trail of Tears in the 1970s," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 24 (2000): 2.

[281] Torpy, "Native American Women and Coerced Sterilization," 3.

[282] Meg Devlin O'Sullivan, "Informing Red Power and Transforming the Second Wave: Native American Women and the Struggle Against Coerced Sterilization in the 1970s," *Women's History Review* 25 (2016): 966-967.

[283] Linda M. Robyn, "Sterilization of American Indian Women Revisited: Another Attempt to Solve the 'Indian Problem,'" in *Crime and Social Justice in Indian Country* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2018), 42.

[284] Robyn, "Sterilization of American Indian Women Revisited," 43.

[285] Robyn, "Sterilization of American Indian Women Revisited," 40-43.

[286] Robyn, "Sterilization of American Indian Women Revisited," 43.

It is important to recognize the differences as well as the similarities between Native and non-Native women of color during the era of forced sterilization. The unique experiences of Indigenous women reveal that sterilization was another colonial strategy of Indigenous erasure and colonial land theft. Indigenous, Black, and Latina/Hispanic women all had remarkably similar experiences when it came to the coercive process of sterilization. Many women were sterilized during routine visits with physicians or while undergoing other medical procedures including births and appendectomies. Additionally, most women were threatened with having their welfare or medical benefits taken away if they did not "consent" to sterilization. Others were told misleading or false information about sterilization procedures, forced to sign consent forms while in severe pain or drugged, and many were not told what they had signed or only told afterwards what had happened to them.[287] Similar to Whitehorse's experience, civil rights activist Fannie Lou Hamer had a hysterectomy after entering the hospital to have a small cyst removed. Born in Montgomery County, Mississippi, Hamer's sterilization occurred at a time when medical professionals and law-makers in Mississippi argued that Black mothers and children reduced the racial purity and economic progress of the nation. The sterilization of Black women was so common in Mississippi, that it was often labeled under the nickname of a "Mississippi appendectomy." Hamer's experience with sterilization was just one of the motivations behind her activism and her involvement in organizations such as the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC).[288] And though mostly young women of color of childbearing age were targeted for sterilization, Black and Indigenous girls as young as eleven were sterilized. Mary Alice Relf and Minnie Lee Relf, who were twelve and fourteen at the time of their sterilizations, are two significant examples of Black girls being sterilized, medical staff having asked their

[287] Robyn, "Sterilization of American Indian Women Revisited," 43-44.

[288] Chana Kai Lee, *For Freedom's Sake: The Life of Fannie Lou Hamer* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999), 21-22.

mother who was illiterate to sign their consent forms without telling her what they were truly for.[289]

Race and racism then must be considered a defining factor of U.S. reproductive healthcare. This is important to emphasize because forced sterilization increasingly impacted women of color at the time when the nation was entering a post-Civil Rights era in which ideas of "color-blindness" were gaining traction within conservative circles. Ideas of color-blindness and the United States being a "post-racist" society were circulating as debates over affirmative action and welfare reached heightened tensions during the era of Ronald Reagan's presidency, pushing narratives that dismissed racism from the history of the Civil Rights Movement.[290] Despite the attempts of these "post-racism" arguments, sterilization is clear evidence of ongoing racism and colonialism, emerging at a time of increased scientific racism and racist paternalism. As I have argued throughout this thesis, the forces of racism and colonialism have been constantly transforming over time, having an ongoing impact on people of color across time. The United States' efforts to sterilize women of color and control the populations of people of color are a continuation of racism and colonialism, both having always involved different forms of oppressive and violent population control of Black and Brown people. In the case of slavery, Black women were enslaved and forced to reproduce in order to provide labor and production for the white colonial state. According to scholar Thomas Volscho, colonialism has always targeted Indigenous women and children for the expressed purpose of complete annihilation and land accumulation. Thus, the U.S. government's control over reproduction is not new; it's actually part of a longer colonial and historical process attempting to subjugate and erase people of color

[289] Thomas W. Volscho, "Sterilization Racism and Pan-Ethnic Disparities of the Past Decade: The Continued Encroachment on Reproductive Rights," *Wicazo Sa Review* 25 (2010): 17; Torpy, "Native American Women and Coerced Sterilization," 4.

[290] Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* (New York: The New Press, 2012), 20-22 & 45-58.

by targeting women of color through U.S. policies of explicit extermination, enslavement, removal and relocation, assimilationist education, and forced sterilization.[291]

Indigenous women were especially vulnerable to sterilization because of the relationship between their tribal nations and the U.S. government and their resulting dependence on the Indian Health Services and the Bureau of Indian Affairs.[292] According to scholar Barbara Gurr, the combination of dependence and oppression within the relationship between the U.S. government and federally recognized tribal nations results in a "double-discourse" of control and neglect, sovereignty and oppression.[293] This double-discourse is especially evident in the relationship between Indigenous people and the Indian Health Services. The IHS was established in 1958 in response to the high rates of disease in Indian Country and operated primarily on reservations, quickly becoming one of the main sources of medical services for Indigenous people.[294] The IHS began providing family planning services in 1965 and this involved increased access to contraceptives and sterilization. "Family planning" constituted a Cold-War era liberal politics' adaptation of eugenicist thinking by both birth control activists and federal policy-makers alike, guiding U.S. foreign and domestic policy.[295] The IHS increased its family planning services after the 1970 Family Planning Act was passed, targeting Indigenous women specifically because of their high birth rates.[296]

The sterilization of Indigenous women first came under scrutiny when health care professionals (many of whom were Indigenous themselves) became concerned with an emerging pattern of young Indigenous women who were sterilized without informed consent. Dr. Connie

---

[291] Volscho, "Sterilization Racism and Pan-Ethnic Disparities of the Past Decade," 18.
[292] Torpy, "Native American Women and Coerced Sterilization," 1.
[293] Gurr, *Reproductive Justice,* 28 & 52.
[294] Jane Lawrence, "The Indian Health Service and the Sterilization of Native American Women," *American Indian Quarterly* 24 (July 1, 2000): 402.
[295] Linda Gordon, *The Moral Property of Women: A History of Birth Control Politics in America,* 3rd ed. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2002), 279-281.
[296] Lawrence, "The Indian Health Service," 402.

Pinkerton-Uri (Choctaw/Cherokee) famously began to investigate sterilization through IHS when a young woman approached her in 1972 asking for a womb transplant after having undergone a hysterectomy when she was twenty years old. It was only after talking with Dr. Pinkerton-Uri that the young woman learned that the procedure was irreversible.[297] In response to the high rates of sterilization they witnessed, Dr. Pinkerton-Uri and other Indigenous health professionals from Oklahoma and New Mexico contacted South Dakota Senator James Abourezk.[298] After garnering attention and support from Senator Abourezk, the General Accounting Office began an investigation into the sterilization of Indigenous women in Albuquerque, New Mexico; Phoenix, Arizona; Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; and Aberdeen, South Dakota. The GAO report discovered that between 1973-1976 the IHS had sterilized 3,406 Indigenous women, 3,001 of which were of childbearing age. These numbers, however, are considered too low due to inadequate reporting by IHS officials and because Albuquerque IHS facilities could not provide their own numbers because they used contract physicians for sterilizations and did not keep records.[299] Additionally, the GAO investigation never interviewed any Indigenous women and when Dr. Pinkerton-Uri and Tribal Judge Marie Sanchez (Cheyenne) conducted their own research, they discovered just how low the GAO's report estimate was. It was Dr. Pinkerton-Uri's research that argued IHS had sterilized as much as twenty-five percent of Indigenous women, while Judge Sanchez's research, involving interviews with a number of sterilized Cheyenne women, argued that even twenty-five percent was too low.[300]

The GAO report and investigations done by Indigenous activists and healthcare workers discovered that IHS was ignoring regulations and sterilizing Indigenous women through coercive

[297] Lawrence, "The Indian Health Service," 400.
[298] Lawrence, "The Indian Health Service," 406.
[299] Lawrence, "The Indian Health Service," 406-407; Torpy, "Native American Women and Coerced Sterilization," 7.
[300] Lawrence, "The Indian Health Service," 410; Gurr, "Reproductive Justice," 125.

and purposefully misleading means. IHS forms were inconsistent and inadequate, many of them not accurately explaining the procedures and their permanency, and consent forms were inaccessible, as they were written in higher-level English and presented to Indigenous women without translators.[301] Indigenous women were often asked to sign such consent forms while in labor or while they were heavily medicated. Even worse, many women were told that if they did not sign the consent forms their children would be taken away, the threat of having Indigenous children being taken away was especially terrifying given the history of boarding schools and new efforts to remove Indigenous children and place them into the foster care system. Thus Indigenous women "were faced with either the solicitude of losing their children or the fear of losing their ability to have children. Even if they agreed to sterilization there was no guarantee that they could keep their already-born children."[302] Considering the double-discourse between Indigenous people and the U.S. government and the coercion and threats Indigenous women experienced from health officials in government hospitals, one has to question whether consent is even possible in such an environment. A further examination of government-sanctioned forced sterilization of Indigenous women reveals its inherently colonial agenda. One must not only examine how these policies have disrupted Indigenous society, but also what the Indigenous alternatives are to such colonial policies and programs.

