The Rhetoric of Red Power and the American Indian Occupation of Alcatraz Island (1969-1971)

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents Marvin and Diane, my best teachers.

Abstract

Beginning with Congressional efforts to terminate the sovereignty of federally-recognized tribes in 1953, the federal government's final efforts to assimilate American Indians parodoxically created the conditions for an urban pan-Indian movement for self-determination. Cities such as San Francisco swelled with alienated and militant young Indians seeking to reestablish a sense of place and community. On 20 November, 1969 a group calling themselves the *Indians of All Tribes* seized and occupied Alcatraz Island in the name of "all tribes." The 19-month long occupation grew into the crucible of contemporary American Indian activism, symbolizing a larger project of reclaiming a homeland for the indigenous peoples of North America. The occupation is referred to by many as the foundation of the concept of *Red Power*: a militant language, or way of speaking, that channels the American Indian community's intellectual and rhetorical power into the creation of a homeland. This project examines the rhetoric of the *Indians of All Tribes* to explain the features, tropes, symbols, utterances, and performances which constitute *Red Power*. Starting with the emergence of self-determination in separatist American Indian literary, underground press, and the speeches and minutes of emergent radical protest organizations, this project historicizes the concept of Red Power that informed the occupant's rhetorical and material practices. This dissertation examines the rhetoric of the Indians of All Tribes to demonstrate the ways in which the group's militant demands, radical interpretation of American history, and defense of traditional Indian practices constructed and affirmed a positive collective identity for many alienated and disempowered Indians grappling with the intersectional experience between urban and reservation life.

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Chapter 1

Discovering Alcatraz, Interpreting *Red Power*

On the morning of 9 November, 1969 a small group of Bay Area Indians dressed in traditional ceremonial garments occupied San Francisco's famous Pier 39 anxiously awaiting transport to Alcatraz Island. Their intent was to reclaim the island in a bold protest that would highlight the injustices experienced by American Indians in the Bay Area and beyond. Organizer Adam Nordwall (Fortunate Eagle), dressed in his best Plains Indian powwow outfit, arrived to discover that the plan had seemingly unraveled: a large press corps and a restless group of Indian activists were present but the boats were not. Nordwall had envisioned the event to be a brief occupation or at the very least a symbolic reclamation of the island and media event. Nordwall had alerted his friends in the local press of the protest event weeks earlier at a Halloween party held by local reporter Tim Findley. Nordwall stalled by reading a prepared proclamation to the press, but it seemed as if the event would fail. His fortunes changed when, with a hint of theatricality, a boat named *Monte Cristo* arrived at the pier. Standing on the boat as it arrived that morning was a young Mohawk and student activist leader named Richard Oakes. Oakes and Nordwall were both ascending leaders in the local Indian community in the late 1960's, but they had yet to work together and did not see eye-to-eye on most issues. Nordwall, for example seemed content with the event as a media spectacle and symbolic occupation. Oakes, on the other hand, had a more radical course of action in mind. As became evident later, he envisioned a sustained occupation of the island as a living experiment in pan-Indian unity, an event that would unify and empower local Indians. In what Paul Chaat Smith and Robert Allen Warrior describe as a "leap of faith," Oakes

plunged into the icy waters and strong current of the San Francisco Bay just as the *Monte Cristo* approached Alcatraz. [1] He swam over 250 yards to the shores of Alcatraz Island.

Several protestors followed Oakes lead, risking their own lives in the process. Perhaps their action was a form of ritual, a test of strength and will because after Oakes and his followers were shuttled back to the mainland by the Coast Guard, they chartered another vessel to return to Alcatraz, spend the night there, and plan a long-term occupation. They told reporters the next day that they soon would return with more people and for a much longer period of time. Instead of viewing the event as a mere publicity stunt, Oakes believed that a large-scale protest action at Alcatraz, beyond what Nordwall had ever conceived, was not only possible, it was necessary. Smith and Warrior explain the mystery of the moment when they write:

> Oakes felt exhilaration. Taking Alcatraz suddenly became, real, possible, even inevitable. Until then, Alcatraz had been a dream. His leap of faith was extraordinary, but what really mattered is that other people followed him. At that moment the long occupation of Alcatraz could be said to have begun. Richard Oakes changed the rules. The carefully scripted media event was out of control, and he, not Adam Nordwall, would write the next act…The experience taught Oakes that he needed more people to make an occupation work, so he traveled to UCLA and talked to forty members of the student group there into joining him. One person, however, he could do without. Adam Nordwall, as it happened, would be out of town on November 20, attending a national conference on Indian education. That would be the date of the real assault.[2]

On 20 November, 11 days after the initial event, Oakes landed on Alcatraz Island accompanied by eighty-nine protestors prepared to occupy the island indefinitely. Distinct from other publicity stunts, this event required a sustained commitment on behalf of it's adherents to perform and experience a vision of Indian activism. What followed was a nineteen-month long occupation, dotted with rhetorical proclamations, news conferences, powwows, ritual celebrations, assaults with arrows on passing vessels, moving image events, and deliberative negotiations. On a more personal level, the occupants of Alcatraz experienced exhilaration, empowerment, and pride as well as cold, anguish, and heart break. Between November 1969 and June 1971, the occupation steadily burgeoned into the crucible of Indian activism, attracting thousands of American Indians and sympathetic visitors from across the nation. Among the protestors that would join would be representatives from many tribes, including Miwok, Sioux, Navajo, Cherokee, Mohawk, Puyallup, Hoopa, Ponca, and Omaha among others.[3] For these nineteen months, Oakes and his fellow activists transformed just another 1960's protest movement into a dream of American Indian unity with roots in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The occupation was the culmination and fulfillment of a host of historical visions, concepts, and ideas of Indian empowerment and unity developed for centuries by American Indian intellectuals and activists struggling to sustain and preserve Indian ways of life.

In its immediate context, the Bay Area Indian community desperately needed leadership, hope, and unity. Federal relocation programs had fractured Indian societies across America by taking individuals out of their traditional reservation communities and placing them in unfamiliar urban landscapes with promises of employment. San

Francisco was the most populous of these centers. When federal programs failed to provide adequate social and economic support, depression, poverty, and alcoholism ravaged the city's Indian community. Oakes, who had worked as a bartender for a period of time in the poverty-stricken Mission District of San Francisco, witnessed first hand the depression and hopelessness in the urban Indian community. But while the relocation programs caused considerable despair, they brought Indians from diverse tribes with similar experiences and interests into close contact with one another. Under these conditions American Indians developed a sense of collective interests and, like so many other communities in the 1960's, began to think in the logics of collective organization. The occupation of Alcatraz was a physical and figurative enactment of the groundswell of Indian organization, much of it characterized by a renewed sense of collective struggle and identity.

Thus, calling themselves the *Indians of All Tribes* (IOAT), the group that occupied Alcatraz Island issued a proclamation to explain the meaning and significance of its action. The proclamation, addressed to "the Great White Father and All His People" began, "[w]e, the Native Americans, re-claim the land known as Alcatraz Island in the name of all American Indians by right of discovery."[4] Rhetorically, the proclamation articulated a vision of Indian agency and unity to be expressed, demonstrated, and actualized through direct action. While the proclamation provided a detailed Indian vision for Alcatraz Island, its metaphorical and symbolic features highlighted a much larger goal to uplift and liberate Indian Country as a whole. The proclamation demanded the establishment of a Center for Native Studies, an American Indian Spiritual Center, an American Indian Museum, and other institutions that would sustain American Indian

cultural, social, and educational practices. Further, the proclamation argued that Alcatraz was an ideal space for these activities to take place because it "resembles most Indian reservations." It lacked running water, adequate sanitation, a transportation system, mineral rights, industry, agriculture, and educational facilities. The activists who penned the proclamation reasoned: what place could more adequately represent the real living conditions of Indian Country than a desolate prison? The island would be "fitting and symbolic" of "the great lands once ruled by free and noble Indians."[5]

The proclamation expressed an assertive collective ethnic consciousness of "We, the Native Americans." This claim had an especially resonant power in the San Francisco Bay Area community. The Bay Area was a site in which immense tribal diversity was being transformed into a common Indian cause. "We, the Native Americans" was a bottom-up redefinition expressed in a strategic framing of the U.S. Constitutions "We, the People." Both in a practical and theoretical sense, the urban Indian community's ability to speak collectively was its strength. One occupant, Carol Williams, reflected on the importance of the concept of "all tribes" at Alcatraz, writing, "[w]hen we claimed Alcatraz Island for Indians of all tribes, we meant exactly that. It's so very important for the Indian people to realize that we're never going to get the island unless the Indian people are going to come here, and represent the Indians of All Tribes."[6] Thus, "all tribes" became a strategic term that constructed a common point of identification, that transcended tribal boundaries and that invited other Indians to come and join the initial "settlers" of Alcatraz Island.

The evocative rhetoric of the IOAT reflected a uniquely Indian experience and, as such, was directed at empowering Indian audiences as agents of change in a modern

American context. Accompanied by the politics of direct action, the self-referential and self-addressed rhetoric of traditionalism and community empowerment constituted what many have called *Red Power*: discourses and symbolic actions that constitute what Indian activist and intellectual Vine Deloria called "people-hood" or a "state of mind" that "dominates behavior so that the culture becomes self-perpetuating."[7] At many points throughout the occupation the IOAT employ different rhetorical strategies fashioned to both Indian as well as non-Indian audiences. On the one hand, much of the IOAT expressions relied on symbols and narratives derived organically from the American Indian experience. At the moments in which the IOAT spoke of the occupation and the movement through the narrative structure of ancient Indian myths, they spoke directly to a vernacular audience. For example, the IOAT references to Alcatraz Island as "Turtle Island," retained little resonance with Euro-American audiences unfamiliar with the pan-tribal genesis narrative common throughout much of American Indian folklore. Indian audiences would have likely identified the religious significance of the narrative and its allegorical application to the emergence of a new Indian community at Alcatraz Island. Even if appreciative of the narratives obvious mythic qualities, non-Indians may have still been unmoved. The use of pan-Indian symbols and narratives was intended for reception by Indian audiences first and foremost so that it may move them to join or sustain the movement's struggle.

This rhetoric was directed at building Indian communities, breaking down socially-divisive forces, empowering its Indian audience, and constructing a collective commitment to an Indian future. Red Power activists, particularly those present at the Alcatraz Island occupation, demanded a return to traditional lifestyles, languages,

religions, and ancestral lands. Randall Lake observed that along with its attendant political demands, Red Power rhetoric was a ritualized form of self-address that was:

> [D]irected at movement members and other Indians for purposes of gathering the like-minded, and is addressed only secondarily to the white establishment. For the Indian audience, Red Power rhetoric is persuasive insofar as it serves consummatory purposes prescribed by traditional Indian religious/cultural precepts.[8]

The rhetoric the IOAT upon their initial landing at Alcatraz and throughout the occupation constructed Indian community through the use of common pan-Indian tropes, narratives, and symbols. Many of their demands were directed at resurrecting waning traditional Indian values and were stylized to reach their audience by evoking ancient Indian symbolism that while distant, retained significant value for Indians interested.

On the other hand, the IOAT frequently evoked, in an ironic sense, the Western language of discovery, social contract, and property rights. The IOAT justified their occupation of Alcatraz Island on the arcane European "doctrine of discovery" and other misguided notions that North American lands were vacant prior to contact. These doctrines were employed throughout pre-colonial America to dispossess American Indian lands. Although there is good reason to also characterize this strategy as a part of Red Power rhetoric, such messages are clearly not traditional in the sense implied by Deloria and Lake's perspective. I argue that there are subtle ways in which the IOAT spoke to both Indian and non-Indian audiences. The group's strategic use of irony and comic framing in their imitation of Euro-American political language served several important functions for their primarily Indian audience, as well as their secondary non-Indian

audience. As linguistic appropriation, iterating the language of conquest in the service of Indian self-determination laid siege to the axioms girding Euro-American colonization and dispelled myths of Western predestination in North America. Tongue-in-cheek imitation inverted and disassembled the "God-terms" of American democracy and Western civilization by forcing them into oppositional and subtle self-defeating uses. For Indian audiences, claiming ownership of the key terms of conquest provided justification for repossessing stolen land and seeking the establishment of a new order in the form of inherent self-determination. Appropriation in the form of imitation was not intended as mere mockery of Euro-American history, but instead can be characterized better as what Kenneth Burke describes as the "stealing back and forth of symbols." He writes in *Attitudes toward History*:

> When advocates of the old order have built up the prestige for such symbols as "liberty, justice, fraternity," a proponent of the new order may frame his apologetic so as to 'take them over.' Particularly in American to-day, there is much strategic maneuvering for the possession of the symbol "liberty," as the representatives of the dispossessed and the representatives of the big possessors both lay siege to it in the battle of words, the monstrous and strident 'logomachy' that accompanies the 'stealing back and forth' of symbols.[9]

Thought of from a Burkean perspective, imitating the language used to preempt indigenous self-rule provided Indian audiences with the rhetorical resources to both critique myths girding the ongoing practices of colonization contrary to the letter of American democratic law and envision the possibility that Indians may also assert the right to self-determination.

While Lake is less sanguine about its utility, for their secondary non-Indian audience ironic inversion provided a new and pervasive critique of Indian dispossession based on the purported principles of Euro-American society. The group's deployment of political language that was originally conceived yet selectively failed to enfranchise a pluralistic society pointed to inconsistencies and hypocrisies built into the law itself as it related to American Indian sovereignty. Though reliant on a necessary degree of empathy unforthcoming from many Euro-Americans, the hyperbolic use of social compact and property disrupted the taken-for-granted assumption that lofty democratic principles translated into their just practice. At many points in this dissertation, I argue that the group's parody of Euro-American political languages, particularly in the form of the Indian treaty, produced what Burke described as "perspective by incongruity."[10] Through juxtaposition, the IOAT subjected dominant concepts of Euro-American society to impious, disruptive, and contradictory frameworks. By treating Euro-American political God-terms to incongruous interpretations, the IOAT sought to rupture taken-for-granted meanings to advance new and divergent interpretations of American history. Juxtaposing the letter of American law with its incongruous practice, the IOAT cleverly presented internal contradictions that they hoped would transform non-Indian audiences with pious devotion to America's civil religion. As a method of inducing change, Thomas Rosteck and Michael Leff argue that perspective by incongruity "is the wedge that pries apart established linkages."[11]

While in some ways it was unsuccessful, I argue that while Red Power rhetoric sought to empower an Indian audience as its first priority, it also communicated with non-Indian audiences to diffuse and transform those concepts that continually impeded

Indian empowerment. Since the IOAT was compromised of Indians living at the intersection of reservation life and the predominantly non-Indian city, messages of power were directed at changing both. Red Power rhetoric was multivalent, speaking to transform Indian life within and outside of Euro-American society. Certainly, Red Power can be also be characterized as, what Kent A. Ono and John M. Sloop call a vernacular rhetoric "that resonates within local communities" and emerges not just in oratory but in a variety of community expressions that conventionally constitute culture, including "music, art, criticism, dance, and architecture of local communities."[12] At the same time, Red Power activists did not refuse to also transform and resonate within the Euro-American world. In short, they did not limit themselves to one strategy or one audience. Using the drama and symbolism of the Alcatraz occupation, I hope to show that rhetoric of Red Power, in its variety of traditional and non-traditional (as well as ancient and contemporary) rhetorical expressions, rejected widespread cultural assumptions about Indian self-determination while it also affirmed collective identity in American Indian protest culture throughout the 1960's and 1970's. Further, I hope to demonstrate in this dissertation that attention to the seemingly smallest of symbolic actions - discursive and performative - can reveal the enormity, diversity, and cultural contours of the Indian life and expression.

Native Rhetoric and Collective Identity

This dissertation provides a critical interpretation of the protest discourse and ritual practices that took place throughout the American Indian occupation of Alcatraz Island (1969-1971). This project highlights the historical and rhetorical challenges of developing a pan-Indian mode resistance to Euro-American power structures, not only in

San Francisco but beyond. In this project I use the symbolic and material activities of the protest action to interpret the relationship between the discursive and extra-discursive performance of a new American Indian collective identity. By collective identities I mean those subject positions that are negotiated and constructed through rhetoric, which enable strategic claims to specific cultural practices, and that represent the expressions of lived communities. Alberto Melucci calls collective identity "a process because it is constructed and negotiated throughout a repeated activation of relationships that link individuals (or groups)."[13] Guided by theories of collective identity and rhetoric's evocative power, this project examines the key rhetorical artifacts of the incipient Red Power Movement as it emerged on Alcatraz Island to demonstrate how the rhetorical practices of protest in part constituted and empowered pan-Indian communities. This project develops the concept of pan-Indianism as a central feature of Red Power, namely the result of American Indians finding a cultural commitment to fight on behalf of causes, beliefs, and values shared by diverse Indian communities. I argue throughout that pan-Indianism has been under-explored as a distinctively rhetorical concept, a richly historical and intellectual idea that made the occupation of Alcatraz possible. The purpose of this project is, in words of Clifford Geertz, to *thicken* the concept of Red Power as it was performed, articulated, and solidified in protest by overlapping analytical methods of rhetorical criticism, American Indian history, and social movement theory.[14]

In this endeavor, I am guided by a series of questions that highlight the salience of the occupant's rhetorical activity. In this project, I grapple with the following questions:

- How did the explicitly symbolic actions of the Alcatraz occupation, performed by activists, affirm the collective identity of those who inhabited the island?
- In what ways did such protest activity revive and update pan-Indianism as both an intellectual vision of Indian community?
- How does the hermeneutical activity of the occupant's reclaim and reinvent Indian history to enact self-determination?
- How did the performance of protest and resistance contribute to the historical development of Red Power and contribute the contemporary movement for American Indian self-determination?
- What do such constitutive practices highlight about the overall relationship between social movement rhetoric and the construction of collective identity?
- What are the rhetorical and symbolic legacies of the occupation for contemporary Indian struggle?

These questions are designed to guide this dissertation's central assumption that the rhetoric of Red Power is significant because of its constitutive and evocative power for American Indians. Like other vernacular discourse, the rhetoric of Red Power, in Ono and Sloop's words, "affirms various cultural expressions while at the same time protests against the dominant cultural ideology."[15]

To answer these questions, I examine all of the varieties of symbolic activity building up to and sustained throughout the occupation (proclamations, newsletters, pamphlets, literature, radio broadcasts, spiritual ceremonies, and even graffiti and

artwork) to demonstrate how protest transformed the collective identity of contemporary American Indian communities. These dispersed textual objects embodied the culturally-specific ways in which American Indians discursively enacted Red Power in thought, expression, and deed. In part, Red Power rhetoric enabled American Indians to translate their so-called tragic experiences into a positive expression of cultural identity and self-determination, celebrating rather than lamenting Indian survival in their present moment. This dissertation explores how the IOAT rhetoric responded to important material and rhetorical exigencies that placed limitations on American Indian expression and collective struggles for self-determination.

Throughout this project I highlight three important dimensions of American Indian expression. First, I hope to demonstrate how the expression of American Indians at Alcatraz Island both sustained and reinvigorated a historic vision of people-hood articulated at significant moments in American Indian history in a variety of rhetorical venues. I argue that the purpose of such discourse was to marshal key icons, discourses, and intellectual ideas that functioned to create a common point of identification that empowered all American Indians. To this end, this analysis demonstrates the rhetorical function of historical interpretation to create a positive vision of future Indian worlds. The IOAT, unified as an interpretative community, sustained their collective identity by recovering, reinterpreting, and modernizing symbols of both Indian resistance and oppression. Second, I highlight the rhetorical challenges of building pan-Indian communities. Specifically, the rhetoric at Alcatraz negotiated the historical barriers to pan-Indianism and American Indian self-determination, including the practices of cultural genocide, forced assimilation, urban relocation, cultural differences between distinct

Indian peoples, and the changing roles of spirituality and traditionalism in American Indian life. In short, this dissertation chronicles the IOAT efforts to overcome, disassemble, and upend the cultural formations that constrain American Indian self-determination. Finally, from the rhetoric of the IOAT, I derive theoretical insights as to how strategies of symbolic protest and direct action, showing how occupation may be fashioned by dispossessed groups, fourth-world communities, and others who stand outside of the Euro-American political structures to creatively engage and resist systems of colonialization and control.

Concepts of Power

The rhetoric of Red Power and its development at Alcatraz Island are worthy of sustained historical and rhetorical criticism because they highlight important contours of the American Indian experience and the possible ways in which oppressed minorities sustain their culture through the art of protest. Throughout the occupation and well into the future of contemporary Indian activism, the words and embodied performances that developed at Alcatraz Island helped solidify the modern meaning and significance of Red Power. The occupation of Alcatraz and the conceptual growth of Red Power were not, however, spontaneous developments. Red Power, a term credited to former National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) presidents Mel Thom and Vine Deloria, was used to denote a renaissance in American Indian culture in the latter half of the twentieth century. Red Power referred to an historical-era of intense Indian activism and ethnic resurgence; however, Red Power was also a rhetorical construction of an empowered American Indian collective identity that was at once contiguous and innovative. Red Power was a historical epoch as well as a category of *identity* and *experience*, enacted

through the performance of activist social protest and the rejection of Euro-American ideologies, values, and belief structures.

The centrality of *power* provided distinction for the type of expression and behavior that characterized Indian activism in the late 1960's and 1970's. Like its immediate analogue Black Power, Red Power rejected inclusion into white institutions as remedies for social injustices precisely because such inclusions had never been on *equal* terms. Similar to Black Power rhetoric, Red Power affirmed and empowered the American Indian community with messages that praised the nobility, beauty, and richness of Indian life. Vine Deloria Jr. argues that leaders of the Red Power Movement had trouble relating to, and creating connections with, the struggles of African-American activists involved in the early Civil Rights Movement until the emergence of Black Power and activists such as Stockley Carmichael, Malcom X, and Fred Hampton. American Indians had little interest in formal legal equality with whites and instead favored the creation of separate spaces for self-governance and sovereignty based on traditional Indian ways of life. As Lake explains, while at times it appears to be geared toward a persuading a dominant audience, Red Power rhetoric initiated at Alcatraz was "consummatory," concerned first and foremost with constituting Indian political subjectivity outside of Euro-American institutions; it was not necessarily about persuading Euro-American audiences to adopt legal remedies for social or political inequality.[16] The rhetoric of Red Power requires further interpretive analysis to explain the complexities of how American Indian activists enacted their identity and constructed their community in similar and distinct ways to their historical analogues. As I argue throughout this dissertation, Red Power is not a parody or even an imitation of Black

Power, but a set of cultural specific expressions that reflect indigenous experiences and struggles. Unlike the Black Panther Party across the Bay in Oakland, Red Power activists did not adhere to principles of Marxism nor did they desire interracial revolutionary coalitions among the world's dispossessed. While their dogmatic goals may have belied their cause, Red Power activists were primarily concerned with superseding questions relating to Indian nationhood, self-determination, and land. Thus, I contend that heuristics for interpreting Black Power miss the mark when it comes to analyzing the discourses and direct actions of American Indian activists. Though these Indian activists would borrow the terminological form of "Red Power," they pursued a very different rhetorical and political end.

Through that concept, the development of Red Power was the result of decades, if not centuries of struggle and intellectual labor by American Indian activists. In fact, Troy Johnson argues that Red Power's "roots stretch back to the first encounter between European explorers and the indigenous peoples of Mesoamerica in 1492."[17] While an exhaustive history of Indian resistance is beyond the scope of this project, I do examine the appropriate cultural and historical contexts to illuminate intellectual concepts and rhetoric that are central to the development of Red Power in its contemporary moment.[18]

Historically, activist notions of Indian unity have been based on the notion that the collective survival of Indian nations requires blurring of tribal differences and, in some cases, overcoming deep historical animosity. Pan-Indianism has been both a response to the brutal divide-and-conquer techniques marshaled by Euro-Americans as well as a philosophical ideal that there exists a shared set of experiences and values

among the indigenous people of North America. Some argue that the development of pan-Indianism is an ethic of collective struggle. Hazel Hertzberg explains:

> The long and complex process of Indian resistance and adjustment carried out largely in tribal terms reflected the diversity of Indian societies and the differing and fragmented nature of Indian contacts with whites. But all the while another theme was at work, sometimes complementing, sometimes contradicting, sometimes overwhelming the tribal one. This was the effort to find common ground beyond the tribe, a broader identity and unity based on shared cultural elements, shared experience, shared needs, and shared common fate. Most such attempts were confined to a few tribes and local areas, but the most important involved Indians from many tribes and localities. The Pan-Indian response, like the tribal one, was sometimes military, sometimes political, sometimes religious.[19]

Historically, pan-Indian movements have been characterized by pragmatic as well as philosophical expressions. At some moments intertribal unity accomplished immediate political goals while at others it served the purpose of universal uplift of Indians people based on the cross-cultural values and practices that were distinct from those of Euro-American society. Examining Red Power rhetoric highlights the historical development of pan-Indian rhetoric that highlight how contemporary American Indians made sense of their experience, related to members of their community, and resisted centuries of assimilation and cultural genocide. Furthermore, a study of Red Power contributes to an understanding of the unique features of contemporary American Indian self-determination that both compare to and diverge from other movements for social justice.

A rhetorical perspective on pan-Indianism reveals how discourse and otherwise symbolic activity, much like American Indian oral traditions, were vehicles by which historical visions of American Indian unity were sustained.

The Importance of Alcatraz

Two factors propelled the rise of American Indian activism in the San Francisco Bay Area: disillusionment with the poor treatment at the hands of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and a general culture of social protest at UC Berkeley and the surrounding community. Emboldened by a hard-fought victory to establish the first American Indian Studies program at San Francisco State College in 1969, local Indian activists were organized and desirous of a large-scale protest event. After the federal penitentiary at Alcatraz Island closed in 1963 a public controversy emerged over the island's possible future uses. Throughout the decade, Indian organizations lobbied and fought to obtain and develop the island as an Indian cultural center. Frustrated by their failure to convince policy makers of the socially-redeeming value of their proposal, Alcatraz became a highly-charged symbol for Bay Area Indian activists. For many, throughout the 1960's Alcatraz more than any other publicly available symbol served as synecdoche for Indian oppression, invisibility, and dispossession. The island was targeted for three separate occupations between1964 and 1969. Obtaining Alcatraz became less about its use and more about uniting and symbolically liberating American Indians.

The rationale for anchoring this dissertation at Alcatraz is two-fold. First, the occupation came at an important historical moment in which American Indians were increasingly aware of the need for direct collective action to sustain Indian ways of life. The devastating consequences of federal Indian policies severed the government's special

relationship with Indian nations and forced urban assimilation were abundantly clear, as evidenced by the rates of poverty, infant mortality, unemployment, and alcoholism in Indian communities. The occupation came at a unique moment when Indians across the country clamored for a change in the direction of Indian affairs and leadership. Organizations such as the National Indian Youth Council (NIYC) and factions within the NCAI demanded radical action and stronger networked connections between peoples of diverse tribes. The occupation was one of the first truly extended pan-Indian national protest events in the history of contemporary American Indian activism. Its symbolic value to both the participants in the occupation and the broader national Indian audience was profound. The occupation was a catalyst for years of intense activism including the formation of the American Indian Movement (AIM), the Trail of Broken Treaties, the occupation of the Bureau of Indian affairs in Washington D.C., and the occupation of Wounded Knee, to name a few. In short, Alcatraz came at a pivotal moment; therefore, it helped solidify intellectual concepts about Pan-Indian identity and resistance.

Second, the significance of the occupation is neither understood fully nor historically-situated. Troy Johnson, Duane Champagne, and Joane Nagel observe that despite its symbolic imprint, "the occupation of Alcatraz Island largely has been overlooked by those who write or speak today of American Indian Activism."[20] While it was only one moment in a continuum of activism, activists claim that "it was the occupation of Alcatraz Island that launched the greatest wave of modern-day American Indian activism."[21] Even if one disputes a direct connection between Alcatraz and the future of Indian activism, the occupation is an important and often misunderstood moment of cultural expression at which radical activists struggled with the important

historical themes and concepts that were near and dear to the American Indian community.

In this project I contend that the initial landing on Alcatraz and first proclamation of the IOAT established Indian activism as a lived performative experience. In this mode of resistance the traditional boundaries between rhetoric and non-rhetoric were blurred. A cursory look at the first proclamation reveals a timely articulation of a historically-rich concept of *pan-Indian* collective identity that became an object of inspiration for the movement's membership. Meanwhile, the physical occupation was a lived performative embodiment of the philosophical tenets of Indian self-determination. While the occupation itself did not achieve any of the explicitly-stated goals articulated by the IOAT, its symbolic importance for the American Indian psyche should not be underestimated. One occupant, Grace Thorpe recalls that "Alcatraz was the catalyst and the most important event in the Indian Movement to date. It made me put my furniture into storage and spend my life savings."[22] Another occupant, George Horse Capture agrees that "Alcatraz tapped into something. It was the lance that burst the boil."[23] The occupation was a catalyst for Indian activism and ethnic revitalization. It articulated collective frustration with the rampant cultural, political, and economic deprivation that had plagued most American Indian communities since the nineteenth century. The rhetoric of the occupation articulated a new collective activist frame for American Indian identity in which Indians were no longer atomized, primitive, and passive victims of oppression. Indeed, the idea of an Indian Nation rather than disparate Native American tribes was born in this protest. Put simply, Alcatraz became the rhetorical moment of articulation in which a unified American Indian collective identity coalesced.

Theorizations of Red Power

Several critics interpreted the varying modes, rationalizations, and functions of Red Power. Theorizations of Red Power fall broadly into three categories: academic studies of Alcatraz and Red Power; studies that assess media and popular culture representations of American Indian protest and; reflection essays written for a popular audience, often comprised of biographies, autobiographies, chronicles on the key events, and assessments of the significance of the occupation and movement. Whether popular or scholarly, many authors take very seriously the rhetorical challenges faced by the movement. Specifically, those who analyze the Red Power Movement assess how American Indian protest negotiated historical barriers to Indian activism and expression. While such studies are also interested in political efficacy in assessing the significance and meaning of Red Power, they gesture toward future studies that understand Indian protest outside of standard models of liberal social change. The literature suggests the necessity for more critical work that examines the rhetoric of Red Power as it was directed at and understood by American Indians. Extending this literature further, this dissertation asks: how should we understand the meaning of Red Power and Alcatraz despite the supposed failure of both?

Scholarly studies of Red Power by American Indian and rhetorical scholars alike generally argue that Red Power protest rhetoric is significant as a *constitutive* rather than instrumentally persuasive discourse. The question for this dissertation is to ask in *what ways* is the rhetoric of Red Power constitutive. The literature on Red Power and Alcatraz takes very seriously the notion that messages of protest and confrontation empower and construct the communities for which they speak. This scholarship is important because it

directs critics to evaluate the rhetoric of Red Power as important for Indians *qua* Indians whether or not it advanced a pragmatic political project or retained any one-to-one persuasive effect. For example, Lake rejected a model of political efficacy and persuasive discourse in his study of Red Power rhetoric. His argument was clearly influenced by earlier studies of confrontational rhetoric that asked critics to suspend ethical judgment, specifically in the case of the violent and radical discourse of the radical and power movements.[24] Lake argues that "[t]he judgments of failure so often leveled against Native American protest rhetoric are problematic because they misanalyze the rhetoric's primary audience."[25] Lake also argues that metaphysical, cultural, and religious perspectives of the power of language have precluded Euro-Americans from comprehending the complexity and cultural specificity of Red Power rhetoric. This line of argument certainly echoes the claims of the movement's vanguard. Deloria, reflecting on "communication gaps" in modern Western civilization, makes a similar argument that Indian communicative practices are so culturally-specific that they are incompatible with Euro-American theories of language and communication.[26] Red Power's message at Alcatraz in particular was shocking and repulsive to Euro-Americans audiences. In an influential essay on the occupation Deloria wrote,

> The Alcatraz news stories are somewhat shocking to non-Indians. It is difficult for most Americans to comprehend that there still exists a living community of nearly one million Indians in this country…The take-over of Alcatraz is to many Indian people a demonstration of pride in being Indian and a dignified, yet humorous protest against current conditions existing on the reservations and in the cities. It is this special pride and dignity, the determination to judge life according to one's

> own values, and the unconquerable conviction that the tribes will not die that has always characterized Indian people as I have known them.[27]

While the rhetoric of the occupation - calling for Native pride, the return to traditional lifestyles, languages, and religions, the return of ancestral lands - may have been meaningful to American Indians, it was not easily understood by non-Indians, particularly those in positions of power and those targeted by the protestors' criticism. On the surface, Euro-Americans understood the movement's demands for land and self-rule yet found their arguments unpersuasive and hopelessly antiquated. At a deeper level, I argue that the fundamental point of misunderstanding was *temporal*. Predominant Euro-American attitudes toward history held that traditional Indian culture was irrevocably trapped in America's primitive past. Demands for self-determination based on treaty promises and ancient cultural traditions were misunderstood by non-Indians audiences as at best anachronistic and at worst socially retrograde. Due to the persistence of cultural myths that American Indians had vanished or otherwise been assimilated, many Euro-Americans were not equipped to understand the historical complexity and cultural specificity of American Indian demands.

Lake examines the temporal features of Red Power to demonstrate the ways in which it enacts sacred or circular time to demonstrate how such rhetorical practices "characterize native 'history' as an on-going tale of injustice, the modern movement as the fulfillment of ancient prophecy, and nature cultures as the sort to which all human life will turn to survive."[28] Red Power rhetoric establishes deep connections between past and present to make Indian religion, ritual, and philosophy to renew itself in the present as "the rebirth of traditional tribal life."[29] In some respects, contemporary Red Power

rhetoric shares characteristics with the earlier ritualistic and symbolic activity of ceremonies such as the Ghost Dance. That is to say that the performance of ritual was an important component of constituting community. Lake's study of Red Power rhetoric demonstrates the ways in which it enacts and empowers its Indian audience as a community and relies on connections to the distant past and enactments of alternate time to draw strength from ancient visions of important symbolic figures, communities, and rituals. While Lake's work poses important questions and directs critics to examine Red Power as a ritualized form of community self-address, there are a myriad of ways in which different symbols and discourses address different needs and problems that are specific to American Indian audiences. This dissertation extends Lake's work further by exploring the different community-building functions of the tropes, symbols, images, and performances that unfold through the microcosmic narrative arch of the Alcatraz occupation.

Rhetorical critics have also assessed how media and popular culture representations complicated the development of Red Power. In their study of the rhetorical challenges facing the American Indian Movement (AIM), John Sanchez and Mary Stuckey argue that Red Power rhetoric is "educative" and "constitutive."[30] While they agree that Red Power rhetoric is consummatory as opposed to purely instrumental, they also argue that American Indian rhetors were perhaps too focused on either an in-group or out-group audience and, as such, risked losing both. They argue that Indian activists were forced to craft their message to three audiences simultaneously: the government, the media, and other activists. AIM activists had to contend with "preconceived, stereotypical, and/or negative images concerning what it meant to be

'American Indian.'"[31] Simultaneously, American Indians tried to reclaim their own history, image, and identity in order to gain entry to American deliberative space and the framework of dominant culture. Sanchez and Stuckey supplement Lake's observations by demonstrating the constraints placed on American Indian protest rhetoric by dominant culture and the symbolic processes of colonization.[32]

Likewise, Richard Morris and Philip Wander argue that the displacement of tribal identities by the construction of the universal "Indian" created a set of nearly insurmountable rhetorical challenges for American Indian protest. They argue that Euro-American's fundamental misunderstanding of the Indian experience made it "virtually impossible for them [Indians] to achieve self-determination or establish a firm foundation for communicating with the dominant society."[33] Stereotypes of the universal Indian without distinct cultural identities created barriers to effective protest rhetoric. Protestors were expected to talk and act in ways that aligned with popular culture images of "real Indians." Like most rhetorical studies of Red Power, Morris and Wander analyze the protest rhetoric of the American Indian Movement's occupation of Wounded Knee in 1973. Their study demonstrates the rhetorical challenges of negotiating collective identity as a matter of necessarily working against the grain of popular cultural stereotypes. The major insight of the works such as Sanchez, Stuckey, Morris and Wander is to explain the ways in which American Indians faced the dual challenge of constructing a common identity for a tribally diverse and conflicted group of activists all the while negotiating that identity in a way that challenged and eroded deep-rooted cultural stereotypes of Indian collectivity.

All of these scholars agree that the most important things that distinguished Red Power in the history of Indian activism was its explicitly pan-Indian character. In Joane Nagel's words, Red Power messages "reflected their supratribal roots and agenda" and reflected a transcendent ethnic pride that "prompted a resurgence in American Indian identity."[34] The movement's rhetoric constructed an interpretative frame for its Indian audience that enabled the emergence of collective identity. In sum, American Indian scholars, as well as rhetorical critics of Red Power, seem to agree that Red Power was misunderstood by dominant society, fashioned most clearly for an Indian audience, and because it was oriented toward an aim that Euro-Americans rarely understood, the diffusion of tribal divisions for the purpose of fulfilling a vision of an inclusive collective identity and self-determination. This is not to suggest that the movement was a failure by standards of political efficacy. As I demonstrate throughout this project, direct action and symbolic protests drew renewed attention to Indian issues at a federal level, particularly land reclamation, and helped stem the tide of anti-Indianism at work in the Congressional movement for termination and relocation.

The literature on the Alcatraz occupation itself situates the occupation within the context of American Indian culture and life. These studies tend to be written for a popular audience yet provide interesting insight into what the occupation meant to its participants and observers. There is some scholarly confusion, however, as to the role that the occupation of Alcatraz played in the formation of the rhetoric of Red Power. This is also true for the academic studies of Red Power. A majority of those who chose to study Red Power have tended to focus on the later moments in the movement such as the occupation of Wounded Knee, South Dakota and the activities of AIM. As of now, there is no

comprehensive rhetorical study of Red Power that uses Alcatraz as its primary object of study. Existing studies on Red Power rhetoric reference the importance of the occupation to the overall narrative arch of the movement; however, they do not perform a close read of the wealth of discourses, rituals, and varieties of symbolic activity produced throughout the occupation (what I refer to throughout as the foundational artifacts of the movement). A close reading highlights how the performance of protest and the articulation of Indian epistemologies are the foundation of contemporary American Indian identity and community. Even in American Indian studies, Johnson, Champagne, and Nagel argue that the occupation has been ignored despite its importance. They argue that the occupation has been overshadowed because it failed sustain the media attention of events such as Wounded Knee. "The occupation of Alcatraz Island that launched the greatest wave or modern-day American Indian activism," they explain. [35] Scholars that recognize Alcatraz as a significant moment in pan-Indian activism do at least note its important symbolic and performative dimensions. Deloria suggests that Alcatraz was important because it constituted an intellectual cauldron in which diverse philosophies of Indian life and activism were negotiated and animated through rituals of protest.

Most importantly, Alcatraz was the performance of those philosophies in the lived ritualistic experience of collective protest.[36] Smith and Warrior concur that the occupation established a collective "Indian philosophy geared to modern times."[37] Put differently, Alcatraz was an experiential method of constituting collective identity through performing protest. Alcatraz established that the Red Power identity was constituted and fulfilled by performing your commitment to people-hood. Protest was a ritual that expressed the unity of Indian people. Smith and Warrior continue to argue that

Alcatraz was important because it was a "reflection of their ideals of unity and consensus and a rejection of the idea of hierarchy."[38] In fact, the tactic of property seizure and occupation required a commitment by individuals to sacrifice for the collective good. Alcatraz established the model of activism that was taken up later by the AIM at large-scale protest movements in the years to follow; including the occupation of the BIA and Wounded Knee. Deloria contends that "Indian[n]ess was judged on whether or not one was present at Alcatraz, Fort Lawson, Mt. Rushmore, Detroit, Sheep Mountain, Plymouth Rock, or Pitt River."[39]

The tactic of property seizure or occupation is also important because it was marshaled as a metaphor for liberation of Indian Country. Journalist Tim Findley and close friend of Adam Fortunate Eagle argued that "Alcatraz in 1969 was not a place; it was in idea, an electrifying moment like the March on Washington or the Chicago convention."[40] The relationship between place and collective identity established at Alcatraz was fundamental in establishing the unity reflected in the later activities of the movement. Another movement participant, Jack Forbes, argues that Alcatraz created a space where it was "all right to be Indian" regardless of experience, location, or tribal affiliation. In this regard, the occupation was "an experiment in native self-determination in a communal and political sense."[41] Alcatraz was an exemplary model of what a pan-Indian community could resemble; a safe-space for all indigenous people to reclaim pride in both individual and collective terms. Occupant Lenny Foster writes that the concept of "all tribes" successfully developed in the atmosphere of the occupation because urban and rural Indians could come together, find common ground, and express "a sense of unity and brotherhood" to "reclaim our Indian dignity."[42]

The accumulation of activist narratives attesting to personal transformations arising from the occupation attests to the need for a comprehensive rhetorical study; however, not merely because the event preceded others. By focusing on the genesis of a new Indian community at Alcatraz Island from 1969 to 1971, this study advances previous work while also accomplishing something quite different. Most significantly, in terms of approach, I examine not only discourses but the transformative experience of lived protest. Unlike any other Indian protest event in the twentieth century, the IOAT constructed a radical colony in which idealized facets of Indian life were performed. Like previous work, I explore the rhetorical function of American Indian tropes and symbols; however, I argue that the simulation of idealized Indian life at Alcatraz offers an opportunity to read the performative aspects of Indian protest rhetorically (even those that perhaps appear mundane at first glance). Taken together, closely reading the subtleties of recolonizing the island, making it livable, and deriving metaphorical content from the prison's oppressive features, highlights the ways in which the survival of traditional Indian cultural values into the twentieth-century challenged ingoing practices of dispossession. The IOAT accentuated and performed Indian survival as a basis of social critique. By articulating and then putting rhetorical concepts of Indian resistance in motion, the Alcatraz occupants enacted the self-determination they sought to create throughout America. In this project, I interpret the symbolic *totality* of the protestor's actions – beyond those identifiable as discursive demands – as a mode of establishing collective agency, symbolizing alternative visions of Indian community, establish identification, and critiquing Western perspectives toward Indian life and sovereignty.

Approaches to Protest

This project approaches social movements as rhetorical processes rather than discrete objects or organizational phenomena. A rhetorical approach, emphasizing symbolic identification and social redefinition, highlights how social movements transform culture at the level of signification. Echoing Michael C. McGee, Kevin Deluca argues that a rhetorical perspective on social movements offers unique advantages over organizational, leader-centric, or resource-based approaches because it allows critics to explain and evaluate the ways in which social movements constitute social reality and change cultural meanings across time. Deluca writes:

> [S]ocial movements are not phenomena, but sets of meanings. Consequently, a rhetorical theory of social movements is not a study of organizational communication but an account of the social consciousness of a society. Changes in the social consciousness are empirically present in the public discourse or rhetoric used to describe "reality." In short, social movements are changes in the meaning of the world, redefinitions of reality, with such realities always being constructed through the filter of rhetoric.[43]

Social movements are significant because they transform, reorder, and constitute social meanings. Leader-centered, organizational, or *resource-mobilization* approaches understand rhetoric in a goal-oriented instrument. Many theorists have aptly shown how these approaches can collapse rhetorical practices into one among many of a movement's organizational components and available means of mobilizing its participants.[44]

The insights of Ono and Sloop's concept of vernacular discourse provides critics with important resources to understand the cultural implications of protest rhetoric and

the "discourse that resonates within and from historically oppressed communities."[45] Protest rhetoric that emanates from culturally-specific local communities can function not only as a counter-hegemonic demand, but as an affirmation of a sense of community in which "culture and protest are interwoven."[46] Protest discourses resonate within the community as a simultaneous rejection of dominant essentialism and affirmation of the group's values, beliefs, and practices. Establishing a framework for criticizing the ways in which protest discourses are circulated within a vernacular community opens up space for new situated concepts of community to emerge. While Ono and Sloop caution against unproblematic recovery of vernacular voices, they suggest that an accompanying critical framework that pays close attention to a community's specific experience and context can highlight the positive and quite radical affirmations at work in protest rhetoric.

This approach also highlights the ways in which vernacular rhetoric transforms the collective identity of movement participants. Hank Johnston, Enrique Larana, and Joseph Gusfield explain that, "mobilization factors tend to focus on cultural and symbolic issues that are associated with sentiments of belonging to a differentiated social group where members can feel power; they are likely to have subcultural orientations that challenge the dominant system.[47] Thus confrontation can be understood as an articulation of collective identity in the face of homogenizing practices in the dominant culture.[48] In this project, I rely on the concept that movement activity is heavily symbolic, caters to the collective cognitive needs of its adherents, and is sustained primarily through discursive practices of protest.

Indigenous Approaches to Interpretation

As a vernacular discourse emanating from the indigenous radicalism of urban American Indians, Red Power rhetoric is dispersed in a variety of traditional and non-traditional rhetorical forms. One can find Red Power in oratorical performance or expressed lyrically in the form of a pamphlet's poem about the harshness of city life. The IOAT and their supporters produced a variety of rhetorical "texts" that expressed the community's collective identity, all of which require careful interpretation from an indigenous perspective. While there are key speech texts that provide cues as to what the IOAT was trying to accomplish for its community, one must examine the many outlets in which urban Indians expressed themselves, and from which they drew inspiration to interpret the words that made self-determination an imaginable reality. As Ono and Sloop observe, "it means reading pamphlets printed by community organizations, watching films by independent filmmakers, or talking about orations given on the street."[49] I will add to this list other expressions including literature, poetry, and song from which activists invent, inspire, and empower themselves and their community. That is to say that Red Power emerges in the metaphorical expressions of self-determination in N. Scott Momaday's Pulitzer-Prize winning novel *House Made of Dawn* and the direct exhortations of the IOAT in their first proclamation. Red Power circulates across the time and space, appearing in radical separatist literature of writers such as Momaday and Leslie Marmon Silko. Concurrently Red Power matured into a project of self-determination by urban Indian activists in their pamphlets, speeches, and newsletters throughout the occupation. Through a comprehensive critique of the discourses of the occupation, in the broadest sense possible, critics can trace the culturally-specific importance of Red Power as a self-affirming discourse.

To elaborate the important themes and functions of Red Power, in this dissertation I examine discourses that require attuned culturally-specific modes of interpretation. Extending both Ono and Sloop's concept of vernacular criticism and Steven Mailloux's situated hermeneutical approach to "cultural rhetoric," I argue that critics of Red Power must adopt an empathetic hermeneutic as an approach to understand community-specific rhetorical practices.[50] Standing in the subject-position of the IOAT would be an impossible, and likely problematic task; however I suggest that exploring the daily expressions of the IOAT provides insights into the community-specific function of particular discourses. A culturally-specific hermeneutic, as Mailloux suggests, "focuses on tropes, arguments, and narratives constituting the interpretation of texts at specific times and places."[51] While employing an approach most closely linked to close textual criticism that pays attention to subtle and nuanced movements of rhetorical construction, I do not consider Red Power texts as fixed, finished, or autonomous cultural products. As such, my interpretation develops theories of collective identity organically, not by imposing them from the top-down. Borrowing from Bernadette Calafell and Fernando Delgado's reading of Latina/o texts, I attempt to "accept the text on its terms."[52]

This task is challenging for the non-tribal outsider seeking to understand a vernacular not necessarily intended to be consumed by non-tribal persons. Deloria warns that anthropologists and "other friends" of the American Indian have inflicted damage on tribal communities by imposing meaning from the outside; amassing a wealth of data about tribal life but producing very shallow critical insights. He argues that one problem is that such approaches treat indigenous subjects as "objects for observation," "experimentation," and "manipulation" while contributing "substantially to the

invisibility of Indian people today."[53] Ono and Sloop echo a similar concern that the study of vernacular discourse without an accompanying critical framework may unconsciously reproduce the ideological presuppositions that one hoped to uncover. I hope to introduce self-reflexivity and to challenge linear and ossified notions about textual and rhetorical culture that, while may be useful in the Western tradition of democratic eloquence, do not explain all the various and fragmentary expressions of American Indian self-determination in this project. I argue that the meaning of the Alcatraz occupation is not constituted exclusively by one official set of speeches or written texts, but by the fragments of community vernacular expressions (pamphlets, newsletters, literature, and so on). Red Power can be traced historically as it was negotiated in the American Indian community's expression through the Alcatraz occupation.