The sterilization of Indigenous women, as Whitehorse said earlier, was also justified with arguments that degraded Indigenous women and Indigenous people. According to historian Sally J. Torpy, "Physicians were convinced that welfare patients were unreliable and not intelligent enough to properly use other methods of birth control," a racist and paternalistic mindset. "Physicians played God," Torpy argued, "deciding for the poor minority members what they felt

[301] Lawrence, "The Indian Health Service," 411-412; Robyn, "Sterilization of American Indian Women Revisited," 47.

[302] Torpy, "Native American Women and Coerced Sterilization," 13-14.

would provide a higher standard of living by limiting the size of families. Many physicians, government administrators, and health corporation planners felt that sterilization provided an inexpensive and permanent method of controlling population, reducing poverty, and ensuring who could reproduce."[303] Narratives of degradation about Indigenous women operated in several ways. First, by degrading Indigenous women as mothers, these narratives not only further emphasized eugenic fears that negative social and economic behaviors could be passed on genetically as opposed to being consequences of ongoing colonialism, but this narrative also justified forced sterilization as a policy that was "improving" the lives of Indigenous women.

The racist paternalism of the social and economic justifications of forced sterilization was also an intentional act of colonialism, since forced sterilization, in line with past colonial practices, sought to exterminate Indigenous peoples in order to take Indigenous land. These extermination attempts targeted Indigenous women, particularly, their ability to reproduce more Indigenous people.[304] As scholar Andrea Smith explains, colonialism operates on the understanding that in order to destroy a people, you must control and disrupt the reproductive abilities of Indigenous women.[305] But on a deeper level, by justifying the sterilization of Indigenous women through the language of eugenics and scientific racism, forced sterilization was also working to further devalue Indigenous women. And as I have argued previously, any devaluing of Indigenous women and the important roles they hold within Indigenous society creates a context for violence, resulting in increased violence against Indigenous women by non-Native and Native people alike. The narrative of degradation behind forced sterilization worked to displace the roles of authority that Indigenous women hold in birth, family,

---

[303] Torpy, "Native American Women and Coerced Sterilization," 12.

[304] Brianna Theobald, *Reproduction on the Reservation: Pregnancy, Childbirth, and Colonialism in the Long Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2019), 9.

[305] Andrea Smith, *Conquest: Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015), 79.

reproductive knowledge, and community work, and replace their crucial roles in their families and communities with Western medical systems.[306] Additionally, sterilization also targeted the social and cultural influence of Indigenous women by disrupting their crucial intergenerational relationships and their ability to teach positive cultural and social behaviors and create positive community relationships.[307]

While understanding sterilization as a continuation of colonialism and investigating how sterilization has targeted the social, cultural, and reproductive power of Indigenous women is essential for creating a model of women-centric Indigenous reproductive justice, so too is an investigation of the tensions that Indigenous women had with white feminists movements and male-dominated Indigenous activists movements. According to historian Meg Devlin O'Sullivan Indigenous women led the efforts to end the forced sterilization of Indigenous women, but this often put them in conflict with the goals and ideologies of white feminist movements. While larger women's movements did give Indigenous reproductive justice movements some support, there were serious differences in their understanding of reproductive justice that made these relationships strenuous.[308] While most white feminist movements considered it liberatory to have access to reproductive healthcare, contraceptives, abortions, and even voluntary sterilizations, Indigenous women along with other women of color were suffering from the abusive implementation of such services. Unlike white women's movements, Indigenous women understood reproductive justice as operating at the intersections of race, gender, and environment and were primarily interested in ending sterilization and sexual abuse in their communities.[309]

---

[306] Theobald, *Reproduction on the Reservation,* 7.

[307] "Tewa Women United: The Yiya Vi Kagingdi Story, Doulas, birth justice, and a more equitable future for families in Northern New Mexico—and beyond," Tewa Women United, accessed March 28, 2021, https://spark.adobe.com/page/ZVm9DKiyCqP2y/?fbclid=IwAR3ZRbYTQ7TBmK-q5lwTJLGJs9ngv5LjRRvj0S0UA4V6o46sL5pm9e--haQ.

[308] O'Sullivan, "Informing Red Power and Transforming the Second Wave," 966.

[309] O'Sullivan, "Informing Red Power and Transforming the Second Wave," 975.

While Indigenous women understood Indigenous reproductive justice as an intersectional model, male-dominated Indigenous activists movements often dismissed the issue of forced sterilization as a women's issue that was too far removed from their greater missions for Indigenous sovereignty. Movements such as AIM gave little attention to or support for Indigenous women's reproductive justice efforts, often arguing that reproductive rights were either too risky an issue to pursue or even distracting from their bigger goals of achieving Indigenous rights and sovereignty.[310]

Indigenous women understood sterilization as not only an attack on them, but an attack on their entire communities and consequently an attack on Indigenous sovereignty. Movements such as WARN understood sterilization to be a continuation of the U.S. government's attempts to annihilate Indigenous people and take Indigenous land and resources, thus sterilizing Indigenous women was another form of genocide.[311] "They understood women's loss of reproductive freedom as an attack on Native people, cultures, and sovereignty within the context of a long history of colonialism, population decline, attempted cultural assimilation, and military confrontations," explains O'Sullivan. "Forced or coerced sterilization challenged the sovereign right of a woman's tribe to protect her from such an invasion. Native women understood control over their fertility as a fundamental human right and a civil right guaranteed to members of self-governing nations," and as "an affront to personal reproductive freedom and tribal autonomy," she continued. "Every time a Native woman was sterilized against her will she lost her reproductive capabilities while her tribe involuntarily relinquished some of its independence and political power."[312] Reproductive justice for Indigenous women, then, was expansive in its intersections, involving issues of sovereignty as well as environment—Indigenous sovereignty

[310] O'Sullivan, "Informing Red Power and Transforming the Second Wave," 973-975.
[311] O'Sullivan, "Informing Red Power and Transforming the Second Wave," 965.
[312] O'Sullivan, "Informing Red Power and Transforming the Second Wave," 973.

being tied to Indigenous land claims and Indigenous women's health and wellbeing as mothers being tied to colonialism's negative impact on the environment.[313]

While an Indigenous history of forced sterilization reveals the multilayered colonial context of its impact on Indigenous people by targeting Indigenous women, current scholarship on the history of forced sterilization reveals a crucial gap in our understanding due to its primary focus on a national or even pan-tribal level. This strategy was initially important in raising awareness of sterilization as a national crisis impacting a national Indigenous community. But in order to successfully confront the history of forced sterilization and its ongoing influence on the contemporary lives of Indigenous people, the next step for historians and activists alike is to investigate its historical impact on specific Indigenous women and their communities. This requires historical work at a local level and must involve the centering of the lived-experiences of Indigenous women. Indigenous women have already begun this work, Judge Marie Sanchez, for instance, has notably investigated the specific impact of forced sterilization on Cheyenne women, even though her local investigation has been primarily used to understand forced sterilization yet again at the national level. Thus, the work of Tewa Women United in response to the historical legacy of forced sterilization for Pueblo women and families at the grassroots community level, and efforts like mine to situate local Pueblo women within a broad Indigenous history of forced sterilization, are crucial next steps for action.

Pueblo Women (Re)Claiming Birth and Reproductive Justice

"IHS Officials Put on Firing Line over Counseling Procedures" read the headline of an article I found in the *Pueblo News* newspaper from 1978. The article is short and sandwiched between two other articles about the IHS, one of them describing how current IHS Director Jay

[313] Theobald, *Reproduction on the Reservation,* 170-171.