Critics should appreciate that American Indian texts do not necessarily display the textual veracity and linearity of the Western imagination.[54] In some instances, they may not persuade or make specific arguments. Authorship is sometimes difficult to authenticate. Simple or seeming banal observations may contain a universe of meaning if one is familiar with the symbolic lexicon of tribal life. Understanding this holistic complexity, accepting its interconnectivity, and allowing its meaning to emerge organically, and accepts it on its own terms.

The tools of hermeneutical criticism provide a rich resource as an interpretive strategy for critics and a perspective about the purposes and affects of rhetorical activity. Mailloux suggests that "rhetorical hermeneutics includes tools both for interpreting texts and for producing them, for describing how texts are established as meaningful through

rhetorical exchanges and for providing rhetorical strategies enabling participation in such exchanges, whether disciplinary or larger cultural conversations."[55] Furthermore, Walter Jost and Michael J. Hyde contend that the hermeneutical approach may be best suited for culturally-specific criticism because it requires that "the reader must attempt to reconstruct and reexperience the distinctive mental processes that were at work in its composition."[56] To interpret culturally-specific rhetoric one must be attuned to a constellation of community discourses from which the rhetoric draws. As I suggest in later chapters, one must understand the sustaining influence of separatist writers such as Momaday and Silko to understand how urban radicals couched their arguments for self-determination. Like the critic, Red Power activists were also *hermeneuts*, involved in a long chain of interpretations of community values and beliefs. In this dissertation, I will both textualize symbolic activity for analytical interpretation and identify unique and sometimes mysterious moments where rhetorical competence was displayed to negotiate extreme contingency and affirm and meanings of communal practices.

The rhetoric of the IOAT in particular mirrors its protest agenda. The texture of collective pronouns, the synecdoche of the barren "prison" of Alcatraz, and the symbolic reclamation of geographical space, are fragmentary discourse in which Red Power conceptually matures. Symbolic activity comprises a constellation of culturally-embedded vernacular practices that shape, and are shaped by, the interpretative capacity of historical subjects. Put differently, historical actors draw from a range of possible situated interpretative frameworks or discursive fields to constitute reality at a particular moment and, conversely rhetorically shape that reality. An indigenous and hermeneutical reading of Red Power highlights how reinterpretations and revisions of Indian culture

were used to distinguish pan-Indian collective struggle from all others. It also demonstrates the challenges of such rhetorical reinterpretations. Chaining together the *interpretation of interpretations* displays the broad and fragmentary discursive field from which Red Power emerged.

Discursive Objects

This dissertation examines the documents produced throughout the occupation of Alcatraz by its participants and members of the movement. Many of these documents theorized the meaning and purpose of American Indian protest. In addition, I choose to read the symbolic behavior of the protestors as a "text," a mode expression and meaning making. This project is accomplished through primary document research and supplemented by secondary materials that evaluate the significance of specific historical contexts. Using the primary documents from the occupation itself as its anchor, I will contextualize my interpretations by selectively returning to past exemplar texts of Indian rhetoric that illuminate the concepts and textual moves at work in particular discourse and rituals. The rhetoric of the Alcatraz occupation developed in variety of media, each of which served a unique function. First, I will examine the proclamations of IOAT beginning with the first speech delivered by Oakes at the initial landing at Alcatraz and reproduced in newsletter form throughout the occupation so that they could reach a broader audience. These proclamations are significant because they articulate an American Indian vision of how the island should become a site of cultural renewal. The proclamations served an additional function of enumerating the contours of American Indian self-governance and how it might be achieved.

Further, I examine how indigenous media, pamphlets, and newsletters covered the occupation. These sources demonstrate the circulation of representations, thoughts, and ideas that emanated from the occupation and developed within the broader American Indian community. Indigenous news sources such as *Akwesasne Notes* and *Warpath* spent a great deal of time presenting the meaning and significance of the occupation to the movement members and American Indians generally. Analysis of these sources will demonstrate how the community integrated the occupation within the history of Indian resistance and used its symbolism to raise consciousness and mobilize support for future activism. I will also supplement this analysis with influential writings by American Indian activists, such as the work of Vine Deloria Jr., Clyde Warrior, and others, who participated in the protest. The circulation of Red Power rhetoric in print demonstrates the diffusion and circulation of ideas that rippled outward from the occupation to reach audiences at a great distance.

Next, I spend a great deal of time grappling with the non-verbal, performative, and embodied expressions of the occupation. For example, I examine the embodied tactics of occupation and the transformation of physical space as a rhetorical text. Throughout the occupation, Alcatraz was transformed from a barren deserted former prison to a lively communal space welcoming to all American Indians. Families with small children inhabited the deserted cell blocks and filled them with life. Others set up Plains-style tipis in the prison yard, wore traditional clothing, prepared food in traditional ways, and engaged in ritualistic ceremonies such as powwows. Additionally, the IOAT used graffiti art as a way to domestic the cold and barren space of the prison. The liberation of Alcatraz Island served as a metaphor for the liberation of all Indian people.

Cultural geographer Robert Rundstrom explains that the IOAT used signs and ritualistic discourse to invert traditional meaning and place, both physically and conceptually.[57] The island, which had previously symbolized desolation, isolation, and imprisonment, was transformed into a space of Indian freedom and empowerment. Rundstrom explains that "place and human identity must be vested in each other for ethnogensis to occur… they came to build a new future and to create an Indian place in which as sense of Pan-Indian ethnicity could be renewed."[58] The island itself was encoded with visible markers of a new Indian world in the form of posted signs and graffiti with messages such as "Indian Land, Indians Welcome," "Home of the Free…Indian Land," "This land is my land" and "Welcome, Peace and Freedom."[59] The combination of physical signs and rhetorical messages recoded a "placeless" island with meaning; turning profane space into sacred space. For the IOAT, the graffiti liberated the land and its inhabitants by literally converted Alcatraz into Indian Country.[60]

Organization and Preview

The organizational approach to this dissertation reflects implicit challenge-response logic. Each chapter starts with a contextual problematic, exigency, constraint, or point of rupture that created the horizon for a rhetorical response. In an effort to demonstrate the myriad of ways in Red Power rhetoric evoked community experiences and transformed collective identities, each chapter tackles rhetoric in different media, styles, and symbolic content. Each chapter demonstrates the invocation of specific tropes, narratives, and styles that addressed specific needs and challenges. While I speak of Red Power as a broad signifier for the rhetoric and direct action tactics of the IOAT, I do not wish to imply that it is by any means monolithic. Thus, in each chapter I interpret the

distinct rhetorical feature and function of different discourses and embodied actions as they relate to the formation and empowerment of Indian communities. While Chapter 2 provides an in-depth history of the occupation and Red Power, each chapter will narrate the micro-dramas of the event. Each chapter poses another challenge or problem to provide the supporting dramatic structure that best unfolds the narrative arch of the occupation.

Chapter 2 narrates the drama of the occupation, and a series of potential causes and explanations, the key individuals, organizations, and ideas that helped forge this movement. This chapter provides the appropriate historical context to more clearly interpret radical actions that may be otherwise mysterious. I pay close attention to the character of Indian activism in light of monumental changes in Indian policy and the politics of protest in the San Francisco Bay from 1953 to 1971. Each subsequent chapter intertwines rhetorical theory and criticism to explore the features and functions of particular discursive and symbolic movements that unfold throughout the nineteen-month long direct action. Chapter 3 explores the rhetorical significance of irreverent performance and comedic discourses in Indian protest. Refusing cosmic dramas and the inevitable progress of Western civilization, comedic rhetoric celebrated cultural survival, diffused the symbolic potency of Euro-American oppression, and embraced human agency over passivity and victimhood.

Chapter 4 investigates the symbolic dynamics of pan-Indian rhetoric. Exploring the metamorphosis of three different rhetorical constructions of Alcatraz Island - prison, rock, and island - I show how the IOAT evoked Indian-specific condensation symbols to collapse time and space between all American Indians. Chapter 5 examines the features

of the more explicitly symbolic and embodied rhetoric of the IOAT. Reading the act of occupation textually, I explore the ways in which insurrectional bodily motion, the physical arrangement of space, the communal rituals, the social milieu, as well as graffiti art enacted Red Power. In the last critical chapter (chapter 6), I examine the negotiations and competing proposals between the federal government and the IOAT to contrast the differences between the rhetoric of Euro-American *history* and American Indian *memory*. While the IOAT envisioned Alcatraz Island as a site of living memory dedicated to the ongoing survival of American Indians, federal counterproposals called for a static form of commemoration that symbolically placed Indians behind museum glass. I argue that this exchange, ending the occupation, highlights the IOAT efforts to avoid cooptation and exhibits the reasons why they refused to compromise or embrace a pragmatic solution to the conflict. Finally, the conclusion offers a summation of the occupation's legacy and the lessons derived from the activist's rhetoric and experience.

Throughout this dissertation, I seek to cultivate critical appreciation for the occupant's endeavors and courage without adopting a patronizing gaze of distant reverence. While this project is historical, I do not suggest that American Indian struggle is trapped in an irretrievable and distant past. I recognized that Indian struggles for self-determination are circular, always ongoing, and dynamically fluid. While it may be considered "tragic" that they did not achieve their stated goals, like the IOAT, I adopt wherever possible an indigenous and comic orientation toward texts that accepts human imperfection and resists the Burkean categories of guilt, order, demonization, and purification. Since many Indian activists expressed that the Euro-American presence in North America was a passing epoch, I resist short-sighted judgment that posits the

occupation was a political failure, an act of cynicism, or otherwise utopian or naïve. I suggest that the evidence for judgment of failure or success may yet be seen. While I suspend judgment of efficacy, I do provide critical and contextual assessments of the IOAT actions as it relates to their explicit and implicit purpose. Further, while I draw from contemporary rhetorical theory, in most instances my theorizations and assessments arise organically from the texts themselves rather than being imposed from outside. My hope is that this dissertation highlights the transformative, affective, and experiential power of Indian protest and the rhetorical agency of refusal.

Chapter 1: Endnotes

[1] Paul Chaat Smith and Robert Allen Warrior, *Like a Hurricane: The Indian Movement from Alcatraz to Wounded Knee* (New York: The New Press, 1996), 16.
[2] Warrior and Smith, *Like a Hurricane*, 16-17.
[3] Throughout this dissertation, I use the term "American Indian" in the place of other ethnic descriptors. Terms such as American Indian, Native American, First Peoples, Indigenous, among others are the source of much controversy even among activists. Whenever possible, I try to use specific tribal or national descriptors, however, given the subject matter of this dissertation concerns pan-Indian ethnic identification, collective descriptors serve an analytical purpose. A large part of the controversy is that the term "Indian" as broad referent for the indigenous people of North America was a European invention. Robert Berkhofer explains that the concept of collective ethnic identity is troubled by the Euro-American construction of Indian peoples as an indistinguishable aggregate. He argues: "Since the original inhabitants of the Western Hemisphere neither called themselves by a single term not understood themselves as a collectivity, the idea and the image of the Indian must be a White conception. Native Americans were and are real, but the Indian was a White invention and still remains largely a White image, if not stereotype. According to a modern view of the matter, the idea of the Indian in general is a White image or stereotype because it does not square with present-day conceptions of how those peoples called Indians lived and saw themselves." (See Robert F. Berkhofer, *The White Man's Indian*: *Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present*, (New York: Vintage Books, 1978), 3. The alternative term "Native American" is also problematic for some because it conjures up images that American Indians are relics, both primitive and natural. Taking the rhetoric of Red Power on its own terms, I adopt the language of the occupants of Alcatraz who generally speak in terms that appropriate and empower the term "Indian." I recognize that at times activists and scholars use Native American and American Indian synonymously and interchangeably I use these terms with a recognition that there is no one collective descriptor that is not already historically troubled For example, Lakota activist and founder of the American Indian Movement argues: "I abhor the term Native American. It is a generic government term used to describe all the indigenous prisoners of the United States. These are the American Samoans, the Micronesians, the Aleuts, the original Hawaiians, and the erroneously termed Eskimos, who are actually Upiks and Inupiats. And, of course, the American Indian. I prefer the term American Indian because I know its origins . . . As an added distinction the American Indian is the only ethnic group in the United States with the American before our ethnicity . . . We were enslaved as American Indians, we were colonized as American Indians, and we will gain our freedom as American Indians, and then we will call ourselves any damn thing we choose." See Russell Means, "I am an American Indian, Not a Native American," Accessed 17 December 2007 at http://www.peaknet.net/~aardvark/ means.html.
[4] Indians of All Tribes, "To the Great White Father and His People: Proclamation of the Indians of All Tribes," *Alcatraz Newsletter* 1 (January 1970), 2.
[5] Indians of All Tribes, "Proclamation." 2.
[6] Carol Williams quoted in *Chronicles of Indian Protest* (Greenwich, CT: Fawcett Publications, 1979), 316.
[7] Vine Deloria Jr., *Custer Died for Your Sins* (New York: Macmillan, 1969), 185.
[8] Randall Lake, "Enacting Red Power: The Consummatory Function in Native American Protest Rhetoric," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 60 (1983): 128.
[9] Kenneth Burke, *Permanence and Change: An Anatomy of Purpose* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 141.
[10] Burke, *Permanence*, 69-70, 119.
[11] Thomas Rosteck, and Michael Leff, "Piety, Propriety, and Perspective: An Interpretation and Application of Key Terms of Kenneth Burke's *Permanence and Change*," *Western Journal of Speech Communication* 53 (1989), 330; also see Bonnie J. Dow, "AIDS, perspective by incongruity, and gay identity in Larry Kramer's '1,112 and Counting,'" *Communication Studies* 45 (1994), 225-240; and Sonja K. Foss, "Feminism Confronts Catholicism: A Study in the Uses of Perspective by Incongruity," *Women's Studies in Communication* 3 (1979), 7-15.

[12] Kent A. Ono and John M. Sloop, "The Critique of Vernacular Discourse," *Communication Monographs* 62 (March 1995), 20.
[13] Alberto Melucci, "The Process of Collective Identity," in Hank Johnston and Bert Klandermans (eds.) *Social Movements and Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 44.
[14] Clifford Gertz, "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretative Theory of Culture," *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973).
[15] Ono and Sloop, "Vernacular," 21.
[16] Lake, "Enacting," 128.
[17] Troy Johnson, *Red Power: The Native American Civil Rights Movement* (New York: Infobase Publishing, 2007), 10.
[18] Cited in Charles Wilkinson, *Blood Struggle: the Rise of Modern Indian Nations* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2005), 90.
[19] Hazel Hertzberg, *The Search for an American Indian Identity: Modern Pan-Indian Movements* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1971), 6.
[20] Troy Johnson, Duane Champaign, and Joane Nagel, "American Indian Activism and Transformation" *American Indian Activism: Alcatraz to the Longest Walk* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 10.
[21] Johnson, et al., "American Indian Activism," 10.
[22] Cited in Johnson et al., *American Indian Activism*, 31.
[23] Cited in Johnson et al. *American Indian Activism*, 30.
[24] For more on the rhetoric of confrontation see Robert L. Scott, "Justifying Violence: The Rhetoric of Militant Black Power," *Central States Speech Journal* 19 (1968): 96-104; Robert L. Scott and Donald K. Smith, "The Rhetoric of Confrontation," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 55 (1970): 1-8; Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, "The Rhetoric of Black Nationalism: A Case Study in Self-Conscious Criticism," *Central States Speech Journal* 22 (1971): 151-160; Robert .S. Cathcart, "A Confrontational Perspective on the Study of Social Movements," *Central States Speech Journal* 34 (1983), 69-74; R. Gregg, "The Ego-Function of the Rhetoric of Protest," *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 4 (1971), 71-91.
[25] Lake, "Enacting," 128.
[26] Vine Deloria Jr., *We Talk, You Listen: New Tribes, New Turf* (Lincoln, NE: Bison Books, 1970).
[27] Vine Deloria Jr., "This Country was a lot Better off When the Indians Were Running it," *New York Times Magazine* (8 March, 1970), 32.
[28] Randall Lake, "Between Myth and History: Enacting Time in Native American Protest Rhetoric," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 22 (1991): 125.
[29] Lake, "Myth," 129.
[30] John Sanchez and Mary E. Stuckey, "The Rhetoric of American Indian Activism in the 1960's and 1970's," *Communication Quarterly* 48 (2000), 132.
[31] Sanchez and Stuckey, "American Indian Activism," 126.
[32] For more on the rhetorical constraints placed on Indians in public deliberation see John Sanchez, Mary E. Stuckey, and Richard Morris, "Rhetorical Exclusion: The Government's Case Against American Indian Activists, AIM, and Leonard Peltier," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 23 (1999) 27-52; On difference in cultural concepts of linguistic power see Mark Meister and Ann Burnett, "Rhetorical Exclusion in the Trial of Leonard Peltier," *American Indian Quarterly* 28 (2004) 719-740.
[33] Richard Morris and Phillip Wander, "Native American Rhetoric: Dancing in the Shadows of the Ghost Dance," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 67 (1990) 164-191, 166.
[34] Nagel, *Ethnic Resurgence*, 131, 133.
[35] Johnson et al., "American Indian Activism," 10. Also see Troy Johnson, "The Occupation of Alcatraz Island: Roots of American Indian Activism," *Wicazo Sa Review* 10 (1994) 63-79.
[36] Vine Deloria Jr., "Alcatraz, Activism, and Accommodation," in Troy Johnson, Duane Champaign, and Joane Nagel, *American Indian Activism: Alcatraz to the Longest Walk* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 47.
[37] Smith and Warrior, *Like a Hurricane*, 53.
[38] Smith and Warrior, *Like a Hurricane*, 19.
[39] Vine Deloria Jr., "The Rise of Indian Activism," in Rudolph Gomez, Clement Collingham, and Kathleen Jackson, *The Social Reality of Ethnic America* (Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath, 1974), 184-185.
[40] Tim Findley, "Alcatraz Recollections," in Johnson et al., *American Indian Activism*, 75.

[41] Jack Forbes, "The Native Struggle for Liberation: Alcatraz," in Johnson et al., *American Indian Activism*, 129.
[42] Lenny Foster, "Alactraz is not an Island," in Johnson et al., *American Indian Activism*, 136.
[43] Kevin Deluca, *Image Politics: The New Rhetoric of Environmental Activism* (New York: The Guilford Press, 1999), 36.
[44] Also see Robert S. Cathcart, "Defining Social Movements by their Rhetorical Form," *Southern Speech Communication Journal* 31 (1980): 267-273.
[45] Ono and Sloop, "Vernacular," 20.
[46] Ono and Sloop, "Vernacular," 22.
[47] Hank Johnston, Enrique Larana, and Joseph Gusfield, "Identity, Grievances, and New Social Movements" in *New Social Movements: From Ideology to Identity* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994), 10.
[48] McGee's fragmentation thesis in the context of social movement activity is explained in Michael C. McGee, "Social Movements as Meaning," *Central States Speech Journal* 34 (1983) 74-77; also see Michael C. McGee, "Text, Context, and the Fragmentation of Contemporary Culture," *Western Journal of Speech Communication* 54 (1990): 274-289.
[49] Ono and Sloop, "Vernacular," 20.
[50] Steven Mailloux, "Re-Marking Slave Bodies: Rhetoric as Production and Reception," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 35 (2002), 99.
[51] Mailloux, "Re-Marking," 99.
[52] Bernadette Marie Calafell and Fernando P. Delgado, "Reading Latina/o Images: Interrogating *Americanos*," *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 21 (2004) 18.
[53] Deloria, *Custer*, 81.
[54] The problem of textual veracity is explored thoroughly in Jason Edward Black, "Native Resistance Rhetoric and the Decolonization of American Indian Removal Discourse," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 95 (2009) 66-88.
[55] Mailloux, "Re-Marking," 99.
[56] Walter Jost and Michael Hyde, *Rhetoric and Hermeneutics in Our Time: A Reader* (New Haven CT: Yale University Press), 4.
[57] Robert Rundstrom, "American Indian Placemaking," in Johnson et. al., *American Indian Activism*, 153-4. For more on the relationship between rhetoric, place, and identity see John A. Agnew and James C. Duncan, *The Power of Place: Bring Together Geographical and Sociological Imagination* (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989); and Yi-Fu Tuan, "Language and the Making of Place: A Narrative-Descriptive Approach," *Annuals of the Association of American Geographers* 81 (1991), 684-96.
[58] Rundstrom, "Placemaking," 186-7.
[59] Rundstrom, "Placemaking," 189.
[60] Carolyn Strange and Tina Loo, "Holding the Rock: The'Indianization' of Alcatraz Island, 1969-1999," *The Public Historian* 23 (Winter 2001), 58-62.

Chapter 2

The Birth of Red Power

This chapter identifies the confluence of historical circumstances that gave rise to the Alcatraz occupation and the Red Power movement. This chapter identifies and narrates the twentieth-century development of Red Power, starting with the disastrous post-war program of *termination* in 1953, which extinguished the federal government's relationship with American Indian nations, ended social services to tribal members, and relocated individuals to major urban centers for the purposes of assimilation. I trace the emergence of the movement through a series of changes in federal Indian policy that, paradoxically, contributed to the reemergence of pan-Indian activism. This context establishes the relationship between oppressive legal practices and the development of the confrontational rhetorical-style characteristic of American Indian protest. Each of the following critical chapters will historicize and situate specific rhetorical challenges that emerge at Alcatraz and interpret their symbolic significance. With San Francisco as the largest urban Indian community by 1960, I situate the importance of obtaining Alcatraz Island within both the national and Bay Area Indian community. Here I pay close attention to the racial politics and dynamics of radical social activism in California to contextualize the occupants' actions and demands.

The second purpose of this chapter is to introduce the drama of the occupation, the key figures that sustained the movement, and the rhetorical dimensions of the occupation. To facilitate this narrative, I introduce sets of rhetorical problems, challenges, and opportunities that emerged at Alcatraz Island. In sketching a broad pan-Indian history of the Red Power Movement and the specific narrative of the occupation, this chapter

elaborates on the choice of Alcatraz as a site of confrontation. While there were countless meaningful spaces throughout Indian Country, I show that the Alcatraz drama is a synecdoche for the ebb and flow of colonialism and resistance to its drive. I argue that the occupation of island was the apex of pan-Indianism in the twentieth century. This historical-rhetorical context provides the foundational knowledge required to understand the style and content of the movement's discourses.

Cultural Meanings of "the Rock"

Why occupy a barren, lifeless rock, tied to both a violent history of military conquest as well as an abusive prison apparatus, floating among the harsh currents and frigid temperatures of the Pacific Ocean? Alcatraz Island is aptly named "the Rock" – a twelve-acre monstrosity riddled with steep jagged cliffs and pummeled by the torrid waves of San Francisco Bay. To add to its oppressive contours, the popular image of Alcatraz Island is that of a brutal federal penitentiary that for thirty years held some America's most infamous criminals: Al Capone, Doc Barker, Machine Gun Kelly, Robert "Birdman" Stroud, and Alvin Carpis, for example. At it's opening in 1934, J. Edgar Hoover declared that "the Rock" would punish the "worst of the worst" of America's criminals.[1] The prison was immortalized for its lonesome brutality in popular films such as *Escape from Alcatraz* which dramatized the true story of the only three of thirty-nine escapees to succeed.[2] In public memory, Alcatraz is a place one occupies against their will and, against all odds, is released or escapes. When the rock's last inmate Frank Weatherman was removed from the island in 1963, he told a reporter that Alcatraz "ain't never been no good for nobody."[3]

The first attempt to occupy the island transpired in 1964 with a small band of Sioux Indians. At the time, acting Warden A.L. Aylworth expressed confusion in response to their demands. Adam Fortunate Eagle records the following exchange:

> At that point the attorney representing the American Indian Council, Elliot Leighton, popped open his briefcase and began reading from a sheaf of papers explaining the basis of Sioux claims to surplus federal property under terms of the 1868 Black Hills Treaty. Aylworth listened, then scratched his head for a tense couple of seconds. "Well," he said finally, "I guess if you want, you can have it."[4]

Aylworth's reaction was understandable. From his point of view most people who experienced Alcatraz did everything in their power to get off the island. Alcatraz in the eye of white American is indeed a mysterious and profane space.

Aylworth's feeling about Alcatraz gestured at an even more complex and disturbing history of the island prior to its use as a federal penitentiary. To be sure, Allen Cottier, Belva Cottier, and Richard McKenzie and the band of Sioux that briefly occupied Alcatraz in 1964 were not the first American Indians to visit or occupy the island. American Indian scholar Troy Johnson notes that "indigenous peoples had been traveling to Alcatraz Island for 10,000 to 20,000 years before Europeans even entered the San Francisco Bay Area." "It is clear that Alcatraz was at once used, feared, and revered," he writes.[5] The first European contact was in 1775 when Lieutenant Juan Manuel de Ayala "discovered" and named the island Isla de los Alcatraces (eng. Pelican's Island). The island remained a bird refuge until Pio Pico, the last Mexican governor of California, sold Alcatraz to Julian Workman, who in turn resold it to General John Charles Fremont for $5,000. After a series of other exchanges, the U.S. federal government took control of the

island and converted to a military fort in 1854. After extensive militarization of the island, American Indians returned to it once again, this time as prisoners.[6] In fact, Fortunate Eagle notes that "Indians had been among the first federal prisoners brought to the dungeons on Fort Alcatraz after it was made a federal stockade and prison during the Civil War."[7] These prisoners represented a wide array of West Coast and Southwest Indian nations ranging from Pagagoes, Paiutes, Apaches, Shoshones, Hopis, and Modocs. They arrive in chains for crimes ranging from asserting propriety over stolen lands to refusing to participate in white boarding schools. The island that was revered for its majesty and mystery by early California Indians was transformed throughout the nineteenth-century to a punitive and regimented space designed to break conquered peoples. Its most recent 150 year history proved the point that Alcatraz, had without a doubt, been "no good for nobody."

The historical development of Alcatraz reflects the struggle over the meaning of place between American Indians and Euro-American colonizers. The expansion of the European world from 1492 to today can be characterized less by a euphemism of "contact" and more by that of "clash." Throughout the history of westward expansion, hallowed spaces were veraciously consumed by the cascading of overlapping Euro-American frontiers and the advancement of explorers, surveyors, miners, homesteaders, farmers, ranchers, missionaries, and the U.S. cavalry. Each of these groups "discovered" and appropriated vast parcels of previously occupied land, radically altering the intimate relationships with place and the practices of everyday life for millions of America's first inhabitants. Alcatraz, like other meaningful spaces, was converted from an island of majesty, beauty, and folklore to an instrument of brutality in the service of colonial

ambitions. Throughout the age of discovery, European common law held that the title to newly discovered territory lay with the colonial power whose subjects first discovered the land. The antiquated doctrine originally intended to expand Christian dominion to the non-Christian world, can be traced to Pope Nicholas V's issuance of the papal bull *Romanus Pontifex* (1452).[8]

The doctrine was used as a legal justification to dispossess American Indians of their previously held lands in the landmark case *Johnson v. McIntosh* (1823). Chief Justice Marshall, enshrining the archaic and self-serving concept into U.S. law, argued the doctrine gave title "to the government by whose subjects, or by whose authority, it was made, against all other European governments, which title might be consummated by possessions."[9] This decision invalidated, and in other instances simply ignored, indigenous possession of North American lands hundreds and even thousands of years prior to European discovery. Did Pacific Coast Indians not "discover" Alcatraz Island prior to John Fremont, Juan Manuel de Ayala, or even the existence of Christianity? Are the journeys to collect Pelican eggs and fish off its rocky shoals not recorded in their oral history? For that matter, can Alcatraz even be called an island? This project demonstrates that Alcatraz is far from just an island. Like all the dispossessed lands of North American, the meaning of Alcatraz cannot be condensed to a narrow set of legal fictions or colonial machination. Within both broad and specific historical contexts, it is a site of contact and clash, dispossession and repossession, meaning and loss, sacred and profane.

Termination and Relocation

The struggle for American Indian self-determination in the later half of the twentieth-century was predominantly shaped by significant changes in federal Indian policy following World War II. On August 1, 1953 Congress approved House Resolution 108, initiating the process of extinguishing the federal trust relationship with five of the largest federally-recognized American Indian nations (Flathead, Klamath, Menominee, Pottowatomie, and Turtle Mountain Chippewa). Formally announcing the new federal policy of *termination*, the legislation was designed to end American Indian dependence on federal assistance, remove tribal lands from federal guardianship, and assimilate Indians into mainstream culture. The legislation read:

> Whereas it is the policy of Congress, as rapidly as possible, to make the Indians within the territorial limits of the United States subject to the same laws and entitled to the same privileges and responsibilities as are applicable to other citizens of the United States, to end their status as wards of the United States, and to grant them all of the rights and prerogatives pertaining to American citizenship.[10]

The program was touted by its main proponent Utah Senator Arthur V. Watkins as an *Indian freedom program*, designed to put Indians in a position "where they would actually have had to go to work and to take care of their own affairs."[11] Comparing himself to a modern-day Abraham Lincoln, Watkins claimed that termination was an historic initiative that would liberate the American Indian: "following in the footsteps of the Emancipation Proclamation ninety-four years ago, I see the following words emblazoned in letters of fire above the heads of the Indians – THESE PEOPLE SHALL

BE FREE!."[12] Composed of Senators from several western states and assimilation advocates in the BIA, proponents argued that ending tribal dependence on federal protections would spur tribal ingenuity and industriousness, creating the conditions for economic self-sufficiency and assimilation. In the same year, Congress also enacted Public Law 280, a complement to the termination movement that devolved criminal and civil jurisdiction over tribal lands from the federal to state and local governments.[13]

While termination was advocated in the name of equality and justice for American Indians, an overwhelming amount of evidence suggests that the policy had disastrous consequences. Donald L. Fixico argues that "in everything that it represented, termination threatened the very core of the American Indian existence – its culture."[14] The policy directly contributed to a decline in health and education resources, income, land distribution, and general quality of reservation life. Fixico concludes that during the termination era "the government processed 109 cases of termination affecting 1,369,000 acres of Indian land and an estimated 12,000 Indians."[15] In nearly every case, termination opened tribal lands and resources to private corporate development or other schemes to liquidate tribal assets. More broadly, the Congressional movement for tribal termination was firmly embedded in the ideological and nationalist politics of the Cold War.[16] R. Warren Metcalf characterizes the policy of termination as a divisive and exploitative "type of ideological combat" which even for those who believed in defending the welfare of American Indians "devolved into a struggle over land and resources, attracting interested onlookers from industry, agribusiness, and state and local government."[17] Termination was sold by its proponents as a program designed to emancipate American Indians from government paternalism so that they may be free to pursue their own

economic development and assimilate into mainstream American culture. In many cases, however, termination served as a vehicle for the interests of opportunistic resource developers, Cold-Warriors pursuing cultural homogeneity, and a myriad of other anti-Indian forces. Senator Watkins gained the support of a coalition of western Senators including Patrick McCarren (Nevada), Hugh Butler (Nebraska), and Richard Neuberger (Oregon).[18]

The termination policy, in both its premise and consequence, created two interesting social paradoxes. First, the argumentative justifications for an aggressive program of Indian assimilation were derived from an ethic of social justice, minority equality, and civil rights that had developed during the Roosevelt and Truman administrations. Fused with conservative post-war nationalism and radical individualism, proponents of termination effectively deployed the logics of equality and justice to undermine traditional culture, significantly shrink tribal properties, and institute policies inimical to American Indian interests. With integration as the only platform for the advancement of minority rights, any attempt to preserve traditional cultural was at odds with calls for national unity. Put simply, forced assimilation became equality and the purchase of Indian land for commercial use became an ethical act. Second, and in contradiction with the programs intended result, termination sowed the seeds of pan-Indian activism and ethnic resurgence both on the reservation and in the relocation centers of the inner-city. Sociologist Joane Nagel argues that "it is one of the many ironies of federal Indian policy that American Indian mobilization and ethnic renewal arose in part out of the federal programs designed to terminate the special status of Indian tribes and to absorb Indian people into mainstream society."[19] As will be discussed in

depth later in this chapter, urban relocation contributed to the rise of pan-Indian ethnic identification in the inner-city. American Indians from dozens of tribes came in closer contact with one another, developed social organizations based on common interests, created strong social support networks to combat discrimination, economic inequality, and collective feelings of alienation and abandonment. An embodied expression of anti-Indianism, termination purported to be a lasting solution to the Indian question. Similar to past efforts to extinguish traditional Indian culture, however, termination created new forms of cultural adaption and new modes of resistance.

One can trace the roots even further back to the decades leading up to the termination-era. Under the leadership of John Collier (1933-1945), the BIA supported a number of reform efforts to preserve traditional Indian culture, increase efficiency in distribution of social services, and develop autonomous tribal government. Collier and Interior Secretary Harold Ickes were strongly opposed to forced assimilation. The influential Meriam Report (1928) found neglect and inadequate funding of federal programs had contributed to extreme poverty and destitution throughout Indian Country.[20] The report concluded that individual allotment of previously communally-owned tribal lands, set forth in the General Allotment Act (1887), significantly contributed to the erosion of tribal lands and assets.[21] As a result of the report, Collier and allies the BIA and Congress were able to successfully hold off efforts to forcibly assimilate Indians and liquidate tribal resources. In 1934, Congress passed the Indian Reorganization Act (hereafter IRA), which prohibited individualized allotment and sale of tribal lands, established legal procedures for adjudicating Indian land claims in federal courts, expanded the power of Congress to create new reservations, and helped tribes

establish governments and constitutions. Other policy changes accompanied the IRA, including more funds for social services and abolishment of restrictions on the practice of tribal religious ceremonies. The IRA put into place political, legal, and economic structures that a new generation of Indian leaders took advantage of. While guilty of a certain degree of paternalism, New Deal-era Indian programs reversed the disastrous policy of allotment, responsible for the loss of millions of acres of tribal lands.

Of most importance, the IRA established a process for democratically electing leadership in governing councils, laid the ground work to establish the intertribal organizations such as the National Congress of American Indians (hereafter NCAI) in 1944 and enhanced tribal development organizations for community reinvestment.[22] Nagel contends that because the IRA was intended to modernize and assimilate American Indians, it "laid the groundwork for the subsequent intertribal communication and political mobilization."[23] Furthermore, education policies instructed in English enabled greater intertribal communication and supratribal Indian identification based on common experiences and interests.[24] Boarding schools expanded cross-cultural tribal ancestry, pan-Indian commitments, and mixed-tribal marriages.[25] Further, the impact of schools cannot be underestimated for their Pan-Indian networking potential. Schools such as Haskell, Carlisle, and Hampton, were spaces in which leaders developed the intellectual idea of collective struggle. In fact, some of the leaders in the San Francisco Bay Area in the 1960's were graduates or attendees of Haskell.[26] Concerning the ironic impact of pro-assimilation Indian education, Vine Deloria Jr. writes that "the Indian political scene in the 1960's was a fine blend of the first larger generation of college-trained Indians and

the entrenched veterans of the New Deal who had served most of their lives in tribal governments"[27]

Shaped by the circumstances of war, Collier's principles did not carry over to the Truman and Eisenhower administrations. World War II, the Korea War, and Cold War hostilities dramatically shifted the priorities of Indian administration to reflect the ideological needs of the time. For his defense of traditional Indian practices the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs accused Collier of supporting communist ideals. In 1943, the Senate Indian Affairs Investigation Subcommittee released a report (Senate Report 310) that signaled a shift in public opinions and Congressional attitudes toward tribal government. Althought not using the word *termination*, the report advocated extinguishing all tribal land claims and abolishing the BIA. Concomitant with the decline in support for New Deal social service programs, pro-Indian assimilation forces gained strength. Visible participation in combat operations and the defense industries during World War II persuaded many policy-makers that American Indians were willing and capable to assimilate into mainstream society and, further, that preservation of traditional culture was debilitating to their advancement. World War II provided ammunition for assimilationist forces and even some leaders that were sympathetic to Indian causes accepted terminationist rationales out of genuine humanitarian concern. Even Truman, unpopular with the Republican-controlled Congress for his strong stance on civil rights, endorsed the early foundations of termination proposals out of concern that paternalism and de facto segregation were the primary engines of American Indian oppression. Throughout the Truman administration and the Eightieth Congress, a number of bills were introduced that used the language of emancipation to discuss reform programs

designed to facilitate urban relocation and wean tribal dependence on federal money.[28] Despite popular mythology, a large portion of the American Indian population was neither interested nor ready to assimilate into mainstream society.[29]

On the other hand, American Indian participation in World War II also offered new opportunities for ethnic resurgence. The participation of nearly 60,000 American Indians created further cross-tribal ties and communication necessary for ethnic resurgence. American Indians participated in both major combat operations as well as wartime industries. The recently popularized Navajo and Comanche "code talkers," who sent and decoded sensitive wartime communiqués, played a vital part in allied combat operations.[30] American Indian veterans of World War II formed a distinct cultural community that constituted a significant and power sect of leadership in the early formations of the Red Power movement, specifically in the NCAI. In addition, World War II raised incomes for families of veterans, providing a strong resource base in American Indian communities for cohesive social action. Veteran access to the military, college, and vocational education the GI Bill, drastically changed American Indian attitudes towards education in general; it gave a sense that American Indians could compete in the "white man's world" and even succeed.[31] The combination of greater ethnic cohesiveness, higher income, advanced education, burgeoning organizational structures, and greater contact with white communities in urban settings, meant that American Indians possessed not only the necessary resources for widespread collective action but a greater collective ethnic consciousness of the challenges they face.

Rolling back some of the Indian gains following World War II, the appointment of Dillon S. Myer as BIA commissioner in 1950 secured the defeat of Collier's New Deal

principles in Indian affairs and led to the triumph of pro-assimilationist forces within the federal government. While possessing no direct experience in the area of Indian affairs, Myer's credentials included directing the War Relocation Authority, the agency responsible for the administration of Japanese internment during World War II. A vocal supporter of assimilation and urban relocation, historians of termination-era Indian policy consider Myer's to be the architect of termination. At an ideological level, the selection of Myer reflected a post-War patriotic fervor for national unity and American individualism that was meant to contrast with Soviet communism. In his scathing biography of Myer, Richard Drinnon writes that his "career reached out laterally to become an expression of Western racism, nationalism, imperialism, and colonialism and in that global context added confirmation of Hannah Arendt's insights into 'the banality of evil.'"[32] Those who have investigated Myer's life and political career argue that he was unapologetically nationalistic and a cold-hearted bureaucrat, famous for forcing Japanese camp inmates to take loyalty oaths upon their release. Influenced by his Protestant background, Myer embraced the concept of the cultural melting-pot and firmly opposed any form of cultural pluralism.[33]

Showing little concern for Indian interests, Myer supported an immediate end to the federal trust relationship and took measures as BIA commissioner to prepare tribes for the inevitable withdrawal of federal guardianship. Righteous in his cause, yet duplicitous in his actions, Myer argued that reducing social services and extinguishing tribal land claims would in fact liberate Indians from guardianship. He immediately designed urban relocation programs and sponsored the adoption of Indian children by white families.[34] As early as 1947, Assistant BIA Commissioner William T. Zimmerman

Jr. compiled a report known as the "Doomsday Book" that categorized the tribes that were most prepared for assimilation.[35] Further, in 1952 the U.S. Department of Interior compiled a 1,800 page document that calculated the economic expense of maintaining the trust relationship and determined that "twenty-three western tribes controlled a third of the nation's low-sulfur coal, fully 80 percent of the country's uranium reserves, and from 3 to 10 percent of national reserves in gas and petroleum."[36] The Interior calculated that severing the federal relationship with the tribes and urbanizing American Indians would be cost efficient and open up vast quantities of natural resources. Such cost-benefit analysis was built into the decision-making framework of the Interior Department which also house the BIA, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and the National Forest Service (NFS).[37]

In sum, Myer's appointment was iconic of the nation's attitude toward American Indians and cultural pluralism. In a generation, the pendulum had swung back toward the aggressive assimilation of the allotment period in the late nineteenth-century. In Drinnon's words, however, "Myers was simply the carrier and instrument of the traditional hostility of white America to the very idea of the survival of Indian peoples."[38] From the actions of Myer and his colleagues, there is strong evidence to suggest that termination served two related material interests: anti-communism and economic resource development. First, in the post-war era, arguments for minority rights were salient as long as they were not culturally divisive. Metcalf argues that "for many who felt that unity in the face of adversity was a more worthy goal than diversity, assimilation seemed the only rational policy."[39] On the one hand, African-Americans civil rights made some strides during the termination decade, including the landmark *Brown* ruling in

1954. Early advancements in civil rights were achieved in part because desegregation and integration converged with the ideological interests of Cold Warriors pursuing American cultural homogeneity.[40] On the other hand, for most American Indians, an integrationist approach conflated assimilation and detribalization with the emancipatory goals of desegregation. While Euro-Americans systematically segregated and excluded African Americans, in Deloria's words they had "force-fed the Indian what he was denying the black."[41] Unlike desegregation, American Indian self-determination was easily confused with ethnic dissimilation and divisive cultural separatism that threatened post-war national unity. Second, termination provided cover for the expropriation of tribal lands and capitalist resource development. In 1953, a group of conservative western Senators lead by Arthur Watkins took up the reigns of termination, advancing the interests of resource developers in their home states. Watkins' enthusiasm for termination and his use of strong-arm tactics to manufacture tribal consent was unmatched with perhaps the exception of Commissioner Myer. Watkins iron-clad grip on Indian Affairs throughout the 1950's ensured the success of termination well after Myer's replacement by the sympathetic assimilationist Glenn Emmons in 1953.

Without economic assistance and federal protections, terminated tribes were unable to deflect commercial pressure or government incentives to withdrawal from the tribe in exchange for one-time payments for the value of their land. Three of the largest terminated tribes – Klamath, Menominee, and Ute, lost nearly one third to one half of their tribal members through per capita payment.[42] With the combination of financial inexperience and the absence of economic infrastructure for community reinvestment, the quick infusion of capital was siphoned-off in nefarious schemes concocted by non-Indian

merchants and tribal lands were ceded to opportunistic companies interested in timber and mineral development. Over a hundred other smaller tribes met similar fates throughout the decade. Introduced at a dizzying pace, a number of hastily concocted and self-interested termination proposals were enacted without careful study, generally without Indian input, and almost universally against the wishes or interests of the tribe in question. Contrary to Watkins predictions, the results of termination were disastrous. Every terminated tribe suffered in one form or another. Charles Wilkinson concludes that terminated tribes "made no measurable improvements. Most found themselves poorer, bereft of health care, and suffering a painful psychological loss of community, homeland, and self-identity."[43]

Termination did not empower American Indian communities in the ways that Watkins and others friends had claimed. While the effect on the land base, natural resources, and community empowerment were profound, the devastation on American Indian cultural identity was immeasurable. Stan Steiner observes that "the words were different, but the battle was still whether the Indian would be permitted to remain an Indian."[44] Assimilationist education, termination, and relocation programs were targeted at breaking Indians of their traditional practices, or in the words of U.S. Army captain Richard H. Pratt to "kill the Indian in him and save the man."[45] Blackfoot Chairman Earl Old Person observed that "in our Indian language, the only translation for termination is to 'wipe out' or 'kill off.' We have no Indian word for termination."[46] While it was conflict over land and natural resources, termination, like the entirety of federal Indian policy, was a fight over the soul of Indian Country.

Red San Francisco

During the termination era, the defining character of the new American Indian was forged in San Francisco. As a result of relocation and vocation programs, the San Francisco Bay area was the largest and most diverse American Indian population in the United States, swelling to approximately 20,000 by 1964. [47] Two-thirds of this population had been subject to federal relocation.[48] Given that reservations experienced unemployment rates as high as 90 percent participants in the relocation program were predominantly seeking employment and a chance to escape poor health services, housing, poverty and the general hopelessness of their rural reservation communities.[49] Large cities, on the other hand, produced new kinds of alienation, isolation, and loneliness. No effort was made by relocation officials to facilitate any urban tribal or pan-Indian community in the inner-city. For relocated individuals, urban spaces were highly depersonalized, overcrowded, and dangerous. Most had lived a large part of their life in rural reservation communities that emphasized collective living, communal law, and family. Economic difficulties were made worse by traditional cultural practices of hospitality and sharing rather than saving to accumulate private wealth. As a result, many Indians did not adjust to the exorbitant cost of city life. While some individuals and families ended up in middle-lower-class neighborhoods, a majority found themselves in ghettos such as San Francisco's Mission District, where housing was substandard and often roach and rat infested.

Many Indians turned to alcohol. Bill Pensoneau, former president of the National Indian Youth Council observed:we drown ourselves in wine and smother ourselves in glue – because the only time we are free is when we're drunk."[50] A somber poem by

Simon Ortiz entitled *Relocation* provides a disturbing summation of the feelings of loneliness experienced by many urban Indians:

> Don't talk me no words, Don't frighten me
>
> For I am in the blinding city, The Lights
>
> The deadened glares tear my head and close my mind
>
> Who questions my pain? The tight knot of anger in my breast
>
> I swallow hard and often and taste my spit.
>
> And it does not taste good, Who questions my mind?
>
> I came here because I was tired, The BIA taught me to cleanse myself
>
> Daily to keep a careful account of my time
>
> Efficiency was learned in catechism.
>
> The sisters spelled me god in white
>
> And I came here to feed myself corn and potatoes and chili and mutton
>
> Did not nourish me it was said: So I agreed to move, I see me walking in sleep
>
> Down streets gray and cement and glaring glass and oily wind
>
> I cheat my children to buy, I am ashamed, I am tired, I am hungry
>
> I speak words. I am lonely for hills, I am longing for myself.[51]

This poem expresses the alien conditions of city life and collective depression experienced by relocated Indians. Cities such as San Francisco were foreign landscapes and the community residents embraced values and cultural practices unfamiliar to American Indians. This experience inspired reporter William Brandon to label urban Indians as "Martian-Americans."[52]

As a result of both underfunding and BIA mismanagement, employment opportunities were not substantially better in the city than on the reservation. Relocated Indians were required to report to the BIA employment office. Any missed appointment would result in the termination of their temporary financial assistance, a frightening prospect to families without any means of subsistence.[53] After job placement, they were removed from the BIA payroll and became the responsibility of state and federal welfare agencies.[54] According to a 1975 study by the Native American Study Group, many of the jobs were temporary and job-training for semi-skilled professions typically lasted substantially less time than required in order to acquire the trade.[55] Johnson and Nagel narrate the typical Indian experience with the relocation program and the BIA employment office,

> The training, which generally was supposed to last three months, often lasted only three weeks; the job assistance was usually one referral, at best; the housing was 1950s and 1960s skid row; and the financial support ran out long before the training was started or any hope of a job was realized. The history of San Francisco Bay Area relocation effort is replete with examples of Indian people – men, women, boys, and young girls – who sat for days and weeks at bus stations, waiting for the government representative who was to meet them and start them on the road to a new, successful urban life.[56]

Relocation and vocational programs were an overwhelming failure. In some cases, the pressure of dealing with administrative agencies and the unforgiving poverty of the city were too much. While exact numbers are unavailable, some Indians even found their way back to the reservation.

While the relocation authorities made no effort to locate tribal members in close proximity, relocation contributed to the rise of over forty social, religious, and political organizations in the Bay Area by 1964.[57] In 1955 the only intertribal organization available was the Four Winds club in Oakland. As the American Indian population swelled in the Bay Area by 1958, new Indian organizations sprang up, including the Women's Club, the San Francisco American Center (founded by the Roman Catholic St. Vincent de Paul Society), American Indian Baptist Church, the Oakland Intertribal Friendship House (which later became the Bay Area American Indian Council), Navajo Club, Chippewa Club, Haskell Institute Graduates, Santa Clara Valley American Indian Association, San Jose Dance Club, and the Tlingit-Haidi Club.[58] By 1963 there were enough organizations to create an all-Indian sports recreation league, which also sponsored games against other urban areas in California.

Organization members blended social support with political activism. In 1963, the Bay Area Indian Council walked the picket line in front of the three area BIA employment offices, dressed in full powwow regalia, protesting poor treatment and neglect.[59] Powwows (a traditional celebratory dance), social gatherings, and dinners became a weekly occurrence at the Oakland YMCA gymnasium and the San Francisco Indian Center. Further, as Nagel observes, communication became more institutionalized and widespread through the creation of "Indian newspapers and newsletters; social service agencies; political organizations; and Christian churches."[60] Social events and gatherings helped urban Indians adapt the conditions of the city to some important aspects of tribal community life. The welcoming ethos of many Indian community centers helped individuals both retain some of the familiar cultural values characteristic

of their reservation home and adapt those values to the modern urban Indian experience. Cultural centers were fashioned to deal with the unique experience of urban Indians – positioned between modern Indian subjectivity and the valued traditions of their ancestral homes. Urban Indian organizations and clubs took up Clyde Warrior's call to newly emergent Indian organizations to develop "true Indian philosophy geared to modern times."[61] In addition to offering comfort they also constituted intellectual cauldrons where individuals exchanged ideas about the necessity of collective action, the character of pan-Indianism, and future of Indian communities throughout the country. These places were the headquarters of planning and coordination for the 1969 occupation of Alcatraz Island.

The New Indians

The most significant advantage afforded by relocation was not organizational but attitudinal. Relocation radicalized the Bay Area Indian community. While national organizations had grown throughout the previous two decades, they emphasized piecemeal reform, passive resistance, and patience over militancy and confrontation. Smith and Warrior argue that the NCAI leaders "wore their steadiness as a badge of pride, a symbol of moral fortitude in the midst of anti-Vietnam rallies and race riots that increasingly seems to them protest for protest's sake."[62] The older generation of American Indians, accustomed to moderation and the promise of mainstreaming, for the most part shunned confrontation and encouraged silent stoicism as a symbol of quiet dignity and respect. The prevailing belief structure of the NCAI was that "Indians don't demonstrate."[63] There was, however, a growing divide between the older leadership and the younger generation of Indian activists. In 1964, the NCAI conference in Chicago

resulted in the "Declaration of Indian Purpose" that it hoped would be endorsed by the Kennedy Administration and create a political agenda for American Indians. The statement emphasized the Indian role in American history and politics, emphasized patience and amicable relations with the federal government, the inevitability of assimilation, and activism premised in "good citizenship" based on "high principles and laws." [64]

Many young Indians, disillusioned by the pain and heartache of termination, were dissatisfied with this accomodationist approach to national leadership. Following the 1964 Chicago Conference, Clyde Warrior, Mel Thom, and a group of young militants formed the National Indian Youth Council (hereafter NIYC) in Gallup, New Mexico. The NIYC was a predominantly nationalist organization that endorsed confrontation, direct action against BIA, and a critique of white society as parasitic. Warrior, a young and charismatic Ponca activist, spoke about revolution and active resistance to oppression. He defended the rationality of violence in the service of justice. Warrior summed up the growing frustration and anger of the Indian youth:

> What it amounts to is that the Indians are getting fed up. It's just a question of how long the Indians are going to put up with being took every day…What can you do when society tells you that you should be non-existent? As I look at it, the situation will not change unless really violent action comes about. If this country understands violence then that is the way to do it. Some of the young Indians are talking about revolution. 'We have tried everything else' they say. 'The only thing we have left is our guns. Lets use em.'… How long will Indians tolerate this?

> Negroes, Mexican Americans, and Puerto Ricans could only take colonialism, exploitation, and abuse for so long; then they do something about it.[65]

Exemplifying the more militant values of the younger generation, Thom irritated some in the national leadership by freely speaking of "Red Power" throughout 1964 Chicago Conference. While some in the national leadership were sympathetic to the NIYC's radical views, NCAI president Vine Deloria tempered Thom's argument by arguing that "we do not threaten anyone. We do not wish power over anyone. Red Power means we want power over our own lives."[66] While Deloria's comments reflect a more activist bent to national Indian politics directed at self-determination, they did not necessary reflect the militant attitude of the NIYC.[67] The split between the NIYC and NCIA was palpable in 1969 when NIYC members heckled guest speaker, Secretary of Interior Walter Hickel, telling him to "shut up" and "go home" as they shouted taunts such as "white honky."[68] Taking its cues from the terminology and direct action tactics of the African American Civil Rights movement, NIYC membership imitated their derogatory language to refer to whites.[69] For example, during the same time period Stokely Carmichael used the term "honkey," intended to be a derogatory racial epithet for whites.[70]

Parallel to the Civil Rights movement and the emergent Black Panther Party, more militant Indians began to think of the older generation that urged caution as "sell-outs," invoking a series of racial epithets such as "Uncle Tom-Toms," "Uncle-Tomahawks," "Stand-Around-the-Fort Indians," or "Apples" (red on the outside, but white on the inside).[71] Turnover in both national and regional leadership throughout the 1960's demonstrated that the cautious pragmatism of the NCAI was no longer sufficient. When Warrior ran for president of the Southwest Regional Indian Youth Council in 1966

he gave a very brief and direct oration. Holding out his large forearms he proudly proclaimed: “This is all I have to offer. The sewage of Europe does not flow through these veins.”[72] Warrior won the election by a landslide. Upon their ascendance, the NIYC and similarly oriented regional organizations initiated direct action and confrontational protests. In 1964, the NIYC participated in a series of “fish-ins” in the Pacific Northwest to protest Washington and Oregon state government nullification of Native fishing rights. The NIYC, in conjunction with the Survival of American Indian Association and the local tribes, fished in prohibited waters thereby committing overt acts of civil disobedience. The “fish-ins” garnered more media attention than the movement had received to date and elevated the issue of American Indian self-determination to a national stage. The fish-ins also garnered celebrity support from actors such as Marlon Brando, Jane Fonda, and Jonathan Winters. Deloria and Clifford M. Lytle argue that once the ideology of the NIYC reached the Indian youth “it slowly made its way across the age spectrum of Indian society, creating an exceedingly more aggressive edge to Indian relations with non-Indians.”[73]

After 1964, militant organizations staged direct actions across the country. In 1968, Clyde Bellecourt, Vernon Bellecourt, Russell Means, and several others founded the American Indian Movement (AIM) in Minneapolis as a community empowerment and police watch-dog organization modeled similarly to Oakland’s Black Panther Party. In December of that year, Mohawk Indians from Canada and New York, led by radical militant Kahn-Tineta Horn, blockaded the Cornwall Bridge in protest of Canadian violations of the 1794 Jay Treaty. The protest obtained a national audience with American Indians when Mohawks began to publish and distribute the influential Indian

newsletter *Akwesasne Notes* which compiled stories of Indian struggle from throughout North America. According to Deloria the Indian newspaper "inspired Indians all across the United States to take a closer look at the protests."[74]

These developments in the US and Canada had a profound impact on Indian activism in the San Francisco Bay Area. American Indian students at Berkeley and San Francisco State College organized around the development of an American Indian studies curriculum. Of course, student activism and confrontational protests were common place on Bay Area college campuses throughout the 1960's. Third World students were holding strikes and demonstrations on the Berkeley campus to force the administration to develop an ethnic studies department. In 1968, La Nada Boyer (Means) was the first American Indian student admitted to Berkeley through the Economic Opportunity Program.[75] Through advocacy work with California Indian Education Association and other Mission District organizations, additional American Indian students soon attended Berkeley and other state universities. Professor Jack Forbes, considered the "father" or American Indian studies department at Berkeley, worked closely with students such as Boyer, Patty Silvas, and others who were later involved in the 1969 occupation, to form an Indian studies curriculum. Within a year of Boyer and Silvas' arrival, the American Indian presence on college campuses was visible and active. In the same year, the Third World Strike at Berkeley, involving clashes between National Guard and minority student organizations, successfully forced the administration to create a Department of Ethnic Studies that offered courses and curriculum for American Indian, African-American, Chicano and Asian Studies. It gave momentum for student organizations across the country to successfully agitate for American Indian studies programs at California

schools such as UCLA and UC Davis to colleges across the country such as the University of Minnesota and the University of Oklahoma. Across the bay at San Francisco State, Richard Oakes successfully lead the charge for Indian studies department in 1969.[76]

The first course on American Indian liberation at Berkeley was taught by Professor Forbes and a young graduate student, Steve Talbot, in the summer of 1969.[77] American Indian studies courses focused on the socio-economic, political, and historical impediments to American Indian liberation. In addition, they provided an intellectual framework for the rise of the American Indian activism. These courses also contributed to a renaissance in American Indian philosophy, literature, culture, and political thought. A series of influential books, novels, and monographs were authored during this period. These works include those such as Vine Deloria Jr.'s *Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto* (1969), Stan Steiner's *The New Indians* (1969), Edgar Cahn and David Hearn's *Our Brother's Keeper* (1972), N. Scott Momaday's *House Made of Dawn* (1968), John G. Neihardt's *Black Elk Speaks* (1972) and John Fire Lame Deer and Richard Erdoes' *Lame Deer Seeker of Vision* (1973). These works were transformative texts and in many ways provided activists with a rationale for participating in collective action.[78]

The Politics of Black and Red Power in California

The ascendance of Red Power took place within a groundswell of racial activism in Northern California, most notably the direct actions and organizational programs of the Black Panther Party (BPP) in Oakland. While intellectually distinct, Black and Red

Power shared many characteristics, trajectories, and historical roots in the tense politics of racial inequality in Post World War II California. Just as with the American Indian community, large numbers of African Americans had migrated to the Bay Area from the American South to find employment in wartime industries and escape what they considered to be the more overtly violent racial politics of the American South. Prior to 1940 there were less than 15,000 African Americans in the Bay Area, but by the 1960 close to a quarter of million lived in the area.[79] While many had believed that they were escaping a racist culture, in the Bay Area blacks faced employment discrimination, residential and education segregation, and police brutality. Although the Bay Area had a reputation as both progressive and multiethnic, the area's entrenched white elites were generally inhospitable and in many instances outwardly hostile toward African American migrants. Daniel Crowe observes that "the liberal mythology that San Franciscans had created about their fair city was widely known throughout the West and the rest of the United States. To judge from the historical record, however, the area's reputation for fraternity were overrated."[80] Racial violence in the Bay Area was not initially as palpable as in the South yet structural forms of violence such as segregation and discrimination undermined the economic advancement of the African American community.

As with American Indians, economic discrimination against African Americans was pervasive. Racial oppression manifested as both institutional and informal arrangements of social control. Many African American workers were displaced after white skilled workers returned from World War II. As a result of employment discrimination, African American workers were either unemployed or forced into low-paying unskilled labor in the area's service economy. As a general practice, many unions

either locked-out African America workers or set up annex programs that extracted dues without corollary rights or protections. Residential housing discrimination combined with the post-war suburban boom segregated African Americans into public housing and low-income ghettos of West Oakland and inner-city San Francisco. As whites and high-skilled industrial jobs went to the suburbs during the 1950's, African Americans experienced *de facto* segregation in the inner-city. Schools in predominantly African American neighborhoods failed to receive adequate funding, a problem exacerbated high dropout rates and inadequate job training.[81]

White police officers perpetrated the most palpable racism. A post-war nostalgic return to law and order combined with fear of African American migrants produced sensationalized reports of black crime in the region's newspapers. Making matters worse, the Oakland police department recruited police officers from the South to deal with rise in migrant crime.[82] As a result, violent confrontations between white officers and African American residents escalated throughout the 1950's and 1960's. Conflicts were so frequent and tensions so high that, in Crowe's words, "even routine traffic stops could escalate into dramatic encounters."[83] By the early 1960's, there were escalating reports of illegal police raids and unprovoked violence against teenagers and even the elderly.

The experience of poverty and police violence radicalized many, particularly the younger generation, in the African-American community. It was under these conditions that Bobby Seale, Huey Newton, Bobby Hutton, and David Hilliard formed the Black Panther Party for Self-defense. In October 1966, the group publicized their Ten Point Platform and Program, focusing on direct action and self-defense against racial discrimination and police violence in the Bay Area. The platform was derived from

ideologies of Black Nationalism and the economic theories derived form Marxism-Leninism. The group diverged from the more moderate, non-violent, and reform-oriented tactics of the established black leadership in the National Associate for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), and the Student Nonviolent Coordination Committee (SNCC). The BPP adopted Malcolm X's call to "when the law fails to protect Negroes from whites' attack, then those Negroes should use arms if necessary, to defend themselves," and organized armed monitoring of the Bay Area's police forces.[84] With their slogan "power to the people," the Panthers also developed Community Survival Programs that included a free children's breakfast, Sickle Cell Anemia testing, and other programs modeled after the Johnson Administration's War on Poverty agenda. The Panthers gained international notoriety for their version of Afro-Marxism, an ideology endorsing the revolutionary potential of the dispossessed and lower-class, the so-called *lumpenproletariat*. The international leftist political thought of Karl Marx, Franz Fanon, Ho Chi Min, Che Guevara, and Mao Tse-Tung directly influence the BPP's theory of "revolutionary intercommunalism."[85]

Despite disparate circumstances and little direct contact between the Panther organizers and American Indian groups in the Bay Area, their tactics and rhetoric bare similar markers. In one form or another, each community experienced employment discrimination, residential segregation, police violence, and social ostracism. For both groups, the discriminatory racial politics of the Bay Area led to a more radical direct action program that contrasted with the moderate reformism endorsed by older, more established members of the community. By 1966, each group's radical politics were dominated by a vanguard of young militants well-read in their own community's radical

traditions and philosophies. Rhetorically speaking, *power* and *self-determination*, as opposed to a liberal vocabulary of *rights* and *equality*, were the key god-terms of each community's radical organizations. BPP spokesman Eldridge Cleaver explained "our goal is political and economic self-determination for our people…[O]ur immediate aim is *community control* - control of local schools, police forces, and all public agencies operating in our communities. The demand for community control builds a strong local base, and is the logical first step toward self-determination in the larger society."[86] Clyde Warrior argued against the "fictional responsibility and democracy of passive consumers of programs; programs which emanate from and whose responsibility for success rests in the *hands of outsiders* – be they federal administrators or local white elitist groups [emphasis added]."[87] The rhetorical similarities are unmistakable.

Each community was aware of and influenced by the other. In fact, the BPP hoped to inspire other oppressed peoples across the globe to seize power and upend the capitalist order. Taking notice of the impressive ethnic resurgence of Bay Area Indian community, the Oakland BPP expressed hope that "even a people divided by great distances and living on reservations can create a unified, federated nation."[88] For some of leaders of the BPP, the slogan "power to the people" advanced the collective interests of all dispossessed people. Chicago Panther Fred Hampton contended "We say all power to all people. Red power to red people, yellow power to yellow people, brown power to brown people, white power to white people, and black power to black people."[89] Many Indian intellectuals, including Vine Deloria Jr., spoke of the correlations between and influences of Black Power on American Indians. Deloria was heavily critical of the early Civil Rights Movement's focus on integration but he also wrote, "Black power, as a

communication phenomenon, was a godsend to other groups. It clarified the intellectual concepts which had kept Indians and Mexicans confused and allowed the concept of self-determination suddenly to become valid."[90] In addition to endorsing the rhetoric of "power to the people," many American Indian organizations borrowed direct-action tactics from the BPP, included the use of armed patrols against police brutality the Minneapolis chapter of AIM.

Based on these similarities and confluences it may appear that Red Power is a derivative of the BPP platform; however, there are many ways in which Red Power resists comparison. The most salient difference between the BPP and Red Power is an explicit rejection of the interracial coalition politics on the part of American Indian activists. While they were sympathetic to the goals of an interethnic movement composed of the world's dispossessed, the utopian vision of Native self-determination was of an indigenously recolonized North America. For Red Power activists, they were neither concerned with external audiences beyond the indigenous world nor interested in creating lasting political alliances among other racial groups. Deloria remarked that other groups may have been shocked to discover that "Indians were not planning to share the continent with their oppressed brothers once the revolution was over."[91] The Red Power activists spoke of a world that existed before Christopher Columbus not as a premodern romantic vision but as a belief that the presence of a settler nation was a passing episode in a long Indian history stretching millennia. The presence of foreigners was neither a political fact that required strategic alliances and compromise nor a condition that required Indians to share the ancestral lands of North America with other revolutionaries or dispossessed peoples. The movement placed the concept of a separate homeland directly at the center

of Indian politics. While the goals of other social movements were consistent, the affirmation of Indian difference and the return of tribal lands put their political project at odds with other social movements.

Red Power was not a neo-Marxist movement. For many American Indian activists, Marxism was perceived as yet another European intellectual tradition concerned with the linear trajectory of history and the advancement of industrial civilization. They argued that Marxism despiritualized the universe and proffered no theory of culture that could advance Indian self-determination. Red Power activist Russell Means explains the oppositional commitments of Marxists and American Indians:

> Look beneath the surface of revolutionary Marxism and what do you find. A commitment to reversing the industrial system which created the need of white society for uranium? No. A commitment to guaranteeing the Lakota and other American Indian peoples real control over the land and resources they have left? No, not unless the industrial process is to be reversed as part of their doctrine. A commitment to our rights, as people, to maintaining out values and traditions? No, not as long as they need the uranium within our land to feed the industrial system of the society, the culture of which the Marxists *are still a part*.[92]

While sharing a desire to upend the capitalist order, American Indian activists embraced *deindustrialization* and argued for a return to traditional indigenous lifestyles that contradicted the goals of the industrial proletariat. For most Red Power activist's their indigenous identity and affiliations transcended their class status. Rather than identifying as either workers or members of the *lumpenproletariat*, Red Power activists saw themselves as descendants of indigenous resistance traditions guided by the pastoral

practices and revolutionary thoughts of historical figures such as Sitting Bull, Geronimo, Red Cloud, Black Elk, and Crazy Horse.

Finally, Red Power occupied a very different cultural space when compared to Black Power. Both African Americans and American Indians experienced oppression at the hands of Euro-Americans yet the methods of conquest and resistance were distinct. Where African American culture was systematically segregated and excluded from mainstream society, American Indian culture was forcibly assimilated. Although both groups spoke of self-determination, grass-roots community empowerment, and sovereignty, the Red Power movement turned to traditional Indian philosophies and spirituality rather than modern political thought and economic theories of liberation. Red Power activists endorsed the concept of *inherent sovereignty*, that Indian nations possess the right to self-governance prior to and outside of the imposition of Euro-American law. Red Power was a project of indigenous self-determination and its rhetoric was directed at creating a collective identity for American Indians, rather than empowering the world's dispossessed.

So, what can be said about the positive correlations noted earlier between Red and Black Power? Rather than force a connection at the level of policy, values or political goals, I suggest that we return to Deloria's comment quoted earlier: "Black Power, as a *communicative phenomenon*, was a godsend to the other groups. It clarified the intellectual concepts which had kept Indians and Mexicans confused and allowed the concept of self-determination suddenly became valid [emphasis added]."[93] Seen in the light of this quotation, I posit that the most important correlation between Red and Black power was the configuration of the term "power" into a specific "technology of

communication." Black Power provided the American Indian community with a way of speaking, a lexicon, a grammar, and a mode of appropriate discursive action that a) demanded departure from past modes of protest action and that b) established the agency of Indian protestors as locales of power equal to the state and Euro-American culture, generally. Black Power was a material mode of speaking and being that American Indians appropriated for their own agenda. Of course, all technologies come with a price. The substitution of "Red" for "Black" meant that Indian activists benefitted from an established and widely recognized mode of expression, but it also implied more affinity between the African American and American Indian struggles than actually existed. Furthermore, as Indian activists used the term "Red Power" they permitted their conservative critics to classify their protest as just another naïve articulation of 1960's revolutionary Marxism.

Three Occupations of Alcatraz Island

American Indians attempted two separate occupations of Alcatraz Island prior to the sustained occupation on November 20, 1969. The first transpired in 1964, when local Indian organizations expressed interest in developing Alcatraz as an Indian education and cultural center. With the help of San Francisco attorney Elliot Leighton, a group of Sioux Indians filed a petition with the General Service Administration (GSA) asserting the right to use Alcatraz Island for Indian purposes based on the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty which gave the Sioux explicit right to occupy abandon Federal facilities.[94] The group's interpretation of the treaty was not accepted by the courts; the court determined that the treaty only enumerated the rights of Red Cloud's people on Sioux land. After both the

city and the court had rebuffed their proposal, Alcatraz became a highly visible symbol for local American Indian groups. On March 9, 1964 a group of Sioux Indians occupied the land armed with banker boxes full of legal documents in defense of their claim. The occupation was led by Allen and Belva Cottier, and Richard McKenzie. Members of an ad hoc Sioux club and Nordwall's United Council joined them. Strong, overbearing, and even intimidating to some, McKenzie was considered the leader and spokesman of the group. The organization's women members deserve recognition for planning the event, including Joan Boardman, a white woman who gathered legal research in defense of the occupation, along with Belva Cottier and Stella Leach.[95] The Cottier's landed on Alcatraz dressed in full head-dresses and traditional Sioux attire. Greeting caretaker A.L. Aylworth, Allen Cottier said "We'll be more fair to the government than they were to us, we'll pay them forty-seven cents an acre, the same as they paid California tribes when the government took their land."[96] The group's ongoing efforts to persuade the General Service Administration (hereafter GSA) were overshadowed by more extravagant proposals by white land developers such as Texas billionaire Lamar Hunt who proposed to turn the island into an array of expensive homes, shopping complexes, and even a luxury resort and casino.

The problem with the legal and procedural approach to converting Alcatraz for Indian use was that such efforts worked within white power structures that did not sympathize with American Indian causes. It was clear to the group that the piecemeal approach would not produce results. It was at this point that Alcatraz became a symbol of governmental neglect and outright oppression for a large portion of the Bay Area Indian community. Seizing Alcatraz became a central part of the Bay Area Indian community's

struggle for self-determination and the place became the synecdoche for the government's neglect of the American Indian as a whole. The 1964 occupation captivated the attention young activists and did a great deal to spotlight the distinguishing character of Indian protest. While reports in the Oakland Tribune and San Francisco Examiner called the invasion "wacky," Smith and Warrior argue that the 1964 occupation became a part of the community's oral history.[97]

The second and third occupations were characteristically different than the first attempt. This time the occupants were of a diverse tribal make-up, they were predominantly college students, and they were unconcerned with the occupation's legality of the occupation. Spearheaded by Oakes and other student leaders, Bay Area Indian organizations planned to occupy Alcatraz Island in the summer of 1970 as an act of protest against their rejected petition. A tragic fire on October 10, 1969 at the San Francisco Indian center created a new sense of urgency to move up the occupation to November. On November 9, 1969, Oakes and a group of supporters chartered a boat, the *Monte Cristo*, to circle and symbolically reclaim the island. Oakes jumped off the boat and swam over two-hundred yards to the island, followed by a small group of loyal supports who spent the night on the island before they were removed by law enforcement. The second yet very brief occupation had begun. While on the island, Oakes became convinced that a longer occupation in the form of a major protest event was possible and necessary. After he returned to the mainland, Oakes traveled to Los Angeles that week to organize a larger group to occupy the island later that month. During that trip he recruited dozens of American Indian students. Oakes also met Edward Castillo (Juaneno tribe), a professor of American Indian Studies at UCLA, who helped

organize a large turnout. Castillo was a highly intelligent and congenial figure who would later be an important figure throughout the occupation as the elected head of controversial security for Alcatraz. He flew from Los Angeles the morning of November 20 to join the occupying force at the Sausalito pier. On November 20, Oakes, followed by eighty-nine American Indians calling themselves the *Indians of All Tribes* landed on Alcatraz Island. In their first proclamation addressed "To the Great White Father and All His People" the occupants established the rhetorical practices and themes that would characterize the construction of Red Power at Alcatraz Island.[98]

Indian Life on "the Rock"

Even at his most optimistic, Oakes could not have anticipated the outpouring of support the protestors received. Within days of the initial landing, hundreds American Indians from across the country flocked to join the occupation or lend support. The initial landing party consisted of Indians from over 20 different tribes. Occupants brought with them families including young children ranging from 2 to 6 years old.[99] In response federal officials gave them until noon November 22 to vacate the island or face arrest. Dennis Turner told reporters "we won't resist, but how will they find us? It's why we are here in the first place – we are the invisible Americans."[100] The occupants sent a proclamation to Interior Secretary Hickel responding the threat of federal marshals, challenging them to "either to use violence upon us as before to remove us from the Great Spirit's land or to institute a real change in its dealings with the American Indians."[101] Oakes, in response to requests by Hickel for a phone meeting with the occupants argued "we have a greater respect for what we have ourselves and this is what we are trying to

build here…We will talk to Hickel, but only if he comes out here. We won't talk to him on the telephone if he calls and we won't talk with a middle man."[102] Oakes and the other occupants demanded that federal officials meet with them directly to negotiate the transfer of the islands title to the Indians of All Tribes. Alcatraz caretaker, Glenn Dodson even helped the landing party get settled by showing occupants to the more comfortable living spaces of former guards. When asked if he felt threatened he said "I don't really mind, besides I'm one-eighth Indian myself." Federal officials extended the deadline for the occupants to vacate to two weeks. Another 40 occupants showed up on the second day. Interior Department Regional Coordinator William T. Davoren then contacted officials in Washington who recommended a cooling off period before any action was taken against the occupants.[103]

Meanwhile, the occupants began work on creating a living community at Alcatraz Island. In addition to negotiating demands with government officials, talking to the press, and performing celebratory songs and dances around the fire at night, the occupants also had to deal with the practical needs of day-to-day life. Many were unprepared for a lengthy stay and packed very little clothing or food, ignoring instructions from the leaders of the first landing party. While Oakes became the spokesman and unofficial leader of the occupation, the occupants created a governing body based on unity and consensus that would help manage the day-to-day operations of the island. The coordinating council's goal was to organize people into groups to do the labor required for health and safety.[104] Occupants were tasked with important duties such as food preparation, sanitation, finances, media relations, and security. By December, a 23-year old Sioux by the name of John Trudell worked out an arrangement with Radio Pacifica in Berkeley and Los

Angeles to broadcast a radio show detailing the news and events on the island. [105] Other occupants began work on an *Indians of All Tribes* newsletter. Smith and Warrior note that the first few days of the occupation were relatively free of major problems and disputes.

At the outset, the protestors lived their stated ideals of pan-Indian unity. One occupant, Luwana Quitquit reflected on the mood near the beginning of the occupation: "We all had things to offer each other. Brotherhood. Sisterhood."[106] While men and women were assigned gendered labor tasks, the women of the island claimed that all work was seen as complimentary. One occupant Linda Aranaydo argued that "no one here feels oppressed" and "we usually choose men to be our spokesmen, for they are more experienced. But if a woman wanted to speak, she would." Another occupant and rousing militant orator Shirley Keith argued that "in the white world, femininity is all appearance. Here it is what you do and how you relate to other people and show warmth in helping each other and compassion for your fellow man."[107] Perhaps due to the excitement of a historic moment and the unique awe and mystery of the island, the protestors initially got along for the most part and the governing functions seemed run smoothly. The island bustled with the sounds of children playing, nightly songs and powwows, the constant flow of local and national media, and a constant influx of new occupants. The nightly gatherings by the fire could be seen from the mainland in San Francisco.[108] While people shuffled back and forth within the first 10 days, reports place the island's population at approximately 600 in December.[109] The protestors domesticated the island by creating communal gathering spaces and covered the island in graffiti with slogans like "You are on Indian Land" and "Indians Welcome" and "Custer

Had It Coming." From a dockside pole, the placed hanged a Red Power flag depicting a broken peace pipe and a teepee as an emblem of the militant occupation.[110]

The extensive level of press coverage at the start of the protest resulted in an outpouring of donations of food, clothing, and money. Even the cast of the musical *Hair* took up a nightly collection at their performance and donated it to the occupants.[111] On Thanksgiving, the San Francisco restaurant Bratskellar's donated turkeys and catered a feast for over 300 occupants. News reports attempted to catch the historic and celebratory atmosphere of the occupation. Many news stories and interviews with occupants described the site as a metaphorical site of holy pilgrimage; they called the site an Indian "Mecca" or "Selma" or "Sistine Chapel".[112] The San Francisco Chronicle gave the protest above the fold coverage for first week and reporter Tim Findley provided generally positive press coverage for approximately the first month.

Unfortunately, the electric atmosphere of the first few months gave way to a number of conflicts, problems, and divisions. The protestors confronted a series of problems that were pragmatic, historical, and theoretical. First, drug and alcohol use was a significant impediment to cooperation. Despite their explicit prohibition, drugs and alcohol were smuggled onto the island. Many smoked marijuana after reporters left for the evening and the security force tried to police the use of drugs and alcohol, it could not effectively monitor all parts of the island. Later in the occupation, the security force known locally as the "Bureau of Caucasian Affairs," would become responsible for much of the drug and alcohol abuse, as some in the security force used their job as an excuse to harass and bully other protestors. Due to the lawless atmosphere on the island, winos and drifters from San Francisco would tramp their way across the bay to find a place to sleep

and use drugs and alcohol on remote parts of the island where they would not be bothered. The frequent visits of reporters and new protestors made it impossible to monitor who was coming and going. Oakes remarked, "our biggest problems are freelance photographers and the hippies. They stay and eat up our stores, then leave. Then we have to clean up after them."[113]

Second, the living conditions on the island were difficult to manage. Once the mystery of exploring the island subsided, boredom and exhaustion plagued the occupants. Smith and Warrior write that "blame and sheer boredom, exuberant anarchism run amok, or a youthful commitment to hard partying – fights and accidents became more and more common, as did a general lack of cohesion and purpose among those who weren't part of the leadership."[114] Additionally, the island was cold, sleeping accommodations were scarce, and there was sporadic running water or electricity. Even some of the leaders such as Castillo and Oakes would slip away to the mainland from time to time to shower, get a nice meal, or just a decent nights' sleep. After Thanksgiving, Oakes and his wife Anne were rarely spotted on the island. He preferred to conduct business with potential donors on the mainland to keep a high level of public support for the occupation. Despite his efforts to sustain donations and financial support, his absence led some on the island to question his leadership and commitment to the occupation. Many others still remained loyal to Oakes in even in his absence.

On 7 January 1970, the occupation was dealt a devastating loss, when Oakes twelve-year-old stepdaughter, Yvonne, fell three floors down a stairwell to her death. Yvonne and some other children were playing unsupervised near when she slipped. Her death created a somber mood on the island.[115] By this time the Oakes family was seldom

present on the island. Some who had grown jealous of Oakes being in the media spotlight used his absence to criticize and challenge his leadership. On the one hand, some of these challenges were easy to dismiss in light of his fund-raising efforts. On the other, Oakes was not necessarily concerned with leadership challenges. At the outset of the protest, he had rejected leader-centered activism, arguing throughout that the entire population of Alcatraz Island was the real leader. In his defense, I suggest that had Oakes exercised a heavy-hand in dealing with power-hungry challengers, he would have betrayed the unity principles of the IOAT and likely received even more criticism from opponents. While donations still poured in, unfounded conspiracy theories circulated that donation checks were being sent to Oakes through personal letters addressed to him. In spite of these charges, Oakes continued his efforts to solicit donations and public support while reducing his appearances on the island to avoid controversy. More so than Oakes' absence on the island, the loss of Yvonne put a damper on spirits and created a much more serious and somber mood in the months that followed.

After initial public interest waned, by January of 1970 news stories in the *Chronicle* began to exaggerate conflicts and divisions on the island. Findley, who introduced Oakes and Nordwall, reported the negative mood on island and spotlighted disputes and conflicts between rival groups. Findley asserted that the island's collapsing infrastructure reflected the emergent chaos and dissension on the island. The challenges facing the protestors were much more related to practical concerns about the limitations and the dangers of the island than in the group's principles of unity. To be sure, the physical challenges on the island were pressing. The main guard tower had begun to collapse. Vandalism, property destruction, and piles of garbage and broken glass gave the

island's public face a depressing exterior. Public sympathy and interest in the protest faded by January and stories covering the occupation were buried pages deep in local newspapers. Some of the protestors also faced personal challenges, divided between their commitments to the occupation and their personal lives. Some in the group were college students and were forced to return back to San Francisco or Los Angeles for the beginning of spring classes. Findley reported that those who remained on the island grew increasingly paranoid of the Bureau of Caucasian Affairs. The security force that adorned in leather jackets stenciled with "Alcatraz Security," took on a life of its own, demanding money and a separate building for "training."[116] Some protestors compared the islands situation to William Goldings' ghoulish book of a youth island dystopia *Lord of the Flies*. Hyperbole aside, the conditions of the island created important challenges for those who remained the entire nineteen months.

Despite these challenges, the occupation continued until June of 1971. Throughout that time, the IOAT held several conferences and developed a series of proposals to "Indianize" the island and solicit federal funds to build an Indian university and cultural center. The beginning of negotiations with federal officials in February presented a new set of challenges. The group had to maintain fidelity to their organizing principles, maintain the island's unity, and navigate a complex negotiating process involving the federal government. On 28 February, the Executive Director of the National Council on Indian Opportunity, Robert Robertson accompanied by the GSA's Thomas Hannon visited to Alcatraz to meet with the group. The newly-formed Alcatraz governing council presented a planning grant to Robertson requesting that $299, 424 be given as a federal grant to the IOAT to establish an Indian university and cultural center. The

proposal explained that the money would be managed by a seven-member council elected by the 115 Indians still living on the island. Robertson considered the proposal and returned to Washington to compose the government's response.[117] On the island, Robertson and Hannon only discussed health and safety issues and argued that he did not have the power to transfer the title of the island to the group. In April, Robertson returned with a counterproposal to the convert the island to an Indian monument managed by the National Park Service.[118] In spite of Robertson's good faith efforts, the counterproposal was unacceptable to the occupants in large measure because its language said that the federal government would hold the island in trust and failed to support an Indian University. As will be discussed in great detail in Chapter 6, this proposal ignored the type principles of self-determination expressed by the IOAT. Many in the group felt that the counterproposal was condescending and an attempt to co-opt their efforts.

On the other hand, the struggle between Robertson and IOAT rejuvenated the island's leadership to redouble their efforts. A Sioux medicine man, Chief Eagle Feather was inspired to prophesize a wave Indian property seizures as a result of the governments recalcitrance. He argued that "at the end of ten years we will have our sacred ground and sweat lodge on the extreme east coast."[119] Resistance was all that was necessary. Leach expressed renewed determination as the negotiations stalled, arguing that "we are here to stay on Alcatraz."[120] Another occupant, Charles Dana told reporters that "after today, things are going to start happening."[121] Dana was correct. The Bay Area Native American Council (hereafter BANAC), comprising the Bay Area's twenty-six Indian organizations and representing some 40,000 Indians from 87 tribes, committed there support the IOAT and refused to negotiate a separate offer with the federal government to build an Indian

center on the mainland.[122] The federal government's attempts to circumvent the IOAT and their recalcitrance toward their demands helped strengthen the resolve of the group and win the support of established Indian organizations on the mainland.

Two tragic events occurred in the summer of 1970. On 1 June, a fire broke out and damaged three buildings heavily, including the warden's quarters and a light tower. While there were no injuries, public perception of the incident was that Indians on the island had intentionally set the fire.[123] John Trudell attributed the fire to the strangers that continued to enter the island without supervision. On 10 June, tragedy struck the Oakes family again when Richard was hospitalized after being beaten in a bar fight at *Warren's.* After two-weeks of coma, his cousin Bruce, Tuscaroras leader Wallace "Mad Bear" Anderson, and medicine man Peter Mitten traveled to San Francisco to visit Richard. Puzzled doctors watch on as Anderson and Mitten administered an ancient and secret medicine to Oakes while performing a ritualistic prayer. Oakes miraculously responded within five minutes and in just over an hour his pulse and body temperature returned to normal.[124] Once conscious, Oakes took a renewed interest in the occupation. On 21 July he spoke with the IOAT's attorney, Aubrey Grossman about the Nixon administrations latest proposals concerning Indian affairs. By this time, government official had grown weary of negotiations and Nixon ordered that all power be cut to the island. Amounting to a war of attrition, federal officials hoped that the lack of any utility service would force the Indian off the island without incident. Nixon adopted a wait-and-see approach to clear the island and make way for a proposed national park.[125]

In correspondence Lou Trudell, wife of Radio Free Alactraz's John Trudell summed up the groups determination to overcome the tragic events of that summer, "the

death in January of the young girl was tragic as is the hospitalization of Richard Oakes…The Indian has had a tragic past, Mr. Schultz, needless to say a tragic present but we are here on Alcatraz and on Rattlesnake Island and in Pit River to prevent a tragic future."[126] Despite all the set-backs of the summer of 1970, Trudell and Leach organized a conference that involved grand tribal performances and drumming. The rhetoric of unity and militant defiance persevered in spite of the challenges and the most dedicated protestors committed to stay on the island to the bitter end. According to Smith and Warrior, Leach promised "they would have another Wounded Knee on their hands, raising the specter of the 1890 massacre."[127] Oakes returned to the island on 3 May 1971 for one last visit; however, his presence did not have a substantial impact.

Almost one year after the power had been cut from the island, only a handful of protestors remained. On 11 June, 1971 the nineteen month-long occupation came to an end when approximately 30 federal marshals detained and escorted the handful of remaining occupants off the island.[128] Despite the last occupant's vow to return, the protest was over. Alcatraz was again lifeless and barren. *The Chronicle* ran a series of articles describing the occupation as a failure, youthful indiscretion, and even a naïve dream. One article by columnist Jerry Carroll entitled "The Dream is Over" described the "autopsy" of the island in which officials chronicled the extent of the damage resulting from vandalism, an estimated cost in the millions.[129] These stories focused on infighting and divisions as opposed to assessing the occupations legacy within the Indian community. While they could not have known it at the time, the occupation had a ripple-effect across the American Indian community. Certainly the failure to hold the rock was a disappointment to the occupants; nevertheless the occupation was not inconsequential. It

retained potent symbolic significance to Indian activists who also sought to organize and take direct action in the years that followed.

One way to judge the Alcatraz is to recognize that if it was a catalyst for Indian self-determination movements across the nation. It inspired other direct actions across the country, including direct actions at Pit River, Fort Lawton, Ellis Island, Mount Rushmore, Plymouth Rock, the BIA headquarters in Washington D.C., and the site of the 1890 massacre at Wounded Knee. Activists present at the occupation also went on to participated in national organizations such as the NIYC and AIM. The most significant legacy of the occupation was the participant's militant and confrontational expression. The rhetoric of the Alcatraz occupation was different from both past Indian movements as well as other protest cultures that emerged in the 1960's. They asserted a revived yet modified ethnic consciousness under the canopy of Red Power. On Alcatraz, a rhetorical culture of self-determination was characterized by a militant language and way of speaking, directed at enacting unity and constituting a pan-Indian collective identity external to white approval and control. The IOAT helped construct new visions of Indian community and strategies for empowerment that could be enacted through confrontation. The rhetoric of the occupation enabled Indians to think differently about what type of community is possible and taught activists that if they wanted self-determination, they had to live, speak, and share their desires to participate in struggle. The chaining out of new interpretations of Indian history and politics established the contours Red Power rhetoric. I argue throughout the next chapters that while unity in practice was not always present at Alcatraz Island, the rhetoric of IOAT sustained unity in ethic and spirit. By

showing unity in principle, I hope to demonstrate that the new visions of community sustained through the rhetoric of the IOAT attest to their transformative impact.

Chapter 2: Endnotes

[1] J Edgar Hoover quoted in Carolyn Strange and Michael Kemp, "Shades of Dark Tourism: Alcatraz and Robben Island," *Annals of Tourism Research*, 30 (2003), 390.
[2] *Escape from Alcatraz*, directed by Don Siegel , (Hollywood, CA: Paramount Pictures, 1979).
[3] Bob Robertson quoted in "Alcatraz Closes," *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 22, 1963, 1.
[4] Adam Fortunate Eagle, *Heart of the Rock: The Indian Invasion of Alcatraz*, (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2002), 7.
[5] Troy Johnson, *The Occupation of Alcatraz Island: Indian Self-Determination and the Rise of Indian Activism* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1996), 1.
[6] William Flynn, "Just One of Many Rows Over Alcatraz," *San Francisco Chronicle*, November 30, 1969, A12.
[7] Fortunate Eagle, *Heart*, 13.
[8] Francis Gardiner Davenport, *European Treaties Bearing on the History of the United States and Its Dependencies to 1648* (Washington DC: Carnegie Institute of Washington, 1917), 9-13.
[9] *Johnson v. McIntosh*, 21 U.S. 543 (1823). For a detailed analysis of the doctrine of discovery see: Robert Williams, *Like a Loaded Weapon: The Rehnquist Court, Indian Rights, and the Legal History of Racism in America*, (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), 51-53.
[10] U.S. Statutes at Large, 67: B132.
[11] Arthur V. Watkins, "Termination of Federal Supervision: The Removal of Restrictions over Indian Property and Person," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 311 (May, 1957), 47-55, 48.
[12] Watkins, "Termination," 55.
[13] Carole Goldberg-Ambrose, *Planting Tail Feathers: Tribal Survival and Public Law 280*, trans. Timothy Carr Seward (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).
[14] Donald L. Fixico, *Termination and Relocation: Federal Indian Policy, 1945-1960* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1986), 186.
[15] Fixico, *Termination*, 183.
[16] See Paul C. Rosier, "'They Are Ancestral Homelands': Race, Place, and Politics in Cold War Native America, 1945-1961," *The Journal of American History* 92 (Mar., 2006), 1300-1326; and Kenneth P. Philip, *Termination Revisited: American Indians on the Trail to Self-Determination* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999), xii.
[17] R. Warren Metcalf, *Termination's Legacy: The Discarded Indians of Utah* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002), 3.
[18] See Donald L, Fixico, "Witness to Change: Fifty Years of Indian Activism and Tribal Politics," in *Beyond Red Power: American Indian Politics and Activism since 1900*, Edited by Daniel M. Cobb and Loretta Fowler (Santa Fe, NM: School for Advanced Research, 2007), 4.
[19] Joane Nagel, *American Indian Ethnic Renewal: Red Power and the Resurgence of Identity and Culture* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1997), 118.
[20] See Lewis Meriam, *The Problem of Indian Administration* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1928).
[21] The policy justification for the Dawes Act was that individualized land ownership would encourage Indians to take up agriculture and subsequently adopt Christianity. This is rooted in a Christian influenced hierarchal theory of human civilization that posits that American Indians exist in a state of arrested evolutionary development because of semi-sedentary cultural practices and the lack of advanced agriculture. Where agriculture flourished, it was thought modern civilized life would emerge. In sum, agriculture was conceived of as a benign method of assimilation and modernization. The program, however, failed because of inadequate resources, the incapability of farming with semi-sedentary cultural practices of the Sioux and other Great Plains Indians, and the unsuitability of such land for family farming. For more see: Paula Marks, *In a Barren Land: American Indian Dispossession and Survival* (New York: William Morrow, 1998), 72-74.
[22] Nagel, *Ethnic Renewal*, 117. It is important to note that while the tribal governments were democratically elected, their leadership consisted of those favorable to the BIA.
[23] Nagel, *Ethnic Renewal*, 115.

[24] Educational opportunities expanded in 1934 with the passage of the Johnson-O'Malley Act which both expanded public education access while it required English instruction.
[25] Vine Deloria Jr., "American Indians," in *Multiculturalism in the United States: a Comparative Guide to Acculturation and Ethnicity*, ed. J.D. Buenker and L.A. Ratner (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1992), 38.
[26] Joan Albon, "Relocated American Indians in the San Francisco Bay Area: Social Interaction and Indian Identity," *Human Organization* 23 (1964), 303.
[27] Vine Deloria Jr., *Custer Died for Your Sins: an Indian Manifesto* (New York: Macmillian, 1969), xi.
[28] These bills included House Resolution 2165 and 1113 which included provisions to assist assimilation of WWII veterans and offered Indians to relinquish their trust limitations and tribal citizenship. Several other termination bills emerged in the Eighty-First Congress, including S.R. 2726 that would have abolished the BIA and repealed the IRA.
[29] Fixico, *Termination*, 15.
[30] See: William C. Meadows, *The Comanche Code Talkers of World War II* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2003); and Kenji Kawano, *Warriors: Navajo Code Talkers* (Flagstaff, AZ: Northland Company Publishing, 1990).
[31] Nagel, *Ethnic Resurgence*, 117-118.
[32] Richard Drinnon, *Keeper of Concentration Camps: Dillon S. Myer and American Racism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), p. xxviii.
[33] See Kenneth R.Philip, "Dillon S. Meyer and the Advent of Termination: 1950-1953," *Western Historical Quarterly* 19 (1989), 37-59.
[34] The BIA established the national relocation assistance program in 1952 and expanded the program in 1956 to included vocational training and apprenticeship programs. Public Law 84-959 renamed the program the Employment Assistance Program.
[35] Fortunate Eagle, *Heart*, 17.
[36] Fortunate Eagle, *Heart*, 17.
[37] For a detailed discussion of the dispossession of tribal natural resources and the conversion of public lands see Jim Messerschmidt, *The Trial of Leonard Peltier* (Boston: South End Press, 1983), 141-174; Donald L. Fixico, *The Invasion of Indian Country in the Twentieth Century: American Capitalism and Tribal Natural Resources* (Boulder, CO: University of Colorado Press, 1998); and Rex Weyler, *Blood of the land: The Government and Corporate War against the American Indian Movement* (New York: Vintage Books, 1984).
[38] Drinnon, *Keeper*, 236.
[39] Metcalf, *Legacy*, 5.
[40] See Derrick Bell, "*Brown v. Board of Education* and the Interest Convergence Dilemma," C*ritical Race Theory: The Key Writings that Formed a Movement*, ed. Kimberly Crenshaw, Neil Gotanda, Gary Peller, and Kendall Thomas (New York: New Press, 1996); and Kirt H. Wilson, "Is There Any Interest in Reconciliation," *Rhetoric and Public Affairs* 7 (Fall 2004), 367-377.
[41] Deloria, *Custer*, 173.
[42] Fixico, *Termination*, 185.
[43] Charles Wilkinson, *Blood Struggle: The Rise of Modern Indian Nations* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2005), 81.
[44] Stan Steiner, *The New Indians* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), 273.
[45] Richard Pratt, "'No Good Indians But a Dead Indian' – 'Kill the Indian in Him, and Save the Manhood,'" in United States Department of Interior *Report of the Department of Interior [with Accompanying Documents]* (1885), 775.
[46] Earl Old Person quoted in Edward Lazarus, *Black Hills/White Justice: The Sioux Nation versus the United States, 1775 to the Present* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999), 223.
[47] Albon, "Relocation," 298. Some estimates were as high as 40,000.
[48] Johnson, *Occupation*, 9.
[49] Peter Collier, "The Red Man's Burden," *Ramparts* (1970), 38.
[50] Bill Pensoneau quoted in "The Angry American Indian," *Time* (February 9, 1970), 25.
[51] Simon J. Ortiz, "Relocation," *Americans Before Columbus* (November, 1969), 1.
[52] William Brandon, "American Indians: The Alien American," *The Progressive* (December, 1969), 29.
[53] Larry W. Burt, "Roots of the Native American Urban Experience: Relocation Policy in the 1950's," *American Indian Quarterly* 10 (1986), 90-91.