Harwood hopes to *increase* the number of Indian hospitals and "streamline" IHS operations. The article is easy to miss and when I return to re-read it multiple times later, I find myself skipping over it accidentally. It's the title, I think. And maybe even its shortness. For an article that talks about a crisis that severely altered the lives of so many Indigenous women, families, and communities, the title feels insufficient. Nowhere in the title is it mentioned who exactly is putting IHS officials on the "firing line," and nowhere in the title does it say the word sterilization.[314]

In 1978, during a National Indian Health Conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico, IHS officials hosted a panel where a "woman-dominated audience" exchanged emotional accounts of their experiences with IHS sterilization and abortion services. At the time of the conference, many Indigenous women in the United States had recently been coerced into sterilization procedures and many more likely faced the same fate. In response to the GAO report that detailed the dramatic number of sterilizations that had occurred the previous year, with the IHS authorizing the sterilization of thousands of Indigenous women and men, IHS officials held the panel discussion in an attempt to "put the report into better perspective." During the panel, IHS physician Dr. Jock Pribnow and Indian Affairs Senate Select Committee representative Patty Marks focused their attention on the sharp criticism being directed towards the IHS about their counseling procedures. According to Pribnow, IHS had no standard set of procedures regarding consent for abortions and sterilizations, and further remarked how he would "hate to see more regulations" barring women from receiving abortions and that "If a woman desires an abortion, and it's medically alright, it's up to her." In addition, Marks explained that "people are quick to scream genocide. But it's something that does not have to be planned to do it. It seems there is a

[314] "IHS Officials Put on Firing Line Over Counseling Procedures," *Pueblo News,* Albuquerque, New Mexico, March 1978, vol. 6, no. 3, p. 6.

real need to get counseling procedures together across the board." There are two issues apparent within the statements made by panelists Pribnow and Marks; first Pribnow's primary concern, similar to that of white feminist activists at the time, was with the idea of *choice* surrounding voluntary abortion and sterilization services. Second, Marks perceived the high rates of sterilization to be unintentional, not the genocide so many people charged IHS with, but a consequence of poor counseling and consent form standards at IHS facilities.

Though these were the narratives IHS officials put forward during the NIHC panel, the narratives of the Pueblo and other Indigenous women and men in the audience tell a different story about sterilization, a story where choice was never an option and colonial violence was deliberate. One audience member described the fifty-six Indian women and men he knew who had been sterilized without being fully informed about the procedures' permanency, while another claimed that in some tribes fifty percent of women "can have no more children." Another man described how he had "three daughters under 30 who for no reason are sterilized today." A woman detailed how an acquaintance of hers went to IHS for an abortion and left sterilized and another woman cried while describing how children were being sterilized "who don't find out about it until later in their lives." As she said, "It's been happening since 1932."[315]

This event offers a small yet unique look at how forced sterilization impacted Indigenous communities in New Mexico at the local level. On one hand, it reveals the lack of serious attention given to the issue of forced sterilization by the government and the IHS itself. It also shows the uproar that occurred at the grassroots level and how the lives of Indigenous women and their communities were specifically impacted. While the IHS officials who hosted the panel portrayed the issue of forced sterilization as a mere "breakdown in communication" between the

[315] "IHS Officials Put on Firing Line Over Counseling Procedures," *Pueblo News,* Albuquerque, New Mexico, March 1978, vol. 6, no. 3, p. 6.

IHS and Indigenous patients, the coercive, misleading, and threatening strategies of IHS officials reveal forced sterilization not only to be purposeful, but also to be part of a larger colonial agenda of Indigenous elimination. The IHS officials' emphasis on choice and counseling procedures also illustrate the disconnection between them and their audience members, a community of people who had historically experienced multiple forms of genocide through different means of population control. Additionally, the IHS's proposed "corrective steps" in response to allegations of genocide and the outrage of Indigenous communities focused on sterilization policy changes, disregarding the fact that the sterilization of Indigenous women never followed HEW guidelines to begin with. Indeed, forced sterilization did not end because of the efforts of HEW or IHS, but because Indigenous, Black, and Latina activists fought for national attention and response. While I know this history, and while this IHS panel offers a glimpse of the historical narratives of Pueblo women and their outcries against forced sterilization, I am still left with one question: what was done for these local New Mexican Indigenous women who had been sterilized?

Ten years after the controversies surrounding the forced sterilization of Indigenous women, Tewa Women United began as a series of support circles where Pueblo women from Northern New Mexico could gather to share their experiences with violence in order to better understand how their shared experiences connected to their historical context. From these conversations, the founding women of TWU concluded that ending physical and sexual violence against Indigenous women and children was of the utmost importance, and in order to do that they had to target the historical roots of these problems while also providing direct services that met the needs of their communities.[316] The historical work of these women exposed how

[316] "Expanding Access to Doula Care: Birth Equity and Economic Justice in New Mexico, Yiya Vi Kagingdi Doula Project," (Indigenous Women's Health and Reproductive Justice Program: Tewa Women United, March 2020): 18.

colonialism had disrupted their families and communities and instilled a culture of violence through settler colonial and military campaigns for explicit extermination, assimilationist education programs, and finally through policies of forced sterilization. Dr. Corrine Sanchez explained how these forces of colonialism all targeted Indigenous women and their important roles in society, at once harming them physically and sexually, while also devaluing and disrupting their social and cultural roles in their communities.[317] The history of forced sterilization, TWU realized, was one key colonial system of violence that was having a devastating impact on contemporary Pueblo women and their families and communities. Thus, in order to (re)claim their power as Indigenous women and implement healing and cultural practices back into their communities, TWU understood that they had to actively combat the influence of forced sterilization beginning with birth and family work.

TWU understands that their framework of relationaltivity—a framework that heavily relies on intergenerational relationships—not only interprets forced sterilization as having a contemporary impact on Pueblo women but on all Pueblo people. Relationaltivity also emphasizes that Indigenous women, in all their relational power as cultural and social leaders and knowledge holders, are the most capable people for implementing positive and culturally grounded healing strategies in their communities, which will in turn be passed down to future generations. According to Chasity Salvador, centering Indigenous women and (re)vitalizing their intergenerational power requires starting at the beginning, with the reproductive bodies of Indigenous women and the structures of Indigenous family that forced sterilization sought to oppress and destroy. “Protecting our women's bodies and our communities is really about raising good people and raising good babies,” Salvador told me, “that means we need to do it from the

[317] Dr. Corrine Sanchez (Executive Director of TWU), Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, July 1, 2020.

very beginning, and the very beginning is birth and thinking about how we're born into this world."[318] In order to do this work, TWU began investigating how Indigenous parents were becoming parents, how Indigenous women and children were being cared for and supported or being mistreated and abused in their families. "Our doula program was born out of this whole conversation around sexual assault and how do we create families that are healthy for generations to come," explained Nathana Bird. "When we're able to provide parents with support in this process, this really breaks down that barrier of having families that are unhealthy or that may have these traumas that are unresolved."[319]

Out of efforts to understand the history of forced sterilization through frameworks of relationaltivity and the lived-experiences of local Pueblo families came TWU's Yiya Vi Kagingdi (Helper of the Mother) Doula program, a program meant to provide safe and culturally grounded spaces and support for Indigenous families while actively decolonizing birth practices. YVK doulas go through TWU's training curriculum and certification program where they learn under the guidance of other Indigenous doulas how best to provide reproductive resources and education to local Indigenous communities while anchoring their work in Indigenous cultural practices and knowledge.[320]

Midwives have always been a part of Pueblo culture and community, Dr. Sanchez explained, "we've always had women helping women in different aspects of their development and growth and transitions. So, again, I think we're (re)asserting and (re)claiming our Indigenous knowledge, practices, and beliefs that we know have sustained us."[321] Indeed, Indigenous women have always been integral to birthwork and to processes of intergenerational knowledge sharing,

[318] Chasity Salvador (Executive Assistant of TWU), Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, June 10, 2020.

[319] Nathana Rae Jaelyn Bird (Associate Director of TWU), Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, June 11, 2020.

[320] "Tewa Women United: The Yiya Vi Kagingdi Story," accessed March 28, 2021.

[321] Dr. Corrine Sanchez, Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, July 1, 2020.

therefore TWU's doula is not only continuing a long-held tradition of Indigenous birthwork but doing so in transformative ways that actively confront and replace violent colonial systems that have disrupted Indigenous family structures. This involves the employment of traditional Indigenous knowledge surrounding ceremonies and medicines, but also Indigenous worldviews about birth that understand birth to be a community process where everyone, not just women, are responsible for seeing to the safe, healthy, and culturally centered nurturing of Indigenous children. By involving the entire Indigenous community in birthwork and childcare, TWU is creating safe familial and communal spaces for Indigenous women and children while also actively developing healthy communities of the present, for the future. "If we are going to heal and work towards a beloved community and beloved families, you have to be loving yourself in a good kind and gentle way… those things have to be a practice," explained Elder Kathy Sanchez. "If we are not feeling supported or comfortable in our own tribal lands, then we need to create these sacred spaces, comfortable spaces, safe spaces," Elder Kathy told me, "we have to bring up loving children and let their parents know, especially young parents, that they're supported."[322]

With all of the different frameworks and missions informing the work of TWU's Yiya Vi Kagingdi doula program, YVK doulas provide education and resources at every step of the birthing process, help mothers and families navigate different traditional and medical birthing practices, teach parenting classes to ensure positive family-baby relationships, and most of all provide cultural, emotional, and communal space and support for Indigenous women, their families, and babies.[323] YVK doulas are also trained to perform "survivor-centered care," postpartum depression screening, lactation support, and to be knowledgeable about local

[322] Elder Kathy Wan Povi Sanchez, (Project Coordinator of TWU), First interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, July 10, 2020.