[54] Adam Fortunate Eagle, *Alcatraz! Alcatraz!: The Indian Occupation of 1969-1971* (Berkeley: Heyday Books, 1992), 21.
[55] Native American Research Group, *American Indian Socialization to Urban Life Final Report* (San Francisco: Institute for Scientific Analysis, revised, 1975).
[56] Troy Johnson and Joane Nagel, "Remembering Alcatraz: Twenty-five Years After," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 18 (1994), 15.
[57] Johnson, *Occupation*, 13-14.
[58] William Willard, "Outing, Relocation, and Employment Assistance: The Impact of Federal Indian Population Dispersal Programs in the Bay Area" *Wicazo Sa Review* 12 (1997), 32-34.
[59] Willard, "Outing," 41.
[60] Nagel, *Ethnic Renewal*, 120.
[61] Clyde Warrior, "Which one are you? Five Types of Young Indians," in *Literature of the American Indian*, ed. T. Sanders (Beverly Hills, CA: Glencoe Press, 1973), 522.
[62] Paul Chaat Smith and Robert Allen Warrior, *Like a Hurricane: The Indian Movement from Alcatraz to Wounded Knee* (New York: The New Press, 1996), 37.
[63] Vine Deloria Jr. and Clifford M. Lytle, *The Nations Within: The Past and Future of American Indian Sovereignty* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1984), 198.
[64] National Congress of American Indians, "Declaration of Indian Purpose, American Indian Chicago Conference, June 13, 1961" in *Red Power: The American Indians' Fight for Freedom*, ed. Alvin M. Josephy, Joane Nagel, and Troy Johnson (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999), 13-14.
[65] Clyde Warrior interview in Steiner, *New Indians*, 68, 72.
[66] Vine Deloria Jr. quoted in William Davis, "Red Power," *Punch* 257 (1969), 1.
[67] While Deloria's comments here frame him in line with the older and more moderate generation of activists, his writings, speaking, and literary work in the late 1960's and early 1970's were frequently cited by scholars and activists as radicalizing Indian activists. His works were also part of an American Indian cultural renaissance that fueled the recovery of Indian intellectual thought, philosophy, literature, and spiritual traditions. His comments here reflect the institutional constraints of the NCAI that was predominantly older and middle-class Indians that favored moderation and accommodation over militant confrontation.
[68] Peter Benchley, "'Red Power' – U.S. Indian Are in Militant Mood," *San Francisco Chronicle* (November 23, 1969), A5.
[69] See Richard W. Rees, *Shades of Difference: A History of Ethnicity in American* (New York: Rowan & Littlefield, 2007).
[70] See Stokely Carmichael, "Speech Given at Garfield High School, Seattle, Washington, April 19, 1967" Accessed 23 April 2009 at http://www.aavw.org/special_features/speeches_speech_carmichael01.html.
[71] Unnamed American Indians interviewed in *Time*, "Angry", 26.
[72] Clyde Warrior quoted in Smith and Warrior, *Like a Hurricane*, 42.
[73] Deloria and Lytle, *Nations*, 199.
[74] Vine Deloria Jr. *God is Red: A Native View of Religion* (3rd ed.) (Golden, CO: Fulcrum Publishing, 2003), 5.
[75] LaNada Boyer, "Reflections on Alcatraz," in *American Indian Activism: Alcatraz to the Longest Walk*, ed. Troy Johnson, Joane Nagel, and Duane Champagne (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 89.
[76] Richard Oakes migrated to San Francisco and enrolled in San Francisco State in 1969. He grew up on the St. Regis Reservation in New York State near the Canadian border. After dropping out of the high school in eleventh grade, he worked in the steel industry for nearly a decade.
[77] See Steven Talbot, "Indian Students and Reminiscences of Alcatraz," in *Activism*, 104-112; and Steve Talbot, "Why the Native American Heritage Should be Taught in College," *The Indian Historian* 7 (1974), 42-44.
[78] Talbot, "Reminiscences," 105. Also see: Zug G. Standing Bear, "To Guard Against Invading Indians: Struggling for Native Community in the Southeast," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*, 18 (1994), 303.
[79] Daniel Crowe, *Prophets of Rage: The Black Freedom Struggle in San Francisco, 1945-1969* (New York: Garland Publishing, 2000), 2.

[80] Crowe, *Prophets*, 16.
[81] See Crowe, *Prophets*, 72-79.
[82] Robyn Ceanne Spencer, "Inside the Panther Revolution: The Black Freedom Movement and the Black Panther Party in Oakland, California," in *Groundwork: Local Black Freedom Movements in America*, ed. Jeanne Theoharis and Komozi Woodard (New York: NYU Press, 2005), 302.
[83] Crowe, *Prophets*, 83.
[84] Malcolm X, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X: As Told to Alex Haley* (New York: Ballantine Books), 374.
[85] See Jama Lazerow and Yohuru Williams, *In Search of the Black Panther Party: New Perspectives on a Revolutionary Movement* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006); Peniel E. Joseph, *The Black Power Movement: Rethinking the Civil-Rights Era* (New York: Routledge, 2006); Jeffrey O.G. Ogbar, *Black Power: Radical Politics and African American Identity* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Press, 2004); Robert L. Scott and Wayne Brockriede, *The Rhetoric of Black Power* (New York: Harper & Row, 1969); and C.T. Vivian, *Black Power and the American Myth* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1970).
[86] Eldridge Cleaver quoted in Crowe, *Prophets*, 214-215.
[87] Clyde Warrior, "We are not Free," in Alvin Josephy, Joane Nagel, and Troy Johnson, *Red Power: The American Indians' Fight for Freedom* (2nd ed.) (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1999), 17, 20.
[88] "Indian Rebellion," *The Black Panther Party* (May 25, 1969), A1.
[89] *The Murder of Fred Hampton*, DVD, directed by Howard Alk, (Chicago: Facet Video).
[90] Deloria, *Custer*, 180.
[91] Vine Deloria Jr., *Behind the Trail of Broken Treaties: An Indian Declaration of Independence* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1985), 3.
[92] Russell Means, "The Same Old Song," in Ward Churchill, *Marxism and Native Americans* (Boston: South End Press, 1983), 25.
[93] Deloria, *Custer*, 180.
[94] The General Service Administration (GSA) was placed in charge of the island and a presidential commission (Public Law 88-138) was established on 16 October 1963 to evaluate some thirty-three development proposals.
[95] Fortunate Eagle, *Heart*, 8.
[96] Fortunate Eagle, *Heart*, 9.
[97] Smith and Warrior, *Hurricane*, 11.
[98] Indians of All Tribes, "Proclamation to the Great White Father and All His People," *Alcatraz Newsletter* 1 (January 1970), 2.
[99] Tim Findley, "Invaders Claim Rock is theirs," *San Francisco Chronicl*e (November 21, 1969), A1.
[100] Findley, "Invaders," A4.
[101] Tim Findley, "Indians Reinforced – U.S. Delays Action," *San Francisco Chronicle* (November 22, 1969), A1.
[102] "The Rock Blockaded – Indians Vow to Stay," *San Francisco Chronicle* (November 23, 1969), A18.
[103] Findley, "Indians Reinforced," A1.
[104] See Typed List of Council Members, Council Memoranda, Box 1, File 29, Alcatraz File, San Francisco Public Library.
[105] Trudell and his wife Lou had a child during the occupation that they named Wovoka, after the Paiute prophet of the Nineteenth-Century Ghost Dance Movement.
[106] Luwana Quitquit quoted in Smith and Warrior, *Hurricane*, 19.
[107] Blake Green, "Indian Women 'Hanging Tough,'" *San Francisco Chronicle*, (November 28, 1969), A25.
[108] "Indians Pouring in to Rock," *San Francisco Chronicle* (December 1, 1969), A18.
[109] Joel Tlumak, "Indians: The Rock Packing 'Em In," *San Francisco Examiner* (November 29, 1969), A5.
[110] "Rock Blockaded," A18.
[111] Tim Findley, "A Tribal Feast on Alcatraz," *San Francisco Chronicle* (November 27, 1969), A4.
[112] "Alcatraz has become a Mecca for most American Indians," *San Jose Mercury News* (March 15, 1970), 7.
[113] Richard Oakes quoted in Lynn Ludlow, "Oakes Has One Goal for Alcatraz Unity," *San Francisco Chronicle* (December 7, 1969), A5.
[114] Smith and Warrior, *Hurricane*, 31.

[115] Tim Findley, "The Indians on Alcatraz - Factionalism and Feuds," *San Francisco Chronicle* (January 8, 1970), A4.
[116] Findley, "Factionalism," A4. Also see Tim Findley, "Alcatraz Dissension Grows," *San Francisco Chronicle* (January 7, 1970), A5.
[117] "U.S. Weighs a Peace Offer by Alcatraz Island," *New York Times* (March 1, 1970), A1
[118] "U.S. Takes Plan to Island – 'Indianized' Alcatraz Park," *San Francisco Chronicle* (April 1, 1970), A18.
[119] Chief Eagle Feather quoted in "Indians Pledge Resistance to Alcatraz Park," *San Francisco Chronicle*, (April 2, 1970), A12.
[120] Stella Leach quoted in "Indians Pledge," A12.
[121] Charles Dana quoted in "Indians Pledge," A12.
[122] Marilyn Miracle, "Bay Area Native American Council," *Alcatraz Newsletter*, 1:2 (February 1970), 8.
[123] "Historical Buildings Burn – Indians Deny Setting Fire," *San Francisco Chronicle*, (June 2, 1970), A4.
[124] "Medicine Men Treating Oakes," *San Francisco Chronicle*, (June 25, 1970), A12.
[125] "Alcatraz War – Both Sides Dig In," *San Francisco Chronicle* (June 4, 1970), A5.
[126] "Correspondence," Outward, Box 1, File 24, SFPL.
[127] Smith and Warrior, *Hurricane*, 83.
[128] "Federal Marshals Seize Alcatraz," *San Francisco Chronicle* (June 12, 1971), A14.
[129] Jerry Carroll, "The Dream is Over – A Sad Visit to Alcatraz," *San Francisco Chronicle*, (June 14, 1971), A1, A4.

Chapter 3

From Tragedy to Trickster

American Indian cultural survival in the twentieth century did not stifle the circulation of tragic portrayals of Native life. Literary critic Shirley Hill Witt compares popular representations of American Indians to the mahogany-carved statues of the local cigar-store: stoic and mute. She writes "the carvers of this genre of statuary must have shared some prevalent conviction with the public – that there was something mute and wooden about live Indians, those Indians still left when the art form flourished in the late nineteenth century. Have you ever seen a wooden Indian smiling? No."[1] For many American Indians, the wood-carved relic symbolized their face of tragedy, a mask weathered by centuries of violence. Similarly, Kahn Tineta Horn (Mohawk) contends that "we are really a happy people. But in front of whites we are serious and self-conscious. We feel we are on trial and what we say will be turned against us. The Indian will remain mute until this stigma has been lifted from him [sic]."[2] For so long, American Indian life imitated art; mute and stoic, an embodied expression of a once proud people now defeated and demoralized. For much of Euro-American society, American Indian voices had fragmented into the monosyllabic grunts of *Lone Ranger's* Tonto or the mythic mimeographs of the ancient *noble savage*, a romantic yet primitive relic trapped in America's tragic past.

The rhetoric of tragedy also constrained American Indian expression. Witt argues that stoicism persisted because "if all that makes a man a man to his [sic] people lies crushed and bloody before him, what other choice remains but to stand mute and enduring?"[3] While Euro-American romantics such as novelist James Fenimore Cooper or

renown naturalist George Catlin conflated stoicism with pastoral nobility, for American Indians it symbolized the triumph of Western attitudes toward history, the unfolding of a drama involving villains and heroes, barbarism and progress, triumph and tragedy. Throughout the nineteenth century, Euro-American discourses of tragedy symbolically replaced flesh-and-blood Indians with muted wood-carved figures encased behind museum glass. This body of discourses constituted the Cult of the Noble Savage, a cultural rhetoric that romanticized the noble simplicity of American Indian life yet mourned its tragic fate to vanish with the inevitable progress of Western civilization. The circulation of themes of tragedy relegated political and ethical questions concerning American Indian land and welfare to an irretrievable past. Thus, the available rhetorical resources with which to demand Indian self-determination were constrained by axiomatic beliefs that Indian demands were anachronistic or even primitive.

Throughout the cultural revival of the 1960's, the persistence of themes of tragedy served as a profound obstacle for American Indian activists seeking to revive and defend traditional beliefs. To rupture the confines of museum glass, young activists developed an irreverent language of life-affirming comedy that celebrated the survival of tribal traditions, rather than lamenting their tragic end. When the IOAT landed on Alcatraz Island they employed comic parody to reframe their historic demands for the enforcement of federal treaties. The IOAT offered a "fair and honorable" treaty to "the Caucasian inhabitants of this land" in which:

> We will purchase said Alcatraz Island for twenty-four dollars ($24) in glass beads and red clothe, a precedent set by the white man's purchase of a similar island about 300 years ago. We know that $24 in trade goods for these 16 acres is more

> than was paid when Manhattan was sold, but we know that land values have risen over the years. Our offer of $1.24 per acre is greater than the 47 cents per acre the white men are now paying the California Indians for their land. We will give to the inhabitants of this island a portion of that land for their own, to be held in trust by the American Indian Government – for as long as the sun shall rise and the rivers go down to the sea…[4]

Articulating an historical demand for sovereignty, the IOAT exchanged an earnest literalism for tactics of ironic inversion and parody. Embracing comedy, the IOAT revisited American history with an indigenous eye and rewrote ancient treaty promises into their current moment and with language that hinted at past oppression. Through eloquent and topical parody, they showcased the contradictions and duplicity of Euro-American legal practices and asserted the power of American Indian voice.

In this chapter, I argue that the IOAT performed the persona of the tribal *trickster*, whom Kenneth Lincoln describes as "an antiheroic comic teacher" that functions to "fashion a new image of the surviving Indian as comic artist more than tragic victim, seriously humorous to the native core."[5] In many American Indian cultures, the trickster is a self-effacing and cathartic figure, a performing jester who plays with dominant cultural forms and induces self-reflexive and laughter in their audience. The trickster releases negative energy not through transcendence but by inverting oppressive dominant symbols through ironic reversals. In what Barbara Babcock calls "symbolic inversion" and Kenneth Burke categorizes as "perspective by incongruity," the trickster produces new and alternative visions dismantling the psychic structures of taken-for-granted rules, codes, and norms.[6] The trickster diffuses the symbolic potency of oppressive symbols by

decontextualizing and domesticating them in new social circumstances, transforming tragedy to comedy. The rhetoric of Red Power should be appreciated for its comedic humility, refusal to participate in tragic dramas, and recovery of a vibrant Indian voice. The persona of the trickster, an otherwise lawless comic figure is, in Lincoln's words, the "original radical."[7] Ernest Stromberg suggests, however, that rhetorical critics themselves are limited by frames of tragedy, and as a result have failed to completely appreciate the comedic texture of American Indian discourse.[8] Taking this charge seriously, this chapter explores American Indians and the occupants of Alcatraz Island as *agents* rather than *victims* who affirm and sustain their collective identity through a comic orientation. To show this comic orientation at work, I examine strategies of mimicry and ironic reversal in the IOAT first proclamation. This document indicts the political language of social contract by imitating the discourse of the nearly five hundred treaties signed between American Indian tribes and the federal government. I argue the occupant's comic interpretation of treaty discourse reframed ancient promises of Indian sovereignty as relevant in present.

The Tragic Frame

Starting in pre-colonial America, a strong sentiment of tragedy pervaded Euro-American perspectives toward Indian history and culture. From political oratory to popular culture, the representative anecdote for the destitute condition of Indian Country persisted as that of the *vanishing Indian* or *noble savage*.[9] Fergus Bordewich argues that the vanishing Indian was "a kind of intellectual solipsism, a closed dialogue among popular fantasies about a people who are simultaneously 'savage,' 'noble,' and 'pathetic' and who are forever said to be on the brink of vanishing from the Earth."[10] The vanishing

Indian embodied tragedy, a victim of the unstoppable machinery of Euro-American civilization and the savage relic of a primitive past. The American Indian was doomed to extinction by either assimilation or extermination. The circulation of this tragic and pitied image endured despite the presence of a rich and adaptive cultural history. Brewton Berry argues that the Cult of the Noble Savage denied American Indian survival through epidictic rhetoric that "patronized Indians by eulogizing them."[11] Although to a certain extent admitting the culpability of Euro-Americans for the destruction of American Indian culture, the Cult of the Noble Savage embraced the order of hierarchy and civilization, the natural victimhood of American Indians, and dialectics of tragedy and triumph as the generative forces of history. While sometimes woeful and sad, the advancement of civilization was argued to be the necessary fulfillment of the cosmic order.

In some parts of American literary history, the noble savage was fashioned as a welcoming figure, heroic helper, cultural interpreter, or spiritual guide. As a famed example, the popular construction of Pocahontas (Powhatan) in Captain John Smith's *A General History of Virginia* (1624) and later in John Davis mythic novels *Travels in the United States of American* (1803) and *The First Settlers of Virginia: An Historical Novel* (1805) sustained beliefs that Indians accepted and even welcomed their inevitable passing. Indian figures in mythic novels willingly assisted Euro-American settlers in their journeys throughout North America. In the work of Davis, Pocahontas was memorialized as an Indian princess who eagerly assisted Captain Smith and the first settlers of Virginia at grave risk to her own life. Davis portrayed Pocahontas as noble enough to recognize that her own way of life was coming to an end, while also participating in its demise.[12] In

the same tradition, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow published *Song of Hiawatha* (1855) in which his Ojibwa protagonist, upon fading into the sunset, welcomed his conquerors from across the ocean as bearers of the fruits of civilization.[13]

The rhetoric of tragedy mapped a hierarchal order over historical forces. For example, in 1819 the literary journal *The North American Review* expressed the popular belief that "a whole race of people has become nearly extinct," a people whose "fate it has been, like the morning dew, insensibly and mysteriously to disappear, before the lights of civilization and Christianity."[14] Within this ideology, tragedy enacted a peculiar drama of heroes and villains and civilization conquering savagery. Exploring this theme, Kenneth Burke writes that "in the face of anguish, injustice, disease, and death…One constructs his [sic] notion of the universe of history, and shapes attitudes in keeping."[15] The categorical choices used to arrange responses to the human condition (epic, tragedy, comedy, elegy, burlesque, satire, or grotesque) interpret reality in ways that commit agents to programs that align with their categorical function. Attitudinal choices such as tragedy "prepare us *for* some function and *against* others, *for* or *against* the persons representing these functions."[16] The tragic frame is an *attitudinal choice* that shapes reality in ways that committed agents to the programmatic fulfillment of an agonistic drama sustained through "patterns of fatality, magnification, and humility."[17]

For Burke, the subject of tragedy is the helpless victim that unavoidably suffers. Adrienne E. Christensen and Jeremy J. Hansen characterize the discourse of the tragic victim as "fruitless because he or she appeals to a supernatural force such as God, fate, or destiny, a force that is, in essence, beyond persuasion."[18] For Burke, tragedy necessitates order and guilt and, as a result, requires purification through sacrifice. The scapegoat

suffers *necessarily* to purge society of impurity and guilt. Themes of guilt and purification exist in the popular fiction of James Fenimore Cooper, Mark Twain, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, and Thomas Cole. In particular, Cooper's *Leatherstocking* novels portrayed the inevitable yet necessary destruction American Indians. Literary critic Karl Kroeber suggests that Cooper's romantic Indians - along with that of Twain and Longfellow - were particularly dangerous portrayals because they were "entangled with enough realistic criticism of white Americans to dramatize some parts of the essential tragedy of the Indians' victimization and that victimization's countereffects upon the Indian's destroyers."[19] Cooper's Indians were unsympathetic, stone-faced, serious, and speaking in broken pidgin English and primitive grunts.

Of the discursive choices available to interpret history, tragedy is the most dangerous because it *necessitates* victimhood and mistakenly conflates conquest for heroism. Brain L. Ott and Eric Aoki write that "since tragic frames ultimately alleviate the social guilt associated with a disaster through victimage, they tend to bring both closure and resolution to the larger social issues they raise."[20] The tragic frame also works to the exclusion of other interpretations, particularly that of the comic. In contrast to the cosmic fatalism of tragedy, the comic frame harnesses humility and reason as an orientation toward human imperfection. Burke elaborates:

> The progress of humane enlightenment can go on further than in picturing people not as *vicious*, but as *mistaken*. When you add that people are *necessarily* mistaken, that *all* people are exposed to situations in which they must act as fools, that *every* insight contains its own special kind of blindness, you complete the

> comic circle, returning again to the lesson of humility that underlies great tragedy.[21]

The comic frame for Burke, as characterized by Christensen and Hansen, emphasizes human "capacity for laughter, reason, and action rather than scapegoating and paralysis."[22] While rhetoric in the tragic frame requires victimhood and mystification, the comic frame affirms reason, human fraternity, and reconciliation in response to life and death challenges. Instead of ceding agency to the fatalistic forces conjured through sacrifice and purification, the comic frame admits human imperfection and offers thoughtful correctives through humor. Barry Brummett argues that the comic frame teaches "the fool – and vicariously the audience – about error so that it may be corrected rather than punished."[23] The comic frame affirms the human condition and its imperfections while the tragic laments it, escaping into the drive for transcendence and purification. Burke clarifies the importance of this difference when he argues that "comedy deals with *man in society*, tragedy with the *cosmic man*."[24] He continues that "mankind's [sic] only hope is a cult of comedy. (The cult of tragedy is too eager to help out with the holocaust)."[25]

As an alternative to guilt and sacrifice, comic frames are cultivated through what Burke describes as "perspective by incongruity," or "methodical misnaming," calling tragic symbols "names unsuited to the nature that the sufferer attributes to them."[26] Comedy demystifies and dismantles tragedy by juxtaposing incongruous symbols in violation of expected conventions. It produces new interpretations and perspectives that would have otherwise remained unseen. Burke contends that "planned incongruity should be deliberately cultivated for the purpose of experimentally wrenching apart all those

molecular combinations of adjective and noun, substantive and verb, which still remain with us."[27] Incongruity subjects language to a "cracking process," infusing instability and fissures into dominant and fixed meanings. In particular, rearticulating historical tragedy as comedy ruptures taken-for-granted meanings and makes new interpretations of history possible.

In America, the rhetoric of tragedy affirmed the predestination of Western civilization and the naturalized conditions of Indian victimhood.[28] The circulation of tragedy denied the human agency of conquerors and victims, because both parties were equally at the mercy of cosmic forces. Tragic frames alleviated responsibility for Euro-American acts of barbarism and disempowered Indian resistance. Craig Womack argues that "non-Natives are often unable to connect comedy with Indian people because of the American guilt complex over Indians and the oft-embraced tragic view of the vanishing American."[29] Tragic frames fail to capture the complexity of comedic expression as a central feature of American Indian cultures. Instead, as Burke suggests, discourses of tragedy seduce us to embrace powerlessness, to mourn, scapegoat, and sacrifice.

The Trickster and the Comic Frame

The uses of Indian humor advance and in some ways redefine the function and discursive power of the comic frame. That is to say that, culturally-specific uses of the comic frame, as embodied by the ritual performance of the tribal *trickster persona*, highlight the role of comedy in American Indian rhetoric and how it is capable of contesting the tragic conception of the noble savage. As a central feature of traditional Indian culture, comedy provides both emotional release through vicarious experience as

well as a discursive refusal of Euro-American tragedy. While rhetorical critics have demonstrated the ways in which comedy is an adaptive tactic of social protest, I suggest further that comedy can be fashioned as a *language of self-determination* because it affirms human agency over the forces of fatalism; self-rule triumphs over cosmic destiny.

The accompaniment of Indian humor with a rhetoric of confrontation fused resistance with the reformation of a militant, though not tragic, identity. While Indian humor takes on a variety of social functions, irony and satire in particular were deployed by many Red Power activists. As a stylized ritual, Lincoln argues that "Indian-white tragedies can be alchemized through the alembic of modern red humor; intercultural differences shift toward seriously playful texts, which tell us much about ourselves, American and Native American."[30] Indian humor makes light of tragic conditions and provokes Euro-Americans by dismantling their most coveted symbols. Needling, mocking, and inverting Euro-American symbols illustrate the value of Indian culture and the political power of playful defiance.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs, recognizing the subversive power of Indian comedy, banned the use of native clowns in religious ceremonies throughout the early twentieth century.[31] Perhaps the Bureau recognized, as I argue in this chapter, that comedy is a powerful framework for Indian protest and the tribal *trickster* is a militant figure or persona, a comic outlaw who demystifies symbolic oppression and removes negative forces of tragedy from tribal life. An archetypal figure in tribal folklore, the trickster is typically an anthropomorphized animal figure - a coyote or monkey in some communities - a human jester, clown, or holy fool in others.[32] The trickster also is a social role or *persona* defined by a ritualized and symbolic performance of collective

catharsis through humor. Tribal tricksters engage in symbolic play to translate pain and suffering into productive and humanistic forms that are no longer beyond reproach. Gerald Vizenor explains that the "tribal trickster liberates the mind in a comic discourse that reveals new signs, identities, and uncertain humor."[33] The trickster, however, cannot be fixed to any set of innate characteristics. They are defined by their cultural context. Lincoln points out that the trickster "isn't nihilistic or even tasteful: it plays with boundaries, surely, releases libidinous energies in sexual, scatological, or otherwise violent escapades."[34] For the trickster, comedy is a safety valve for tragic cycles of guilt, redemption, scapegoating, and violence.

Rather than think of comedy as simply a tactic, I argue that it is an attitude toward protest reflected in specific practices of mimicry and irony.[35] American Indian folklore relies on narrative, allegory, and artful imitation as a communal pathway to advance cultural histories and communal values. The creative and humorous play of oral storytelling is part memorization, part imitation, and part invention. Stylized humor demonstrates intimacy, cultural knowledge, and a commitment to a collective future. Lincoln argues that humorous storytelling demonstrates cultural literacy and that "'literate' here means 'verbally skilled,' in or out of the great tradition – and crafting a good joke, telling a comic story, or simply conveying one's humor may be the highest verbal (and transverbal) interactive art of all."[36] N. Scott Momaday argues that this type of story-telling is powerful because it relies on "racial" or "ancestral memory," to reconstitute Indian nationhood through imaginative storytelling. For Momaday, ancestral memory forges communal bonds and shapes collective identity by imagining and reexperiencing history and culture through narrative structure.[37] Spiritual renewal through

storytelling asserts Indian survival and adaptation in spite of the persistence of cosmic tragedy. Sally L.A. Emmons argues that humor assumes a sacred position within ceremony, folklore, and narrative across American Indian cultures. Thus, humorous narratives and rituals are at once political and spiritual. Emmons explains that comedy is "woven into the very fabric of Native American life, to the point where it serves many purposes related to sacred rituals and social cohesion."[38]

Finally, comedic performance offers an emotional release through collective experience. Tribal humor builds and strengthens communal bonds because it releases negative tensions and dissipates the looming threat of tragedy through catharsis. Bruce Johansen suggests that many American Indian societies traditionally used humor as an emotional release from "enduring political oppression."[39] Indian protestors harnessed the life-affirming power of laughter to redirect pain and suffering. As Lincoln suggests, the comic perspective of Indians dissipates their pain by "drawing together against the common enemy."[40] Leslie Marmon Silko explains in her influential novel *Laguna Woman* (1974) that the difference between comedy and tragedy is that a speaker may be "referring to the same incident, especially in areas of justice, loss of land, discrimination, racism" and that "there's a way of say it so people can kind of laugh…so you can keep their interest, so you can keep talking to them."[41] Indian humor refuses to cede power to symbols of oppression (the reservation, BIA, Columbus, General Custer) that deny community empowerment. Vine Deloria Jr. notes that "when a people can laugh at themselves and laugh at others and hold all aspects of life together without letting anybody drive them to extremes, then it seems to me that that people can survive."[42]

Protesting and Performing Tricksters

In the 1960s, the persistence of the tragic frame had convinced established Indian leaders that assimilation and compromise were required for the advancement of American Indians. In contrast, young radicals turned to their culture's comedic tradition as a form of militant expression. Paula Gunn Allen argues that "humor is the best and sharpest weapons we've always had against the ravages of conquest and assimilation. And while it is a tiny projectile point, it's often sharp, true and finely crafted."[43] Furthermore, comedy allowed the younger generation to distinguish their politics from the older generation. The young-college educated militants were also scholars of Indian history and products of a radical American Indian studies curriculum emanating across the country. Their mode of humor was directed at demolishing what they considered to be the predominately tragic view ceded by the national leadership. Throughout the 1960s, comedy emerged as a predominate mode of militant expression for the young Indian activists that would later occupy Alcatraz.

Their comic orientation was poignant and artistic. First, protest comedy took the form of the self-reflexive ridicule. For example, in his essay "Which One Are You: Five Types of Young Indians," Clyde Warrior satirized five caricatures of what he considered foolish Indians "the slob or hood," "joker," "redskin white-noser or the sell out," "ultra-pseudo Indian," and the "angry nationalist."[44] Emmons suggests that self-policing is an important function of the trickster, arguing they warn "tribal members who have conducted themselves inappropriately that their actions have serious spiritual consequences."[45] In Warrior's case, each category demonstrated the complacency of many Indians with living as caricatures, rather than human agents. His sarcasm brought

out the fresh air of self-reflexivity to Indian cultural politics. Warrior mocked the idea that any of these caricatures spoke for his generation. Lampooning the politics of the NCAI, Warrior mimicked organizational minutes:

> One of those token Indians will stand up and spout off a speech about how all Indians are great Americans and how we love our country because it has been so good to us: That is an absolute lie! This country hasn't been good to us. All this country has meant to us is exploitation and watching greedy people come in and take advantage of inarticulate and inexperienced Indians. I despise what the white man has done to us.[46]

Warrior was careful in his humor to attribute the conditions of Indian politics to Euro-Americans. While heavily critical of the old generation, he praised tribal elders but offered the fiery and humorous tactics of his generation as a corrective.

Second, comedy diffused Euro-American cultural hegemony. Deloria humorously mocked Euro-American lifestyles as nothing more than "ice cream bars and heart trouble and neurosis and deodorants and getting up at six o'clock in the morning to mow your law in the suburbs."[47] Richard Oakes also needled the burgeoning white suburb, warning that "if we don't make it now, then we'll get trapped at the bottom of that white would out there, and wind up as some kind of Jack Jones with a social security number and that's all."[48] Humor also evoked militancy by demonstrating the weakness, and even inferiority of oppressive structures. Deloria continues:

> I often counseled people to run for the Bureau of Indian Affairs in case of an earthquake because nothing could shake the BIA. And I would watch as younger Indians set their jaws, determined that they, if nobody else, would shake it. We

> also have a saying that in case of fire call the BIA and they would handle it because they put a wet blanket on everything. This also got a warm reception from people.[49]

Believing that Indians were the subject of pity and comic delight of non-Indian audiences, militants reclaimed the comic frame to diffuse the pejorative power of prevailing bigotry.

As a very popular form of satire, young Indians mocked coveted white heroes. General George Custer and Christopher Columbus jokes became short-hand for Indian militancy. Lampooning these figures struck at the heart of tragedy with a militant and comedic voice. As the most readily available figures of Euro-American triumph and Indian tragedy, reinterpreting their popular construction through frames of comedy, in part, dismantled and domesticated potent symbols of oppression. UNA founded Lehman Brightman joked that the cultural representations of Indianness were not their own: "even the name Indian is not ours. It was given to us by some dumb honkey who got lost and thought he landed in India."[50] A popular Columbus joke that circulated among NIYC members went as follows: "a survey was taken and only fifteen percent of the Indians thought that the United States should get out of Vietnam. Eighty-five percent thought they should get out of America!"[51] Another popular joke went: "Upon seeing Columbus' ships, one Indian is believed to have said to another, 'There goes the neighborhood!' Upon seeing a flying saucer, one said to another: 'oh no, not again!'"[52] Custer jokes were also frequently employed by young militants. Some Indians joked that "Custer bragged that he could ride through Sioux and Cheyenne country with this Seventh Cavalry…'He was half right. He got half-way through.'"[53] Other Custer humor also took the form of

protest slogans such as "[s]ome day you're going to feel like Custer, baby" and "Custer had it coming."[54] While providing comic release, these jokes also formed the basis of the young movement's identity. The comic frame allowed Indians to reclaim their history and establish new and creative ways to understand Indian politics and life.

Finally, pamphlets produced just prior to 1969 show the emergence of comedic themes that would replicated during the Alcatraz occupation. For example, through imitation, Indian militants employed "perspective by incongruity." Statements of ironic inversion and hyperbole exaggerated the supposed generosity and care of Euro-American civilization, Christianity, and the so-called "Great White Father." Exaggerating Euro-American forms of expression and behaviors, young militants demystified the implied superiority of Western civilization, juxtaposing Euro-American texts with playful indigenous twists A useful demonstration of this tactic can be seen in the journal the *Native Nevadan*, in which a young Indian responded to Secretary of Interior, Stewart Udall's claim that he was the "Great White Ultimate Trustee." The anonymous author wrote:

> Our benefactor in Indian Affairs, Hallowed by thy position.
>
> Thy downfall comes. With every election.
>
> Thy will be done on this reserve.
>
> As will be done on every other reserve.
>
> Give us this day our daily rations.
>
> And forgive us our trespasses as we will.
>
> Forgive you your trespasses on our land.
>
> Lead us not into integration.

But deliver us from exploitation.

For thine is the establishment, the power, and the glory

For as long as the grass shall grow.

And the rivers flow and the sun shines.

Forever and ever – unh![55]

For comparison, below is the Christian version of "The Lord's Prayer," as it appears in Luke 11:2-4:

Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name.

Thy Kingdom come.

Thy will be done,

On Earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses,

As we forgive those who trespass against us

And lead us not into temptation.

But deliver us from evil.

From thine is the kingdom,

and the power, and the glory,

for ever and ever. Amen.[56]

This Indian version of the Christian prayer exhibits the confrontational style of ironic inversion practiced by militant Indian activists. The Indian version of the passage twists form and meaning by appropriating sacred Euro-American rhetorical forms of prayer and political covenant (the treaty). The manipulation of the rhetorical form inverted the

sacred Christian prayer to articulate the failures of the Christianity and the "Great White Father" to uphold the sacred covenant of treaty. In the Christian version, God and humanity are bound by an agreement that God will forgive "trespass" and "temptation" to bring about the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth. It is commonly understood by most Christians as a communal prayer of petition that the covenant or holy pact between humanity and God. In the Indian version, God or the Great White Father has forsaken its people. As a result of "trespasses on our land" and failure to "deliver us not from exploitation," however, "thy downfall comes." The juxtaposition of "benefactor" with "God" mocked the arbitrary abuse of power by the BIA that asserted that it was God to Indians.

Even God, however, was bound by covenant. Appropriating the rhetorical form of prayer was a form of comedic incongruity that criticized Euro-Americans for failing to live up to their values and responsibilities. It mocked the Christian sacred and established a new notion of covenant in which the government pledged to uphold its promise "for as long as the grass shall grow and the rivers flow and the sun shines." While tribes signed treaties as sacred covenants, Chadwick Allen argues Euro-Americans saw treaties as "politically retrograde" and "little more than bothersome formalities," "ruses designed to deceive," or "promises no longer practical for the nation."[57] By juxtaposing the Christian and Indian form of the sacred, the Indian version of the Lord's Prayer exposed the oppressive inconsistencies of the Great White Father. This text rearticulated the rhetoric of treaties as ongoing commitments, dislodging them as archaic relics of a different time and place. To American Indians, treaties were transformed into living and sacred documents that necessitated self-determination.

The preceding analysis shows the features of imitation that later became one of the foundations of the IOAT rhetorical strategy. They appropriated treaty language to radically reinterpret and reclaim American history with Indians as agents rather than victims. They leveled and dismantled oppressive symbols of Indian tragedy (the prison, the BIA, the reservation) through ironic inversion. They appropriated these symbols as a part of a project of Indian empowerment, producing incongruity that in turn diffused the power of tragedy. The comic frame, characterized by the playful textual practices of the trickster, enabled the occupants to speak with an emphatic and militant voice that shattered the stoic wood-carved mold. By making light of, rather than lamenting, their oppressive circumstances, young activists reframed tragedy, cathartically released pain from their community, and made new visions of Indian self-determination possible.

The Tricksters of Alcatraz

The "Proclamation to the Great White Father" served as the founding document of Alcatraz occupation. The text begins "We, the Native Americans," imitates the preamble to the U.S. Constitution which reads "We the people of the United States." In one sense, this obvious parody of social compact created a sub-national identity for the occupants. The document implies that American Indians speak as a distinct political entity that pursues its own unique set of goals within the U.S. In a different sense, the document can be read as the Constitution of a new nation, like those acknowledged in the texts of treaties signed between the federal government and tribal nations. Even as late as 1831, Chief Justice Marshall presented an interpretation of Second Article of the U.S.

Constitution that held that Indian tribes were foreign nations, arguing in *Cherokee Nation v. State of Georgia* (1831):

> The counsel have shown conclusively that they are not a state of the Union, and have insisted that individually they are aliens, not owing allegiance to the United States. An aggregate of aliens composing a state must, they say, be a foreign state. Each individual being foreign, the whole must be foreign.[58]

The makers of federal Indian law since then have predominately ignored this interpretation, exchanging it for the view that Indians are dependent nations or wards of the federal government. For many American Indians, however, the treaties signed by the federal government acknowledge that Indian tribes were foreign nations with their own lands, citizens, and government. Returning to the political documents that should have guaranteed self-rule, the IOAT imitate and elaborate treaty rhetoric to establish a new foundation for modern self-determination. I argue that the proclamation comically reinterpreted recurrent phrasing strategies in treaty rhetoric to establish a new basis for American Indian sovereignty.

Sacred Covenant

Many of the island's occupants were students of emerging American Indian studies programs at San Francisco State, Berkeley, and UCLA where courses included information about the history of Indian treaty rights.[59] Deloria argues that during this period American Indians were "exploring the old legal doctrines, the cultural attitudes of themselves and white society, and the history of peoples of the world to find an answer to the present confusion."[60] Using this knowledge, the IOAT imitated the style and generic form of the some 389 treaties signed and ratified between 1788 and 1868. Thus, treaty

enforcement became one of the central features of Bay Area Indian rhetorical demands. Leading up the occupation, a list of proposed demands was featured in the radical newspaper *The Warpath* demanding that "all treaties and agreements made with Indian tribes of groups must be recognized as legally binding upon the United States and the States, except those treaties or agreements forced upon Indian tribes or groups against their will by illegal means shall not necessarily be binding upon the Indians."[61] For the IOAT, treaties were living documents and their promises were not politically retrograde. Deloria and Lytle jest that "Indians still refer to the provisions as if the agreement were made last week."[62] This notion of obligation did not mean that Indians wards of the state. Rather, they were sovereign nations that demanded the treaties be fulfilled.

Contemporary Indian activist found that they and Euro-Americans diverged on the purpose and meaning of treaty promises. From a Euro-American perspective, treaties were ad hoc legal expressions intended to establish temporary zones of peace. Furthermore tribal societies were expected to decline and even die during the treaty's terms. In treaty negotiations, the federal government was always assumed to be a superior party, the agent that bestowed lands upon the tribes that already inhabited them.[63] While Indians often honored their promises, laying down their arms and accepting protections of the federal government, Euro-American leaders seldom upheld their end of the bargain. Some treaties even enshrined the language of civilization and barbarism into federal law. For example, the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868, leveraged as an argumentative justification for the 1964 occupation, read "in order to insure the civilization of the Indians entering into this treaty, the necessity of education is admitted."[64] In the tragic frame, treaties established a paternalistic relationship,

mandating that Indian lands and money accrued from the sale of said lands be "held in trust" by the federal government. Francis Prucha contends that the peculiarity of this relationship indicates an assumed tribal incompetence to manage their resources.[65]

One unintended consequence of treaty negotiations, however, was that they recognized tribes as foreign nations or a sovereign "people." While Euro-Americans understood treaties as arrangements to curtail Indian land-claims, tribal governments interpreted them as an acknowledgement of sovereign nationhood. The special legal status of American Indians provided contemporary activists a unique argument for self-determination unparalleled by any other oppressed group seeking redress. No other ethnic minorities freely or forcefully negotiated and ratified treaties with United States federal government; therefore, the resurrection of the treaty as a mode of political action for Red Power was crucial. It resurrected the foundational form of political action that presumed Indian sovereignty. Traditionally, Indians expressed confusion over the complicated maze of Indian treaty law, conflicted court decisions, but the IOAT appropriated the very medium that had been used to deprive Indians material wealth

In the first proclamation, the IOAT revived and updated the language of treaties with a comedic orientation. The first method employed was the rhetoric of covenant. Many tribes originally understood treaty promises as sacred *covenants*, worldly agreements bound by spiritual or divine force that guaranteed *inherent* sovereignty. Like the Indian version of the *Lord's Prayer*, the first proclamation resurrected a legal concept of the sacred. The IOAT offered an open-ended guarantee to purchase Alcatraz and hold the land in trust for whites "as long as sun shall rise and the rivers go down to the sea." While nineteenth-century treaty documents did not frame their promises in such dramatic

terms, they did include guarantees of sovereignty and protection with phrases such as "in perpetuity" or "perpetual peace" or "from this day forward" and "forever." The peculiar circulation of the phrase "as long as the grass shall grow" and "as long as the sun shall rise and the rivers go down to the sea" represented the sacred orientation toward treaties held American Indians. In their earliest form, treaties took the form of *actual* covenants between Indians and Euro-Americans cemented by gift-giving and divinely secured promises of mutual peace.

Legal scholar Robert Williams suggests that the bequeathal of wampum belts (sacred beaded artifacts) from Eastern Woodland tribes to colonial settlers and the British government reflected "an Indian understanding of treaties as sacred texts performing a sanctifying and integrative role."[66] For example the text of the 1768 Treaty of Fort Stanwix, negotiated by Sir William Johnson to renew the alliance between the British and the Iroquois, suggests that treaties were in fact sacred covenants:

> I do therefore by this Belt in the name of your Father the great King of England…renew and confirm the Covenant Chain subsisting between us, strengthening it, and rubbing off any rust which it may have contracted that it may appear bright to all Nations as a proof of our love and Friendship…*so long as grass shall grow or waters run* [emphasis added].[67]

Two hundred years later, the IOAT imitate this very phrase as evidence of ongoing covenant. While no treaties negotiated with the U.S. government include this exact phrase, it was accepted by many Indian activists that treaties did include such highly stylized dramatic language.[68] There are some places in federal Indian law, however, where the phrase does occur. In 1854 Senator Sam Houston argued that treaty promises

extend "as long as water flows, or grass grows upon the earth, or the sun rises to show your pathways, or you kindle your camp fires, so long shall you be protected by the Government, and never again be removed from your present habitations."[69] The non-existence of this phrase in Indian treaty law per se does not, however, deny the power of appropriation at work in IOAT proclamation. The invocation of the phrase was a comedic dramatization of the conflict between a sacred interpretation of treaties and a duplicitous approach to the same. By translating Euro-American political language into a sacred form, the occupants appropriated the treaty in a different context, envisioning treaties as unending promises of *inherent* sovereignty. Such a reinterpretation exposed the self-serving nature of the treaty language use by Euro-Americans.

Sacred Time

The Indian approach to the treaty *altered time* by reanimating ancient promises as a part of a historical continuum of promises. The IOAT expressed an entirely different concept of *circular* time. While the Cult of the Noble Savage conceived of Indians as anachronism, the IOAT expressed a concept of circular time in which Indian history lived in the present, linked with an ongoing struggle and temporal motion (or revolution). The IOAT rhetoric harnessed words and images of the past as eternal and immortal, living in the current moment. Witt writes that for many American Indians the spoken and written word "contains a life of its own, an endless life." Whereas Euro-Americans understood their promises as historically-situated, from an indigenous perspective words are immortal, they do not "fall to the ground, shatter, and turn to dust, in Indian comprehension" but live "forever – always ready to be recalled if need be."[70] Embodying this approach to language, the IOAT treaty rhetoric drew from prevailing folklore about

the nature of treaties as sacred covenants and made them live again in their present day. The IOAT enacted a form of *sacred time* that resisted Euro-American attempts to lock Indians in a tragic past.

The exaggerated form of treaty discourse needled the duplicity of Euro-American law. It resurrected the promise of covenant as a foundation for Red Power. For the IOAT, it was a foregone conclusion that the island belonged to all Indians. Their purpose was not to dismiss treaties as a part of a tragic past, but to update and celebrate them as sacred documents. In spite of the oppressive reign of the anachronistic Cult of the Noble Savage, Indian people, like the written word, survived, resurged, and thrived. As a rhetorical-hermeneutical exercise, the occupants offered a radical reinterpretation of American history that reread Indian concepts of sacred covenant and comic folklore into the law. As expressed in the influential visions of Lakota holy man Black Elk, sacred time was like a set of hoops, each representing the many peoples of the Indian world, whose histories overlap and are continually sustained and channeled from one generation to the next.[71] The IOAT approached the treaty they offered to whites as a *living document* always open to revision. Using comic parody, the occupants offer a "fair and honorable" treaty to "the Caucasian inhabitants of this land" in which they would purchase Alcatraz for twenty-four dollars in glass beads and clothe.[72] Note, too, that the treaty blurred past and present, conflating the Dutch purchase of Manhattan in 1623 with all treaty injustices, connecting Alcatraz to an ongoing struggle and establishing the timelessness of Indian sovereignty.

The IOAT orientation toward time and history is reflected elsewhere in their rhetorical reference to a living past. In the IOAT February 1970 Newsletter, one occupant calling himself "coyote 2" wrote:

> My father hunted the giant mammoth, and I am only five hundred years old, who can still remember the blood of Montezuma and the crying at Wounded Knee. And I am only five hundred years old who yesterday was herded on a Trail of Tears, and a hundred Sand Creeks flow through veins my Indian heart feeds. And I an only five hundred years old and my dream is only now beginning, as the drums throb my spirit and all the people do a round dance. And our mother earth is in round dance and all the stars circle our eagle dreams and the children of Alcatraz run and play glad I am to be a youth of only five hundred years.[73]

This poem compressed five hundred years of time, positioning the occupation of Alcatraz directly adjacent to Montezuma, the Trail of Tears, Sand Creek Massacre, and Wounded Knee. Resistance was framed as revolution or recurrence of centrifugal motion. In the same edition of the newsletter, the IOAT expressed the concept of Indian unity as one that traversed time and space. They argued that unity "is best expressed by the circular stamp 'Indians of All Tribes,' in whose infinite structure abounds with the energy to roll and keep rolling…Time assumes a different yet meaningful relationship with space as harmony with nature becomes the trend once again."[74] The IOAT argued that there were always traces of ancestors in their actions. This rhetoric enabled them to summon past struggle and make it live in a new context. Their comic orientation was not just reflected in their parody, but their life-affirming celebration of history in resistance to *profane* time that partitioned the past. The IOAT appealed to temporal unity collapsed and overlapped Indian struggles, irrespective of linear time. They argued that "the moccasin foot no longer follows the cumbersome and heavy heeled prints of proven destructive exploiters. The trail is worn and devoid of beauty…With this in mind we are asserting our sense of

direction…the symptom depicts a healthy glow of true and relevant 'redness' with the strength match the 'unity' of this glow."[75] While the path is worn thin and "eroded," it can be traversed again with new zeal and spirit, removed from contexts of tragedy.

Savagery and Civilization

The original proclamation inverted the Euro-American rhetoric of civilization. It decreed that the land "held in trust" by the Indian government was:

> [t]o be administered by the Bureau of Caucasian Affairs (BCA). We will further guide the inhabitants in the proper way of living. We will offer them our religion, our education, our life-ways, in order to help them achieve our level of civilization and thus raise them and all their white brothers up from their savage and unhappy states. We offer this treaty in good faith and wish to be fair and honorable in our dealings with all white men.[76]

Inverting the European concept of civilization as an organizing principle of society this passage exposed the arbitrary power established through hierarchy. Ingrained in literature, the arts, popular culture, and political discourse, the concept of civilization as enforced on Indians was integrally linked to a denial of Indian culture. Furthermore, multiple acts of Congress cemented the hierarchy of civilization into the law. The "Civilization Fund Act" (1819) proposes "introducing among them [Indians] the habits and arts of civilization."[77] The act that created the BIA (1824) charged the organization with "the civilization of the Indians."[78] For the IOAT, there was nothing civilized about removing Indians from their ancestral homes, disconnecting them from their families with more false promises of employment. An NIYC policy statement effectively summarized the view of civilization from the bottom-up: "Our viewpoint, based in a

tribal perspective, realizes, literally that the Indian problem is the white man," and further "we attempt to *reverse the hierarchical structure* of existing agencies such that 'the People' directly determine the policies [Emphasis added]."[79]

The IOAT rejected hierarchy in all forms. In *God is Red*, Deloria writes that order through hierarchy contradicted Indian religious values, which stressed equality, sharing, and community.[80] Influenced by traditional religious and philosophical beliefs, Lou Trudell summed up the IOAT rejection of hierarchy and order, arguing that "the leaders are the whole body, the whole population on Alcatraz for without them there would be no Alcatraz and there would be no hope."[81] Oakes argued that Western hierarchy inevitably would implode, suggesting that "the sad fact about the non-Indian world is that most of it is not based on truth…that's why it is going to fall, to crumble. Its crumbing now, its falling apart…"[82] Unwilling to wait on the trajectory of history, the young militants of Alcatraz enacted a critique designed to expose the hierarchy of civilization as bankrupt. As a mode of critique, the IOAT inverted Western hierarchies, rearticulating Indians as purveyors of civilization and Euro-Americans as savages. This discursive move highlighted the ironies and contradictions concealed by the rhetoric of civilization. This critique emphasized the countervailing belief that Euro-Americans committed the savage and barbaric acts they attributed to American Indians.

To accomplish their critique, the proclamation mocked the conflation of reservations with nationhood. The IOAT contended:

> We feel that this so-called Alcatraz Island is more than suitable for an Indian reservation, as determined by the white man's own standards. By this we mean that this place resembles most Indian reservations, in that:

1. It is isolated from modern facilities, and without adequate means of transportation.

2. It has no fresh running water.

3. It has inadequate sanitation facilities.

4. There are no oil or mineral rights.

5. There is no industry so unemployment is great.

6. There are no health care facilities.

7. The soil is rocky and non-productive; and the land does not support game.

8. There are no educational facilities.

9. The population has always exceeded the land base.

10. The population has always been held as prisoner and kept dependent upon others.[83]

Here, the IOAT leveraged the very symbols of Indian oppression as an argument for self-determination. Instead of challenging the literal conditions of reservation life, the IOAT embraced those conditions, juxtaposing the lifeless barren prison with the actual lived conditions of Indian Country. This juxtaposition both explained the rationale for occupation while it drew attention to the persistent neglect of the reservation. Simultaneously, protestors highlighted the Euro-Americans "own standards" for the treatment of Indians, inferring that they were not the savages of history or the present. Of course, this move was meant to preclude any Euro-American suggestion that Alcatraz was not suited for American Indian life. Indeed, this comedic rhetoric critiqued the contradictions in Euro-American treatment of the American Indian and served as a justification for repossessing stolen lands.

Juxtaposing treaty promises with their disastrous consequences also demystified the presumed superiority of Euro-American civilization. The textual move of placing Indians at the top of the hierarchy was not simply to rearrange the hierarchy, but to deconstruct the concept of hierarchy itself. The incongruity of the so-called "savage" as the purveyor of civilization worked to destabilize the very categories that produced hierarchy. In Burkean terms, hierarchy necessitates guilt, which in turn requires an act of sacrifice to redeem order. In Brummett's words hierarchal order "requires a sacrificial scapegoat who suffers, dies, or is banished by society in a symbolic attempt to rid itself of chaos, disease, and impurity."[84] Striking at the heart of hierarchy, the proclamation dismantled and reframed American history and civilization. Young militant Phil George (Nez Perce) summarized the goal of this a project perfectly: "The question is not how you can Americanize us but how we can Americanize you."[85]

In sum, the first proclamation rewrote history and destabilized the ingrained meanings of Indian sovereignty. It offered a new justification for inherent sovereignty linked to documented promises that did not atrophy over time. The IOAT asserted agency as authors of a new vision of treaty and covenant. By juxtaposing the Indian visions of treaties with that of Euro-Americans, the IOAT established perspective by incongruity. Indians were no longer victims but members of an interpretative community. Mocking the treaty form, holding it to the letter of the law, and collapsing time served as a method to reinterpret treaties as the foundation for Red Power. By holding up the rhetoric of Euro-Americans to a wide audience their comic frame spoke with "forked-tongues," exposing the duplicity. By the protestor's logic, treaty obligations did not cease at the end

of the nineteenth century. They presumed that Euro-Americans would have no choice but to fulfill their responsibility and accept the occupant's treaty provisions.

Nationhood and Inherent Sovereignty

While it connected Indians to a living history, the proclamation also distinguished the IOAT from the 1964 occupation. After nearly a decade and two previous "symbolic" occupations, the Bay Area Indian community failed to secure title to the island. While the Cottiers, Dick McKenzie, and their fellow Sioux were certainly militant 1964, their argumentative justifications were rooted in legal literalism rather than inherent sovereignty. Elliot Leighton tried to find a loophole in the Fort Laramie Treaty and litigate the case within the traditional system that, according the Williams and Wilkinson, seldom ruled in favor of tribal sovereignty. What's more, their argument was founded on a technicality in a Sioux-specific treaty that, even if correct, could not sustain a full-fledged pan-Indian movement for self-determination. Contemporary Indian theorist Taiaiake Alfred argues that "to argue on behalf indigenous nationhood within the dominant Western paradigm is self-defeating" because it accepts "the fiction of state sovereignty."[86] For Alfred, American Indians must then assert that their right to self-determination is *inherent*, existing independent of Euro-American political fictions.

The 1969 occupation abandoned the legal process as the first step to obtain self-determination. The IOAT proclamation suggested that Indian sovereignty was inherent, given by "mother earth," not the Great White Father. Instead of debating original interpretations of the law, the occupants created the law itself. Turning the justifications for colonization on their head, the IOAT claimed the island by "right of discovery," suggesting that title to lands in North America lie with the discoverer nation. The 1969

occupants mocked the idea that Europeans could "discover" a land previously inhabited by indigenous people for 10,000 to 20,000 years. Inverting the concept as a justification for occupation appropriated one of the most volatile justifications for colonialism against itself. The "right of discovery" in Indian hands domesticated oppression in a comic context as an argument *for* self-determination. The 1969 occupation set itself a part from legalistic modes of sovereignty.

While the IOAT attorney Aubrey Gross also worked on legal justifications for the 1969 occupation, going to court for the movement meant direct action, invading and repossessing Indian country one piece at a time. The IOAT refused to embrace Euro-American civic virtues and rejected participation in politics of gradualism. As Indian activist Jerry Gambill suggested, young Indians understood liberal politics as a diversionary art used to "steal human rights" by convincing "the Indian that he should be patient, "that these things take time" and "we are making progress, and that progress takes times."[87] Likewise, Gross argued,

> How do they get it? By praying? By begging? Why do I not suggest going to court? Because the Courts have made it clear that Indians cannot go to Court just by going to Court. They cannot sue the Government without the consent of Congress. Furthermore, even if Congress consented, the Courts would refuse to decide the issue, claiming it is (as well it might be) a "political" or "legislative" question. It may sound strange but it is true. The Indians have "gone to court" in the only way they can – by occupying the island.[88]

Rather than litigating their case in court, the IOAT seized the island. They instead offered a radical reinterpretation of federal treaty law. By parodying dominant interpretations of

Indian sovereignty through comedic performance, the occupants foreground the arbitrary absurdity of denying Indian self-determination. Further, by humorously appropriating the discourse of nineteenth century treaties, the IOAT asserted that they, like treaty promises, were neither archaic relics nor primitive symbols trapped in time. As Allen contends, the occupants aligned themselves "with a larger project of American Indian sensibility" and assert that past promises "possess ongoing, 'living' relevance in the present."[89] Like the comic trickster, the IOAT disassembled taken-for-granted meanings of treaties, resurrecting the law and history in a social new context.

Like all treaties, the proclamation blended literary elements of "perpetual peace" and promises that last "as long as the sun shall rise and the rivers go down to the sea" with a list of principles and policies to be enacted to fulfill the treaty obligations. The proclamation closed with a proposal to Indianize that island by establishing a Center for Native American Studies, an American Indian spiritual center, a center for ecology, and Indian University, and an Indian museum. While the proposals were literal, they were also framed in comic rhetoric. For example, the museum "will present some of the things the white man has given to the Indians, in return for the land and life he took: disease, alcohol, poverty, and cultural decimation (as symbolized by old tin cans, barbed wire, rubber tires, plastic containers, etc.)." The museum displays would be iconic of the occupant's interpretation of history. A mockery of Euro-American history, the museum would "remain a dungeon, to symbolize both Indian captives who were incarcerated for challenging white authority, and those who were imprisoned on reservations."[90] While the Center, Spirituality Center, Ecology Center, and Training school were discussed in serious yet utopian terms, the museum was proposed to suggest that it would enshrine the

radical historical interpretation they put forth. The museum was envisioned as a metonymy for the historical-interpretative practice employed by the IOAT. They proposed that this dungeon would "show the noble and the tragic events of Indian history, including the broken treaties, the documentary of the Trail of Tears, the Massacre of Wounded Knee, as well as the victory over Yellow Hair Custer and his army."[91] While invoking the language of tragedy, the proclamation brought history back in a comedic context. Part practical proposal and part utopian vision, the performance of parody disrupted the rhetoric of civilization and opened up alternative perspectives toward Indian self-determination. Harnessing the Euro-American forked tongue, the IOAT dismantled their oppressive edifice and converted tragedy to comedy. Like the ancient trickster, the occupants reversed and dismantled taken-for-granted and conventional meanings to liberate the minds of their community. Their comic framing enacted the social function of the trickster, to hold up harmful and oppressive symbols and, through vicarious experience, translate pain into laughter. As Clifton Hill prophesized "Like that Tower of Babel, that had to fall. It had to come down. It could not go on. Our Indians had to learn how to shake up that Tower of Babel. And they will. They have." [92]

Laughter or Comedy

This chapter has been optimistic about the subversive potential of the comic frame. It is important for critics to also recognize its possible limitations. A. Cheree Carlson warns against conflating laughter with humor arising from comic frames. She argues that "as critics, we need to learn to tell the difference…not only so we can learn to propagate the comic, but also that we can recognize the conditions under which it cannot

be propagated."[93] To be sure, the IOAT comic orientation was by no means a panacea. The younger generation's attempts to infuse national Indian politics with militancy and comedy were dismissed and resisted by some older and more experienced activists. Movement elders viewed young and fiery activists as hopelessly utopian, with no comprehension of the serious nature of Indian self-determination. Taos elder Paul Bernal suggested that while speaking sharply could be empowering, the older generation felt that young militants acted rash and foolish. Mimicking the elder's voice, he argues "I will not speak loudly. I will not speak quickly. That is not the Indian way. That is not the sensible way to speak to the white man. The Indian is sensible. He will always do the sensible thing. We do not fool ourselves."[94] The radical and confrontational strategies of the IOAT challenged ingrained perspectives on Indian decorum in conducting politics. For some, militancy and parody were indecorous. Steiner argues that it was "unheard of for an elder of the tribe to talk in this way in public."[95] The trickster persona also wore thin for some tribal elders. While militant activists believed they were shocking the community out of apathy, accusations that older Indian leaders were "uncle tomahawks," "apples," or "stand-around-the-fort-Indians" divided the community. The Alcatraz occupants were seen by some as dirty, grungy, and foolish college students.

For non-Indian audiences, the occupant's comic persona did not necessarily induce the "charitable" debunking laughter envisioned by Burke.[96] Euro-Americans already were used to laughing at Indians as foolish anachronisms. Columnist William Davis' suggests that at the time of occupation "the Redskin" was in fact "an international joke."[97] Davis' observation suggests that the residue of the Cult of the Noble Savage may have permanently constrained Indian rhetorical agency. Acting comically brought with it

the remnants of a laughter associated with ridicule rather than catharsis. For the most part, non-Indians lacked any cultural knowledge about the traditional role of humor in Indian folklore and political life. They only had noble savages and Indian buffoons from which to make their assessments of Indian activists. When Indians resurrected the history and the language of treaties, they also brought with them the baggage of the white imagination. In Deloria's word, the occupants were "re-indianized" according the existing stereotypes ingrained in Euro-American culture. When the occupation finally came to a close in June 1971, newspaper reports emphasized tragedy. The San Francisco Chronicle ran a story entitled "The Dream is Over," in which reporter Jerry Carroll lamented the "sad remains of the dream to liberate Alcatraz Island" and emphasized the "squalor, filth, systematic pilfering, and mindless destruction" of the occupants.[98] Popular news sources mourned the end of the occupation as a failure, a dream that became a nightmare. They focused on factionalism, drug use, and vandalism with little to no celebration of how the occupation mobilized Indian activists and constructed a strong collective identity for American Indians across the country. The reports failed to appreciate the IOAT rhetorical efforts to affirm Indian traditions, empower their community, and reinterpret and reclaim American history.

To be sure, comedy is not a panacea for tragedy. This does not mean that the IOAT rhetoric did not serve an important function. While the rhetoric suffered the remnants of tragedy, Burke suggest that "for all the self-perpetuating qualities of an orientation, it contains the germs if its own dissolution."[99] While their rhetoric did not completely dissolve the Cult of the Noble Savage, the IOAT did produce new perspectives about what Indians were capable of achieving. By juxtaposing tragedy with

comedy, oppressive symbols with the methods of self-determination, the IOAT demonstrated that Indians were members of a community with a distinct identity, not passive victims. Their comic framing of Indian history and community helped diffuse the power of tragedy that dictated to Indians that they were incapable of being agents of political change. Like the comic trickster, the IOAT challenged taken-for-granted meanings, reclaimed Indian history and folklore, and undermined the concept that Indians were wooden totems and passive victims.

This chapter suggests that among the many functions of the IOAT rhetoric, their reliance on comic frames opened up new alternative visions of Indian community. I suggest that the language of tragedy, which positioned Indians passive victims of the inevitable trajectory of Western civilization, prevented the articulation of American Indian self-determination. While tragedy requires scapegoating and sacrifice to redeem a hierarchal order, comedy is a life-affirming rhetoric that celebrates imperfection and understands humans as mistaken rather than evil. The new generation of activists, rediscovering their ancient traditions, revived and updated the comic persona of the trickster as a way to cope with the contemporary hurdles of tragedy prevailing in national Indian politics. As embodied at Alcatraz Island, young activists reinvigorated the socio-linguistic features of American Indian folklore, involving comic allegory and playful textual invention as an emotional release. A comic orientation enabled to activists to renew their community through laughter, rather than sacrifice. I argue that as contemporary tricksters, the young militant generation offered comic textual practices, such as ironic inversion, as a hermeneutical method to radically reinterpret American history. The first proclamation of the Indians of All Tribes demonstrates how the

occupants of Alcatraz Island appropriated treaty discourse to animate their historical promises in a new context to disarticulate Indian self-determination from frames of tragedy. The number of occupations that followed over the next several years suggests that the occupant's rhetoric helped reorient the Indian community and give them a new militant language with which to assert their demand for self-determination. The occupants provided an alternative vision to the Cult of the Noble Savage that made further Indian activism possible. In sum, the occupant's project was to translate the Cult of the Noble Savage into what Burke call "the cult of comedy," and a hope for collective survival. As Shirley Keith argued emphatically that "we refuse to end up on museum walls for the pleasure of non-Indians."[100]

Chapter 3: Endnotes

[1] Shirley Hill Witt "Listening to His Many Voices: An Introduction to the Literature of the American Indian," *The Way: An Anthology of American Indian Literature*, Eds. Shirley Hill Witt and Stan Steiner (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1972), xvii-xviii.
[2] Quoted in Stan Steiner, *The New Indians* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), 75.
[3] Witt, "Listening," xxi.
[4] Indians of All Tribes, "Proclamation to the Great White Father and His People," *Alcatraz Newsletter* 1, (1970), 2.
[5] Kenneth Lincoln, *Indi'n Humor: Bicultural Play in Native America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 5.
[6] Barbara A. Babcock, "Introduction," in Barbara A. Babcock, *The Reversible World: Symbolic Inversion in Art and Society* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1978), 14.
[7] Lincoln, *Indi'n Humor*, 22.
[8] Ernest Stromberg, "Rhetoric and American Indians," *American Indian Rhetorics of Survivance: Word Medicine, Word Magic* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2006), 1-12.
[9] I borrow the concept of the representative anecdote as a heuristic devise from Kenneth Burke. In *Grammar of Motives*, Burke explains that "dramatism suggests a procedure to be followed in the development of a given calculus, or terminology. It involves the search for a 'representative anecdote,' to be used as a form in conformity with which the vocabulary is constructed." See Kenneth Burke, *Grammar of Motives* (Berkeley: University of California, 1962), 49. Barry Brummett also elaborates on the utility of the representative anecdote for rhetorical critics. See Barry Brummett, "Burke's Representative Anecdote as a Method in Media Criticism," *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 1 (1984), 161-176.
[10] Fergus Bordewich, *Killing the White Man's Indian: Reinvention Native Americans at the End of the Twentieth Century* (New York: Anchor Books, 1996), 324; Also see Brian W. Dippie, *The Vanishing American: White Attitudes and U.S. Indian Policy* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1991).
[11] Brewton Berry, "The Myth of the Vanishing Indian," *Phylon* 21 (1960), 52.
[12] See Fleming E. McClung, "The American Image as Indian Princess, 1765-1783," *Winterthur Portfolio* 2 (1965), 65-81.
[13] Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, *The Song of Hiawatha* (Chicago: Thompson and Thomas, 1855).
[14] "Review of Heckewelder's 'An Account of the History, Manners, and Customs of Indian Nations who once Inhabited Pennsylvania.'" *North American Review* 6 (June 1819), 156. An excellent summary of the literature and iconography of early nineteenth-century accounts of vanishing Indians can be found in Thomas L. Doughton, "'Like the Shadows in the Stream: Local Histories, The Discourse of Disappearance and Nipmuc Indians of Central Massachusetts," a paper presented at the American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, MA, May 20, 1999. Accessed on 10 June 2008 at http://www.geocities.com/quinnips/history/shadowstreams.html. Vanishing Indian accounts exist in a variety of local histories and speeches. Also see William Tudor Jr., "An Address Delivered to the Phi Beta Kappa Society, at their Anniversary Meeting at Cambridge," *North American Review* 2 (1815), 20; and Jared Sparks, "Review of Jame's Buchanan's *Sketches of the History, Manners, and Customs of the North Ameircan Indians*," *North American Review* 19 (October 1824), 464.
[15] Kenneth Burke, *Attitudes Toward History* (2nd ed.) (Los Altos, CA: Hermes Publications, 1959), 3.
[16] Burke, *Attitudes*, 4.
[17] Burke, *Attitudes*, 37.
[18] Adrienne E. Christiansen and Jeremy J. Hanson, "Comedy as Cure for Tragedy: ACT UP and the Rhetoric of AIDS," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 82 (1996): 159.
[19] Kroeber, "Persistence," 4.
[20] Brian L. Ott and Eric Aoki, "The Politics of Negotiating Public Tragedy: Media Framing of the Matthew Shepard Murder," *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 5 (2002), 498.
[21] Burke, *Attitudes*, 51.
[22] Christiansen and Hanson, "Comedy," 158.
[23] Barry Brummett, "Burkean Comedy and Tragedy, Illustrated in Reactions to the Arrest of John Delorean," *Central States Speech Journal* 35 (1984), 219.
[24] Burke, *Attitudes*, 53.

[25] Kenneth Burke, *Language as Symbolic Action* (Berkeley: University of California, 1966), 20.
[26] Kenneth Burke, *Permanence and Change: An Anatomy of Purpose* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1965, Originally published 1935), 69-70
[27] Burke, *Permanence*, 119.
[28] Robert K. Berkhofer, *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present* (New York: Vintage), 39.
[29] Craig Womack, *Red on Red: Native American Literary Separatism* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 136.
[30] Lincoln, *Humor*, 27.
[31] See: Julian Hayne Steward. *The Clown in Native North America* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1991).
[32] For more on the concept of trickster as Jungian archetype see Paul Radin, *The Trickster: A Study in American Indian Mythology* (New York: Schocken Books, 1972); and Lewis Hyde. *Trickster Makes this World: Mischief, Myth, and Art* (New York: North Point Press).
[33] Gerald Vizenor. *Trickster of Liberty: Tribal Heirs to a Wild Baronage* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988), ix-x; Vizenor also develops the literary and performative function of the trickster in *Griever: An American Monkey King in China* (Normal, IL: Illinois State University Press, 1987).
[34] Lincoln, *Humor*, 158.
[35] David R. Edmunds, "Indian Humor: Can the Red Man Laugh?" in *Red Men and Hat Wearers: Viewpoints in Indian History: Papers from the Colorado State University Conference on History*, Ed. D. Tyler (Boulder, CO: Pruett, 1974), 141-153; See John Lowe, "Theories of Ethnic Humor: How to Enter, Laughing," *American Quarterly* 38 (1986): 439-60.
[36] Lincoln, *Humor*, 7.
[37] See N. Scott Momaday, *House Made of Dawn* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1968).
[38] Sally L.A. Emmons, *A Disarming Laughter: The Role of Humor in Tribal Cultures: An Examination of Humor in Contemporary Native American Literature and Art*. Ph.D Dissertation, University of Oklahoma, 2000.
[39] Bruce E. Johansen, "Catharsis vis a vis Oppression: Contemporary Native American Political Humor," *SIMILE: Studies in Media and Information Literacy Education* 5 (2005), 1.
[40] Lincoln, *Humor*, 5.
[41] Leslie Marmon Silko, *Laguna Woman* (Greenfield Center, NY: Greenfield Review Press, 1974), 146.
[42] Deloria, *Custer*, 167.
[43] Paula Allen Gunn quoted in Lincoln, *Humor*, 7.
[44] Clyde Warrior, "Which one are you? Five Types of Young Indians," in *Literature of the American Indian*, Ed. T. Sanders and W. Peek (Beverly Hills, CA: Glencoe Press, 1973), 521-523.
[45] Emmons, *Disarming*, 34.
[46] Quoted in Steiner, *New Indians*, 92.
[47] Vine Deloria quoted in Steiner, *The New Indians*, 86.
[48] Richard Oakes quoted in Peter Collier, "The Red Man's Burden," *Ramparts* (1970), 38.
[49] Deloria, *Custer*, 147-8.
[50] Lehman Brightman quoted in *Time*, February 9, 1970, 24.
[51] Deloria, *Custer*, 155.
[52] Deloria, *Custer*, 150.
[53] Deloria, *Custer*, 151.
[54] Anonymous Indian protestors quoted *Time*, February 9, 1970, 24. The quote "Custer had it coming" occurs frequently in the pages of militant Indian newspapers throughout the 1960's and 1970's, such as *American Aborigine*, *Warpath*,and *ABC: Americans Before Columbus*.
[55] Anonymous Author, "The Great White Ultimate Trustee" *Native Nevadan*, 8 (1968), 68-9.
[56] The Lord's Prayer appears in The Gospel of Luke 11:2-4 and the Gospel of Matthew 6:9-13 in the King James version of the Bible.
[57] Chadwick Allen, "Postcolonial Theory and the Discourse of Treaties," *American Quarterly*, 52, issue 1 (2000), 71.
[58] *Cherokee Nation v. Georgia*, 30 U.S. 1 (1831).

[59] See LaNada Boyer, "Reflections on Alcatraz," *American Indian Activism: Alcatraz to the Longest Walk*, in Troy Johnson, Joane Nagel, and Duane Champagne, (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 88-103.
[60] Vine Deloria Jr.. *Behind the Trail of Broken Treaties: An Indian Declaration of Independence* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1974), 249.
[61] United Native Americans, "Proposed Principles," *Warpath* (March, 1969), 20.
[62] Vine Deloria Jr. and Clifford M. Lytle, *The Nations Within: The Past and Future of American Indian Sovereignty* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1984), 8.
[63] Charles F. Wilkinson. *American Indians, Time, and the Law: Native Societies in a Modern Constitutional Democracy* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1987), 100-102.
[64] "Treaty of Fort Laramie" in Francis Prucha, *Documents of United States Indian Policy, 2nd Edition Expanded* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1990), 112.
[65] Francis P. Prucha, *American Indian Treaties: The History of a Political Anomaly* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1994). The phrase "held in trust" occurs in the Treaty with the Sac and Fox (1861) and Treaty with the Osage (1865) and the General Allotment Act (1887).
[66] Robert A. Williams. *Linking Arms Together: American Indian Treaty Visions of Law and Peace, 1600-1800* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 51.
[67] Excerpt from the "Treaty of Fort Stanwix" reprinted in *The Documentary History of the State of New York, Volume 1*, edited by E.B. O'Callaghan, (Albany: Weed, Parsons & Co., 1850) 379-381.
[68] Two prime examples of the prevalence of this assertion can be found in Wilma Mankiller and Michael Wallis, *Mankiller: A Chief and Her People* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), 118; and Joseph M. Marshall III, *The Lakota Way: Stories and Lessons for Living* (New York: Penguin, 2002), 428.
[69] Sam Houston, *Congressional Globe*, 33rd Congress, 1st Session, App. 202 (1854); Also see: Charles F. Wilkinson and John M. Volkman, "Judicial Review of Indian Treaty Abrogation: 'As Long as Water Flows, or Grass Grows upon the Earth' How Long a Time Is That?" *California Law Review*, 63 (1975), 601-661.
[70] Witt, "Listening," xxiii-xxiv.
[71] John G. Neihardt, *Black Elk Speaks: Being the Life Story of a Holy Man of the Oglala Sioux* (New York: Washington Square Press, 1959).
[72] Indians of All Tribes. "Proclamation," 2.
[73] Coyote 2, "Untitled Poem," *Alcatraz Newsletter*, 1 (1970), 9.
[74] Indians of All Tribes, "Alcatraz: The Idea," *Alcatraz Newsletter*, 1 (1970), 2.
[75] Indians of All Tribes, "Idea," 2.
[76] Indians of All Tribes, "Proclamation," 3.
[77] "Civilization Fund Act" reprinted in Prucha, *Documents*, 33.
[78] "Creation of a Bureau of Indian Affairs in the War Department," in Prucha, *Documents*, 38.
[79] National Indian Youth Council, "NIYC Statement of Policy," *Indian Truth* 45, issue 3 (Winter, 1968-9), 10.
[80] Vine Deloria Jr., *God is Red: a Native View of Religion* (3rd ed.) (Golden, CO: Fulcrum Publishing, 2003).
[81] Lou Trudell, "Response to Bob Shultz," Alcatraz File, Outward Correspondence, Box 1, File 24, San Francisco Public Library.
[82] Richard Oakes quoted in Paul Chaat Smith and Robert Allen Warrior, *Like a Hurricane: The Indian Movement from Alcatraz to Wounded Knee* (New York: The New Press, 1996), 24.
[83] Indians of All Tribes, "Proclamation," 3
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[85] Phil George, *Time*, February 9, 1970, 27.
[86] Taiaiake Alfred, *Peace, Power, Righteousness: an Indigenous Manifesto* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 58.
[87] Jerry Gambill, "On the Art of Stealing Human Rights," *Akwesasne Notes*, 1 (1969), 1.
[88] Aubrey Gross. "Is the Occupation of Alcatraz Island by the Indians of All Tribes Legal?" *Alcatraz Newsletter*, 1, no. 3 (1970), 4.
[89] Allen, "Postcolonial," 60.
[90] Indians of All Tribes, "Proclamation," 4.
[91] Indians of All Tribes, "Proclamation," 4.

[92] Hill quoted in Steiner, *New Indians*, 84.
[93] A Cheree Carlson, "Limitations on the Comic Frame: Some Witty American Women of the Nineteenth Century," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 74 (1988), 310.
[94] Paul Bernal quoted in Steiner, *New Indians*, 89.
[95] Steiner, *New Indians*, 89.
[96] Burke, *Attitudes*, 166.
[97] William Davis, "Red Power," *Punch*, 257:6738 (October 29, 1969), 1.
[98] Jerry Carroll, "The Dream is Over – A Sad Visit to Alcatraz," *San Francisco Chronicle*, (June 14, 1971), A1.
[99] Burke, *Permanence*, 169.
[100] Quoted in Smith and Warrior, *Hurricane*, 26.

Chapter 4

Prison, Rock, Island

In January 1970, the Indians of All Tribes published and distributed its first *Alcatraz Newsletter* in which the organization explained its plan to make the island inhabitable and the occupation meaningful. Building on the rhetoric established in its founding proclamation, the IOAT embraced as one of their anchoring principles a belief in inherent *interconnectedness* between one act of resistance and all indigenous collective struggles. The IOAT linked itself to struggles that extended beyond their own time and space. Declaring emphatically "WE HOLD THE ROCK!":

> Indians of All Tribes greets our brothers and sisters of all races and tongues upon our Earth Mother. We here on Alcatraz Island, San Francisco Bay, California represent many tribes of the United States as well as Canada, Alaska, and Central and South America. We are still holding the island of Alcatraz is the true name of Freedom, Justice and Equality, because you, our brothers and sisters of this earth, have lent support to our just cause. We reach out our hands and hearts and send spirit messages to each and every one of you – WE HOLD THE ROCK![1]

This preamble connected Alcatraz Island and its new inhabitants to a constellation of oppressed indigenous people throughout the globe. The collective *we* suggested that all Indians everywhere "held the rock," and the name of *All Tribes* advanced connectedness between all Indian peoples. This concept was expressed in the first proclamation, "we, the Native Americans, re-claim the land known as Alcatraz Island in the name of *all American Indians* by right of discovery [emphasis added]."[2] Indeed, what others might

see as an organization, a group similar to SNCC or SDS, was for the participants in the IOAT a collection of souls who stood in for the diverse peoples of Indians everywhere.

In one media interpretation, the IOAT was understood as isolated and delusional, making demands to a government that would not hear them. Some newspaper reports called the occupation a personification of the "mouse that roared."[3] This chapter posits a different interpretation. It examines the seizure of Alcatraz as a collective indigenous struggle and expressed the birth of a new pan-Indian community. Deloria argues that "Indians regarded the capture of Alcatraz as the beginning of a new movement to recapture the continent and assert tribal independence from the United States, and it was finally this issue that Alcatraz came to symbolize."[4] From the perspective of the group, all acts of resistance aggregated into an emergent Indian society. They considered each individual act of resistance a replica of a broader notion of Indian unity. Peter Blue Cloud elaborated that for the IOAT, acts of protest and visions of unity were interchangeable: "all tribes and unity are the words of the drum and all tribes in unity are the dancers."[5] The first newsletter's preamble concluded that at Alcatraz "we will join hands in a unity never before put into practice. We are Indians! Our Earth Mother awaits our voices. We are Indians of All Tribes!"[6] Regardless of the IOAT ability to secure the title to the island, the group argued that its acts signified rebirth, revolution, or perhaps even the genesis of a deeply historical vision of Indian unity. The utopian visions of unity expressed throughout the group's newsletter reflected the electric optimism of the first few months of the occupation. On the one hand, the bold claims of unity provided a way for the protestors to think about their actions as historic. On the other, their rhetoric

shifted attention away from moments throughout the occupation in which conflicts threatened to unravel the group's solidarity.

The IOAT appeals to unity implied that the relationship between all Indians was elemental. Thus, they structured their claims around root metaphors derived from pan-Indian folklore. Specifically, they argued that all Indians were connected by a familial connection the Earth. While the IOAT argued that it was part of a specific struggle for social justice in California, the organization's rhetoric expressed the universal character of Indian values. Simultaneously, their actions embodied universal struggle on the part of all Indian peoples to achieve self-determination. As the IOAT suggested, the scope and function of its rhetoric was not tied to an isolated island or the ephemeral character of the moment. By offering to stand in the place of *all Indians*, the occupants connected themselves to a history of indigenous struggle that transcended difference, time, and space. While also reflecting their diverse tribal make-up, the rhetoric of pan-Indian connectedness transformed the occupation into the *synecdoche* for all Indian struggles. As Oakes suggested, the occupation was "a move, not so much to liberate the island, but to liberate ourselves for the sake of cultural survival."[7]

In the occupant's rhetoric, the part (IOAT) stood in the place of the whole (all Indians). They constructed Alcatraz as a microcosm of their collective ideals to align with macrocosmic visions of Indian unity attempted by some in the past yet never successfully realized. As I argue throughout this dissertation, the concept of pan-Indianism is deeply historical; both theorized and performed at different moments by Indian intellectuals and leaders as a method of resistance to Euro-American oppression. In this chapter I argue that at the moment of the occupation, the rhetoric of IOAT condensed time, space, and

tribal difference to resist the oppressive forces of assimilation. The policies of termination and relocation divided Indians geographically and temporally, separating them from both their community and past. The rhetoric of pan-Indianism responded to the challenges of assimilation by constructing an all-encompassing political identification rooted in common experiences of dislocation and shared cross-cultural symbols and rituals.[8]

To construct this collective identity, the occupants established Alcatraz Island as a microcosm of Indian life and society. The occupation signified how all Indian life and society could take root and grow out of the harshest material conditions. Under the auspices of one "meta-tribe," the occupants recreated a familiar space at Alcatraz that reflected the generalized cultural values and everyday rituals of North American Indian life. While some rhetorical and cultural practices reflected those of specific tribes, appeals to common experiences, histories, and folklore established Alcatraz as a microcosm for a reconstituted pan-Indian community. While appeals to unity resolved conflicts and differences between tribes at Alcatraz and in the San Francisco Bay Area, their rhetoric also connected all Indians to the Red Power struggle. Providing common points of symbolic identification, the occupation was constructed as the genesis of a new Indian world. Standing in the place of all Indians, the occupants constructed a new tribe representing a variety of cultural traditions in which time and space were no longer constraints for tribal membership. Furthermore, in this tribe specific ancestry was not as important as much as the general classification – Indian – and a shared political history.

Throughout the occupation, rhetorical appeals to pan-Indian unity were framed in ways that mimicked the interconnectedness the IOAT sought to elicit of all Indians. With

this in mind, I explore the function of *condensation symbols* in the occupant's pan-Indian appeals, specifically the ways in which generalizable Indian imageries, icons, and discourses were marshaled to elicit interconnectedness. Using easily identifiable and generalized symbols from Indian folklore, the occupants constructed one large tribe that transcended spatial-temporal boundaries. I analyze three depictions of Alcatraz: as prison, rock, and island. These symbols established a synedochic relationship between the act of occupation and all Indian struggles and, as Burke suggests, "an integral relationship, a relationship of convertibility, between the two terms."[9] The occupant's use of synecdoche was iconic of the goals of a pan-Indian movement, in that each individual part is "treated as a replica of the universe, and vice versa."[10]

Condensation and Indian Rhetorical Worlds

Witt argues that the mark of an American Indian traditionalist is his or her precise use of language to harness the complexity of Indian thought. Rhetorical precision means finding ways to represent or convey significant ideas through a "minimum of verbiage."[11] Such words and images function as *condensation symbols*. Doris Graber states that "a condensation symbol is a name, word, phrase, or maxim which stirs vivid impressions involving the listener's most basic values."[12] Burke extrapolates that social belonging and collective identity are tied to the capacity to condense meaning into symbols and create categories of identification that ground human experience.[13] Likewise, David S. Kaufer and Kathleen M. Carley argue that condensation symbols differ from ordinary words and symbols in that they contain a high degree of connectivity within networks of meaning. Some condensation symbols, they argue, "link explicit utterances with the insider

elaborations of their audiences."[14] Drawing on similar insights, Michael C. McGee argues that what makes such symbols special is not related to cognition alone, but rather their imbeddedness in specific rhetorical exigencies, histories, and social contexts.[15] As literary critic Craig Womack suggests, the use of trope and symbolism in Indian writing and speaking in particular is not a matter of "pure aesthetics," but rather is punctuated "to *invoke* as much as *evoke*" a complex web of meanings, memories, and experiences.[16]

Kaufer and Carley contend that in the form of *allusions*, condensation symbols can be used to both mobilize collective action and signify one's membership in a community. They argue that while the deployment of such culturally-bound meanings may "thin out" as its audience widens, "allusions are the source of many strategies used to hold together, by a thread, fragile coalitions, even to cultivate a false sense of consensus across diverse constituencies."[17] Although they are difficult for an external audience to comprehend, culturally-specific allusions, such as those used within Indian communities, serve as a rhetorical resource to ground an interpretative community and provide common points of identification for collective action.

I posit that symbolic condensation relies on synecdochic pairing between the part (symbol) and whole (community). As the whole (all tribes) condensed into the part (IOAT), the use of pan-Indian symbols anchored Indian audiences in a culturally-specific manner.[18] When unpacked, condensation symbols display a synecdochic relationship between that which they signify. Burke elaborates that "we might say that representation (synecdoche) stresses a *relationship* or *connectedness* between two sides of an equation, a connectedness that, like a road, extends in either direction."[19] Synecdoche is a sign or summation that contains the essence of that which it represents.[20] In this relationship the

sign stands in the place of the thing represented. Burke argues that such rhetoric provides a "*summation*, containing implicitly what the system that it developed from it contains explicitly."[21] The process, however, is convertible; condensations can be expanded, unpacked, and dispersed when the whole stands for the part. Examining the workings of synecdoche alongside its close relationship to condensation symbols highlights the rhetorical power of such symbols to create reversible and convertible connections between all Indians.

Indian condensation symbols are by no means universal; however, there are allusions that transcend tribal boundaries. For example, the symbolic lexicon of American Indian rhetoric and literature emerges in part from the norms of traditional oral culture. Many American Indian oral traditions are based on a belief in the immortality of words and some traditionalists believe that words are imbued by speakers with life. As Momaday writes in *The Way of Rainy Mountain*, "a word has power in and of itself."[22] Significant words and symbols can be recalled at any moment to conjure the world of meaning contained within. For Indian traditionalists, rhetorical power is constituted through the precise deployment of symbols in ways that compress entire histories and universes of meaning. For example, speaking about the simple contours and utilitarian function of a woven basket can stand in the place of the perfect roundness of the Earth and the bounty it contains.[23] While the symbols of the American Indian world are precise, they are linked to a complex world of condensed meanings. Momaday writes that when "we look into this lexicon of the Native American, as into the whorls of a winter count, and we see the universe"[24]

Derived from the rhetorical power of the oral tradition, condensation and its special application in the form of synecdoche is an important trope in American Indian rhetoric. Witt writes:

> This leads to almost habitual use among traditionalists, who seek to preserve the old ways, of the figure of speech called by the Greeks *synecdoche*. The speaker can hereby designate a part for the whole of a thing (my *wool* for my *sheep herd*), the whole for a part (the *tribe* for the *tribal chairman*), the species for the genus (my *case worker* for the *Bureau of Indian Affairs*), the name of the material for the thing made (the *electric* for any *electric appliance*), and the like. It can become exceedingly complex."[25]

Similar to the oral tradition, the use of condensation and expansion in contemporary American Indian rhetoric elicits audience identification. For traditionalists, the words and thoughts of the American Indian lexicon are never discarded; they carry with them the worlds from which they were given life. Condensation symbols give Indian rhetors a symbolic short-hand to signify vast discursive fields.[26] Thus, while condensation symbols work in this summary fashion generally. They seem to have a heightened function in Indian communities on account of their history and verbal ideology. Condensation translates immense worlds of cosmic meanings into simple words and icons. Because of the immensity and circularity of the Indian concepts of the universe, Momaday theorizes that only "by means of words can a man [sic] deal with the world on equal terms."[27]

Prison, Rock, Island

Alcatraz Island is a difficult place to transform into a home. While it is only 1.25 miles from Pier 33, it is isolated, barren, and treacherous. The island does not possess the raw materials required to sustain life. It is no surprise then that acting warding A.L. Aylworth's was confused when the Indian invaders wanted the title to the island. Of what use is a barren rock to the American Indian? The IOAT, however, repeatedly argued that "Alcatraz is not an Island."[28] The repetition of this phrase provides a cue that while the IOAT desired the legal title to the island, they also were concerned with Alcatraz's symbolic potency. The IOAT contended that the island's physicality could not contain its symbolic excesses and that their actions transcended its remote isolation, prison cells, and lifeless features.[29] They suggested a series of physical changes to the island to be accompanied by symbolic transformations.

The island's transformation from rock/prison into a pan-Indian symbol established common points of identification which collapsed differences between Indians. According to the occupants, all Indians were children of the island whether they acknowledged it or not. The IOAT argued that that the occupation was "meaningful in that it is stepping quickly toward the unification of thought, word, and deed, of all Indians."[30] To accomplish this end, the occupants examined and dismantled each physical characteristic of the island, recoding with Indian significance. Using traditional Indian symbols, the island was transformed into a synecdoche for all Indians and as a corollary all Indians were to be found in each contour and characteristic of the island. The occupants argued that this new idea of Alcatraz would make it easier "for individuals to assume the identity of belonging to the whole as well as the part."[31]

Alcatraz as Prison

In his prison memoirs, condemned American Indian activist Leonard Peltier writes that while the prison served as an apt metaphor to describe the historic conditions of Indian life, "I promise you, you cannot build enough prisons to hold us all."[32] Iterating a common theme of prison memoirs, Peltier argued that prisons can contain one's physical presence, however "no prison bars can stop a prayer."[33] While he wrote years after his participation in the Fort Lawton occupation and the America Indian Movement (AIM), Peltier highlighted the symbolic function of the prison for many urban American Indians. As he suggests, prison bars and physical isolation could not contain the expression of the Indian soul. Iterating the symbolism evoked in prison memoirs, the IOAT used the image of Alcatraz as prison to represent the socioeconomic isolation of American Indians and, as Sklansky suggest, to assert an "image of total rebellion, the inmates running the institution."[34] As a prison, Alcatraz embodied the worst characteristics of the American penal system. The island's former inmates were the worst sort of criminals and its isolated and barbaric conditions enabled brutal and extreme punishment to occur far away from the public eye. Since hundreds of American Indians had been imprisoned in Alcatraz throughout the nineteenth-century, the island held specific significance for the IOAT. The prison was both a particular symbol of Indian oppression and a general metaphor for the conditions of American Indian life. The occupation marked the first time in the history of the Alcatraz prison in which the cell blocks were filled with life and comedy. The IOAT argued that the island was thus a fitting symbol because "the population has always been held as prisoners and kept dependent upon others."[35] Thought of as a *prison riot*, the inmates were finally in control.

One commentator wrote that Alcatraz was “a powerful symbol of liberation springing out of the long American imprisonment.”[36]

First, the symbolism of the prison provided a useful metaphor for describing the relationship between Indians and Euro-Americans. Steiner contends that many American Indians understood their relationship in penal terms, a “conversation between prisoner and jailer.”[37] Portraying Indians as *inmates* embodied the experience of governmental paternalism, dependence, and complete helplessness. Anthropologist Robert Thomas has highlighted the persistence of incarceration metaphors used by the BIA in their administrative activities, including the persistent use of key terms such as “keeper,” “guardian,” and “warden” as descriptors for the role of the federal government.[38] Likewise, Edgar S. Cahn’s 1972 study of the BIA highlighted the ways in which federal administration and its language tended to infantilize, control, and restrict tribal life.[39] BIA bureaucrat’s micromanaged and rendered powerless Indian lives like prisoners. For example the rhetoric of Indian administrators highlighted a self-perceived therapeutic-punitive role. The architect of the Indian boarding school system Richard Pratt argued that the purpose of Indian education was to punish the savage body in order to redeem the civilized soul within. He argued “let us by education and patient effort kill the Indian in him, and save the man.”[40] As an alternative to murder or physical violence, Indian education and other related assimilation programs enacted a peculiar type of rehabilitative punishment, a common feature of the modern prison. While the prison restrained the physical body, it also sought to rehabilitate the soul by provoking the inmate to reflect on his/her crime and participate in his/her own punishment.

For those familiar with Indian administration, the daily practices of the BIA were akin to punishment and rehabilitation. If the BIA were guards, then the occupants were insurrectional conspirators. As a symbol, the IOAT utilized the prison to dramatize their experience. They wrote:

> We think it [Alcatraz] has more value than that of a discarded prison. The stigma that a convict must bear throughout his life is a burden we Indians are familiar with; bars and barbed wire are not our jailers as we are prisoners of inequality, discrimination, and social contempt and injustices…and that is where the Alcatraz symbolism is. Alcatraz was a prison, a symbol of what your society has produced![41]

Using the prison metaphor enabled the occupants to rearticulate their experience both within and outside of euphemisms of state guardianship and protection. Situating Indians as *inmates* as opposed to *wards* or *children* politicized their experience, provided concrete symbolism of the Indian experience, and highlighted the harsh reality behind the gentle language employed to defend dispossession and control.

In addition to dramatizing the Indian experience, the extended prison metaphor also drew attention to the unsuitable conditions of reservation life. The IOAT argued that the reservation system was a series of penal colonies by different names, "Leavenworth, San Quentin, Corcran, Lompoc, Attica, and hundreds more and let's not forget Pine Ridge, Rosebud, Klamath, Fort Sill, Colville AND HUNDREDS MORE. These places are ALL prisons holding our People and our Mother."[42] Juxtaposing a long list of America's worst prisons with a series of the nation's largest Indian reservations invited comparison between each object's shared characteristics, including restraint, control, and

punishment. The IOAT argued that portrayals of BIA benevolence could not disguise their basic function, which was to restrain the savage body and control their freedom of movement. One occupant argued "my Mother has seen what the 'Beneficial Bureau' has done. Like give us all the economic opportunities, which were none. You've tried your best to make our land white by robbing us of our heritage and our birthrights. Your attempts at suppression are through. We're taking back what is ours and there's nothing you can do!"[43] As this passage suggests, the prison metaphor exposed how the language of benevolence only disguised the harmful inner-workings of social control.