[323] "Tewa Women United: The Yiya Vi Kagingdi Story," accessed March 28, 2021.

resources that provide food, shelter, income, and addiction/recovery services.[324] Providing trauma-informed care is a crucial aspect of TWU's doula program because it not only understands historical violence and its intergenerational impact, but it also takes into account the lived-experiences of local Indigenous women at the individual level. This understanding is important for helping those mothers who may have experienced domestic or sexual violence—what Dr. Sanchez describes as individual complex traumas—navigate motherhood, prolonged or stalled labor, breastfeeding, and discomfort with medical services and exams.[325] "We see how unresolved trauma (historical, intergenerational and individual complex) may be passed down," TWU's Yiya Vi Kagingdi Doula Project report explains, further arguing that trauma-informed and survivor-centered doula work is necessary because, without it, "these experiences of unresolved trauma may be further marginalized and criminalized, continuing the cycle of harm, and impeding the life-giving experience of birth, parenting and healing for families."[326]

The TWU doula program, as Elder Kathy emphasized, also combats violence against Indigenous women, the histories of violent systems such as forced sterilization, and the cycles of harm within contemporary Indigenous families by working to empower Indigenous women to (re)claim their rightful presence in birthwork and their social and cultural influence as mothers and grandmothers.[327] This work is especially crucial considering Gurr's double discourse analysis of forced sterilization and IHS, in which the government devalued Indigenous models of family and birthwork and persecuted Indigenous midwives, creating a situation where IHS was increasingly becoming the only medical resource for Indigenous women. This dependency is one

[324] "Expanding Access to Doula Care," March 2020, 8.
[325] "Expanding Access to Doula Care," March 2020, 18.
[326] "Expanding Access to Doula Care," March 2020, 19.
[327] Elder Kathy Wan Povi Sanchez, First interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, July 10, 2020.

half of Gurr's double discourse, the other is the combination of the lack of funding IHS receives making it often an inadequate resource for Indigenous people, and the colonial agendas of IHS practices as seen through the history of forced sterilization. Such a double discourse puts Indigenous women in the difficult position of having to turn to government resources that have historically sought to oppress and violate them and their communities.[328]

The challenge of confronting this double discourse has resulted in TWU's doula program working to not only create safe Indigenous reproductive spaces and resources for Indigenous women, but also to ground their work in frameworks of reproductive justice and body sovereignty. "The Doula Program allowed us to reclaim birth, reclaim our connection to our knowledge as women, and to push back against a medical system that was often dehumanizing and retraumatizing for people," explained Dr. Sanchez. "So in birth justice, it's about—for me—a woman's ability to make informed decisions about her body. It's about, how do we create that nurturing environment so that all can thrive, especially our young people." The Doula Training Institute, she continued, "is a natural evolution of us claiming our space and claiming our voice." After all, "women gave birth before a medical model came into play and we had our herbs, we took our knowledge from animals and our relatives."[329]

The doula's Indigenous models of reproductive justice require a trauma-informed perspective and a deep knowledge of the history of forced sterilization and its ramifications on contemporary Indigenous communities. This ensures an approach that fosters healing while actively replacing harmful systems and cycles.[330] TWU doulas help families navigate medical systems that have historically targeted Indigenous women and families for colonial agendas. "It's

[328] Gurr, "Reproductive Justice," 40, 52, & 69-79.

[329] "Tewa Women United: Birth Justice in Northern New Mexico," YouTube video: Tewa Women United, May 3, 2019, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bcR52QBOdhc.

[330] "Tewa Women United: The Yiya Vi Kagingdi Story," accessed March 28, 2021.

really to give support to the family in that process and advocate for them when they're going into medical spaces," Nathana Bird explained. "They may be first time parents that are going in and they're having the mom sign all these papers and if nobody's knowledgeable about this, they may be signing something they have no idea about. So there's that advocacy and also advocacy for traditional practices for different things that are culturally relevant to or culturally appropriate for the family."[331]

TWU's advocacy work remains relevant not only because the history of forced sterilization is still relatively recent, but also because health care in the United States still replicates the colonial violence of mistreating Indigenous women. In a 2020 investigation done by *ProPublica* in collaboration with *New Mexico in Depth,* they discovered that Indigenous mothers were being racially profiled at a Lovelace Women's Hospital in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Lovelace health officials had implemented a COVID-19 screening policy for pregnant women where they were targeting women for additional examination who either "appeared to be Native American" or who had ZIP codes on tribal land—checking their addresses with a list of Indian reservation ZIP codes they referred to as the "Pueblos List." Even if those Indigenous women were symptom free or low risk, after being targeted by this screening policy hospital staff separated them from their newborn children, depriving Native mothers of immediate contact and breastfeeding with their infants. Clinicians at Lovelace described the screening process as a "violation of informed consent," recalling a history of forced sterilization where misleading and coercive consent forms were used, as well as a history of Native children being separated from their mothers through Indian boarding schools.[332]

---

[331] Nathana Rae Jaelyn Bird, Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, June 11, 2020.

[332] Bryant Furlow, "A Hospital's Secret Coronavirus Policy Separated Native American Mothers from their Newborns," *New Mexico in Depth, ProPublica,* June 13, 2020, https://www.propublica.org/article/a-hospitals-secret-coronavirus-policy-separated-native-american-mothers-from-their-newborns.

By intervening where colonial forces previously harmed Indigenous women—coercive actions and abuse of consent forms—TWU's doulas are doing the work of both Indigenous women's history and community activism. It is important to emphasize that these are Indigenous doulas advocating for and providing resources for other Indigenous women. Not only does this work (re)vitalize the roles of Indigenous women in birth and family, but it's reproductive justice being mobilized at the grassroots level by and for local Indigenous women and their communities.

Recall that the history of forced sterilization exposed tensions between Indigenous reproductive justice movements and white feminist movements and male-dominated Native activist movements. The different goals of these movements and the differences in the lived-experiences of the women within them meant Indigenous women had to create their own frameworks for reproductive justice, frameworks that operated at the intersections of gender, race, tribal sovereignty, and environmental justice. As a result, contemporary organizations like TWU have had to continue to define reproductive justice on their own terms and through their own narratives, especially when employing reproductive justice at the grassroots level in their local communities. As Dr. Sanchez explains in her PhD dissertation, reproductive justice in TWU is a process of "reclaiming our cultural sovereignty and re-centering a Pueblo/Tewa women's epistemology and de-centering Colonial-White Supremacist Capitalist Scientist Patriarchy." This process involves centering the everyday lives of Indigenous women who are the true experts about grassroots knowledge and the needs of their communities.[333]

TWU describes its broader Indigenous Women's Health and Reproductive Justice Program, of which the YVK Doula program is a part of, as intersectional in its approach to reproductive justice, implementing issues of gender, environmental, reproduction, and economic

[333] Sanchez, "Protecting Those Most Vulnerable," 32-33.

justice along with their frameworks of body sovereignty. This comprehensive approach, according to TWU, allows them to confront colonial violence and its specific impacts on Indigenous women and the environment, making it a wholistic practice that relies on a framework of relationaltivity.[334]

Of special importance within TWU's reproductive justice framework are its principles of body sovereignty. TWU describes body sovereignty as part of a unique continuum of reproductive justice where Pueblo culture and history are necessary for what they call a "culture of affirmative consent" and "informed decision making."[335] Body sovereignty is "every person's right and responsibility to have complete and unencumbered control of their body" including having the power over choice and access to good, safe, and culturally responsive healthcare that incorporates healing from and the prevention of colonial cycles of violence.[336] Even within this model of reproductive justice, TWU understands the tensions surrounding ideas of "choice," calling upon the reproductive justice models from organizations led by Black women such as SisterSong that explain that, "Women of color in the U.S. largely experience limited choices due to a system that keeps us in poverty, gives us inadequate education and healthcare, racially profiles and over-polices us, discriminates against us, disparages us, and more. Reproductive justice shifts the conversation from choice to access, because there is no choice where there is no access."[337] Therefore, TWU's understanding of body sovereignty involves the (re)claiming of Indigenous cultural and social practices concerning birth and family, as well as providing

[334] "Indigenous Women's Health and Reproductive Justice Program," Tewa Women United website, accessed April 13, 2021, https://tewawomenunited.org/programs/indigenous-womens-health-and-reproductive-justice-program.

[335] "Expanding Access to Doula Care," March 2020, 13.

[336] "Expanding Access to Doula Care," March 2020, 13.

[337] SisterSong, quoted in "Tewa Women United: The Yiya Vi Kagingdi Story," accessed March 28, 2021.

accessible reproductive health resources that emphasize and prioritize Indigenous womens' autonomy.

TWU's framework of reproductive justice also incorporates environmental justice because, similarly to WARN, TWU understands Indigenous women and Mother Earth to be inherently connected, which means that any colonial attack on Indigenous women is also an attack on the environment, and any colonial attacks on the environment will consequently have a negative impact on Indigenous women. According to frameworks of environmental justice, Dr. Sanchez explains, health risks associated with the environment do not impact people randomly, but rather have a disproportionate impact on Indigenous populations and other populations of color.[338] And through this framework of environmental justice, TWU centers the devastating impact environmental issues have on Indigenous women in particular, resulting in an intersectional model of reproductive justice that understands the (re)claiming of Indigenous birth practices to be integral to individual, communal, and environmental health. "In reclaiming birth, Pueblo/Tewa women are re-enforcing the importance of protecting and ensuring the health of our Mother Earth," Dr. Sanchez explained, "what happens to women's bodies happens to Mother Earth, **nung ochuu quiyo**, we are directly linked." The relationship between Indigenous women and the environment, Dr. Sanchez reminds us, includes not only the familial and communal environments that can impact Indigenous mothers, but the literal environment as well. "What a mother consumes and what a mother experiences during her pregnancy impacts the growing life within her. The intersection of environmental justice, reproductive justice, and sexual violence cannot be denied or underemphasized."[339] Chasity Salvador further explained how the intertwining of reproductive and environmental justice can be found in TWU's Protect Those

[338] Sanchez, "Protecting Those Most Vulnerable," 34.
[339] Sanchez, "Protecting Those Most Vulnerable," 20.

Most Vulnerable Campaign, where the standard for community and environmental protection is a working-class, farming, pregnant, Pueblo woman. "It's about protecting those most vulnerable in the community and that's a woman who has the reproductive ways of creating new life," she said. "You can't have a healthy community if there's toxins in the soil and the water and you can't have healthy children. We've been able to create that narrative and also see how we have rooted it in the Tewa culture and the Tewa language and really putting together what justice means, what it feels like, what it looks like, from a community perspective."[340]

Therefore with these intersectional frameworks of reproductive justice, TWU's reproductive programming not only creates positive families and communities at the grassroots level but also strives to defend the environment and end violence against Indigenous women and children by helping Indigenous women (re)vitalize their roles of authority within birth and family. Ultimately, the YVK doula program believes that, "the best start for newborn babies comes when they are born into the watchful eyes of trusted and trained aunties and sisters and grandmothers who really care for them and really have the tools to hold these new mothers and fathers in a good way. By giving these new families the very best guidance about how to gently birth and breastfeed and nurture their new babies, our doulas are helping to pave the way for a healthy bright future."[341] The healthy futures that TWU is working to create through culturally grounded and historically informed practices are evidence of TWU's success in confronting past and present colonial violence with the intention of replanting positive Indigenous structures of family and community.

TWU's framework of reproductive justice and resulting doula program are blueprints for how history can be utilized to confront colonial violence at the grassroots community level by

[340] Chasity Salvador, Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, June 10, 2020.
[341] "Tewa Women United: The Yiya Vi Kagingdi Story," accessed March 28, 2021.

uplifting the lived-experiences and needs of Indigenous women. Within this intersectional approach, TWU emphasizes the need for accessible birth and healthcare in their communities, actively confronting forced sterilization's history of targeting poor women of color and exploiting the double discourse relationship between systems like IHS and Indigenous communities. A crucial aspect of TWU's doula program is its economic, social, and cultural accessibility at the grassroots level, once again requiring all doulas to be trauma/history informed, survivor centered, and culturally responsive.[342]

TWU's reproductive justice program, in collaboration with its A'Gin program, ensures that Indigenous women and children are able to achieve "self-determination and agency" and "make decisions supporting their dreams and goals through a culturally congruent curricula enabling them to create awareness of the lived history of our Tewa people and the strength of our cultural ways and practices; to create connections and sense of belonging to self, family and community; to create meaning that unfolds through language, story, and cultural practices; and to provide coping skills to handle grief and loss, trauma, stress and contradictions of life." With these goals, TWU understands that every Indigenous individual and community has the responsibility of healing and (re)claiming Pueblo knowledge and ways of being in order to confront colonial violence "so our young people grow strong into whom they were meant to be, as **Tewah Towah** [Tewa people], peoples of this land."[343]

[342] "Expanding Access to Doula Care," March 2020, 9.
[343] Corrine Sanchez, "Protecting Those Most Vulnerable," 64.

Conclusion

During our second interview together after Three Sisters Collective's protest in the Santa Fe plaza, I asked Autumn Gomez what she would like to see replace colonial monuments like the obelisk and the Oñate statue. Gomez explained how she and the other women of 3SC had discussed the idea of a statue or art installation honoring Indigenous women such as Tewa linguist and storyteller Esther Martinez. However, Gomez explained, they have also kept returning to the idea of a community garden. "A garden where Oñate once stood, now that would be beautiful. I feel like that's the shared heritage of Northern New Mexico. We all survived and we're resilient and we always had those plants and that farming and those cycles to rely on," Gomez said. "I think that would be a great way to honor not only this uniquely New Mexican space, but also to honor the land."[344] Gomez further explained why she believed it is important to (re)vitalize spaces in Santa Fe with Indigenous agricultural traditions that promote community relationships between people, cultures, and the land. "We're small communities, but there is a resurgence in farming and language in younger people," she added. "I think it's recognized and unspoken that these were the things that really saved us as people and can save us as people, especially when we go into difficult times like now."[345]

Gomez's inclination to turn a space that traditionally served as a meeting place for Pueblo people and historically served as space of violent Spanish colonialism and Pueblo resistance into a community garden is an extraordinary example of how the community programming and activism of Three Sisters Collective (3SC) and Tewa Women United (TWU) works. Gomez's idea to replace colonial monuments with a space that simultaneously invokes the social, cultural,

[344] Autumn Gomez (Founder of 3SC), Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, August 7, 2020.
[345] Autumn Gomez, Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, August 7, 2020.

and agricultural traditions of Pueblo people and invites the participation of everyone in the community is phenomenal for several reasons. First, replacing colonial monuments with a community garden involves a historical understanding of the negative impact the idolization of colonial history has had on the local Indigenous and multicultural community of Santa Fe. The women of 3SC recognize this violent history and the ways in which it is perpetuated in the present by the exclusive historical narratives told and sold about downtown Santa Fe. Therefore, not only is 3SC actively confronting this history by calling for the removal of colonial monuments, but by imagining possible replacements for colonial monuments in the form of community gardens, they are also actively imagining ways to replace the violent influence of Santa Fe's colonial history with a (re)vitalized Indigenous system of community. "That's what my decolonized world would look like, people providing for each other but according to what they're good at or what they love to do," Gomez elaborated. "I think that when we talk about liberation movements, that's what we're asking for, we're asking for the simple life of providing for those who we love in a way that we love doing."[346] This Indigenous system of community is additionally important because it requires the participation of everyone in an agricultural cycle that works to sustain the community while encouraging people to invest in their communal and environmental relationships in order to provide for each other through healthy systems that operate apart from and in contrast to colonialism.

Gomez's understanding of the wholistic work a community garden could do for downtown Santa Fe—a space that has experienced multiple forms of colonialism including recent gentrification—calls to mind the Tewa language and practices that Tewa Women United utilizes within their own programming. This language similarly looks to Pueblo agricultural traditions, emphasizing ideas of growth, healing cycles, community relationships, and most

[346] Autumn Gomez, Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, August 7, 2020.

importantly (re)planting. As Dr. Corrine Sanchez explains, confronting colonial violence requires TWU to call upon their "lineage of farmers" in order to "weed out and uproot this culture of violence to (re)plant a culture of peace."[347] And as TWU's guiding core values emphasize, specifically the core values of **Seegi ma vay i** (loving and caring for each other), **Wina ta yay** (together we live these values), and **Wowatsi** (our breath, our prayer, and our commitment to live life with purpose and good intentions), the process of (re)planting healthy community practices must involve the mobilization and accountability of positive intergenerational community relationships.