The prison symbolism also enabled a pervasive critique of Euro-American society, in particular highlighting the barbarism of law. The IOAT argued that "Alcatraz is again the hateful symbol of oppression…Steel fences are again being put up. Armed with weapons of war and sterile theories of law, they try desperately to keep out the Indian spirit."[44] The prison embodied the retributive features of Euro-American law. It emphasized revenge over balance and justice; therefore using the prison as a summation of Euro-American theories of justice, the IOAT argued that while appearing "just," Euro-American law was typically self-serving, hypocritical, and oppressive. To elaborate this point, the rhetoric of the IOAT described the prison as an expression of retribution. They asserted, "we are aware that there may be action taken against us that could result in the imprisonment of Indian people that are concerned and involved in this movement, but we will not be intimidated because we are asking for and what we are working for is a just cause. We have nothing to fear. We have done nothing wrong."[45] The attitude expressed here highlights the paradox of imprisoning the protestors who voluntarily had occupied an abandoned prison. A harsh response could have provided an embodied expression of

the protest's critique, an ironic dramatization of their central argumentative premises. Further, they argued that because Indians were already inmates, the threat of prison could not deter them for fulfilling the imperatives of civil disobedience.

Through ironic inversion, the IOAT appropriated or domesticated the prison as a paradoxical symbol of Indian liberation, presenting Alcatraz in a new and updated context. Put differently, the IOAT symbolically dismantled the prison in all its forms. Oakes and others continually asserted that the occupation was not a move to liberate the island but to free Indians from imprisonment. The IOAT demonstrated that prison walls could crumble under the weight of Indian unity; their rhetoric symbolically dismantled the prison edifice. One occupant poetically expressed:

> Alcatraz, symbol of oppression, rock prison of liberation. I come to take you into my possession. You possessed many braves full of indignation. Against the oppressive system. Yes, I come to change you into a symbol of redemption, and to include you Rock Reservation of the melting pot, into a symbol of redemption, and to include you, Rock reservation of the melting pot in the struggle of liberation.[46]

Repossessing or redeeming the prison was folded into a project of reclaiming the reservation, a metaphor for insurrection. One activist concluded that such inversion healed the pain associated with both prison and reservation, arguing "isn't now time to heal all wounds of Mother Earth and her People?...Now is a time for Freedom. This is why we Dance and Sing and Walk for Justice. We walk together, on the Rock of our Foundation: Mother Earth."[47]

In the first months of the occupation, they animated the cell blocks and the prison yard with laughter and celebration. Children played freely throughout the island, families took up residence in the cells of infamous criminals, and the Oakes family inhabited the warden's quarters. Others built tipis in the prison exercise yard and defaced ominous signs telling trespassers to keep off government property. In sum, they demonstrated that prison walls could not contain the American Indian spirit. Thus, the prison was transformed into an ironic site of Indian liberation. Occupant George Pina wrote "sitting right here on the cell-block, [I am] feeling better now that I'm free. We've made our break for Freedom and we all want Liberty."[48] Paradoxically, Pina expressed feeling freedom inside of prison walls. Oakes wrote that this feeling was widespread throughout the island's population. He told a powerful and touching example when he recounted that "there was one old man who came on the island. He must been eighty or ninety years old. When he stepped onto the dock, he was overjoyed. He stood for a minute and then said, 'At last I am free!"[49]

It is important to note that the feelings expressed in the romantic passages above reflect the mood of the island during the first several months of the occupation. Furthermore, these quotations highlight the idealized visions of the island's potential as protestors were transformed by traveling to the island. Though expressing hope, these passages were not denotative descriptions of the island, but expressions of identification with the ideals of the IOAT. At points throughout the event, the prison metaphor broke down as some members of the Bureau of Caucasian Affairs enforced a harsh system of rule and law. The rhetoric demonstrates that the occupants had a difficult time balancing the need to keep order on the island and resist prevailing modes of law and order in Euro-

American society. The prison was more difficult to dismantle from this inside than the group had expected. Nonetheless, the prison metaphor demonstrated the problematic role that law and order played in the lives of American Indians.

This juxtaposition between freedom and imprisonment traveled through much of the protest. Oakes suggested that the occupants' presence on the island released the tortured Indian souls that haunted the island. He explained that "the spirits were free. They mingled with the spirits of the Indians that came on the island and hoped for a better future."[50] Oakes' words suggest that, ironically, imprisonment was not everlasting and that Indians could tear down the prison's walls and release their imprisoned spirits. Another occupant suggested that their presence "danced the Spirit back into the land. And now, there are only remains of the prison, we see that man-made things cannot last."[51] As this passage implies, the prison was neither natural nor eternal in their constructions. Prisons could be smashed, dismantled, and transcended. Indians connections with one another, even deceased spirits, transcended anything constructed by humans, even something as oppressive as a prison. The prison and its dismantlement represented how insurrection could transform the symbols and materials of Indian oppression into sites of liberation. Alcatraz served as a microcosm for reclaiming the tools of Indian oppression and redeploying them for insurrectional use.

Alcatraz as Rock

The construction of Alcatraz as "the Rock" served two important functions. First, the barren rock-like features of Alcatraz represented the then-existing conditions of Indian Country. Second, the parallel process of reclaiming the island and transforming it into a flourishing Indian space exhibited the traditionalist ethic of returning to the soil, or

an expression of *redemptive pastoralism*. In this portrayal, the IOAT's rhetoric featured the transformative dimensions of traditional Indian ecologies and the dangerous features of Euro-American environmental attitudes. In their first proclamation, the IOAT argued that Alcatraz was "more then suitable for an Indian reservation, as determined by the white man's own standards."[52] Elsewhere the occupants argued:

> Alcatraz is a symbol of what we Indian people have today. It bears a remarkable resemblance to Indian reservation life, as neither have enough water, there are no natural resources and the government can't find any use for it. Thus Alcatraz became discarded land. We think it has more value that a discarded prison.[53]

While "the Rock" was unsuitable in Euro-American terms, the occupants sought to reclaim and transform the island into a center of vibrant Indian culture life, "a symbol of the great lands once ruled by free and noble Indians."[54] The transformation of Alcatraz from a barren rock to a thriving center of Indian civic and cultural life served as a demonstration of the occupant's wider orientation toward land reclamation. Likewise, the growth of Indian culture in a supposedly inhospitable landscape symbolized that Indian life could grow, adapt, and sustain anywhere. The symbolism of "the rock" drew from both the negative features of Alcatraz and the occupant's expressly sacred relationship with the island. This symbolism tapped into the healing power of Indian landscapes and constructed a pan-Indian project of land reclamation.

First, the occupants positioned Alcatraz as a symbol of Euro-American environmental degradation and the resulting conditions of reservation life. They argued that because Alcatraz was barren, it could be categorized ironically as a reservation. Like most Indians on reservations, the occupants were isolated and without any means of self-

sufficiency.[55] For the occupants, Alcatraz, which possessed no natural resources of its own, seemed to be a fitting icon for the state of Indian Country. Positioning Alcatraz in the place of Indian Country dramatized the history of degradation and dispossession in terms of both its impact on reservation environments and tribal life. The struggle over Alcatraz then functioned as a representative anecdote for the clash of incommensurable beliefs about nature and the historic struggle to maintain a tribal land base. Like most reservation landscapes, however, Alcatraz was undesirable to non-Indians. Abandoned entirely in 1963, it was even unsuitable for the worst of the worst American criminals. In spite of the Bay Area Indian community's efforts, the GSA rejected proposals to develop the island as an American Indian cultural center and university. The GSA did, however, spend a considerable amount of time entertaining Billionaire Lamar Hunt's proposal to build a luxury hotel-casino resort and a series of high-rise condominiums.[56] To the local Indian community, this proposal was profane. In their eyes, the San Francisco Bay politicians were only too willing to continue the cycle of natural resource exploitation.

In the preamble to the first issue of the *Alcatraz Newsletter*, the IOAT used the rationale of land reclamation to explain their presence. They wrote,

> Be it known, however, that we are quite serious in our demand to be given ownership of this island in the name of Indians of All Tribes. We are here to stay, men, women, and children. We feel that this request is but little to ask from a government which has systematically stolen our lands, destroy a once-beautiful and natural landscape, killed off the creatures of nature, polluted air and water, ripped open the very bowels of our earth in senseless greed; and instituted a program to annihilate the many Indian Tribes of this land by outright murder

> which even now continues by the method of theft, suppression, prejudice, termination, and so-called re-location and assimilation.[57]

The IOAT situated its repossession of the island in a larger context of exploitation and positioned landscape as the central antagonism of the movement. Cheryl Clifford argued, "our land is gone…We can no longer go to these places that once were ours. We have to have permission before we can go and get those things which are our way of living."[58] As this passage suggests, the occupation was an enactment of their demand for the ecological restoration of an ancestral home.

To facilitate restoration, the IOAT proposed the development of an Indian center of ecology that would "restore our lands and waters to their pure and natural state" and "revitalize sea life which has been threatened by the white man's way."[59] For the occupants, land reclamation was a commitment to healing landscapes, which would, in turn, heal the Indian. The occupants argued that in the non-Indian world, however, "the trail is worn and devoid of beauty, behind it is erosion; contamination; and odors unlike freshness of honeydew…the grass is covered with concrete…true to the missionary zeal and spirit of having to do something in a quasi-good manner Mother Earth is covered with hardness." Echoing this criticism, one occupant calling themselves Coyote 2 wrote "San Francisco [is] so close to us, vertical fabrications erase the rounded hills, bright lights and sounds and smells of decay drift to this turtle island."[60] The occupants described Alcatraz as a healing oasis amongst the pollution, the oppressive mechanical angles, and the cacophony of dissonant sounds that characterized the city surrounding them.

As a cure, the occupants offered a similar version of *redemptive pastoralism*, the concept that reciprocal investment in tribal landscape could heal and revive the Indian peoples. The IOAT wrote, "with this in mind we are asserting our sense of direction. The visible withdrawal symptom is not a symptom of sickness, nor is it a sign of weakness, far from it, the symptom depicts a healthy glow of true and relevant 'redness' with the strength to match the 'unity' of this glow."[61] They argued that as Alcatraz became "red" with Indian occupants, it also became "green," renewed with the health of an Indian environmental ethic. To the extent that Alcatraz took on the characteristics of a healthy and traditional landscape, it would be transformed into a center of Indian cultural renewal. They argued that Alcatraz would become a spiritual center which offered Indians an alternative to urban life, and the woes of relocation. The occupants sought to heal the island and for the island to heal its occupants. Most importantly, however, the IOAT connected their ecological project with a pan-Indian ideal. The occupants constructed Alcatraz as a redemptive landscape that would facilitate a new connection to both the Earth and fellow Indians. Not only did termination remove Indians from their ancestral homes, it enabled the invasion and destruction of the lands intimately tied to tribal identity. Ownership or the title to Alcatraz was first and foremost about the construction of an Indian homeland that extended beyond the island. The failures of Euro-America stewardship and its attendant environmental destruction required that Indians repossess the land, if the land was to survive.

The occupation also enacted a condensed and progressive project of land reclamation. Any occupation, no matter how small, was a part of an expansive project to re-occupy all of North America. According to the protestors, Alcatraz would inspire a

wave of militant activism. One Sioux medicine man prophesized that Alcatraz was the starting point, or a condensed version of a continent-wide, writing,

> We picked this place because this movement was to start in the extreme West…it will move from the West to the East, no stone will be left unturned. Alcatraz is the starting point. Now in our ceremonies there is a big movement. At the end of 10 years, Indians will have an equal pace with white men. At the end of 10 years we will have our sacred ground and sweat lodge on the extreme East.[62]

This prophecy was unfulfilled; however, the occupation inspired similar acts. For example, on 8 March, 1970 a group calling themselves the *United Indians of All Tribes* invaded Fort Lawton in Seattle, Washington. The group attempted three separate occupations of the base in the hope that an Indian education and vocational center would be built. Each time they were violently removed by military police and arrested.[63] In their manifesto, the Fort Lawton protestors repeated the language of Alcatraz, arguing, "we will build a new life and a new philosophy based upon the ancient wisdom of our fathers…The drums of our eternal people will sound once more forever across our lands."[64] The Alcatraz occupants replied to this passage saying, "Indian unity is begun and the struggle for self-determination in all phases of human life must continue … Alcatraz is the beginning of an idea, and now Fort Lawton has become the continuation of this concept of United Indians of All Tribes dedicated to all of our people everywhere."[65]

The *Alcatraz Newsletter* devoted significantly more space to the national movement as the number of sympathetic direct actions increased. The occupants asserted that Alcatraz was a starting point, one small part of an emergent struggle that would arise

in other locations across the country. The IOAT argued that the Fort Lawton occupation signaled that "there will be no more compromises" from American Indians.[66] In fact, additional struggles did emerge and the IOAT noted many of them. Speaking of the emergent Pyramid Lake struggle, an author calling himself "Turtle's Son" wrote that the "Indians of All Tribes sing your beauty. Like our people, you must be forever, and eternal."[67] The Alcatraz Newsletter also devoted space to a discussion of the occupations at Pit River, Round Valley, and similar militant protest events that aligned with the occupant's ideals.[68] They also devoted space to international indigenous struggles throughout the first three newsletters.[69] The occupants' increasing attention to the struggles of other militants was a both a gesture of unity and a sign of an emergent Indian movement. The IOAT argued that all Indians hold a common stake in every localize struggle and that only by investing in each others' struggles could indigenous people challenge prevailing power structures. The IOAT wrote that "our fight with the whiteman's power structure demands a united front. There is no need to cite the past histories of difference caused largely by factionalism – what we must do now is demonstrate faith in our Indian brothers and demand this symbolic bit of reparation for millions of acres of land stolen from Native Americans."[70]

While they continued their struggle for the title to the island, the occupants also diffused the symbol of "the rock" into the American Indian community. To accentuate this point Oakes argued,

> On November 9, 1969, a small group of Indians – each from a different part of the country, started a movement that was later called Alcatraz. Since that historic moment, we are convinced that Alcatraz is not an island – but an idea. Alcatraz,

> the Indian Giant, has awakened. His many parts have merged into one. He quickly steps in the direction of Indianness, of unity. …It pointed the way for Pomos to reclaim Rattle Snake Island, for Mohawks to reclaim Stanley and Loon Island, as well as attempts at Fort Lawton, Ellis Island, Pit River, and elsewhere.[71]

In this text, Oakes suggested that while Alcatraz in part inspired other acts of Indian militancy, independent acts of militancy should be interpreted as evidence of a larger being coming into consciousness. Alcatraz was both an inspiration of pan-tribal unity and sign of an emergent unified project of self-determination. The metaphor of an awakened sleeping giant foregrounded Oakes argument that the occupation was just a part, perhaps the head of a national indigenous movement. Alcatraz was not just a place but an idea of unity enacted anywhere an act of occupation emerged. In early 1970, Mad Bear Anderson also expressed the idea that all acts of occupation and protest were connected by the same root, writing "everywhere we see the winds of change. When they continue to disregard the treaties – their sacred words and spiritual foundations – the government has become corrupted and will soon collapse."[72] While to many Indian occupations revolved around local interests, activists at Alcatraz said that they were specific enactments of universal Indian principles. As Oakes suggested, the Alcatraz occupation represented that Indian world was merging to reclaim North American. Alcatraz, the idea, had sufficiently diffused into the American Indian community.

Finally, the occupant's rhetoric of "the rock" transcended reservation borders and redefined the geographic construction of Indian Country. The IOAT asserted that once Indians had reoccupied a rock or barren landscape was reoccupied by Indians *it became Indian Country by definition*. In the act of occupation, Indian Country was no longer a

space defined by the federal government. Instead, the militant act of occupation transformed any space into Indian Country. For example, occupant Raymond Lego wrote of Alcatraz that you "don't feel you're a stranger here. This is your land, this is my land. This is Indian Country."[73] By virtue of repossession or a declarative prolocutionary act (be it at Alcatraz, Fort Lawton, Pitt River, Stanley Island) the borders of Indian Country expanded. It was a space defined by the presence of Indian tradition and life, not by treaty declaration. One occupant, Cheryl Anne Payne argued that "we made the Rock ours, again. It was stolen, but now we claim it back…Yes, we made Alcatraz ours again. We brought back our connection to that 'Sacred Rock.'"[74] As suggested, the act and rhetoric of occupation reestablished lost connections between people and land. The IOAT demonstrated that Indian already possessed an imminent power to mark any space as sacred in the name of all Indians.

The act of occupation also highlighted that the occupants understood the importance of land in exercising political power in modern America. Recolonizing the island was a mimetic performance of what Euro-Americans had done to America. In this sense, I argue the protestors of Alcatraz had learned an important lesson of liberal modernity: land had power in its possessed state. Furthermore, because a Lockean notion that liberty was derived from property rested at the foundations of American liberalism, the occupants' understood that land ownership was the highest social value. Deloria argued that the birth of the modern nation-state demonstrated that land translated into self-determination. He argued,

> No movement can sustain itself, no people can continue, no government can function, and no religion can become a reality except it be bound to a land area of

> its own. The Jews have managed to sustain themselves in the Diaspora for over two thousand years, but in the expectation of their homeland's restoration … Without land and a homeland no movement can survive.[75]

Repossessing "the Rock" highlighted the centrality of land for any movement seeking self-determination. It also demonstrated that American Indians were not without a concept of land tenure that would justify self-determination. Thus, land was important to the occupants both spiritually and politically.

In Red Power rhetoric, Indian Country was defined by a sacred relationship between people and place as opposed to the profane relationship established by law. Put differently, the borders of Indian Country were limitless. Anywhere Indian peoples created a connection to the land it became a reservation, an oasis in a non-Indian world. This act recovered a traditionalist definition of Indian Country that resisted the artificial and arbitrary boundaries drawn by Euro-Americans. What's more, the relationship between people and land was mutually reinforcing; each drawing strength from one another. For the occupants, dissolving the borders of Indian Country also dissolved boundaries between Indian people and revoked the Euro-American power to name, categorize, relocate, and terminate. The redemption this rhetorical move offered can be found in a poem titled "Alcatraz Medicine," which reads: "Long years, barren land, the smell of death. All fade on the winds of Alcatraz. And make me a man again!"[76]

Alcatraz as (Turtle) Island

Transforming the prison/rock into an Indian island, the IOAT told a *genesis narrative* concerning the rebirth of their community. The IOAT renamed Alcatraz Island *Turtle Island* and, in the process it recovered a creation story from traditional pan-Indian

folklore and adapted it as a foundational cultural construct for the new urban tribe.[77] The myth of Turtle Island is well-known among many Indian traditionalists. American Indian mythologist Gerald Hausman argues that most North American tribes share a remarkably similar creation narrative derived from animal symbolism and mythic structure. While this story unfolds thousands of different ways, Hausman writes that "I have begun to see a palpable similarity in the stories that I have been collecting. And it seems to me that the tales have begun to take on singular voice, that of a universal conscience."[78] It is important to note, however, that the choice of the Turtle Island myth reflected the geographic composition of the island's leadership. Though widespread and recognizable, the Turtle Island myth is not universal to all indigenous cultures, particularly the tribes of the American Southwest (Pueblo, Navajo, Ute, Paiute, etc.). The articulation of the story as the mythic foundation of the occupation, as the genesis of a new community, is significant nonetheless.

In a generic form, the myth of *Turtle Island* begins with a great flood and the subsequent search by all earth creatures to find land. Eagle soars above the earth and finds nothing. Loon is confident it can find land underneath the water, but is unable to find the bottom. Beaver (or Muskrat), who can stay under water the longest dived too deep and drowned. While they mourn, the other creatures find that Beaver holds soil and must have found earth. Turtle tells the others to pack the mud on her back for trees and plants to put down roots and all earth's creature to live. Turtle, then, becomes the *Earth Mother* from which all life springs and all creatures of connected; transforming into the Earth. Hausman writes that "out of Turtle Island came everything necessary, all that was needed for life."[79]

In the lexicon of Indian animal symbolism, the turtle is immortalized as a symbol of longevity, birth, and renewal. The turtle is also understood as selfless, changeless, and infinitely wise. Hausman notes, however, that the narrative is disrupted by the occupation of Europeans, who held no sacred reverence, or even acknowledgement, for the Earth Mother. He writes:

> Perhaps the most regrettable corruption in the name used for this country, America. Originally, this earth, the mother of Native American legend. The people called Turtle Island. And it was thought that the ancient and sacred creature carried the earth upon her back. Turtle was a deity, an ancestor creature, a symbol of long life. However, Turtle Island was taken from those who named her. And a thing was done that Native Americans have never fully understood: The sacred land was used, sold, bartered, bought and paid for with blood and money. In the end, The People had no part in it, and hardly any place in it. And Mother Earth, Turtle Island, was owned by people who did not seem to know who she was.[80]

Thus, the occupation of *Turtle Island* by European invaders was profane. Put differently, Euro-American attitudes toward land and nature defiled its sacredness and broke the bonds that connected the Indian world. The myth provides a summation of a sacred attitude toward land; a belief in an interconnected or symbiotic relationship between land and people. This contrasts with some applications of Christian dominion theology in which land is a natural resource provided by God for humanity's limitless exploitation.[81] For some, sustaining the Turtle Island narrative in the face of European occupation

asserted that while the land may have been traded, lost, or occupied by non-believers, its meaning and significance persisted.

The myth of Turtle Island had special significance for the IOAT and allusions to the ancient myth were ubiquitous throughout their rhetoric. For example, Fortunate Eagle begins his reminiscence of the occupation in *Heart of the Rock* by telling the Ojibwa version of the legend. He writes that Turtle Island is "one of those creation stories that anthropologists and missionaries love to compare among tribes, as if there is some hidden secret in them that binds together all people from the beginning of time. Maybe they are on to something"[82] As Fortunate Eagle suggests, the telling of the story is different, but there remains a central point of identification with the story's dramatic structure that connect all tribes. Fortunate Eagle's individual telling of the narrative prefaces his own discussion of the occupant's struggle. For Fortunate Eagle and many of the other occupants, renaming Alcatraz *Turtle Island* symbolically transformed the island into a new site of creation. Interpreting Alcatraz Island through mythical structure, the island became the synecdoche for Indian rebirth; a replica of the Indian world. The birth of a new community at Alcatraz represented a wider ethnic and spiritual renewal at work throughout Indian Country in the 1960's and 1970's. The occupants infer that they will grow from a singular point in much the same way that the small clump of mud on Turtle's back transformed into the Earth. Like Turtle's shell, Alcatraz Island became the occupant's *axis point*; a universal center or symbolic point of identification from which the new pan-Indian world would begin. Deloria argues that this rhetorical move has mythic and religious significance. He argues that most Indian religions are anchored by center points (a river, mountain, plateau, island, or any natural feature) which "enables

people to look out along four dimensions and locate their lands, to relate all historical events within the confines of this particular land, and accept responsibility for it."[83]

The rhetoric of the Turtle Island myth appeared in a variety of forms. First, the IOAT used the visual iconography of the myth to align with traditionalist cultural practice. To illustrate the myth's importance to the occupants, the *Alcatraz Newsletter* employed a variety of artistic impressions of the mythic turtle (figures 1-3).[84] The first three images appeared in the occupant's newsletter from January through March 1970. They were unaccompanied by explanation or caption. While an outsider audience may

Figure 1

Figure 2

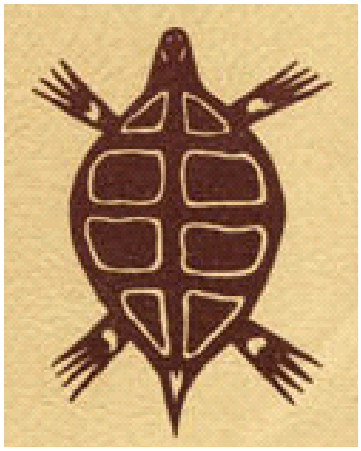

Figure 3

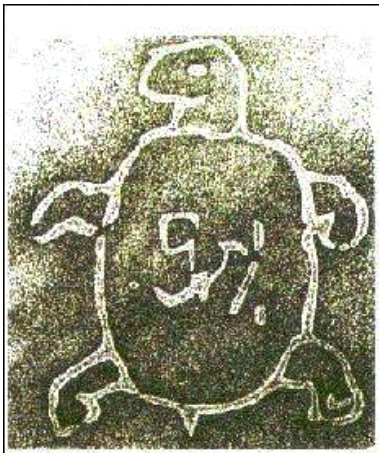

Figure 4

read these symbols as a traditionalist aesthetic, to some Indian audience these images evoked cosmic meanings. Figures 1 and 3 are austere and bucolic, mimicking ancient petroglyphs typically depicted on ancient rock formations. Figure 1 divides the turtle into quadrants, reflecting Deloria's assertion that in Indian religious traditions, the world is divided into "four dimensions" which are visible from a sacred center. For comparison, Figure 4 is an actual petroglyph carved by Delaware Indians from approximately 1,000-1,600 A.D. The occupant's art and the ancient petroglyph are remarkably similar in style and form.[85] The mimicry and visual representation of the ancient art form has important rhetorical significance.[86] Archaeologist Mark J. Dudzik argues that petroglyphs are *archaeoastronimical* or mnemonic devises that record and retell the mythical narratives that serve as bedrock for traditional Indian cultures.[87] In much the same ways that for Christians the symbol of the cross may evoke the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the turtle represents a sacred connection to a transcendent other (Maker, Creator, or God) that speaks a condensed mythic narrative. The symbol of the turtle represents the values and ethical principles of interconnectivity that anchor the Indian world. The IOAT mimicry of the ancient art form and its mythical content aligned the occupants with a pan-Indian folklore tradition while it documents the narrative of the occupation. The variety of turtle forms reflects a cross-section of Indian symbolism that is sufficiently generic as to suggest a pan-Indian aesthetic.

Performing a similar function, Figure 2 is drawn in a more contemporary style with two overlapping images to signify double meaning. The first layer displays the contours of Earth; circular with contrasting colors that map the outline of the continents and oceans. The turtle contains the entirety of the world on its back. The second image is

of a turtle containing two Indian faces in close proximity. In this image the faces are connected because they are contained in the same universe of creation. From the image, one can infer that all of those who live on the turtle's back are connected by a common referent. Put differently, the container stands in for the contained. Taken together, the use of these images displays a traditionalist orientation and a pan-Indian sensibility. By adorning the turtle, the IOAT artfully frame its mythical assertion that a new community was born at Alcatraz. Symbolizing rebirth, renewal, and genesis, these images display fidelity to the occupations dramatic structure.

Second, the IOAT also made explicit references to the myth to symbolize two seemingly paradoxical ideas: the occupation's *continuity* with historic Indian visions of unity and at the same time the birth of a *new* and original identity. Such rhetoric anchored the occupants to traditional Indian cultures, collapsed the distances between Indians of then and now, and fashioned a new identity that responded to present day challenges. Peter Blue Cloud's "Alcatraz Diary" expressed all three of these ideas:

> We dance upon this turtle island, an isolated people from the rest of society. An isolation long imposed upon us by a colonial system of government which has never truly sought to understand us. We dance on our turtle island and draw strength from one another and from the past. Isolated, we will learn unity and speak out our demands to a deaf government. We dance the stars in their sky passage and time does not exist. The fire is a pile of embers with a small group still sitting around it talking, talking. We join the dance and feel the magic which is passing from hand to hand. All tribes and unity are the words of the drum and all tribes in unity are the dancers. The ancient dream of Indian unity is begun.[88]

As Blue Cloud suggests, the seemingly small actions of occupants isolated on a barren island signified the wide-spread emergence of a pan-Indian consciousness. First, he attributes the isolation of the American Indian to the imposition of a colonial system and positions the occupants to learn together ways to reunify and speak against their oppressors. Next, Blue Cloud referenced Indian unity as the fulfillment of prophecy; a vision espoused by historic Indian leaders that sought to unify all tribes to expel Europeans from North America. This provided continuity to the occupation without being entirely derivative. While the occupants were connected to a sustained project of self-determination and possessed strong roots in Indian traditions, they also fulfilled a dream that no previous generation was able to achieve. The reference to repetitive activities such as dancing or drumming suggests the possibility of imitation. Dancing and drumming are repetitive acts that bring the past into the present moment in a new form. Thus, this new version of *Turtle Island* was at once a reference to a shared recoverable past and the birth of a new collective identity.

Extending this observation, Coyote 2's poem titled "Alcatraz Visions" spoke to the occupant's connection to pan-Indian history,

> And I am only five hundred years old,
>
> and my dream is only beginning,
>
> and the drums of Alcatraz throb my spirit
>
> and all the people do a round dance
>
> And our mother earth is on round dance
>
> All the stars circle our eagle dreams
>
> And the children of Alcatraz run and play

And I am glad I am to be a youth of only five hundred years[89]

This poem suggests the ancient roots of the occupant's ideals. Paradoxically, however, the author suggests the occupants are simultaneously five-hundred years old and "young" or "children" of "mother earth." They were at once tied to five hundred years of prophecy and initiating a new beginning, residents of both Alcatraz Island and *Turtle Island*. Rather than suggesting that the occupant's rhetoric was contradictory, I argue that this juxtaposition created a synecdochic pairing between the protests and practices of everyday life at Alcatraz Island and all American Indians. The IOAT constructed and performed a microcosm of the unity it sought in the Indian community. When Alcatraz Island stood in the place of Turtle Island, it became a synecdoche for the whole Indian world. It evoked the pan-Indian interconnectedness implied by the Turtle Island myth. This move allowed the occupants to speak as both agents that attended to the everyday humanistic needs of their local community and as traditionalists or tribal elders who gratified the psychic needs of their community for universal significance and collective identity. The occupants traversed from the local to universal to construct a constellation of Indian activism that was rich in history, marked by deep significance, and without boundaries.

Finally, the occupant's use of the myth invited mimicry and elaboration from Indian Country. Blue Cloud suggests that a small "pile of embers" is evidence of a once large fire. Some Indians may be idly watching the occupation unfold "still sitting around it talking, talking," yet fanning the flames may have reignited the Indian world. The metaphor of "dancing" unity at Turtle Island serves as an invitation to participation. While the occupants practice traditional ritualistic dancing and storytelling by fire in the

prison work-out yard, Blue Cloud invoked a *figurative* meaning of dancing to represent the strength drawn from participation in collective struggle. Hausman suggests that across American Indian cultures dancing is an "expression of universal exuberance, love of life." Dancing, in both a literal and figurative form, sets the "word into physical motion."[90] Much in the way that dancing puts words into motion by acting out mythic dramas, participation in that occupation animates the "talk" of Red Power. While dancing as ritual dramatizes the narratives that define the community's identity, dancing as participation enacts Red Power. Since speaking Red Power requires one to participate in collective action and embrace the recovery of traditional practices, *they must dance*. Blue Cloud implied that dancing unity is mysterious and contagious, "passing from hand to hand." By embracing unity, all tribes, everywhere, become the real occupants of Alcatraz Island in the dance. Occupant Jerry Hill provides a summation of this ideal in his poem "Why You Are Here,"

> What Earth Mother and Spirit Father have given you
>
> You must develop and return to the life
>
> Of which we all are part
>
> And will return to.[91]

In yet another reference to the Earth Mother, the occupants contend that they like all Indians are not only connected, but obligated to one another.

The title of the poem provides a useful summation of their argument. All Indians are at Alcatraz by virtue of the presence of *any* Indians. Thus, the struggle of one group of Indians is the struggle of all Indians. Throughout the newsletters, the occupants reference adjacent occupations and struggles (Pyramid Lake, Pit River, Fort Lawton) to

not only express solidarity but to evoke their presence elsewhere.[92] In a series of articles by the appropriately named author "turtle's son," the newsletter transcended the occupant's isolation at Alcatraz. For example, the author wrote "Indians of All Tribes who have come upon a raven's wing, white buffalo, and deerskin people, totem pole, katchina and sand painters, hunters of the Everglades and plains and forests, united under the Spirit sky to support their brother Paiutes, this sacred lake to replenish."[93] Here, the author collapsed spatial boundaries between Indians by placing singular tribes, and their signifiers and landscapes, under the same "Spirit sky." In this juxtaposition, IOAT and all Indians interpenetrate one another. The rhetorical function of this strategy was to create an all-inclusive political affiliation. Through their support of the Paiutes at Pyramid Lake, the occupants argue that they "move closer to us, and the feeling is of All Tribes."[94] The all-inclusive tribe transcended singular Indian isolation imposed by, as Blue Cloud suggests, a colonial imposition. As Coyote 2's "Alcatraz Visions" argues "steel bridges all around this Bay, connecting steel in bumper and bumper pain, dreams of Alcatraz are of another bridge, fashioned of sunlight and soft voices."[95] The occupants presented themselves as a convertible part of a unified Indian world. This rhetoric allowed the occupants to summon the strength of all Indians and, conversely, allow all Indians to draw from their strength.

This rhetoric also collapsed temporal boundaries. Coyote 2 juxtaposed the above stanza with a first person narrative of his vicarious experience of hunting mammoth, the massacre at Wounded Knee and Sand Creek, and the Trail of Tears. I argued in the previous chapter that this poem enacted an Indian notion of sacred time in which the actions of ancient ancestors were directly adjacent to the actions of the IOAT. This poem

is exemplary because it condensed millennia of time, from humanities first hunts to the present day. I argue, further that by using ancestral memory as a form of protest, the occupants make their struggles and demands of the past live in the present. This condensation moves the occupants closer to their pan-Indian ideals. Here, the occupants summon an entire history of Indian resistance to build momentum. By retelling the stories of great Indian struggle in a new context, the IOAT align with a project unbounded by time because self-determination is timeless. While this rhetoric created common points of identification, it also enabled present day individuals to imagine themselves as past great leaders present day incarnations. This rhetoric suggested to the occupant's audience that they were linked to a history of struggle and that they were capable of enacting widespread social change. The poem also folds in the future by calling the children of the occupants "young eaglets of an Indian tomorrow, tomorrow children of all tribes, here on Alcatraz."[96]

Condensing past, present, and future actions enabled the occupants to envision themselves as exercising the aggregated collective power of all Indian resistance. Their symbols accrued more potency and deeper historical meaning. Put differently, the occupant's construction of pan-Indianism that traversed both space and time. Occupant Marilyn Miracle argues that "in unity, we can continue to strengthen ourselves in our struggle for survival and progress."[97] The occupants recoded Alcatraz as Turtle Island to suggest that from a small clump of mud on the back of the turtle, grows an entire universe. Through their rhetoric and visual iconography, the IOAT constructed Alcatraz as both the site of genesis from which a new tribe was to emerge and a microcosm of an

interconnected Indian world. Coyote 2 concludes that on their "turtle island" the occupants were "testing the ground of unity."[98]

Condensation or Assimilation

Each symbol evoked by the occupants – prison, rock, and island – sought to unify the different aspects of Red Power. Taking each contour of the island as a small replica of the Indian world, the occupants were able to dramatize American Indian struggle and provide mythic structure. The occupants transformed Alcatraz Island into a microcosm of Indian society in which the transformation of the island's oppressive features was converted into objects of liberation. The rhetoric served different functions for different Indian audiences. For the occupants, each symbol condensed the challenges and potentialities of an Indian world to evoke the cumulative strength of all Indians in the most localized acts of militancy. At the same time, each symbol tapped into the common experience of American Indians to establish points of cross-tribal identification. For the American Indian community, the microcosm of Alcatraz helped connect Indians across North American to a singular struggle. Evoking the whole of Indian Country helped create a common stake in the outcome of the occupation and inspire others to participate in the genesis of a new community. Through condensation and synecdoche, the occupants evoked the interconnectivity they sought of all Indians. As a special application of condensation, the name *Indians of All Tribes* itself was a synecdoche; a part that stood in the place of the whole. The name is *inter*connecting because, as the Alcatraz occupants argue, the relationship was reversible; *all Indians* occupy Alcatraz Island. The substitutability of one for the other suggests that Indians were always inextricably linked in spite of any perceived difference or interest. Recall that for Burke, in the dictionary

sense synecdoche is the "part for the whole, whole for the part, container for the contained, sign for the thing signified, material for the thing made…cause for effect, genus for species, species for genus, etc."[99]

It is important to note that while the IOAT pan-Indian identification helped construct a collective identity for American Indians, there were limitations to this strategy. Foss and Domenici argue that for Argentina's *Mothers of Plaza de Mayo*, the use of synecdoche was "a particularly effective set of rhetorical strategies for the Mothers by which to manage their personal trauma and create awareness of the issue but less effective options for achieving resolution to the political conflict."[100] The same can be said for the occupants of Alcatraz Island. First, the specific and contextual meaning of particular symbols did not translate to a non-Indian audience. In *God is Red*, Deloria suggests that the Indian symbolic and spiritual world is incommensurate with the Euro-American conscience, mutually unintelligible and vastly divergent. While speaking as a traditionalist gratified the psychic needs of an urban Indian audience, to non-Indian audiences, their rhetoric was foreign, mysterious, and archaic. In terms of both Indian and non-Indian audiences, the rhetoric of pan-Indianism created some difficult rhetorical problems for the activists.

To an audience unfamiliar with the myth of Turtle Island and its religious significance for many traditionalists, its symbols would appear to be relics of a pre-modern world or a caricature of the noble savage. For a non-Indian audience this rhetoric could have been evidence that American Indians were clinging hopelessly to an Edenic past and were incapable of surviving in a civilized world. As has been suggested in the previous chapters, the rhetoric of civilization overwhelmed the occupant's ability to

articulate the ongoing need for folklore, ritual, and symbolic traditions in the modern world. Pan-Indian rhetoric was conflated by some with the stereotypical construction of a mythic aboriginal Indian sharing a universal conscience. This homogenous view often is accompanied by myth of the noble savage that while showing reverence for American Indians, portrays them as uncivilized, heathen, and barbaric. Rhetoric that evoked pan-Indian mythic qualities as a basis for common action could have also reproduced the image of the *ecological savage*.[101] Renee Cramer notes that even positive depictions of the mythical characteristics of Indian religious beliefs reproduce its counterpart, that of "earlier images of the Indian as heathen or pagan."[102] While the call for ecological restoration inspired collective action, it could have possibly undermined Indian efforts to gain an audience with non-Indians who were unfamiliar with the message's symbolic content.

Within some American Indian audiences, there was much disagreement about which "common traits" should be foreground to define the group's collective identity. D'Arcy McKnickle notes that "there can be disagreement in naming the elements that should be included in such a psychological inventory."[103] For some, the number of traits and practices to be assimilated was too great; such integrations would have required much negotiation, perhaps make a pan-Indian identity impossible. This created a practical and theoretical concern for tribal politics. What's more, some activists worried that too much unity contributed to the homogenizing influences in the BIA. From a pragmatic standpoint, political scientists Anne McCulloch and David Wilkins argue that flattened differences between tribes based on common cultural traits facilitates the "ongoing tendency by a number of federal agencies to treat Indian tribes monolithically."[104] Other

scholars note the tendency of non-Indians to conceive of American Indians as a homogenous group, indistinguishable from one another, rather than a series of independent nations with disparate cultural practices, languages, and socioeconomic structures.[105]

The rhetoric of interconnectedness was simply not enough to overcome vast differences between urban and reservation Indians. Smith and Warrior note that "the people at Alcatraz and the leaders of other Indian protests had not yet addressed successfully a further issue: how and what they were doing related to the people and politics on reservations."[106] To a certain degree the occupants may have underestimated the sentiment of tribal nationalism throughout Indian Country. Sklansky notes that many reservation traditionalists in the 1960s and 1970s held tightly to their tribal affiliations to protect against emergent threats from relocation. Some reservation Indians could have interpreted the call for one tribe as a move toward assimilation. Dissolving boundaries between tribes could have a similar effect to termination in that it required adaptation to a different, albeit familiar, set of cultural traditions. While tribal differences may not have been as relevant to urban transplants, to reservation Indians historical animosities between warring nations far outweighed any benefits of cooperation. Many nations embraced different forms of government, kinship relations, religions, and political alliances. The thought of traditional enemies such as the Crow and Sioux struggling together for common goals would be unthinkable to those nation's elders. To many tribes, cultural differences between themselves and neighboring tribes created important distinctions that affirmed the uniqueness of their tribal identity. Even in cases where there was a common interest, political cooperation did not necessarily translate to into social

and cultural affinities. The collapse of past alliances between tribes demonstrated that often times such cooperation was provisional, temporary, or tacit; they were motivated more out of expediency than cultural interconnectivity and collective identity. Even Deloria wrote that occupants were out of touch with the "real needs of reservations" which "doomed them thereafter from raising their issues in a context in which they could gain public support."[107]

Finally, it must be acknowledge that economic investments in tribal identities outweighed common ethnic considerations. The federal tribal acknowledgment process enables the administration of BIA funds and provides access to federal loans, health, law enforcement, and trust lands. In her study of the tribal acknowledgment process, Cramer argues that "these services are considered necessary to the survival of reservations and to the survival of the tribes themselves."[108] Tribes must be able to establish a distinct traditional ethnic identity, historic ties to specific geographic boundaries, and in some cases Indian physiognomy and traditional clothing. Some tribes resisted to pan-Indianism because they perceived that it would undercut their claim to a distinct identity that maintained their special status as a federally-recognized tribe. Cramer contends that pan-Indian gains "blurred the distinction between American Indians and other ethnic minorities, which could have ultimately harmed their claims to sovereign nation status made by tribes."[109] Reservation Indians were hesitant to submit to a *supra* or pan-Indian identity in fear that it could undermine their own tribes access to federal resource, and hence their tribes survival. The increasing frequency of tribal termination previous to the 1960's made this a reasonable fear. Berkhofer suggests that "Native American activism to the extent that it brings traditional leaders and followers into mainstream politics,

regardless of the reason, may signify the final phase of assimilation into a large society."[110]

While it may have been the case that the occupants were out of touch with the needs of reservation Indians, their message did resonate with urban Indians who already had become detached from their cultural roots. For urban Indians seeking social and cultural acceptance, the IOAT offered a new tribal identification that was at once traditional and modern. Their rhetoric appealed directly to the circumstances of city life and dramatized their actions to summon collective strength lost in the process of termination and relocation. The deployment of pan-Indian symbols created common points of identification and offered an alternative to assimilation and alienation. The occupant's articulation that Indian Country did not end at the reservation border created a sense that any space could be reclaimed and resignified as Indian space. The use of synecdoche and condensation infused urban Indians with a sense of place and purpose. It transcended spatial-temporal boundaries to suggest that Indian communities could reformulate, adapt, and survive in spite of the government's efforts at detribalization. The occupants gave urban Indians a sense of continuity with millennia of Indian traditions; indeed, the protestors refashioned themselves into a new emergent community. Even if they did not directly speak to the needs of reservation Indians, they opened up a space in which Indians from all tribes were members of the *Indians of All Tribes*. While some may have rejected the occupant's rhetoric, it is clear that their rhetoric spoke to the unique intersectional experience between reservation and urban life; the foundations of Red Power.

Chapter 4: Endnotes

[1] Indians of All Tribes, "We Hold the Rock," *Alcatraz Newsletter*, 1, (Janaury 1970), 1.
[2] Indians of All Tribes, "Proclamation to the Great White Father and All His People, November 20, 1969," *Alcatraz Newsletter*, 1 (Janaury 1970), 2.
[3] John C. Waugh, "'It's Our Statue of Liberty,'" *Christian Science Monitor*, 18 (December 1969), 14. For an analysis of newspaper reports of the occupation see Zachary D. Clopton, "'14 Little Indians': A Critical Examination of the Public Reaction to the Indian Occupation of Alcatraz." *49th Parallel: An Interdisciplinary Journal of North American Studies*, 8 (Summer 2001) http://www.49thparallel.bham.ac.uk/back/issue8 /clopton.htm#_edn26.
[4] Vine Deloria Jr. *Behind the Trail of Broken Treaties: An Indian Declaration of Independence* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1974), 38.
[5] Peter Blue Cloud, "Alcatraz Diary" in *Alcatraz is not an Island* (Berkeley, CA: Wingbow Press, 1972), 21.
[6] Indians of All Tribes, "Rock," 1.
[7] "El Grito Interviews Richard Oakes." *El Grito Del Norte* (November 1970), 1.
[8] See Vine Deloria Jr. "Out of Chaos," *Parabola* 10 (May 1985), 20.
[9] Kenneth Burke, *Grammar of Motives* (Berkeley: University of California, 1945), 508.
[10] Burke, *Grammar*, 509.
[11] Shirley Hill Witt, "Listening to His Many Voices: An Introduction to the Literature of the American Indian," *The Way: An Anthology of American Indian Literature*, Eds. Shirley Hill Witt and Stan Steiner (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1972), xxv.
[12] Doris A. Graber. *Verbal Behavior and Politics* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1976), 289; Also see Ernst Cassirer. *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953).
[13] Kenneth Burke. *Language as Symbolic Action* (Berkley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1966), 7; Also see Jennifer MacLennan. "A Rhetorical Journey into Darkness: Crime Scene Profiling as Burkean Analysis," *KBJounal*, 1 (2005), accessed August 20, 2008 at http://www.kbjournal.org/node/61.
[14] David S. Kaufer and Kathleen M. Carley "Condensation Symbols: Their Variety and Rhetorical Function in Political Discourse," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 26 (1993), 201.
[15] Michael C. McGee, "'The 'Ideograph': A Link Between Rhetoric and Ideology," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 66 (1980), 1-16.
[16] Craig Womack, *Red on Red: Native American Literary Separatism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 17.
[17] Kaufer and Carley, "Condensation," 211.
[18] The term "interpretive community" is borrowed from Charles J. Stewart, Craig A. Smith, and Robert E. Denton. They argue that the construction of collective values and identities within social movement cultures are enabled by sharing common codes of social and historical interpretation: "…the social movement must operate as an interpretive community that conceives of itself as a 'people' operating in an environment of demands and relational patters." See Charles J. Stewart, Craig A. Smith, and Robert E. Denton, *Persuasion and Social Movements 4th Edition* (Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, 2001), 158.
[19] Burke, *Grammar*, 509.
[20] See Barry Brummett, "Burke's Representative Anecdote as a Method in Media Criticism," *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 1 (1984), 161-176.
[21] Burke, *Grammar*, 60.
[22] N. Scott Momaday, *The Way to Rainy Mountain* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1969), 33.
[23] See Bruce Bernstein, *The Language of Native American Baskets: From the Weavers' View* (Washington, D.C.: National Museum of American Indian, 2003); and Sarah H. Hill, *Weaving New Worlds: Southeastern Cherokee Women and Their Basketry* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1997).
[24] N. Scott Momaday, "Foreword," in Gerald Hausman, *Turtle Island Alphabet: A Lexicon of Native American Symbols and Culture* (New York: St. Martins Press, 1992), viii.
[25] Witt, "Listening," xxv.
[26] See Vine Deloria Jr.'s discussion of symbolism in Indian storytelling in *God is Red: A Native View of Religion* (Golden, CO: Fulcrum Publishing, 1973), 98-99.