When I first began researching for my thesis, I quickly became personally and academically frustrated with the different histories I was reading and the violences I was encountering. Was this all history could do, I wondered, retell the violences that have happened to Indigenous people? What was I supposed to do with these violences? What was I supposed to do with the gaps in the scholarship or with the historical narratives that are often more intent on describing violence against Indigenous women, than with providing solutions to past and present problems caused by colonialism? From these experiences I began to critically think about what *Indigenous history* can and should look like, what it can and should be doing for the communities it seeks to understand.

After reading the narratives of Indigenous women such as Helen Cordero, Leslie Marmon Silko, and Deborah A. Miranda, I was reminded that Indigenous women have always been doing historical work, and they have been doing history primarily through storytelling. Storytelling, Silko explains, is complex in that it involves a process of being, it requires seeing yourself connected to those around you and seeing everything contextualized within a larger ongoing

[347] Corrine Sanchez, "Herstories and the Braiding of Environment and Reproductive Justice to Protect Those Most Vulnerable," *Journal of American Indian Education* 55 (Fall 2016): 49.

history. Storytelling is a process of transmitting historical experiences of the past as well as cultural and spiritual ways of being to ensure the survival of Indigenous people.[348] In her memoir, in which Deborah A. Miranda navigates and confronts the history of California Indian Missions and her own family's history, she reminds us that in storytelling and history, "you must know what that storyteller has at stake."[349] Therefore, by following an Indigenous model of storytelling, Indigenous history should be a process of interpreting Indigenous people's past history through the lived-experiences of other Indigenous people in order to pass on knowledge for developing social and cultural strategies that will help present and future Indigenous people survive and thrive. This is critical historical work that Indigenous people, and Indigenous women especially, have already been doing and continue to do today. As scholars Brianna Olson-Pitawanakwat and Cyndy Baskin explain, Indigenous research and efforts to end colonial violence should be led by Indigenous people, and Indigenous women specifically, because this "allows for nuanced, regionally specific Indigenous methodologies that can be healing, transformative and a path forward for decolonization and self-determination."[350] No one helped emphasize this for me more than my father who reminded me that colonial violence did not have to be the complete historical narrative in my thesis, and that I could instead turn to the historical efforts of contemporary Pueblo women in my own community who were actively confronting historical violence and replacing colonial systems of violence. It was imperative that I made a commitment to explore Pueblo women's historical experiences from a perspective that aligned with Pueblo women's ways of historical thinking and storytelling.

---

[348] Catherine Rainwater, *Leslie Marmon Silko's Storyteller: New Perspectives* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2016), 45; Leslie Marmon Silko, "Landscape, History and the Pueblo Imagination," *Antaeus* 57 (1986): 87.

[349] Deborah A. Miranda, *Bad Indians: A Tribal Memoir* (Berkeley: Heyday, 2013), xvi.

[350] Brianna Olson-Pitawanakwat and Cyndy Baskin, "In Between the Missing and Murdered: The Need for Indigenous-Led Responses to Trafficking," *Affilia: Journal of Women and Social Work* 36 (2020): 7.

Turning to the work of TWU and 3SC was essential for investigating how contemporary Pueblo women are using history to confront colonial violence in transformative ways that are uniquely specific to the needs and cultures of their Pueblo communities, but that can also be applied to broader Indigenous historical work and activism. Their work is also important because it highlights how Pueblo frameworks of community and history can be successfully mobilized to end violence in Indigenous communities and promote intergenerational healing. Elder Kathy Sanchez's framework of relationaltivity—a framework that utilizes the multilayered and non-linear connections between Pueblo people and their communities, cultures, environment, and histories—operated as the guiding framework for the historical work of this thesis and was essential for explaining the major historical arguments I underscore. These arguments include the idea that Indigenous history is non-linear, and therefore, past colonial violence is ongoing and has a contemporary impact on Indigenous people. As a result of this non-linear connection, Indigenous people can in turn confront these past histories of colonial violence for the betterment of their present and future communities. Through a framework of relationaltivity I also argue that Indigenous women have great relational powers as key cultural and social leaders in their communities. Therefore, any colonial attack on an Indigenous woman is also an attack on the entire Indigenous community. Accordingly, Indigenous women should be centered in all historical and community activist efforts to end colonial violence not only because Indigenous women are the primary targets of colonial violence and thus best understand colonialism and its recurring forms, but also because they are the best equipped to utilize their inherent relationaltivity to mobilize culturally relevant strategies of healing throughout their communities.

With these arguments in mind, in chapter one I investigated a Pueblo Indigenous history of violence against Indigenous women. This involved examining the beginnings of TWU and

3SC and how both organizations have transformed over time in order to create more preventative programming and to expand their understanding of colonial violence. Complicating the idea of colonial violence and understanding the ways in which it is non-linear, transforms over time, and specifically targets Indigenous women has allowed both organizations to confront violence through their own transformative, historical, and culturally-grounded approaches, as seen through TWU's A'Gin education program and 3SC's recent Santa Fe plaza protest. I, along with the women of TWU and 3SC, contextualized their community programming and activism within an Indigenous history of New Mexico colonialism, specifically highlighting the connections between instances of past colonial violence and Indigenous activism—such as the Pueblo Revolt and Acoma Massacre—with the present experiences and efforts of Pueblo women.

In chapter two, I investigated an Indigenous history of Indian boarding schools by examining frameworks of Native feminisms and Indigenous possibility in order to understand how assimilationist education targeted Indigenous women in order to disrupt Indigenous structures of gender, family, and community. I also interrogated the lasting impact of Indian boarding schools on contemporary Indigenous communities, and the ways in which TWU's A'Gin program and Sayain/Circle of Grandmothers work to confront violence within Indigenous communities by creating safe and culturally significant educational spaces where Pueblo children and families can learn healthy relationship skills from leading Pueblo women.

Finally, in chapter three I examined an Indigenous history of forced sterilization and how eugenics theory was utilized to target Indigenous women as a part of ongoing colonial efforts to annihilate Indigenous people and take Indigenous land through means of population control. Within this chapter I emphasized how, similar to Indian boarding schools, forced sterilization also worked to disrupt Indigenous family and community structures by targeting Indigenous

women and their societal influence. I then investigated how TWU created its Yiya Vi Kagingdi doula program and its own framework of reproductive justice in response to the lasting impact of the history of forced sterilization on local Pueblo communities. Examining TWU's doula program was essential for illustrating the intersectional complexities of Indigenous reproductive justice as well as the ways in which TWU has utilized the lived-experiences of Indigenous women to create grassroots community programming that seeks to confront colonial violence at the local level. Thus, the work of TWU and 3SC uplifts grassroots strategies for confronting colonial violence and offers other historians and activists a blueprint for both navigating and utilizing history in their efforts to end colonial violence. Both organizations also remind us, however, that this work is most successful when it centers the lived-experiences and relational influence of Indigenous women and when it operates at the grassroots level.

I hope this work helps provide models of history and healing for other Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars and activists. As explained by Autumn Gomez, Indigeneity involves many negotiations and processes, and it is also about "carrying on the traditions that I know of and what knowledge I do have to live by, and sharing it in a way that's not exploitative but uplifting." Gomez further described how these efforts are evident in her activism and artwork, both being crucial aspects of her Indigenous identity and community work through 3SC. "It's part of my artwork too, giving that perspective of creating patterns and colors that are traditional but also with a new medium. That's the idea that is in all my work, carrying on these traditions and these philosophies, but also pushing to rebel, to create not necessarily a new culture, but a healthier culture."[351] This thesis is my offering and attempt to do the same thing, utilize the knowledge and skills I do have to uplift the history and activism of Pueblo Indigenous

[351] Autumn Gomez, Interview by author, Santa Fe, NM, August 7, 2020.

communities in the hope that this work in and of itself is contributing to individual and communal, historical and contemporary efforts to confront colonial violence.

Bibliography

Primary Sources:

Interviews:

Billie, Autumn Rose (Founder of 3SC). Individual Interview by author. Santa Fe, NM, August 11, 2020.

Bird, Nathana Rae Jaelyn (Associate Director of TWU). Interview by author. Santa Fe, NM, June 11, 2020.

Gomez, Autumn (Founder of 3SC). Individual Interview by author. Santa Fe, NM, August 7, 2020.

Salvador, Chasity (Executive Assistant of TWU). Interview by author. Santa Fe, NM, June 10, 2020.

Sanchez, Dr. Corrine (Executive Director of TWU). Interview by author. Santa Fe, NM, July 1, 2020.

Sanchez, Elder Kathy Wan Povi (Project Coordinator of TWU). First Interview by author. Santa Fe, NM, July 10, 2020.

[---]. Second Interview by author. Santa Fe, NM, July 17, 2020.

Three Sisters Collective Founding Members: Dr. Christina Castro, Autumn Rose Billie, and Autumn Gomez. Interview by author. Santa Fe, NM, June 12, 2020.

Verswijver, Andrea (Violence Response and Resiliency Specialist). Interview by author. Santa Fe, NM, October 9, 2020.

Additional Primary Sources:

Abinanti, Abby JD, Angi Cavaliere, Alanna Nulph, Blythe K. George, Annita Lucchesi, et al. "To'Kee Skuy' Soo Ney-Wo-Chek'/ I Will See You Again in a Good Way: A Year 1 Project Report on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two Spirit People of Northern California." Sovereign Bodies Institute, July 2020.

Amnesty International. "Maze of Injustice: The Failure to Protect Indigenous Women From Sexual Violence in the U.S." New York: Amnesty International USA, 2007. https://www.amnestyusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/mazeofinjustice.pdf.

Choate, John N., photographer. "Seventeen Young Female Pueblo Students [version 1]." Glass Plate Negative Photograph, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, c1885. From the *Carlisle Indian School Digital Resource Center.* *http://carlisleindian.dickinson.edu/images/seventeen-young-female-pueblo-students-version-1-c1885*. NAA_73332; Photo Lot 81-12 06810600.

Hammond, George P. and Agapito Rey. *Don Juan de Oñate, Colonizer of New Mexico 1595-1628.* Albuquerque, NM: The University of New Mexico Press, 1953.

Huyser, Kimberly R., Sofia Locklear, and Gabriel R. Sanchez. "Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls: A Briefing Paper." Albuquerque, New Mexico: University of New Mexico Native American Budget & Policy Institute, University of New Mexico Center for Social Policy, June 2019.

"IHS Officials Put on Firing Line Over Counseling Procedures." *Pueblo News,* Albuquerque, New Mexico, March 1978, vol. 6, no. 3, p. 6.

Keane, Colleen. "Women Gather at Roundhouse to Honor Murdered, Missing; Demand Action." *Navajo Times,* March 7, 2019. https://threesisterscollective.files.wordpress.com/2019/03/07_navajo-times__a__4iwd2019.pdf.

Lucchesi, Annita Hetoevehotohke'e and Abigail Echo-Hawk. "Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women & Girls Report: A snapshot of data from 71 urban cities in the United States." *Our Bodies, Our Stories Project Series.* Urban Indian Health Institute: Seattle Indian Health Board, November 14, 2018.

"Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women & Girls." University of New Mexico Native American Budget and Policy Institute, University of New Mexico Center for Social Policy, New Mexico Indian Affairs Department, accessed October 16, 2020.

Native American Oral History Program. "Whitehorse, Jean - Part 3." (2019). https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/cswr_na_interviews/9.

"New Mexico Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Relatives Task Force Report." Report to the Governor and Legislature on the Task Force Findings and Recommendations. State of New Mexico Indian Affairs Department in partnership with the Native American Budget Policy Institute, December 2020.

Perry, Steven W. "American Indians and Crime: A BJS Statistical Profile 1992-2002." *American Indians and Crime Series.* Bureau of Justice Statistics: U.S. Department of Justice, December 2004 (NCJ 203097).

Sovereign Bodies Institute. MMIWG in New Mexico data, 1914-Present. Requested by author. Received November 5, 2020.

Tewa Women United. “About Us.” Accessed November 1, 2020, https://tewawomenunited.org/about-us.

[---]. “A’Gin Healthy Sexuality and Body Sovereignty project.” Accessed December 12, 2020, https://tewawomenunited.org/agin-tribal-prep.

[---]. “Expanding Access to Doula Care: Birth Equity and Economic Justice in New Mexico, Yiya Vi Kagingdi Doula Project.” Indigenous Women’s Health and Reproductive Justice Program: Tewa Women United, March 2020.

[---]. “Indigenous Women’s Health and Reproductive Justice Program.” Accessed April 13, 2021, https://tewawomenunited.org/programs/indigenous-womens-health-and-reproductive-justice-program.

[---]. “Our Story.” Accessed November 4, 2020, https://tewawomenunited.org/our-story.

[---]. “Sayain / Circle of Grandmothers.” Accessed March 21, 2021, https://tewawomenunited.org/sayain-circle-of-grandmothers.

[---]. “Tewa Women United A’Gin Project, Healthy Sexuality and Body Sovereignty: Part Two of Three.” A’Gin Healthy Sexuality and Body Sovereignty Project: Women’s Leadership and Economic Freedom Program. Accessed October 13, 2020. https://spark.adobe.com/page/tDffIbPvA7eHF/.

[---]. “Tewa Birthing Project Maternal Health Survey Final Report: A Community Survey of Tewa Women.” Española, NM: Published by Tewa Women United, 2010.

[---]. “Tewa Women United Birth Justice in Northern New Mexico.” YouTube video: Tewa Women United, May 3, 2019. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bcR52QBOdhc.

[---]. “Tewa Women United: The Yiya Vi Kagingdi Story, Doulas, birth justice, and a more equitable future for families in Northern New Mexico—and beyond.” Tewa Women United, Adobe Spark Page. Accessed March 28, 2021. https://spark.adobe.com/page/ZVm9DKiyCqP2y/?fbclid=IwAR3ZRbYTQ7TBmK-q5lwTJLGJs9ngv5LjRRvj0S0UA4V6o46sL5pm9e--haQ.

Secondary Sources:

Adams, David Wallace. *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928.* Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 1995.

Alexander, Michelle. *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness,* revised edition. New York: The New Press, 2012.

Archuleta, Margaret, Brenda J. Child, and K. Tsianina Lomawaima. *Away from Home: American Indian Boarding School Experiences, 1879-2000.* Phoenix, Arizona: Heard Museum, 2000.

Babcock, Barbara A., Guy Monthan, and Doris Born Monthan. *The Pueblo Storyteller: Development of a Figurative Ceramic Tradition.* Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1986.

Bauerkemper, Joseph. "Narrating Nationhood: Indian Time and Ideologies of Progress." *Studies in American Indian Literatures* 19, no. 4 (December 1, 2007): 27–53.

Brill, Marlene Targ. *Dolores Huerta Stands Strong: The Woman Who Demanded Justice*. Athens: Ohio University Press, 2018.

Brooks, James F. *Captives and Cousins: Slavery, Kinship, and Community in the Southwest Borderlands.* The University of North Carolina Press, 2002.

Burnette, Catherine. "Historical Oppression and Intimate Partner Violence Experienced by Indigenous Women in the United States: Understanding Connections." *The Social Service Review* 89, no. 3 (September 1, 2015): 531–563.

Chakraborty, Ranjani. "How the US stole thousands of Native American children." Youtube video: Vox Missing Chapters Series, October 14, 2019. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UGqWRyBCHhw.

Child, Brenda J. *Boarding School Seasons: American Indian Families, 1900-1940*. University of Nebraska Press, 1998.

[---]. *Holding Our World Together: Ojibwe Women and the Survival of Community.* New York: Viking, 2012.

Coalition to Stop Violence Against Native Women. "Domestic Violence." CSVANW Resources. Accessed March 16, 2021, https://www.csvanw.org/resources/what-is-domestic-violence.

Deer, Sarah. *The Beginning and End of Rape: Confronting Sexual Violence in Native America.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015.

DeLucia, Christine M. "Continuing the Intervention: Past, Present, and Future Pathways for Native Studies and Early American History." *The American Historical Review* 125, no. 2 (April 2020): 528–532.

Devens, Carol. "'If We Get the Girls, We Get the Race': Missionary Education of Native American Girls." *Journal of World History* 3, no. 2 (1992): 219–237.

Duara, Prasenjit. *Rescuing History from the Nation: Questioning Narratives of Modern China*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995.

Estes, Nick. *Our History Is the Future: Standing Rock Versus the Dakota Access Pipeline, and the Long Tradition of Indigenous Resistance.* London : Verso, 2020.

Freedman, Eden Wales. *Reading Testimony, Witnessing Trauma: Confronting Race, Gender, and Violence in American Literature.* Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2020.