[27] Momaday, *Rainy Mountain*, 32.
[28] Indians of All Tribes, "Alcatraz: The Idea," *Alcatraz Newsletter*, 1 (February 1970), 2. While the phrase "Alcatraz is not an Island" is not clearly explained here, its repetition is ubiquitous throughout the occupant's rhetoric.
[29] See Jeff Sklansky, "Rock, Reservation, and Prison: The Native American Occupation of Alcatraz Island,"*American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 13 (1989), 29-68.
[30] Indians of All Tribes, "Idea," 2.
[31] Indians of All Tribes, "Idea," 2.
[32] Peltier, *Prison Writings*, 207.
[33] Leonard Peltier, *Prison Writings: My Life is My Sun Dance*, edited by Harvey Arden (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 1999), 35.
[34] Sklansky, "Rock," 36.
[35] Indians of All Tribes, "Proclamation," 2.
[36] Peter Collier, "The Red Man's Burden," *Ramparts* (February 1970), 34.
[37] Stan Steiner, *The New Indians* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), 83.
[38] Robert K. Thomas, "Colonialism: Classic and Internal," *New University Thought* 4 (1966), 37-44.
[39] Edgar S. Cahn, *Our Brother's Keeper: The Indian in White America* (Cincinnati: New Community Press, 1972).
[40] Richard Pratt, "'No Good Indians But a Dead Indian' – 'Kill the Indian in Him, and Save the Manhood,'" in United States Department of Interior *Report of the Department of Interior [with Accompanying Documents]* (1885), 775.
[41] Indians of All Tribes in Johnson, *Indian Land*, 43.
[42] Payne, "The Rock," 87.
[43] Anonymous quoted in Johnson, *Indian Land*, 7.
[44] Indians of All Tribes in Johnson, *Indian Land*, 100.
[45] Indians of All Tribes, "Reply to Counter-Proposal of Robert Robertson for the U.S.A." *Alcatraz Newsletter* 1, issue 3 (March 1970), 7.
[46] Anonymous quoted in Johnson, *Indian Land*, 9.
[47] Payne, "The Rock," 87.
[48] George Pinas, "Indian Freedom," Box 1, File 32, Alcatraz File, SFPL.
[49] Richard Oakes, "Alcatraz is not an Island," *Ramparts* (December, 1972), 35.
[50] Oakes, "Island," 35.
[51] Payne, "The Rock," 86.
[52] Indians of All Tribes, "Proclamation," 2.
[53] Indians of All Tribes in Troy R. Johnson, *Indian Land*, 43.
[54] Indians of All Tribes, "Proclamation," 3.
[55] The occupants relied on charitable donations of food and clothing from the mainland. For example the groups Thanksgiving celebration was catered by local restaurants. See: "Foggy Sea Blockade Strands Alcatraz Indians," *San Francisco Chronicle* (November 23, 1969), A18; and "A Tribal Feast on Alcatraz," *San Francisco Chronicle* (November 27, 1969), A1.
[56] For a discussion of the politics of Lamar Hunt's proposal at the GSA see Smith and Warrior, *Like a Hurricane*, 11-12, 27.
[57] Indians of All Tribes, "Rock," 1.
[58] Cheryl Clifford, "Struggle to Save," *Coyote* (Spring 1970), 2. See Box 3, File, Alcatraz File, SFPL.
[59] Indians of All Tribes, "Proclamation," 3.
[60] Coyote 2, "Visions," 10.
[61] Indians of All Tribes, "Idea," 2
[62] The anonymous Sioux Medicine Man was interviewed by Jeff Sklansky. See Sklansky, "Rock," 38.
[63] Don Hannula, "Indians Again Try to Occupy Fort Lawton; 80 Detained," *The Seattle Times* (April 2, 1970), A1.
[64] United Indians of All Tribes, "Manifesto," *Alcatraz Newsletter* 1 (March 1970), 18.
[65] Indians of All Tribes, "United Indians Invade Fort Lawton," *Alcatraz Newsletter* 1, issue 2 (February 1970), 1.
[66] Indians of All Tribes, "Fort Lawton," 1.
[67] Turtle's Son, "Pyramid Lake," *Alcatraz Newsletter* 1 (March 1970), 9.

[68] Also see Indians of All Tribes, "Round Valley: Are Army Engineers and BIA a Conspiracy?" *Alcatraz Newsletter* 1 (March 1970), 10.
[69] Indians of All Tribes, "Brazil: Atrocities & Genocide," *Alcatraz Newsletter* 1 (March 1970), 16; A discussion of Canada's First Nation Struggles occurs in an untitled article in *Alcatraz Newsletter* 1, issue 4 (1971), 2; This fourth and final newsletter is very rare was preserved by Teveia Clarke and Mary Jean Robertson. It is only available at http://www.warmcove.com/alcatraz/indexnewsletter.htm. I do not offer a thorough analysis of this issue because it documents events that occurred at Pitt River, Pyramid Lake and the Nisqually River and not Alcatraz. It is important to note that this issue repeats the same language and themes of unity sustained throughout the first three issues.
[70] Indians of All Tribes, "Support the Claim to Alcatraz Island," Box 4, File 1, Alcatraz File, SFPL.
[71] Richard Oakes, "Comment/Opinion," *Mankind: The Magazine of Popular History* 2 (1969), 1.
[72] Mad Bear Anderson quoted in "Traditionalists Call for Unity," *ABC: Americans Before Columbus* (February/March 1970), 1.
[73] Raymond Lego, "Untitled," in Johnson, *Indian Land*, 37.
[74] Cheryl Anne Payne, "The Rock of Our Foundation: Mother Earth," in Johnson, *Indian Land*, 86, 87.
[75] Deloria, *Custer*, 179.
[76] Lonewolf, "Alcatraz Medicine," in Johnson, *Indian Land*, 91.
[77] On December 12, 1969 Peter Blue Cloud, Earl Livermore, Woesha Cloud North, Swazo Hinds, and Verna Clinton held a round table discussion on design and layout of the new Alcatraz. They discussed several names for the island that they wanted to reflect its Indian history, including Indian Island, Turtle Island, Pelican Island, or Ameican Indian Island. They agreed that they wanted to find a word "in some tribal language" which reflects that "idea of an island for All Indians." See "Gathering of All Indian Tribes Round Table Discussion: Design and Layout," (December 12, 1969), Box 1, File 32, Alcatraz File, SFPL.
[78] Gerald Hausman, *Tunkashila: From the Birth of Turtle Island to the Blood of Wounded Knee* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), xviii.
[79] Hausman, *Turtle Island*, xviii.
[80] Hausman, *Turtle Island*, xviii.
[81] See: Stephenie Hendricks, *Divine Destruction: Dominion Theology and American Environmental Policy* (Brooklyn, NY: Melville House, 2005); and Howard L. Harrod, *The Animals Came Dancing: Native American Sacred Ecology and Animal Kinship* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2000).
[82]Adam Fortunate Eagle, *Heart of the Rock: The Indian Invasion of Alcatraz* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2002), 3.
[83] Deloria, *God*, 66.
[84] The drawings in Figures 1-3 occur in Volume 1, Number 1, 2, and 4 respectively.
[85] The image in Figure 4 is currently on display at the New York Botanical Garden, in Bronx, New York. The image was accessed from the website of the New England Antiquities Research Association. See Tim MacSweeney, "Turtle Vision: Seeing the World of Turtle Island," http://www.neara.org/macsween/ turtlevision.htm.
[86] Many scholars have established the rhetorical power of aesthetics and visual images. See Roland Barthes "The Rhetoric of the Image," *Image, Music, Text*. Ed. and trans. Stephen Heath. (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977) 32-51; Stuart Ewen, *All Consuming Images* (New York: Basic Books, 1988); John Lucaites and Robert Hariman, "Public Identity and Collective Memory in U.S. Iconic Photography: The Image of 'Accidental Napalm'." *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 20 (2003), 35-6; Cara A. Finnegan, "Forum: What is This a Picture Of?: Some Thoughts on Images and Archives," *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 9 (Spring 2006), 116-123.
[87] Mark J. Dudzik, "Visions in Stone: The Rock Art of Minnesota," *The Minnesota Archeologist* (St. Paul, MN: Minnesota Archeological Society, 1997).
[88] Blue Cloud, "Alcatraz Diary", 20-21.
[89] Coyote 2, "Alcatraz Visions," *Alcatraz Newsletter* 1 (January 1970), 11.
[90] Hausman, *Turtle Island*, 34, 35.
[91] Jerry Hill, "Why You Are Here," *Alcatraz Newsletter* 1 (February 1970), 19.
[92] The occupants also provided support to Pyramid Lake Paiutes by providing a caravan of over 40 individuals to bring the group water and supplies. See Turtle's Son, "Pyramid Lake: All Tribes Caravan to Support Paiutes," *Alcatraz Newsletter* 1 (March 1970), 9. All the newsletters feature stories the highlight other Indian struggles and injustices (including indigenous struggles in the Amazon) as well as articles

about common Indian experiences with the Bureau of Indian Affairs and mainstream society. All of these stories are framed in ways that suggest interconnectivity between one struggle and all struggles.
[93] Turtle's Son, "Pyramid Lake, 1970," *Alcatraz Newsletter* 1 (March 1970), 8.
[94] Turtle's Son, "Caravan," 9.
[95] Coyote 2, "Visions," 11.
[96] Coyote 2, "Visions," 10.
[97] Marilyn Miracle, "Bay Area Native American Council," *Alcatraz Newsletter* 1 (February 1970), 6.
[98] Coyote 2, "Visions," 10.
[99] Burke, *Grammer*, 508-9.
[100] Foss and Domenici, "Haunting," 243.
[101] See K.H. Redford, "The Ecological Savage," *Cultural Survival Quarterly* 15 (1991) 46-48.
[102] Renee Ann Cramer, *Cash, Color, and Colonialism: The Politics of Tribal Acknowledgment* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2005), 58.
[103] D'Arcy McKnickle, *Native American Tribalism: Indian Survival and Renewals* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), 11.
[104] Anne M. McCulloch and David E. Wilkins, "'Constructing' Nations within States: The Quest for Federal Recognition by the Catawba and Lumbee Tribes," *American Indian Quarterly* 19 (1995), 367-8.
[105] See Fergus M. Bordewich, *Killing the White Man's Indian: Reinventing Native Americans at the End of the Twentieth Century* (New York: Anchor Books, 1996); and Eva Marie Garroutte, *Real Indians: Identity and the Survival of Native America* (Berkely, CA: University of California Press, 2003).
[106] Smith and Warrior, *Like a Hurricane*, 110.
[107] Vine Deloria Jr. "Toward a Common Indian Frontier," *AIPA News Service* (January 13, 1972).
[108] Cramer, *Cash*, 6.
[109] Cramer, *Cash*, 26.
[110] Robert K. Berkhofer, *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present* (New York: Vintage Books, 1978), 190.

Chapter 5

The Embodied Rhetoric of Alcatraz

Prior to the occupation but as late as September 1969, discussions at the Bay Area's United Indian Council concerning Alcatraz Island were at best ad hoc and tentative. Fortunate Eagle writes that at the Council, "we had a lot of other projects that occupied our time, our limited resources, and the talents of our people."[1] Though some Bay Area Indian organizations developed a proposal for an Alcatraz cultural center, support for a direct action protest did not galvanize until it became increasingly clear that the General Service Administration was unlikely to recognize the Indian community's investment in the island's future. Meanwhile, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors voted in favor of Lamar Hunt's proposal to develop the island into an upscale apartment and shopping complex. With Hunt's proposal under serious consideration and despite strong protest by the American Indian community, many Indians doubted that they would receive a fair audience. Hunt's commercial proposal, and the city's apparent assent, was an affront to Indian cultural values and a serious impediment to the potential socially-redeeming uses of the island. On a practical level, Hunt's vast wealth and influence highlighted for many Indians that they lacked the material resources and public support necessary to secure their interests politically. On a symbolic level, the advancement of Hunt's proposal served as a summation for Euro-American attitudes toward nature and the rights of Indian peoples. In both senses, direct and insurrectional tactics became more appealing and likely to produce results.

While the positive reception of Hunt's efforts suggested that the cultural center was unlikely to materialized, it was the destruction of the mainland Indian center that

catalyzed the community into action. On 10 October 1969, a fire destroyed the Valencia Street San Francisco Indian Center. The center's destruction demoralized, displaced, and agitated the city's Indian community. Smith and Warrior write that "[t]he loss was devastating; mourned almost like a death in the family. Suddenly Indians had no place of their own."[2] The building was the nerve center of the Bay Area's Indian community serving as the primary meeting place for nearly 30 Bay Area Indian organizations and the hub of community outreach and social events such as dances, powwows, and social networking. Fortunate Eagle described the loss in very personal terms; it was "mourned liked a close and beloved friend."[3] For some it was a simply a safe space, or in Fortunate Eagle's words, a place "to just get off the streets."[4] In one sense, the loss of the center posed logistical problems, severely undermining efforts at coordinating political activities, including those of the United Council. In another sense, the fire cultivated a shared sense of *placelessness* and highlighted the collective need to ascertain a foundational space from which the community could flourish. For many, watching the Indian center burn while the GSA ignored the community's desperate need for adequate physical facilities punctuated a long history of oppression. The fire also highlighted the provisional character of Indian space in the city and the necessity of land to facilitate a broader movement for self-determination. In the wake of this traumatic displacement, the idea of the occupation was born.

Historian Paula Marks suggests and I advance further, that the occupation can be read broadly as a struggle for emplacement, the IOAT direct action tactics "reflected a real Indian frustration at seeing land and structures sit unused when tribes' needs were so pressing, their claims so ancient and still ignored."[5] The Hunt proposal and the fire at the

Indian center were representative cases that pointed to larger divergent philosophical questions concerning the nature of space and place in North America. Thus, motivated by both localized and system-wide displacement, the IOAT engaged Alcatraz Island as a contested site of condensed geographic and sovereign power. In this regard, the group resisted their displacement by engaging in symbolic acts of placemaking to both symbolically transform the island into an Indian home and enact a Native concept for inherent sovereignty. Radio Free Alcatraz spokesman John Trudell remarked that the occupation was a practice in "body politics," characterized by the deliberate deployment of occupying bodies to signifying the group's demand for self-determination.[6] Their founding proclamation provided a poignant and inventive verbal articulation of Red Power, yet Trudell suggests that there was important symbolic activity at the level of *embodiment* that advanced beyond the spoken word. Therefore, in this chapter, I consider the rhetorical function of embodiment: the deployment of occupying bodies, arrangement of space, defamation and graffiti, and ritualistic consecrations (singing, dancing) throughout the occupation of Alcatraz Island. I argue that each tactic created an indigenous relationship with place and marked an expression of collective agency. In many ways, these symbolic acts reclaimed Alcatraz as a tribal landscape and enacted an indigenous concept of *inherent sovereignty*, the right to land derived from Indian presence rather than through the authority of an external power. The IOAT expressed inherent self-determination symbolically through the undeniable exertion of physical presence, exemplified by the act of occupation. Thus, to occupy space at the risk of one's physical safety was to symbolically assert ownership via connectivity and investment rather than by any ideological or sterile legal reasoning.

Occupation was a powerful rhetorical act in confluence with, not merely in service of, discursive pronouncements of its meaning. I argue that occupation gave *presence* to American Indian bodies and enacted self-determination by saturating place with Indian meanings. Theorizing the rhetorical force of bodily presence and the textual contours of landscape and space, I argue that the sustained presence of Indian bodies acting out traditional community practices challenged Euro-American attitudes toward the use and purpose of land while it affirmed Indian ecologies and metaphysical perspectives concerning space and place. Exploring the dialectical tension between Indian and Euro-American rhetorics of place, I argue that the symbolic act of occupation struck at the heart of colonial justifications for the dispossession of Indian lands and the disembodiment of Indian peoples. I conclude by suggesting that attention to the rhetorical dynamics of placemaking explains the centrality of the concept of homeland to the Red Power movement.

The Rhetoric of Dispossession and Placemaking

In this chapter, I contrast two competing notions of sovereignty to establish the symbolic value of occupation as an expression of Indian self-determination. The rhetoric of American Indian placemaking starts with an embodied concept of landscapes and an immanent notion of self-rule that is *inherently* exercised by tribes, by virtue of a people's presence and strong communal relationship with inhabited geographies. While also a metaphysical concept, American Indian placemaking is a political expression of self-determination that arises from a people's phenomenological connection to landscapes. I argue that the strategy of occupation was a fundamental expression of *inherent sovereignty* because it reclaimed Indian landscapes without authorization or consent. The

overwhelming presence of Indian bodies and cultural symbols asserted IOAT connection to a homeland in spite of the historical persistence of Euro-America beliefs that Indians, by virtue of their primitivism, could never occupy or cultivate land. By foregrounding the importance of inherent sovereignty and the perspectives of Indian placemaking, I suggest, then, that the occupation struck at the theoretical justifications for American colonialism. By colonialism, I mean the Euro-American practices of dispossessing land that were girded by misguided assumptions of Indian inferiority. I do not interpret the entire function of the American colonial apparatus, only as it relates to questions of land ownership.

The occupants asserted an embodied concept of inherent sovereignty that was exercised by bodily presence or deed, not reasoned political argument alone. In November 1969, an article appearing in *Americans Before Columbus* articulated the uselessness of argument alone when it came to power and self-determination. The authors wrote:

> [P]ower, on which institutions are built, needs to be grabbed, not begged; worked for, not argued about. Education will then be a powerful tool Indians can use to act out their own definitions and carve out a chunk of America for themselves."[7]

The application of embodied metaphors and physical imagery was an important transformation in the activist's discourse. It indicated a broadening of tactics to include insurrectional non-discursive acts of militancy: "grabbing," "working," and "carving." The IOAT argued that sovereignty could not be obtained by negotiation and legal argument alone. As the occupants' attorney Aubrey Grossman wrote during the occupation, "[t]he Indians have 'gone to court' in the only ways they can – by *occupying*

the Island…whether it was legal or not legal [emphasis added]."[8] This passage suggests that the insurrectional act of occupation responded directly to the self-serving concepts of sovereignty historically imposed by Euro-Americans in the service of dispossession.

Whereas Euro-American political power more closely resembles a transcendent concept of sovereignty exercised by command and authority, inherent sovereignty is an immanent concept of indigenous self-determination because it assumes that tribal sovereign power does not emanate from the consent or permission of any federal or state government.[9] According to this argument, American Indians were sovereign *before* the existence of United States and remain sovereign regardless any treaty, law, or decree. Political theorist Kevin Bruyneel observes that inherent sovereignty presents the most radical and militant challenge to the Congressional plenary power doctrine because it presumes self-determination is "not a creation of and gift from the United States" but rather as "historically persistent and constitutive feature of the cultural and political identity of indigenous tribes and nations."[10] In this case, sovereignty was tied to a people's presence and persistence, not by legal definition, economic principle, or consent of an external sovereign.

Inherent sovereignty contrasts with the authority-based claims established in American governance of Indian affairs. The Congressional plenary power doctrine serves as a useful illustration of the Euro-American practice of sovereignty. Under the plenary power doctrine Congress possesses the sole right to govern Indian affairs, grant claims of tribal sovereignty, and possesses the right to extinguish those claims. In fact, the assumptions that gird the plenary power doctrine presume that tribes are incapable of managing their own affairs. Historians Robert J. Miller and Elizabeth Furse argue that

plenary power was derived from the principles of Indian inferiority and subjugation implicit in the European doctrine of discovery. [11] In contrast, the Indian notion inherent sovereignty preempted by the plenary power doctrine does not recognize the federal government's power to authorize indigenous self-rule. Rather, sovereignty is exercised with or without the permission of an external power. Bruyneel suggests that the denial of inherent sovereignty imposes an oppressive concept of space that "narrowly bound indigenous political status in space and time, seeking to limit the ability of indigenous people to define their own identity and develop economically and politically on their own terms."[12] The principle of inherent sovereignty recognizes the authority for self-rule emerges from embodied presence not by any external sovereign authority.

Some, though admittedly few, rhetorical scholars have explored the ways in which Euro-American constructs of sovereignty, private property, and political modernity were advanced to dispossess indigenous peoples of North America. In their exploration of rhetorical machinations of colonialism, Mary Stuckey and John Murphy argue that "the imposition of a particular linguistic world" that entitled Europeans to uncultivated lands in American was deployed to prepare American Indian landscapes for colonization, strip them of their political sovereignty, and enable violence in the name of conquest and settlement.[13] They argue that the imposition of demeaning, inapplicable, and confusing misnomers reflected and reinforced European interests in obtaining American Indian lands. Critic Jeremy Engels argues that European political rhetoric, particular that of John Locke, was used to justify dispossession by positing that by *res nullius* "a 'few handfuls' of 'savages' had no right to the land because they did not cultivate it to American standards."[14] I want to advance these scholar arguments further by suggesting the Euro-

American rhetorics of *emptiness* - the rhetorical construction of America as a vacant, uncultivated space - erased American Indian presence and logically rendered them incapable of occupying land. The rhetoric of emptiness made it so that "Indian arguments carried no weight at a bargaining table with representatives of an Anglo culture bent on expansion and imposition of marketplace values."[15]

Many European political theorists asserted that American Indian lands were vacant not because they were unpopulated but because they were uncultivated by Western agriculture. Locke's concept of property illustrates this point. In *Second Treatise on Government*, Locke argued that civil society was organized around the maximization of property.[16] As owners of their own labor power, Locke reasoned that individuals could claim ownership over that which they transformed in the natural world. "Life, liberty and estate" were natural rights that should be guaranteed by the social contract between individuals and government. Locke's philosophy was embraced by American colonists as both a justification for Revolution and extracting wealth from expansion into Indian Country. Anchoring rights to private property and cultivation served as a rationale for dispossessing Indian lands. Anthony J. Hall observes that because of his Eurocentric view of property "Locke's *Two Treaties* have been among the most influential texts ever written to provide legal or moral justifications for the dispossession and genocide of Indigenous peoples."[17] Whereas other political philosophers in the European liberal tradition such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau argued that property was at the root of social inequality, early Americans enthusiastically adopted Locke because, as Engels (2005) argues his theories were "well suited to empire."[18]

Locke's view of property also buttressed the doctrine of discovery because it advanced the notion that American Indian lands were awaited to be subdued by European settlement. From the tribal perspective, however, lands considered uncultivated to American colonists were fully utilized. Marks contends that Indian land tenure was defined as the "the right simply to use its resources by hunting, gathering, and planting using nonintrusive methods."[19] Hall notes that Euro-Americans did not consider less-obtrusive Indian horticultural techniques to be a justification for Indian land ownership.[20] Because these semi-sedentary techniques were unobtrusive, they logically did not transform the natural world in an identifiable way, at least not in the Lockean sense of private property. Indian agriculture was not designed to subdue nature or transform the state of nature into private property. Locke, however, wrote:

> For I aske whether in the wild woods and uncultivated waste of America left to Nature, without any improvement, tillage or husbandry, a thousand acres will yield the needy and wretched inhabitants as many conveniences of life as ten acres equally fertile land does in Devonshire [England] where they are well cultivated.[21]

To the extent he even recognized its existence Locke considered Indian cultivation practices to be indistinguishable from the state of nature, and thus "wild" or "savage." In *Two Treatise*, Locke referred to Indians as exclusively hunter-gatherers, refusing to acknowledge any form of indigenous agriculture.

The concept of emptiness is premised on the belief that for lands to be occupied, and thus owned, they must be subdued and "improved" by the civilizing hand of agriculture. Emptiness did not mean that lands were entirely devoid of humans; rather

they lacked a civilizing presence. Thus, Lockean discourses reduced American Indians to objects of landscape, such as that of plants and animals, to be conquered and controlled. Richard Drinnon writes that for Locke "natives were always [described as] wild animals that had to be rooted out of their dens, swamps, and jungles."[22] Traditional Indian agriculture dissolved distinctions between human and nature, yet Euro-American settlers asserted a strict opposition between the two. For European political theorists in particular, such as Locke and Thomas Hobbes, civilization was defined in opposition to the *state of nature*, which characterized the anarchical conditions prior to the emergence of the rule of law. As Hobbes infamously wrote, the state of nature is "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short."[23] In Euro-American political thought, nature was defined as uncultivated spaces free of human control, law, and society. As a result, Jack Forbes argues, constructing "wilderness" as savagery constructed tribal landscapes as places "where things live which are free and undomesticated, and of 'wild people,' who supposedly live beyond 'civilized' social control."[24] By failing to demonstrate dominion and control of the land through cultivation and development, Indian lands were considered unoccupied, vacant of civilization, devoid of property, ergo open to Euro-American settlement. As its etymology suggests, "culture" derived from "cultivation" asserts its own absence in the state of nature. As a result, cultural geographer Patricia Price argues that "Indians became part and parcel of the *void* that characterized the landscape construction from the rhetoric of emptiness."[25]

Along with the doctrine of discovery, Euro-American political theory advanced a complimentary concept *vacuum domicilium*, or vacant space, in order to justify the dispossession of American Indian land for cultivation. *Vacuum domicilium* held that

lands that were not subdued by human presence were vacant. Robert K. Berkhofer argues that this concept of vacancy enhanced Euro-American land claims by rendering Indian occupants invisible:

> Among themselves, they argued whether visual discovery alone sufficed to establish a valid claim to areas of the Americans or whether occupation and settlement were also necessary to secure permanent title for one nation against other European powers. The assertion of title against native claims was quite another order: it rested upon the image of the Indian as deficient. Charters and grants to explorers and settlement agencies usually stipulated that they posses lands uninhabited by a Christian prince. *Terra nullius* was an ambiguous term, however, for it could mean lands totally vacant of people or merely not inhabited by peoples possessing those religions and customs that Europeans recognized as equal to their own under the international law arising in this era.[26]

On the one hand, visual discovery was sufficient to negate competing claims from other European nations. On the other, to extinguish aboriginal title required Europeans to make distinctions between the manners in which lands were cultivated. Whereas land claims based on *terra nullius* required lands to devoid of any human presence, the theory of *vacuum domicilium* advanced the doctrine of discovery further by asserting the discovered lands that were not "improved" by human labor were subject to European claim. The litmus test for sovereignty was not necessarily whether a people could see the land; rather, it was the manner in which they viewed and then occupied the land that determined their ownership rights. This statutory theory of sovereignty privileged

customary practices of Christian dominion and agricultural cultivation over ancient Indian lands claims.

Rhetoric of emptiness, exemplified by *vacuum domicilium*, developed beyond Locke's justifications for conquest and was applied ubiquitously throughout the pre-colonial and colonial period.[27] Cited as one of the "first formal expressions of this justification for expropriation," a British colonist published an essay entitled *Mourt's Relation, or a Journal of Plantation of Plymouth* (1622) in which he summarily argued that "our land is full – [and] their land is empty."[28] The author provides continued justification for expropriation through ongoing reference to emptiness and Indian attitudes toward economic cultivation:

> [T]his then is sufficient reason to prove our going thither to live lawful: their land is spacious and void, and they are few and do but run over the grass, as do also the foxes and wild beasts. They are not industrious, neither have [they] art, science, skill or faculty to use either the land or the commodities of it; but all spoils, rots, and is marred for want of manuring, gathering, ordering, etc. As the ancient patriarchs therefore removed from straiter palces into more roomy [ones], where the land lay idle and wasted and non used it, though there dwelt inhabitants by them…so is it lawful now to take a land which none useth and make use of it.[29]

Vacuum domicilium was enshrined in the Massachusetts colony law with the passage of the Indian Land Rights Law (1652) which extinguished Indian title and opened up to settlement to lands considered unoccupied or otherwise desolate, even those used by local tribes for traditional hunting.[30] Historian Dennis A. Connole argues that with this action "[t]he Puritan leaders stretched the theory of *vacuum domicilium* to its absolute limit."[31]

Euro-American concept of sovereignty derived from theories of European legal recognition clash with American Indian concepts of inherent sovereignty. Joseph Epes Brown argues that from a native perspective "collective presence sanctifies and gives meaning to the land in *all* its details and contours [emphasis added]."[32] Myths persist, however, that tribes lacked any concept of ownership or land management. Lands considered vacant and uncultivated to Euro-Americans were fully occupied and utilized according to customary tribal law. While distinct from Locke's theory of property, the tribal concepts of sovereignty also went *beyond* property. Strongly contrasting with practices of aggressive cultivation, this land-use ethic emphasized interconnectedness, sustainability, and mutual responsibility between land and people. N. Scott Momaday describes this land ethic as *reciprocal appropriation* "in which man [sic] invests himself in the landscape, and at the same time incorporates the landscape into his own most fundamental experience."[33] The native notion that a people belong to the land implies a corollary concept of ownership based on mutual investment and responsibility. Thus, a people's presence binds them to and invests them in the land. Inverting European political thought, land rights were determined by the persistence of culture, as opposed to a practice of cultivation and legal recognition.

As many American Indian scholars attest, ownership is also a spiritual or sacred concept in which land is conceived as *home*land.[34] Some early tribal resistance leaders such as Chief Joseph and Tecumseh argued that ancestral homelands for both Europeans and American Indians were determined by God, distributed and segregated across distinct landscapes according to divine or spiritual will.[35] As a more developed justification for a concept of cultural over economic ownership, Deloria positions "sacred geographies" as

constitutive dimensions of American Indian societies, serving as signifiers of myth, meaning, history, and memory. He quips that "because of our considerably long tenure on this continent, [we] have many more sacred places than do non-Indians."[36] Keith Basso extends this observation further by arguing that the geographic features of landscapes assert "an omnipresent moral force," and repositories "of distilled wisdom," bestowing tribes with distinct cultural identities.[37] As such, from a tribal perspective, treating lands as economic commodities was profane.

From both the Euro-American and American Indian perspective, the meaning of land was determined by the ways in which it is inhabited. Whether defined by absence or presence, ownership and sovereignty were derived from a people's encounter with a landscape. Rhetoric about place and rhetorics of place are equal and complimentary constructs of landscapes. The European concept of land evacuated landscapes of American Indian presence and the practices of cultivation and exploitation shattered the symbolic meanings articulated to sacred geographies. The ongoing practices of private property ownership, mineral and timber extraction, agricultural cultivation, and urbanization constitute the processes of colonization that transforms sacred Indian landscapes to Euro-American resources. By rendering American Indians invisible, the practices of Euro-American cultivation constrained the possibilities for self-determination. The creation of an Indian homeland, then, required resignification of landscape through embodied, relational, and emplaced assertions of collective presence in the void of perceived absence.

Recolonizing Alcatraz Island

The IOAT engaged in variety of discursive and embodied placemaking practices to enact their project of self-determination. Guided by American Indian theories of inherent sovereignty, I explore four ways in which the occupants reclaimed Alcatraz as an Indian landscape, the symbolic power of each exceeding the confines of reasoned argument: how the deployment of bodies asserted Indian presence; how graffiti inverted the island's vacant and oppressive meaning; how imaginative acts of architectural construction and destruction resisted Euro-American concepts of property and ownership; how social-ceremonial practices made the island a livable and shared place. Expanding Richard Rundstrom's geographic exploration of placemaking at Alcatraz, I argue that each of the practices transformed the island's meaning, resisted the Euro-American practices and concept used as justifications for dispossession, and constructed a microcosm of an Indian homeland.[38] Each act took up Deloria's call for a "recolonization" movement that involved the occupation of "the unsettled areas of the nation by Indian colonists."[39] Recolonization rejected Euro-American consumer values and rugged individualism and instead called for the "revival of Indian social and legal patterns" and "traditional Indian customs."[40] Enacting recolonization, the IOAT revoked Euro-American ownership rights and reasserted an inherent right to self-determination by presence.

Occupying Bodies

While the first two occupations asserted an anemic concept of symbolic reclamation and legal formalism, the third and sustained occupation forcefully asserted a presence that could not be reasoned, negotiated, divert, or coopted. This time, American Indians invaded and dispossessed Euro-Americans of *their land*, reenacting the dramatic

structure of first contact. By presenting an undeniable Indian presence on the island, the occupants used their bodies as arguments. Recolonization required the presence of visibly active bodies against the scenery of a "vacant" land to reenact the historical processes of encounter. Invading the landscape with Indian bodies denied the vacancy that founded a myriad of justifications for colonialzation. The Indian body was introduced in a new context that exercised agency through resistance.

At Alcatraz, occupied bodies transformed into *occupying* bodies. By this, I mean that the act of occupation demonstrated to Indians that they did not have to appeal to white authorities for permission to live as they wished. Occupation was a political argument unto Indians to exercise control over their lives, body, mind, spirit, and community. As Clyde Warrior had demanded in 1967, to exercise self-determination American Indians had to first "demonstrate competence to ourselves" and must be "free men and exercise free choices" not "sold or coerced into accepting programs for our own good, not of our own making or choice."[41] The Bureau of Indian affairs treated Indians as objects to be *acted upon*, reinforcing the belief that Indians were incapable of independence. The IOAT demonstrated that Indians were agents of action armed with their own prerogatives of movement. As such, when threatened by federal officials that they would be arrested and forcibly removed from the island, they emphatically expressed "we won't move!"

Next, the occupants translated self-determination over the physical body into the collective agency of the *tribal body*.[42] The IOAT refused a leader-centered model of organizing in favor of egalitarian, non-hierarchal concept of collective agency. Occupant

Lou Trudell observed that "the leaders are the whole body, the whole population on Alcatraz for without them there would be no Alcatraz and there would be no hope."[43] In one sense, Trudell's comment suggests that by working as one body the group could achieve proverbial "strength in numbers." Theoretically, the group could avoid power struggles over leadership and sustain a strong sense of equality among the occupant community. Unfortunately, as the history of the occupation suggests, the group did not always work as one body. The construction of a collective tribal body was pivotal, however, in creating solidarity with Indian organizations on the mainland. Before deciding to directly engage the IOAT, Bob Robertson and Thomas Hannon attempted to circumvent the group by negotiating a separate settlement with Indian organizations on the mainland they considered to be more "representative." Robertson and Hannon believed they could bring a quick end to the occupation by offering to build an Indian center at an undetermined location on the mainland. In theory, if Indian groups on the mainland agreed to such a deal, it would make the occupation irrelevant and divide the radical fringe on the island from legitimate, more rational organizations on the mainland Indian community.

By creating a tribal body, encompassing Indians in solidarity anywhere, the occupants resisted strategies of division employed by federal negotiators. Collective agency was particularly effective against the diversionary tactics of Robertson and Hannon. When they approached the United Indian Council about building a new Indian center, the Bay Area's twenty-six Indian organizations – composed of nearly 40,000 Indians – established the Bay Area Native American Council (BANAC) to coordinate all discussion with local and federal officials. This BANAC included the IOAT and adopted

Alcatraz as its top priority.[44] The group's attempt to bring Bay Area organizations into the fold was more than a recruiting tool or a way to create consensus on the island; it established solidarity with sympathetic groups as to resist attempts to circumvent the occupants or foment divisions in the community. The collective solidarity expressed by BANAC forced federal negotiators to deal directly with the occupants on the island. Thus, the apparent unity enacted by IOAT allowed them to enlist more activists to their cause and deny federal efforts to marginalize on group in favor of another. When working as a collective body, the IOAT resisted external attempts at fragmentation

Third, occupying bodies gave physical presence to an abstract and invisible Indianness dominated by myth and stereotype. When asked by the press if they were worried about being arrested by federal marshals, members of the occupying force replied, "how will they find us?...we are the invisible Americans!"[45] As suggested, prevailing stereotypes rendered the American Indian at once seen but invisible; exchanging real life Indians for their wooden caricatures. In Deloria's words, within American society Indians were "unreal and ahistorical."[46] Existing only as a fiction to Euro-Americans, American Indians were disembodied or naturalized objects that gave way to the fantasies of American empire. The occupation confronted this history with the flesh-and-blood Indian body that looked nothing like Lone Ranger's friendly and feeble-minded *Tonto*. Unlike their cultureless stereotype, the occupants visibly embraced their pronounced difference and re-presented it as social protest. In what would appear to be contradictory or paradoxical to some Euro-Americans, the occupants adorned ancient ceremonial aesthetics and performed ritual dances as a routine aspect of the island's everyday social life.[47] The incongruity of an indigenous aesthetic and ritual, coupled with

a contemporary expression of political protest, problematized the false binaries that denied the existence of modern Indianness. Within the Cult of the Noble Savage, Indian rituals were hermetically sealed in a savage though noble past, incompatible with modern political identities or to expressions of sovereignty and nationhood. For the IOAT, the performance of traditional Indian habits and rituals, alongside a modern political project of self-determination, challenged the presumption that the Indian had vanished in the twentieth century.[48]

Finally, the very act of an occupation put the protestor's bodies in harms way, which challenged state authorities. At points, the IOAT highlighted the problem that their bodies created. They invited the federal government to remove them from the island, declaring that "we won't actively resist…but they'll have to find us first."[49] Others suggested a different outcome, but with a similar eye toward provocation. Stella Leach said that the federal government would have to slaughter the occupants to remove them, comparing this scenario in 1970 to the 1890 Wounded Knee Massacre.[50] In the context of widespread information about military atrocities in Vietnam at Pinkerville and My Lai and persistent public protests against the war, Nixon and Spiro Agnew were aware that invading the island with overwhelming police and military force would be viewed unfavorably by the public. Paradoxically, in their vulnerability the occupants highlighted the government's lack of real options. The occupant's physical presence put the government in an impossible dilemma between negotiating with militants on the one hand and the use of force on the other. While they were vulnerable bodies, the occupants experienced a paradoxical form of agency in their weakness. Gerald Hauser suggests that

laying the physical body bare to instruments of violence can invert the rhetorical power of state repression:

> Removing the opposition by forcibly controlling its body serves as an admission that dissident ideas cannot be refuted, thereby bestowing a hyperrhetorical presence on the political prisoner's body. This is another way of saying that the prisoner of conscience, having lost control of her body and its attendant freedoms of movement, assembly, and expression, has her body transformed into her last but most potent resource for subverting her oppressors.[51]

The resistant body of the political prisoner is vulnerable to violence and yet its symbolic potency cannot be extinguished through physical force. It contains symbolic excesses that imbue the body with political agency. When the application of violence to the body by instruments of power paradoxically signifies its agency or control over the repressive response, the body's political potency is unbounded. Forcefully removing the occupants would have vindicated the truthfulness of the occupant's claims about a history of dispossession, greed, and violence. As Hauser suggests, the vulnerable body exceeds its physical bonds and redirects the symbolic coding of violence and repression as evidence of that body's righteousness. As vulnerable bodies, the occupants bounded the government's response, forcing them to behave as they had at Wounded Knee or in ways that otherwise did not match prevailing discourse of racial pluralism and democracy. This incongruity limited the government's ability to wield violence against the occupants and thus gave the Indian body power over the instruments of its domination. With violence as impossibility, the government was forced to negotiate.

Graffiti and Naming

Within the first week, the main entrance to the cell block, the dock landing, main terrace, and the water tower were refurbished with block letter indications of the new settler's presence. Visible from the sea, the wall affront the main landing read in large letters "You are on Indian Land" and "Indian landing." Painted signs were affixed to the dock reading "Red Power, Indians," "Human Rights, Free Indians," "Remember this land was taken from us!" and "Alcatraz for Indians." The water tower, visible from the air, displayed messages such as "Freedom," "Welcome," and "Indian Land." The imposing, state crafted, anti-trespassing signs were defaced. Once they read "Warning: United States Government Property," and "Keep of U.S. Property," but then the new signs read "United Indian Property" and "Indian property." The entrance to the main cell block, guarded by an eagle holding a red and white stripped American flag shield had the letters F.R.E.E. painted between each stripe, an unlikely message to appear before the entrance to a prison. Within the cellblock and wardens quarters, the occupants wrote in charcoal messages of hope and unity, pictures resembling ancient petroglyphs, along with names and tribal affiliation. Cellblocks were renamed after infamous elected officials of the time: "Agnew," "Nixon," "Mitchell," "Reagan" and "Alioto." The occupants even splashed one side of the island with red paint that was visible from the other side of the Bay.[52] In total, the National Park Service catalogued approximately two-hundred individual acts of graffiti throughout the island before most were erased along with the removal of the remaining occupants in 1971.[53]

Though often read as a visible sign of rising crime and urban decay, graffiti has important symbolic and political implications for placemaking in urban landscapes. For some cultural geographers and sociologists, graffiti is a transgressive appropriation of

Figure 5. Sign displayed above entrance facing the. docks. Source: Alcatraz Archival Collection, Room Special Collections, San Francisco Public Library.

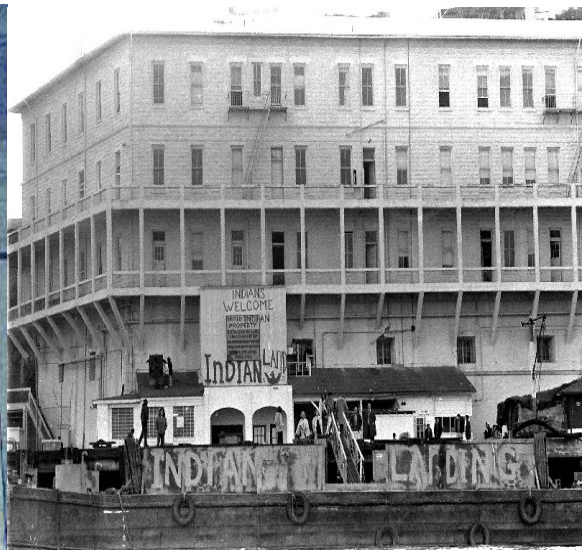

Figure 6. A view of the main landing that greeted visitors to the island. Source: Troy Johnson, History *You are on Indian Land: Alcatraz Island 1969-1971* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles American Indian Center, 1995), 5.

Figure 7. The headquarters of the "Bureau of Caucasian Affairs." Source: Johnson, *Indian Land*, 3.

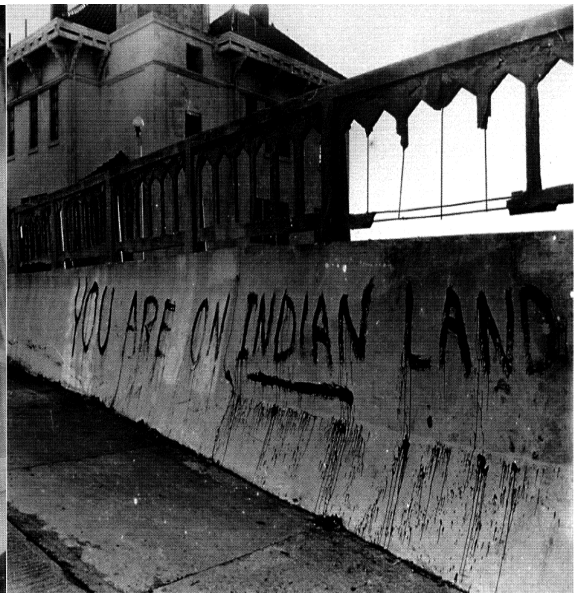

Figure 8. Source: Alcatraz Archival Collection, History Room, Special Collection, San Francisco Public Library.

public property that gives symbolic as well as physical presence to marginalized and excluded communities.[54] Lorraine Dowler, Josephine Carubia, and Bonj Szczygiel observe that graffiti "simultaneously established the basis for a community of relationships among writers and provided the means by which that community could powerfully announce its existence to the rest of the city."[55] Due to the radical social and political commentary of its subtext, public discourses characterizing both graffiti and other forms of illegal street art as "dirty" or "criminal" reflect fear on behalf of the mainstream public that the dispossessed "would take by force what had been denied them." [56] Geographer Tim Cresswell observes that graffiti moved and frightened the public in cities such as New York and Los Angeles because it represented "a symbolically violent attack on an equally symbolic category of property." [57] By articulating presence to those without access to public space - themselves constructed as dirty, criminal, or symbols of urban decay - graffiti and other acts that deface public property complicate and even challenge the very category of property itself. After all, the graffiti artist is writing often in a public space, a space in which their voice is ideally supposed to matter.

Graffiti is a tactic that enables the dispossessed to assert symbolic and physical presence in light of both inadvertent and intentional efforts at effacement. While retaining special significance for different urban cultures and subcultures, the use graffiti throughout the occupation highlighted the uniquely urban identity of these protestors while also making room for their traditionalist orientation toward space and place. In one sense the occupant's graffiti reflected an experience of exclusion, effacement, and invisibility expressed through the radical aesthetics of urban subculture. For the IOAT,

defacing the iconic island with Red Power slogans visibly marked public property with the very presence that it sought to deny. In another sense, the graffiti was an insurrectional act of *renaming* that embodied a cultural connection to land and landscape. Taking together, graffiti symbolized the group's efforts to assert both a place in the city as well as right to occupy so-called public land.

Naming is a symbolic process that selects and highlights particular elements of reality to the exclusion of others. As Burke writes, naming and framing orient audience perspectives and attitudes towards that which is signified.[58] Indian activist Winona LaDuke argues that naming has important implications for American Indian's claim to land. She contends that the geography of naming was historically used in the service of dispossession and the unmaking of Indian places in North America:

> [H]ow come it is there are so many mountains named after small men. Who were these guys? Why did they get these mountains named after them? You go out there and these little puny men who have mountains named after them and some of these men were really, really bad guys. You know, Harney Peak, that guy was a butcher, the guy committed massacres against the Lakota people, he's got a little peak named after him – Harney Peak…In this day and age, are we going to name towns after Hitler? Probably not…And it is really offensive as indigenous people but it is offensive to humanitarians to consider that we continue to aggrandize individuals whose crimes are crimes against humanity. And that is one of the challenges we face, not only in terms of the structures of land tenure, but also in terms of the framework and how we consider the land upon which we live.[59]

As LaDuke suggests, the naming of North American landscapes by Euro-Americans erased the historical atrocities of conquest and denied Indian claims to self-determination. Stuckey and Murphy suggest that colonial nomenclature denied Indian presence where it existed and that it prepared land for colonization. As such, contestation over naming is one of several underlying symbolic strategies of American colonialism.[60]

As a confrontational nomenclature, the Red Power messages painted across walls overlaid Indian meaning over oppressive materials of American culture, ironically inverting the island's colonial structures against its intended purpose. The IOAT suggested the importance of naming elsewhere when the organization discussed the need to give the island a new name, such as *Indian Island* or *Turtle Island*.[61] As a rhetorical act of placemaking, renaming the island as a welcome and inviting space for Indians reclaimed and prepared the land for settlement. It asserted the primacy of an Indian ecology of placemaking and a sacred interpretation that the land never sustained while it was in Euro-Americans hands.

Price argues that the act of naming land is the first step in the formation of a people's sovereign national identity. Naming land is a "critical gesture in the formation of national identity and of ongoing struggles for national identity."[62] She writes that names conjure places into being and ritualistically incorporate sacred sites into a community's collective memory, history, and identity. Naming domesticates land, makes it livable, knowable, and comfortable, or in Michel de Certeau's words, "[i]n spaces brutally lit by an alien reason, proper names carve out pockets of hidden and familiar meanings."[63] Furthermore, specific names give communities a sense of collective investment in a shared geographic identity. For the IOAT, renaming through acts of graffiti established a

new relationship between the island and Indian people. Non-Indians interpreted the graffiti as an act of destruction typically associated with urban decay, yet the occupants used graffiti as an empowering cultural practice. To this end, the graffiti established a common point of identification from which the occupants constructed a pan-Indian collective identity. The renaming of Alcatraz as "Indian land" and defacing the signs of Euro-American nomenclature reconstituted the island as an Indian place, refusing its dominant meaning as surplus property; graffiti helped the occupants make the oppressive prison livable.[64]

Placemaking, however, can exceed the boundaries of discourse. While the names, ironic and literal, oriented the occupant's position toward the island, exercising the right to name implied a rejection of that right for Euro-Americans. Put simply, places rarely have two recognized names. While the content of the messages are important because they asserted the significance of land as the central feature of the occupant's struggle, I am also concerned with the *act of naming* itself as a rhetorical enactment of inherent sovereignty. The act of naming authorizes a community's specific relationship with place by presuming an *a priori* authority to decide the land's identity and how it should be inhabited. Price elaborates:

> To say that place is conjured is not to say that place, landscape, and identity are somehow powerless or immaterial. It is, rather, to note that the power of place lies in the politics of its production, and that such politics is suffused with, not apart from, narrative, myth, and ritual. Claiming space, the ownership of sacred symbols, and *the right to name* the land constitute powerful authorial gestures in the scripting of collective identity. Contesting such claims, often through the same

> narrative, symbolic, and ritual modes that are employed to make them initially, is at the heart of a politics of the relationship between identity and place [emphasis added].[65]

To push this concept of narrative placemaking further, I argue that beyond the hand painted Red Power slogan is an embodied act of authorization and imagination that implies Indian agency. Reclaiming the right to name is a performative enactment of inherent self-determination, a form of agency that is immanent to the people who do the naming. Constructing Indians as authorities with the power to name landscapes and revoked other names as profane communicates the inherent sovereignty exercised by virtue of Indian presence.