Furlow, Bryant. "A Hospital's Secret Coronavirus Policy Separated Native American Mothers from their Newborns." *New Mexico in Depth, ProPublica,* 13 June 2020. https://www.propublica.org/article/a-hospitals-secret-coronavirus-policy-separated-native-american-mothers-from-their-newborns.

Gordon, Linda. *The Moral Property of Women: A History of Birth Control Politics in America,* 3rd ed. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2002.

Gore, Dayo, Jeanne Theoharis, and Komozi Woodard. *Want to Start a Revolution?: Radical Women in the Black Freedom Struggle*. New York: NYU Press, 2009.

Gram, John R. *Education at the Edge of Empire: Negotiating Pueblo Identity in New Mexico's Indian Boarding Schools*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2015.

Gurr, Barbara. *Reproductive Justice: The Politics of Health Care for Native American Women.* New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2014.

Gutiérrez, Ramón A. "Franciscans and the Pueblo Revolt." From *When Jesus Came, the Corn Mothers Went Away.* In *What Caused the Pueblo Revolt of 1680,* edited by David J. Weber. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1999. 39-53.

Hargreaves, Allison. *Violence Against Indigenous Women: Literature, Activism, Resistance.* Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2017.

Heath Justice, Daniel. *Why Indigenous Literatures Matter.* Waterloo, Canada: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2018.

Heidenreich, Linda. "Mobilizing Linear Histories: Violence, the Printed Word, and the Construction of Euro-American Identities in an 'American County.'" *Journal of American Ethnic History* 23, no. 3 (April 1, 2004): 41–77.

Howe, LeAnne. "Tribalography: The Power of Native Stories." *Journal of Dramatic Theory and Criticism* 14.1 (Fall 1999): 117-125.

Hyer, Sally. *One House, One Voice, One Heart: Native American Education at the Santa Fe Indian School.* Museum of New Mexico Press: Santa Fe Indian School, 1990.

[---]. "Remember Santa Fe Indian School, 1890-1990." Ph.D. diss. University of New Mexico,

1994. https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1078&context=amst_etds.

Jacob, Michelle. *Yakama Rising: Indigenous Cultural Revitalization, Activism, and Healing.* Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2013.

Jacobs, Margaret D. *White Mother to a Dark Race: Settler Colonialism, Maternalism, and the Removal of Indigenous Children in the American West and Australia, 1880-1940.* Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009.

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

Knaut, Andrew L. *The Pueblo Revolt of 1680: Conquest and Resistance in Seventeenth-Century New Mexico.* Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1964.

Lawrence, Jane. "The Indian Health Service and the Sterilization of Native American Women." *American Indian Quarterly* 24, no. 3 (July 1, 2000): 400-419.

Leaños, John Jota. "Frontera!" *PBS* video. Accessed February 24, 2020. https://www.pbs.org/video/pbs-frontera-revolt-and-rebellion-rio-grande/.

Lee, Chana Kai. *For Freedom's Sake: The Life of Fannie Lou Hamer.* Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999.

Leslie M. Silko. Dir. Matteo Bellinelli. Films for the Humanities and Sciences, 1995.

Liebmann, Matthew. *Revolt: An Archaeological History of Pueblo Resistance and Revitalization in 17th Century New Mexico*. University of Arizona Press, 2012.

Lomawaima, K. Tsianina. *They Called It Prairie Light: The Story of Chilocco Indian School*. University of Nebraska Press, 1995.

Miller, Susan. "Native America Writes Back: The Origin of the Indigenous Paradigm in Historiography." *Wicazo Sa Review* 23, no. 2 (2008): 9–28.

Million, Dian. "Felt Theory: An Indigenous Feminist Approach to Affect and History." *Wicazo Sa Review* 24, no. 2 (2009): 53–76.

[---]. "There Is a River in Me: Theory from Life." In *Theorizing Native Studies*, edited by Andrea Smith and Audra Simpson. Durham: Duke University Press, 2014. 31–42.

Miranda, Deborah A. *Bad Indians: A Tribal Memoir.* Berkeley, California: Heyday, 2013.

Newman, Louise Michele. *White Women's Rights: The Racial Origins of Feminism in the United States*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Olson, Dayna. “Protecting Native Women from Violence: Fostering State-Tribal Relations and the Shortcomings of the Violence Against Women Act of 2013.” *Hastings Constitutional Law Quarterly* 46, no. 4 (2019): 821–854.

Olson-Pitawanakwat, Brianna and Cyndy Baskin. “In Between the Missing and Murdered: The Need for Indigenous-Led Responses to Trafficking.” *Affilia: Journal of Women and Social Work* 36, no.1 (August 3, 2020): 10-26.

O’Sullivan, Meg Devlin. “Informing Red Power and Transforming the Second Wave: Native American Women and the Struggle Against Coerced Sterilization in the 1970s.” *Women’s History Review* 25, no. 6 (November 1, 2016): 965-982.

Peterson, Nancy J. “Storyteller as Tribalography.” In *Leslie Marmon Silko’s Storyteller : New Perspectives,* edited by Catherine Rainwater. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2016. 39-55.

Rainwater, Catherine. *Leslie Marmon Silko’s Storyteller: New Perspectives.* Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2016.

Ransby, Barbara. *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement: A Radical Democratic Vision*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003.

Risling Baldy, Cutcha. *We Are Dancing For You: Native Feminisms & the Revitalization of Women’s Coming-of-Age Ceremonies.* Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2018.

Robyn, Linda M. “Sterilization of American Indian Women Revisited: Another Attempt to Solve the ‘Indian Problem.’” In *Crime and Social Justice in Indian Country*. University of Arizona Press, 2018.

Romero, Simon. “Why New Mexico’s 1680 Puebolo Revolt Is Echoing 2020 Protests.” *The New York Times,* September 27, 2020. https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/27/us/pueblo-revolt-native-american-protests.html?referringSource=articleShare.

Sando, Joe S. *Pueblo Nations: Eight Centuries of Pueblo Indian History.* Santa Fe, New Mexico: Clear Light Publishers, 1992.

Sanchez, Corrine. “Herstories and the Braiding of Environment and Reproductive Justice to Protect Those Most Vulnerable.” *Journal of American Indian Education* 55, no. 3 (Fall 2016): 48-71.

[---]. “Protecting Those Most Vulnerable: Building Beloved Families and Communities To End Violence Against Native Women, Girls and Mother Earth.” Ph.D. diss. Arizona State University, April 2015.

Silko, Leslie Marmon. “Landscape, History and the Pueblo Imagination.” *Antaeus* 57 (1986): 83–94.

Silverberg, Robert. *The Pueblo Revolt.* Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994.

Silverman, David J. “Living with the Past: Thoughts on Community Collaboration and Difficult History in Native American and Indigenous Studies.” *The American Historical Review* 125, no. 2 (April 2020): 519–527.

Simonsen, Jane E. *Making Home Work Domesticity and Native American Assimilation in the American West, 1860-1919.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006.

Smith, Andrea. *Conquest : Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide.* Durham: Duke University Press, 2015.

Smith, Linda Tuhiwai. *Decolonizing Methodologies.* London: Zed Books, 1999.

Szasz, Margaret Connell. “Through a Wide-Angle Lens: Acquiring and Maintaining Power, Position, and Knowledge Through Boarding Schools.” In *Boarding School Blues: Revisiting American Indian Educational Experiences,* edited by Clifford E. Trafzer, Jean A. Keller, and Lorene Sisquac. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006. 187-201.

Theobald, Brianna. “A 1970 Law Led to the Mass Sterilization of Native American Women. That History Still Matters.” *TIME* Magazine, November 28, 2019.

[---]. *Reproduction on the Reservation: Pregnancy, Childbirth, and Colonialism in the Long Twentieth Century*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2019.

Torpy, Sally J. “Native American Women and Coerced Sterilization: On the Trail of Tears in the 1970s.” *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 24, no. 2 (2000): 1-22.

Trafzer, Clifford E., Jean A. Keller, and Lorene Sisquoc. *Boarding School Blues: Revisiting American Indian Educational Experiences*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006.

Trouillot, Michel-Rolph. *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2015.

Volscho, Thomas W. “Sterilization Racism and Pan-Ethnic Disparities of the Past Decade: The Continued Encroachment on Reproductive Rights.” *Wicazo Sa Review* 25, no. 1 (2010): 17–31.

Weaver, Hilary N. “The Colonial Context of Violence: Reflections on Violence in the Lives of Native American Women.” *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 24, no. 9 (September 2009): 1552–1563.

Weber, David J. *What Caused the Pueblo Revolt of 1680?* Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1999.

Wilentz, Gay Alden. *Healing Narratives: Women Writers Curing Cultural Dis-Ease.* New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2000.