The graffiti on Alcatraz Island symbolized the IOAT relationship with that island and the abolition of a propertied system of nomenclature that had previously erased the island's ancient Indian presence. Put differently, by encoding the island's physical contours with trace signs of Red Power, the IOAT oriented the form and function of the land toward Indian self-determination. Evoking the right to name and a corollary refusal to accept the use-value names associated with a capitalist philosophy of property, the occupants demonstrated that Indians were capable of asserting a concept of ownership and self-rule, that while was not based on individual property rights, did give the occupants an inherent right to self-determination based on their very presence.

Arrangement of Space

The occupants tried to arrange the space of Alcatraz to align with an Indian ecology of landscape. That is to say that the IOAT expressed that the island's physical makeup should embody the geographical, architectural, and aesthetic qualities of an

"Indian" concept of place. To advance this project, the IOAT adopted a rustic traditionalist aesthetic which signified the island's common Indian orientation. Smith and Warrior, as well as Rundstrom, note that the IOAT generally avoided the use of specific tribal icons in favor of conveniently universalized Indian symbols.[66] The IOAT ideals of pan-tribal unity, traditional lifestyle, and land reclamation were highlighted by the informal scenic arrangement of generalized Indian objects and edifices. The most popularized aesthetic of the Plains Indian – consisting of feathered Indian headdresses and tipis – served as universalized signifiers of an Indian presence on the island. Most of the occupants lived in the guard's quarters or the cellblock; nevertheless, they visibly displayed tipis in the main yard. The tipi's presence was complimented by the omnipresent fire in front of the cellblock around which occupants gathered, socialized, and where Linda Aranaydo, Shirley Keith, and others prepared meals.[67] Although the tipis did not provide warmth or shelter, their presence altered the island's environment.[68] In addition to constituting a primary signifier of Indianness, at least according to American popular culture, the tipi also stood in as a symbol of home, domesticity, and shelter.[69] The tipi represented a traditionalist orientation that was minimalist, humble, unobtrusive, yet functional in nearly any landscape. The bucolic exterior of the tipi signified a traditionalist concept of place and it was also a durable yet transportable home, suited to semi-sedentary or nomadic cultures. In many ways, these characteristics were not just stereotypes; they had become the new modern experience of even urban Indians. It represented a need to retain traditional tribal values and fashion them to the demands of the modern world.

The juxtaposition of the tipi with the San Francisco skyline created for the occupants the appearance of an Indian refuge within the city. The contrast symbolized that while the group was composed of urban Indians, they retained a strong connection with reservation life. Their experience was intersectional rather than binary, that is to say that the city and the reservation symbolized different modes of modern Indian experience and that the tensions between the two signaled the presence of both. First, the arrangement pointed to a collective desire to reconcile the experience of city life with that of the traditional reservation. Second, as a transient symbol of home, the tipi indicated that island was itself undergoing transformation. Third, aligned with an Indian orientation toward landscape, the transient tipi embodied a concept of ownership based temporally limited presences and circulation rather than firm settlement. Forth, the erection of a single tipi produced a scene of radical incongruity; whereas city domiciles were immovable by design, contained rigid contours, and limited motion and circulation, the tipi was mobile, transportable, and adaptable to the geography of landscape. Whereas city landscapes shape, chisel, and manipulate the land into unnatural and unsustainable forms, the pastoral landscape constituted by the Plains tipi was attuned with rhythmic motion and circular patterns of nature. Thus, the tipi signified the persistence and adaptation of Indian life where it should not logically exist, in a lifeless and inhospitable landscape. In many ways, the tipi symbolized the groups attempt to reconcile traditional Indian values with their intersectional experience of living in both the city and the reservation. This visual trope offered young Indians hope that a return to traditional scenery and lifestyle might constitute a sense of home and provide a solution for the intersectional urban/reservation experience – the tipi and the skyscraper.

The evidence for the symbolic and material meanings of the tipi exists in the discourse of this protest. Deloria remarks that for American Indians and Western Civilization alike, "the contest of the future is between a return to the castle or the tipi."[70] Deloria's argument emerges from a critique of Western capitalism as a form of modern-day feudal serfdom. Arguing that capitalist exploitation of the natural environment was unsustainable, Deloria sketched two scenarios for future of civilization. In the first scenario late capitalism transformed into a system of hereditary control that kept in place an ossified landed aristocracy armed with advanced methods of technological control and an overwhelming concentration of corporate wealth. For Deloria, the castle and its vassal lands stood in for the workings of corporate neofeudalism under late capitalism. The second scenario involved a return to traditional tribal life and sustainable forms of existence based on community, equality, and human interconnectedness. A return to the tipi, representing traditional tribal life, was the only alternative to the capitalist exploitation of nature:

> Meanwhile, American society could save itself by listening to tribal people. While this would take a radical reorientation of concepts and values, it would be well worth the effort. The land-use philosophy of Indians is so utterly simple that it seems stupid to repeat it: man must live with other forms of life on the land and not destroy it. The implications of this philosophy are very far-reaching for the contemporary political and economic system.[71]

Thus, the juxtaposition of the tipi and the city represented also a contrast between two land-use philosophies - the pastoral and the technocratic. I suggest, however, that the occupants were not attempting to impose the binary suggested by Deloria (the city

oppresses and the rural liberates); rather, they wished to synthesize the two experiences to reflect their own intersectional (and inter-geographic) identity.

The ubiquity of pan-Indian symbols such as feathers, arrows, ceremonial tobacco pipes, declarations displayed on stretched buckskin, as well as indigenous artwork, rearranged and transformed the island into a *pastoral landscape* resembling the reservation home that many left behind and that others had yet to experience. Changing the island's symbolic and material economy enabled a new ways of inhabiting and relating to the landscape. Imposing a traditionalist aesthetic over the technological and mechanistic architecture of the island-prison advanced the redemptive influence of Indian spatial arrangements advocated by Deloria, Momaday, and Silko. At the same time, it adapted those structures to reflect traditional cultural values, and in the end synthesizing the two geographic spaces. The traditionalist aesthetic and arrangement transformed its symbolism and as a result demanded a new land-use philosophy be applied to the use of Alcatraz. The island's rhetorical construction as property had to be dismantled and rebuilt from the ground up with a traditionalist orientation. Covering the island with familiar symbols constructed the social scenery in which a new pan-Indian community could organically emerge. The arrangement of space did not necessarily transform Alcatraz itself into a sacred space; however, it symbolized the ideals of IOAT and provided a powerful visual argument for the return of land.

Figure 9. One of many tipi's erected throughout the island. Source: Alcatraz Archival Collection, History Room and Special Collections, San Francisco Public Library.

Social Landscape

Throughout the occupation, the IOAT recreated the social experience of traditional Indian life, and, in the process, they sought to transform the island's space into an idealized pan-Indian home. Performing both stylized and informal socialization rituals created phenomenological encounters between the island and community. Put differently, these rituals created a social experience of place that transformed the geographic position of the island in the occupant's history, memory, and identity. At one level, the protestors turned the island into an Indian settlement with its own community structure: government, schools, religion, social services, media, and social activities. While physical arrangement and the circulation of bodies throughout the island enabled new ways of relating to the space, social ritual saturated the landscape with new positive and empowering experiences tied to the island. Rundstrom's study of the occupation's social geography provides a valuable exploration of the island's social milieu and highlights the contours of this social experience of place:

> Perhaps the regular powwows were the most common and distinctive means by which a social milieu was created and sustained. The drumming and singing often lasted long into the night, the sound giving shape to island experience while also symbolizing the investment being made. At other times, in various spaces tribal dances were held on special occasions. People were also compelled to come together regularly to eat the daily meals served in a communal setting inside the main cellhouse.[72]

Additionally, Rundstrom argues that educating the children, creating a governing council, media broadcasts, and community outreach programs created a social and political

environment that anchored the occupant's identity at Alcatraz Island. The solidification of political structure and social norms created a sense that the occupation was not a temporary protest event seeking immediate governmental redress of grievances. Rather, the IOAT founded a community with an economy, religion, history, social structure, and inherent sovereign authority. In doing so the occupants simulated a utopian social environment in which they could either re-experience tribal life or, for some urban Indians, connect with it for the first time.

A strong example of the island social landscape was the reenactment of the first (un) Thanksgiving on 26 November 1970. A week after the start of the occupation, the IOAT playfully inverted the Thanksgiving holiday associated with the first Euro-Indian encounter. While the traditional Thanksgiving holiday represented the feast provided by New England Indians to starving pilgrims in their first winter, the Alcatraz feast displaced the pilgrims as the narrative's center by celebrating the survival of American Indians. Rather than Indians performing as willing servants for their would-be conquerors, the occupant's feast involved a performance where Indians were served by Euro-Americans. Turkeys and other accoutrements were provided by non-Indian restaurants, private donations helped sustain and advance the life of the new colonial settlement. Displacing the salvation of pilgrims and the selflessness of welcoming Indians, the occupants used the feast to showcase the occupation's celebration of Indian agency and traditional Indian life. The celebration began with a traditional blessing of tobacco smoke performed by Semu Chumash, medicine man of the California's Chumash nation.[73] Many attendees dressed in traditional powwow outfits and animated the island landscape with dancing, drumming, eating, and socializing in the main exercise yard. The

occupants even refused to call it Thanksgiving, opting for the term *feast* or *(un)Thanksgiving*.[74]

The first (un)Thanksgiving demonstrates two important dimensions of the social landscape of the island. First, there existed on the island a norm of celebration, socialization, and ritual tribal life. Before the celebration Oakes remarked that celebration was tied to the recover of land: "How many of you can sit and beat a drum and sing? How many of you can sing your own language? It's not just the land we want to retrieve, it's the life."[75] The performance of traditional life consecrated the landscape and incorporated that transformed space into the community's identity. Social rituals assigned the landscape a distinctively Indian purpose. Reclaiming the land meant saturating it with the signs of Indian community. Drumming, singing, dancing, and socializing transformed the land from a sterile notion of property to an embodied landscape that was *cultured* rather than *cultivated*; consequently, the island's social landscape and physical landscape were fundamental to the creation of a new community. Second, the inverted Thanksgiving ritual recreated a founding moment of social and historical experience. Thanksgiving imagery is part of the Cult of the Noble Savage, one of many iconic events of the colonial encounter that served as a justification for dispossession. By revisiting a foundational moment of the Euro-American colonial encounter and reversing the roles of pilgrims and Indians, the IOAT recolonized Alcatraz as an Indian social and political space. In this case, Indians were the agents of colonization, not its object. As colonizers, the IOAT even defended its territory against invaders, successfully preventing the several Coast Guard attempts to land on the island.[76] Unlike the first Thanksgiving, white settlers were not welcome. The IOAT sought to sustain their communal identification with the

land and defend it against other spatial prerogatives. Occupant Tom Joseph (Shoshone-Paiute) provided a powerful summation: "[w]e need this place. It's time for our people – our young people – to get together on an island away from everybody else and discuss our future."[77]

From Absence to Presence

In this chapter, I have sought to extend the rhetorical heuristics of placemaking and embodiment. Starting with metaphors of space, the body, and motion, I argued that Red Power rhetoric was characterized by a confluence of discursive and extradiscursive acts directed at the construction and enactment of Indian visions of place and homeland. Examining the physical yet deeply symbolic acts of the occupation highlights the ways in which the deployment of bodies, spatial configurations, graffiti, and social rituals saturated the island with traditional tribal meanings and transformed it into a sacred place. To understand the rhetoric of placemaking, critics should understand acts of placemaking and geographic construction as an embodied rhetoric of identification. Put differently, the embodied rhetoric of place highlights how landscapes and their attendant relationships of identification are altered by presence and absence, circulation and arrangement, systems of nomenclature, ecological attitudes, and communal social activity.

I contend that the IOAT struggle should be contextualized as a resistance to the unmaking of the original North American. As indigenous lands and bodies were the objects of control and dispossession, colonization functioned most efficiently through rhetorics of disembodiment, constructing native lands as vacant and Indians bodies as docile or natural. For this reason, I argue that the act of occupation was radically anti-

colonial, because it asserted the presence and persistence of ongoing cultural life that colonization had failed to extinguish. Occupation challenged the underlying justifications of Euro-American rule by forcefully asserting that self-rule and land tenure were not gifts of the state but rights possessed inherently, literally by virtue of a people's sustained presence and connection with place. Red Power was founded on the assumption that self-determination could be exercised without permission or reservation, beyond the bounds of rational deliberation. It is not begged, pleaded for, or negotiated through civil discourse, it was simply exercised. As such, self-determination begins with presence, enactment, and embodiment. Occupation was the foundational act of creating a homeland, seizing territory and recolonizing it according to rhetorical visions of Indian place and ecology. While the occupation did not achieve the creation of a homeland, it represented the type of embodied and insurrectional acts that achieve self-determination. Furthermore, occupation demonstrated the rhetorical power of landscapes to empower Indian people and create a sense of collective identity. Though only a snapshot of the recolonization effort, the move to dispossess Euro-Americans of stolen lands offered hope in the redemptive power of tribal landscapes that the presence of a colonial nation was only a passing moment in the long history of American Indian presence in North America.

Chapter 5: Endnotes

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[16] John Locke, "Of Property," *Second Treatise of Government*, ed. Richard H. Cox (1689; Wheeling, IL: Harlan Davidson, 1982).
[17] Anthony J. Hall, *The American Empire and the Fourth World: The Bowl with One Spoon* (Montreal, Canada: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003), 185.
[18] Engels, "Paxton Boys," 360.
[19] Marks, *Barren*, xxii
[20] Hall, *Fourth World*, 184.
[21] Locke, "Of Property," 336.
[22] Richard Drinnon, *Facing West: The Metaphysics of Indian-Hating and Empire-Building* (New York: New American Library, 1980), 53.
[23] Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Ed. A.P. Martinich (1651, Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press, 2002), xiii.
[24] Jack D. Forbes, "Nature and Culture: Problematic Concepts for Native Americans," *Indigenous Traditions and Ecology: The Interbeing of Cosmology and Community*, ed. John. A. Grim (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 109. It is important to note that as one of the founders of the American Indian studies program at Berkeley in 1969, Forbes played an important role in planning, justifying, and theorizing the Alcatraz occupation.
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[26] Robert K. Berkhofer, *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present* (New York: Vintage Books, 1978),120.
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[38] Robert A. Rundstrom, "American Indian Placemaking of Alcatraz, 1969-71," in Troy Johnson, Joane Nagel, and Duane Champagne, *American Indian Activism: Alcatraz to the Longest Walk* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 186-206.
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[59] Winona LaDuke, "Land Tenure and Native American People," a paper presented to the opening session of *Who Owns American? III* at the Land Tenure Center at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (6 June 2001), 6.
[60] Also see Renee L. Bergland, *The National Uncanny: Indian Ghosts and American Subjects: Reencounters With Colonialism* (Hanover, NH: Dartmouth College Press, 2000); Ned Blackhawk, *Violence over the Land: Indians and Empires in the Early American West* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008); and Don Trent Jacobs, *Unlearning the Language of Conquest: Scholars Expose Anti-Indianism in America* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2006).
[61] Indians of All Tribes, "Gathering of All Indian Tribes Round Table Discussion: Design and Layout," (December 12, 1969), Box 1, File 32, Alcatraz File, SFPL.
[62] Price, *Dry Place*, 30.
[63] Michel de Certeau, *The Practices of Everyday Life*, Trans. Stephen Rendall (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1980), 104.
[64] The occupants also displayed a flag on the main dock which contained an image of a broken peace pipe and a tipi. See "The Rock Blockaded – Indians Vow to Stay," San Francisco Chronicle, (November 23, 1969), 18.
[65] Price, *Dry Place*, 31.
[66] Rundstrom, "Placemaking," 200.
[67] See "On the Rock – Indian Women 'Hanging Tough,' *San Francisco Chronicle* (28 November 1969), A24.
[68] Smith and Warrior, *Hurricane*, 25.
[69] See Greg Dickinson, Brian Ott, and Eric Aoki, "Spaces of Remembering and Forgetting: The Reverent Eye/I at the Plains Indian Museum" *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies* 3 (2006) 33-35.
[70] Vine Deloria Jr., *We Talk, You Listen: New Tribes, New Turf* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1970), 16.
[71] Deloria, *We Talk*, 190.
[72] Rundstrom, "Placemaking," 195-6.

[73] Findley, "Tribal Feast," A1.
[74] See Marshall Schwartz, "Alcatraz Gathering of Indian Tribes," *San Francisco Chronicle* (28 November 1969), A1.
[75] Quoted in Tim Findley, "Indian's Old Ideal: Why They Want Island," *San Francisco Chronicle* (November 25, 1969), A4.
[76] For more on the Coast Guards attempts to blockade and land on the island see Tim Findley "Indians Reinforced – U.S. Delays Action," *San Francisco Chronicle* (22 November, 1969), A1; "The Rock Blockaded – Indians Vow to Stay," *San Francisco Chronicle* (23 November, 1969), 1; Peter Stack, "Indian Invaders Still on Alcatraz," *San Francisco Chronicle*, (24 November, 1969) A1.
[77] Quoted in Tim Findley, "Indians' Old Ideal: Why They Want Island," *San Francisco Chronicle* (25 November 1969), A4.

Chapter 6

Between History and Collective Memory

The Alcatraz Island of 2009 does not resemble the radical Indian colony that flourished there nearly forty years earlier. If one traveled there today, one would see a park. While the renovated park includes a fragmented museum collection of the occupants' documents, artwork, and other keepsakes, Alcatraz remains just another recreational park. In fact, the documents of the occupation displayed in island's museum, seem to be at odds with the park that surrounds them. The documents speak of the utopian ideals of an independently-controlled Indian cultural center and university, ideals thwarted by the island's incorporation into the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. In one displayed object, the IOAT reflected on the consequences of failure, writing if "[w]e lose on Alcatraz, we lose everything, end of [the] movement. Failure gets more failure. We will be [the] laughing stock of our opponents."[1] The very existence of a federally-managed national park on Alcatraz Island signals a kind of failure that contradicts the memories of the occupants. Folding the occupation and the island's Indian past into an Americanized historical narrative, the park placed the IOAT back behind museum glass, their failed dreams on display for public consumption. Full of respectful platitudes and expressions of admiration, the commemoration of the protest action that exists today suffers from willful amnesia concerning the true purpose of the occupation. While the IOAT expressed purpose was to shatter their image as historical relics and control their own destiny, present-day Alcatraz Park domesticates the radical excesses of Red Power. The words that accompany the occupants' artifacts offer a revealing statement: "[e]ventually, all things must come to an end."[2]

Fiercely contested, the memorial at present day Alcatraz represents the triumph of Western history over Indian collective memory. Despite protestor's statement, "we will no longer be museum pieces, tourist attractions, and politician's playthings," today's park portrays the occupation as a distant historical artifact.[3] The federal park plan was offered as a "concession" in response to a nineteen-page and $300,000 planning-grant submitted by John Trudell and LaNada Means which demanded title to the island and funding for an Indian-run university and cultural center.[4] Since neither side were willing to compromise and control of the island was the IOAT's only source of leverage, after federal marshals removed the final occupants on 1971 the federal government constructed the national recreation center that exists today.

In this chapter, I examine the competing proposals for the island and the debate that surrounded those proposals to highlight the problems of memory and cooptation that this event precipitated. Using scholarship from the growing field of collective memory studies, I contrast Euro-American memorializations of the Indian struggle against the concepts of collective memory at work in the rhetoric of the IOAT. I argue that Red Power disrupts and threatens "official cultural memory." John Bodnar observes that for agents of dominant culture interested in "protecting values and restating views of reality derived from first hand experience," the very existence of vernacular expression that alternatively conveys the feelings of a shameful social reality threatens "the sacred and timeless nature of official expression."[5] With this in mind, I contend that the type of living memory favored by the IOAT displaced national myths about Indian identity and challenged the deliberate silence about their dispossession and oppression. I argue that in response, federal proposals sought to contain and coopt the movement's radical message

with conciliatory practices that reestablished dominant cultural myths central to Western history, which also relegated the activists to the confines of the noble Indian past. In advancing this argument, I am guided by Maurice Halbwachs, and later Paul Ricoeur's, distinctions between history and collective memory.[6] For both scholars, history and memory are approaches to dealing with the past. Memory can be distinguished as a socially-shared and relational representation of the past whereas history is the sterile and so-called objective, impartial, and universal archival of fact. In this respect, I conclude that while the IOAT sought to cultivate living social memory of a shared affective experience, the federal government displaced the collective memory of Indian experiences in North America with the spatial-temporal constraints of institutional history. Paying careful attention to the implications for American Indian nations, I suggest that the struggle between memory and history highlights how presentist interests are challenged, reinforced, and sustained through direct engagement with the past.

The Problem of History

Richard White writes that the problem of Western history is that "most nonnatives relegate Native Americans to the past. Living Native Americans become invisible; dead Native Americans become visible without becoming historical."[7] White suggests the problem of historical memory is, paradoxically, *history itself.* As is equally true of historical writing, constrictive and binary notions of linear temporality and teleology complicate Euro-American commemorative practices. The problem of history for American Indians, however, is neither an ancillary effect of Western temporality nor amnesia. For Indians, cultural history evinces ideological interests and their present oppression. Bodnar argues that commemorative politics often are employed to resolve

tensions and contradictions over "serious matters in the present such as the nature of power and the question of loyalty to both official and vernacular cultures."[8] Thus, presence and absence in commemorative practices are intertwined with the interest-based politics of the present. To explain the recurring problem of selective history and linear temporality in commemorative rhetoric, some critics have theorized the rhetorical challenges of framing history at *sites of memory*, including public commemorations, memorials, museums, and monuments.[9]

A good number of public memory scholars examine how selective framing strategies and invited modes of looking encourage the forgetting of tragedy.[10] While these perspectives are useful, Western history poses a unique set of challenges for American Indians interests, and understanding these challenges illuminates the critiques levied by Red Power against a version of history that employed commemorative reverence. First, though sharing some epideictic qualities of Western commemoration, the modes and functions of American Indian collective memory are qualitatively different, as illustrated by the IOAT's response to a federal "Indian park." "We do not need statues to our dead because our dead never die. They were always here with us. We remember the deeds that our people do in our hearts, and this is where heroes should be remembered."[11] The sense of time articulated by the IOAT refused rigid distinctions between past and present while disrupting any clear sense of linear progression. Insisting that their dead *never die* is presented less as a defiant paradox and more as a perspective that makes the past relevant through collective remembrance. As I have argued previously, N. Scott Momaday contends that the invocation of *ancestral memory* serves as a foundation for community building and identity formation. It reanimates the past in

the present. [12] The perspective of time enacted in collective memory shuttles between and condenses past and present. Lake observes that this concept of time is important for Red Power activists because "many Euramericans characterize native activist goals and actions as hopelessly out-of-date, a tactic that, like its predecessor – the theme of the vanishing red man – manifests the metaphor of time's arrow."[13] The circular time expressed in Red Power rhetoric affirmed that traditional tribal values were not anachronistic and that authentic Indianess was not trapped in an irretrievable past. In a concept of circular time, the past always lives in the present, thus one memorializes by acting in the spirit of their ancestors. By collapsing rigid historical distinctions between past and present, American Indian remembrance reinforced the relational bonds within the community, but it sustained the importance of their present-day interests.

Demonstrating the ongoing resonance of sentimentalism, Greg Dickinson, Brian L. Ott, and Eric Aoki interpret how the rhetoric of *reverence* reifies historical distance between Euro-Americans and "Others." Interpreting the arrangement and content of the Plains Indian Museum (PIM), the authors argue the site embraces a tragic narrative of progress and invites anthropological modes of looking. Commemorating primitive culture from the position before the museum glass creates spatial-temporal difference that "downplays the violent conquest of the nineteenth century and ignores the ongoing struggles of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries."[14] Thus, commemorating the tragic loss of Indian culture relegates the authentic performance of Indian identity to a primitive past made suspect by the inevitable advancement of civilization.[15] For Indian activists, official histories of the West thwarted efforts to articulate a modern American Indian collective identity and alleviated government responsibility to attend to the ongoing

needs and demands of struggling Indian communities. Since the American Indian is the subject of history, rather than memory, there exists no space to establish an affective relationship between past and present.

The final problem of Western history is silence. While a number of scholars have examined how strategic presence and absences pervades public commemorations of race and racism, there is something disparately problematic for American Indians.[16] For Dickinson, Ott, and Aoki, the problem is the persistent focus on the past is often unaccompanied by an explicit acknowledgment of historical violence and dispossession. Fergus Bordewich argues that while there is a developing consensus about the violent legacy of slavery, Japanese internment, and other national racial tragedies, the extent, purpose, and justifications for violence against American Indians remain disputed and open to revision.[17] In short, the nostalgia that pervades Euro-American attitudes toward American Indians precludes an honest assessment of violence and culpability. For Bordewich, national conversations on race and ethnicity rarely include efforts to gain the perspectives of American Indian communities, for example. Faced with a countless list of violent crimes, silence overwhelms the alternative of national introspection. Reflecting on the limited potentials for an honest assessment of history, Bordewich argues that "it is impossible even to begin to understand modern Indians without taking into account the lingering power of events that the rest of the nation has never known or has pushed to the margins of memory."[18] Thus, the problems for commemorating the American Indian experience are uniquely shaped by the unwillingness of Euro-American civilization to accept responsibility for a legacy of violence that built a nation. In this context, official

state sponsored commemorations are likely to continue to celebrate Indians, in a patronizing fashion.

When viewed from this perspective, the IOAT demand for an autonomous Indian cultural center and university devoted to the survival of traditional tribal life takes on new meaning. This proposal was intended as an alternative to a commemorative park honoring the American Indian past. Open to the public, the park would remain under federal control. As Bodnar suggests, public memory "involves not so much specific economic or moral problems but rather fundamental issues about the entire existence of a society: its organization, structures of power, and the very meaning of its past and present."[19] Bodnar's comment suggests that negotiations over commemoration, while on the surface logistical, are actually implicated in a larger struggle for "the interpretation of reality."[20] While I agree with Bodnar's observation that commemorative rhetoric serves presentist ideological interests, I will push his distinction between official and vernacular memory further to suggest that in this instance what the federal government's proposal was, in fact, not memory at all. Instead, the government's attempts to commemorate the occupation displaced Indian collective memory. Distinguishing between memory, dreams, and history, Maurice Halbwachs observes that human memory functions in relational and collective contexts. Rather than residing within the individual (e.g. dreams), recollection relies on interactions with others to recall and reconstruct past events. He writes that "[i]t is in this sense that there exists a collective memory and social frameworks for memory; it is to the degree that our individual thought places itself in these frameworks and participates in this memory that it is capable of the act of recollection."[21] To the extent that enacting memory requires shared, empathic

participation in collective or social frameworks, singular and so-called objective historical engagements with the past exists external and prior to their articulation within human communities. While there is only one history, memories are delimited and multivocal, numbering as many as there are recollecting communities. Paul Ricoeur clarifies the distinction between history and memory as collective affect, writing that "between individual memory and collective memory the connection is intimate, immanent, the two types of memory interpenetrate one another…The same thing is not true of history inasmuch as it is not assigned to what is going to become 'historical' memory."[22] History is in tension with collective memory because the former attempts to evacuate the past of the subjective and intimate interpretations that are inherent in the latter. While its function is similar, Bodnar's concept of official memory is more appropriately understood as *history* because it reflects a hegemonic attempt to deny the plurality of communal, experiential, and affective narratives cultivated by the collective interpretation and recollection of the past. Guided by this distinction, I argue that Euro-Americans in positions of power used the practice of history to contain and silence the subversive potential of Indian collective memory.

Negotiation, Cooptation, and History

Evidenced by the troubled history of nearly five-hundred broken treaties, negotiation between American Indian tribes and the federal government have rarely, if ever, proceeded on equal footing or without subterfuge. Short-term gains between tribes and the federal and state governments have rarely been worth the long-term costs to tribal sovereignty, land, resources, governance, or economic self-sufficiency. Usually negotiations have sustained the narrative arch of Western history in which civilization

advances over barbarism. Taiaiake Alfred elaborates the problem of negotiating tribal interests:

> Negotiation and reconciliation as defined and implemented thus far are perversions of justice in which state Settler societies end up gaining legal possession of not only land and governments…integrating the desirable and useful elements into their own social fabric at little to no moral or economic cost. In their efforts to co-opt First Nations politicians and to legitimize their presence in this hemisphere, Settlers attempt to take root the only way that it is possible for them to do so, by seizing the indigenous heritage of the land. Through negotiation and the development of compromise solutions with aboriginal politicians who they themselves employ…the Settlers are in effect buying the legitimacy of their state…[23]

Historically, negotiations, treaties, and other dispute resolutions legalized dispossession, falsely conferred tribal consent, and coopted resistance movements and other opposing forces. To the extent that visible gains are permitted, they align with Euro-American interests. Alfred suggests that while tribes may negotiate provisionally, those in power negotiated to solidify legitimate post-hoc justifications for dispossession and favorable interpretations of reality that obscure the machinations of colonial power. The frequent result of negotiations is to codify Western history into law.

The IOAT experience with negotiations did not depart from these trends. When Bob Robertson traveled to Alcatraz Island on 11 January 1970 to negotiate on behalf of the federal government, the foundational demands of the IOAT were already off the table. While technically in charge the negotiations, Robertson reported directly to White

House consultant Leonard Garment and possessed no authority to make concessions over the island's ownership or offer any financial commitments. Meanwhile, a month earlier and with no mention of the IOAT, the NPS submitted a report to the Department of Interior proposing that Alcatraz be included in a Golden Gate national recreation area. Again without the IOAT involvement, the Interagency Regional Council met on 16 December to begin plans for an "omnibus Indian center" at a separate unspecified location. All twenty-six American Indian organizations in the Bay Area were excluded, as well. Troy Johnson notes that even before they directly engaged the occupants "the attitude of the government negotiators was beginning to focus on circumventing the island movement by funneling money into the establishment of a mainland cultural center, refusing to meet on the occupiers' chosen site, and including mainland Indian people in any recognized representative group"[24] The occupants would not know until much later the plans of the General Services Administration , the National Council on Indian Opportunity (NCIO), the Department of Interior, the Interagency Regional Council (IRC), the NPS, and the White House. With the outcome decided, federal negotiators proceeded with strategies of cooptation and neutralization, which eventually took the form of commemoration and reverence. Robertson admitted that his strategy for dealing with the IOAT was to circumvent their demands and proceed with pre-formulated plans that would have "taken the wind out of their sails and will have started constructive work in the democratic tradition which will lessen the empathy felt for those on the island."[25]

While the IOAT initiated the demand for negotiations, Deloria expressed concern after his visit to the island that "only ten Indians in the country are qualified to negotiate

with the federal government."[26] On one hand, Deloria argues that naiveté and inexperience were partially to blame for the negotiations failure. On the other, Deloria, an expert in federal Indian law, expressed a much larger concern with the group's vulnerability to diversion and cooptation in the federal negotiation process. Elsewhere, he said:

> Here personal whims, misunderstanding, the security of federal employment, the informal networks of political bureaucracy, and the guerilla tactics of political activism play an important role in defining what the pretty phrases devised at the higher levels actually mean.[27]

Deloria explains that by looking back at federal Indian policy, critics can identify the ways in which "avowed beliefs of politicians" are "often subject to the expediencies of the moment and the road to programmatic hell is well paved."[28] Deloria cautioned that federal negotiators, at best, misunderstand Indian demands and at worse are duplicitous; deceptively supportive of short-term Indian interests for long-term federal gain. When the federal task force on the Alcatraz occupation was formed in December 1969, NCIO executive director Bob Robertson was selected to negotiate directly with the IOAT.[29] Robertson was a Nixon-faithful rewarded with a federal job at the NCIO for his work on 1968 Presidential campaign. Though at times Robertson even showed good faith toward the IOAT, he was limited by the conditions set forth by the White House and the Department of Interior.

The government took active efforts to divert and coopt the group on the island. For example, reflecting the interests of Garment and the White House, Robertson's first approach to the occupation was a strategy of isolation. While Robertson considered the

possibility of arranging talks with the IOAT, in December 1969 he and his colleagues organized other efforts to negotiate a solution on the single-issue of the Indian center. This move was seen by many as an attempt to foment divisions in the Indian community over the radical demands of the IOAT. Johnson contends that "[b]y funding the cultural center on the mainland the government could lead the public to believe that Indian issues had been addressed and ignore the occupiers."[30] This tactic was thwarted when the Bay Area's twenty-six Indian organizations - representing some 40,000 Indians from 87 tribes - merged to form the Bay Area Native American Council (BANAC) and suspended all negotiations with the federal government while establishing "Alcatraz…as their first priority."[31] The formation and collective solidarity of BANAC forced federal negotiators to deal directly with the IOAT rather than negotiate a separate settlement over the Indian center.

When the isolation tactic proved ineffective, the federal government adopted a seemingly more conciliatory approach. Garment and Robertson resigned to hold direct talks with the occupants on Alcatraz. At first, government officials limited the conversation to health and safety issues. GSA regional administrator Thomas Hannon accompanied Robertson to the island in January to explain to the occupants the physical and logistical problems precluding the island's development. He explained that it was in such terrible condition that it would cost close to $8 million dollars to restore the water barge, electricity, sanitation, and other necessary safety measures.[32] Remaining topical, the IOAT developed a proposed list of short-term health and safety measures that could improve conditions on the island immediately, including but not limited to: clinic supplies, emergency hospital equipment, bathing and laundry supplies, lanterns, stoves,

emergency telephone service, and so on.[33] Stella Leach read the memo at the 11 January meeting with Robertson and GSA representative Hannon. Hannon replied with a prepared statement that warned that the island's dangerous condition made it "extremely hazardous for human habitation." Rather than responding to the request for aid, Hannon accused the occupants of being irresponsible and criminal, declaring "I must therefore again advise you that you are present here as trespassers. I must further advise you that the Government assumes no responsibility for your safety while you remain on this island." [34] Robertson proposed that the women and children leave the island for safety reasons, enraging the occupants.[35] Hannon and Robertson tried to persuade the occupants that even if they could give them the title, the island was so deteriorated that it was completely undesirable for an Indian center. The IOAT, however, was unconvinced, arguing "if [the government] can render foreign aid, fight a war, etc., etc., [the government] can give them everything the want."[36]

The IOAT demands did not lessen when it met with Robertson again on 23 February. Their February newsletter expressed awareness of federal strategies of cooptation and likely resistance, arguing "conventional trails in their top heavy bureaucratic structure [is] strewed with the bones of mismanagement; frustration; subtle (and not so subtle) maneuvers of cultural genocide with the sanctions of health, education and welfare."[37] With this in mind, the IOAT presented Robertson with a planning grant that kept the island in the hands of Indians, "holding the island of Alcatraz in the true name of freedom, justice, and equality."[38] The proposal presented to Robertson called for $299,424 in federal funds to build, staff, and maintain an Indian university, cultural center, museum, ecology center, and archive.[39] While no agreement was reached at the

meeting and Hannon remained firmly against the proposal, Robertson promised that he would study the proposal and provide a response in three weeks.[40] Robertson had grown a bit more sympathetic toward the occupation and remarked that "something positive" should come out of the negotiations and that a "'piece of the pie' was better than none at all."[41] He believed that a compromise could be reached that would give the occupants and national Indian organizations input on the future of the island without fully ceding to the occupants demands.

Submitted to the IOAT on 31 March, 1970 Robertson presented the government's formal proposal for a national park at Alcatraz dedicated to the American Indian. The proposal was to "develop a master park plan for the Island, creating an outstanding recreation resource within reach of millions of urban dwellers."[42] Including the phrase "maximal Indian quality," the proposal solicited the input of American Indian "writers, historians, artists, religious leaders, 'grass roots people,' and so forth, and would be chosen by the Secretary of the Interior from lists supplied by Indian individuals and organizations throughout the country."[43] While perhaps well-intentioned, the proposal contained many contradictions that could not be reconciled through negotiations. *Maximal Indian quality* meant something quite different for Robertson than it did for the protestors. From the IOAT perspective, infusing the island with maximal Indian quality meant the creation of collective public memory that would sustain the relationship between American Indians and the island, and would give testimony to Euro-Americans and the rest of the nation. For the movement, maximal Indian quality meant the creation of a space in which Indian concerns were significant and observable in their current moment. Such quality was best sustained through a connection to a shared but often

forgotten Indian past and required lived practices that highlighted how past Indian experiences are/were alive and relevant in the present moment.

This drama exhibits the tensions between history and memory. Ricoeur writes that "memory is a phenomenon that is always actual, a living tie with the eternal present, 'history' is a representation of the past."[44] Halbwachs observes further that commemorative practices, memorials, and monuments should not be conflated with the workings of collective memory. To further distinguish collective memory from commemorative rhetoric more appropriately understood as history, Halbwachs argues that memory requires the multivocal and embodied presence of communal recollection, and ultimately empathy:

> [T]he framework of collective memory confines and binds our most intimate remembrance to each other. It is not necessary that the group be familiar with them. It suffices that we cannot consider them except from the outside – that is, *by putting ourselves in the position of others* – and that in order to retrieve these remembrances we must tread the same path that others would have followed had they been in our position [emphasis added].[45]

The presence of a connected and empathic relationship with the past is what empowers the construction of collective memory. Monuments, memorials, or otherwise commemorative rhetorics that reference the past for purposes of preservation, or for posterity, passively chronicle information in the service of history. Barry Schwartz succinctly argues, "commemoration lifts from an ordinary historical sequence those extraordinary events which embody our deepest and most fundamental values."[46] Thus, for Alcatraz to be transformed into a site of memory its visitors would have to be invited

to engage in an affective relationship with the past rather than to gaze distantly at historical reference points for an irretrievable past. This is precisely what the IOAT desired, and the government feared.

Remembering and Forgetting Indian Struggle

The government's proposal offered a putatively reasonable yet limited inclusionary incentive to bring the occupation to a quick close. Though not ideal, the proposal offered a material gain that perhaps no one on the island, with the exception of perhaps Oakes, could have anticipated. Even Smith and Warrior argue that the occupants were dogmatically rejectionist, placing symbolism above the tangible needs of the community. On the other hand, given the symbolic currency garnered during the occupation, it's important to distinguish between what could be characterized as a *tangible* victory and to what extent privileging expediency or prudent compromise betrayed the movement's purpose.

Smith and Warrior contend that the IOAT reactionary stance toward the park proposal was linked to the group's "governing ideology" of symbolism, which excluded the tangible goals of "pan-Indianism or revolution or cultural revival."[47] I argue, however, that symbolism should not be placed in false opposition with tangible victories. Rather than deride the occupation's symbolism as either dogma or distraction, I argue that the symbolic politics of each side's position were implicated in a struggle for the interpretation of reality with material and rhetorical consequences beyond immediate and measurable benefits. In light of the problems of history and memory outlined herein, accepting a monument rather than the title - commemorative rhetoric as opposed to Red

Power rhetoric - had powerful implications for the future of Indian struggle. Accepting a compromised version of history instead of Indian collective memory would have exchanged the recognition of past Indian interests from those of existing in the present-day.

The Anthropological Gaze

According to the protestors at Alcatraz, the government's proposal read much like "an anthropological preface" in which Indians were "soothed, back-patted, praised and assured of a bright tomorrow."[48] They argued that a monument park was "unneeded, undesired, and actually an attempt to end the Alcatraz movement."[49] The federal proposal would have only satisfied the interests of non-Indians, they said. Furthermore, the placement of Indian agency in the hands of non-Indians was antithetical the movement's goals. They responded, "they [the government] are going to continue to do as they have done in the past, which is to *do our thinking for us* and run things their way [emphasis added]."[50] By speaking as both benefactors of and experts on Indian interests, the proposal fused government paternalism with anthropological rhetoric; Indians were at once hapless child-like people in need of control and the objects of Euro-American historical fascination, according to the logics of the IOAT rhetoric. The IOAT suggested that by deliberately ignoring the protestors demands, the government proceeded as if it was more qualified to speak and act on behalf of Indian interests than leaders in the Indian community. Deloria writes that the proposal mimicked the perspective of the anthropologist or the hobby-historian, a perspective in which "people are objects for observation" and thus "are then considered objects for experimentation, for manipulation, and for eventual extinction."[51] Anthropological thinking is manifest in paternalistic

policies that presume that experts and administrations better understand tribal needs then the tribes themselves. Replicating this mode of thought, the proposal refashioned non-Indian interests as if they had either generated from the *authentic voice* of Indian country or were derived from careful observation and study by experts. The purpose of the occupation, however, was to reclaim Indian control over their own affairs and reconstitute a vibrant community destroyed by centuries of anthropological and paternalistic thinking. The protestors argued emphatically that Robertson's proposal would do the opposite by preventing the "Indians of All Tribes from having any control over the destiny of Alcatraz."[52]

The historical and anthropological gaze was also reflected in the museum's proposed content, planning process, and arrangement. A museum/monument, as opposed to an Indian university and cultural center, placed emphasis on enriching the lives of non-Indians through white education, perfecting Western knowledge about a forgotten culture important to American history. The proposal offered by Robertson envisioned Alcatraz as a space for Euro-Americans to commemorate and revere the American Indian, "allowing non-Indians an excellent opportunity to learn from Indians of the treasured culture and heritage of the 'First Americans.'"[53] According to the proposal, non-Indian visitors would observe museum artifacts dedicated to the memory of "noted Indians through history" and learn about the distinctively Indian history of the island. The monuments would educate visitors unfamiliar with the Indian cultures of the past. Distinguishing it from intersubjective memory, Ricoeur characterizes such historical practice as acculturated externalization:

> History is first learned by memorizing dates, facts, names, striking events, important persons, holidays to celebrate. It is essentially a narrative taught with the framework of a nation. At this stage of discovery, itself remembered after the fact, history is perceived, mainly by the student, as 'external' and dead. The negative mark placed on the facts mentioned consists in the student's not being able to witness them. It is the province of hearsay and of didactic reading. The feeling of externality is reinforced by the calendrical framework of the events taught: at this age on learns to read the clock.[54]

The historical presentation of important facts external to memory is devoid of any affective relationship with the object of historical interpretation. Since memory is a shared and intersubjective experience with the past, to remain methodologically sound the objective dispassionate historian or the anthropologist intentionally avoids connections with their subject for fear that it may bias or impede their judgment and conclusions. The historian and the anthropologist gaze at historical objects to remain unaffected. By adopting a historical or anthropological gaze, the proposed monument would have denied the lived experience of collective memory.

While celebrating American Indian culture, the primary objective of the museum was to edify, educate, and enlighten non-Indian audiences. The proposal proclaimed the island would be an "outstanding recreation resource within reach of millions of urban dwellers." Placing non-Indian interests at the forefront, the proposal reframed the contemporary challenges of American Indians in terms of a perfectible Western epistemology, attributing barriers to empowerment as an easily correctible failure of proper Euro-American representations. Euro-American visitors would be offered an

opportunity to redeem themselves by spending time learning about a misunderstood culture. Purportedly responding to the occupants' expressed needs, the federal government proceeded as if underlying concern was intercultural miscommunication, rather than the material conditions that reinforce structural oppression. Reducing their demands to an easily resolvable cross-cultural misunderstanding suggested that Indian needs could be met more easily through celebrating multicultural diversity as opposed to grappling with the deeply-rooted structural inequalities identified by the IOAT. Federal negotiators then inverted the challenge-response structure identified in the occupants' first policy proposal; Indians were identified as the problem and Euro-American were the solution.

In terms of its proposed content, the museum proposal suggested that Indian history was only usable as an object of study and commemoration, in contradistinction to the occupants' argument that traditional Indian life and memory serve as a rationale and resource for an ongoing demand for self-determination. This commemorative-educational approach to Indian empowerment reflected a Western anthropological gaze in which Indians were reduced to exoticized objects of inquiry for the advancement of social-scientific knowledge. Advancement in anthropological knowledge would in turn provide answers for Indians they themselves could not generate. As a result of this orientation, each dimension of the proposal would construct an environment in which non-Indians could consume and vicariously experience authentic Indianness while still maintaining historically and culturally difference. The arrangement of the museum would place visitors in the privileged subject-position of an anthropologist with the power to gaze, analyze, and dissect Indian cultures. Easily identifiable to most non-Indians, this subject-

position would not require authentic empathy nor require introspection on the part of the visitor. Amplifying historical distance between visitor and artifact, the proposal located Indian culture in an ancient and mystical past. Making only vague references to the occupation itself, the proposal discussed Indians exclusively in terms of the past, using words such as “heritage,” “treasured culture,” and “ancient.” The use of the qualifier “through history” temporally-bound the scope of commemoration to historical epochs unlike the present moment and reflected the linear trajectory of Western history that advanced unidirectional from primitivism to civilization. This rhetoric constructed authentic Indian life as belonging to an anachronistic and irredeemable past, knowable only for social scientific study by civilized non-Indians and always at a safe distance.

With past and present clearly delineated, modern visitors would be directed to gaze backwards at their object while never being confronted by the persistence of a radical present in which history served as an argumentative resource *for* self-determination. Responding to present-day Indian demands by celebrating historical accomplishments, the museum conflated past and present struggles for justice without careful attention to both continuity and change in native cultural life. For visitors, “noted Indians” would function as synecdoche for *all Indians*, including those of the present moment. By encasing historical Indians behind glass for study, the museum would direct the visitors’ eye toward an alien past and divert attention from the ongoing needs and demands of surviving Indians in 1970. The proposal confused a demand for the preservation of traditional Indian life with an anthropological project of *museumification*. Put differently, the museum more closely aligned with the needs of an anthropologist to collect, classify, record, and preserve remnants of an anachronistic past than it did the

occupants' needs to recover, use, and defend traditional Indian life as an integral part of a modern future. Replicating the anthropological project, the museum would have clearly demarcated time, suggesting that the past be used for the production of knowledge for or historical education of non-Indian audiences rather than as a resources for Indian self-determination. Further, with content decisions ultimately residing with Euro-Americans, the past would be engaged without a concept of shared experience, external to or outside of the dominant experience. Without Indian input, the museum could only advance history not collective memory.

While non-Indians exercised a degree of optical power, there was a noticeable absence concerning museum representations of Euro-American participation in Indian history. Non-Indian visitors would be privileged with the anonymity of a third-person omniscient historical narrator; the ability to passively observe and remain selectively invisible during the presentation of American Indian history. While celebrating and learning about Native culture, non-Indians would be absolved from confronting their own culpability, or at least privileged position, in dispossession and violence. While the proposal suggested that museum may evolve to including artifacts and narratives not originally conceived, there were no suggestions that the museum include directions as to how Euro-Americans, and the crimes they perpetrated, would be represented. By removing Euro-Americans from the museum's narrative and celebrating accomplishments of exemplar American Indians, the museum would erase the role of violence in the destruction of Native culture. Selective and positive depictions of American Indians would remain unaccompanied by any memory of historical violence perpetrated against their people. The perpetrators of cultural genocide would ostensibly

be agentless and, thus, the destruction of Indian culture would appear seemless, natural, and even inevitable. Non-Indians could celebrate diversity and vicariously experience a primitive past while remaining passive, blameless observers. Lacking the position of privilege to observe and analyze from a distance, American Indians were to be animated for the selective and self-serving educational advancement of lay anthropologists and hobby historians. Robertson's museum proposal strongly contrasted with the occupants' vision, however, which in would "show noble and tragic events of Indian history, including broken treaties, the documentary of the Trail of Tears, the Massacre of Wounded Knee, as well as the victory over Yellow Hair Custer and his army."[55] The occupant's museum, as only one part of a larger cultural center and research university, would make violence and dispossession visible, topical, and relevant to present day Indian struggle.

Next, the museum would have transformed Alcatraz into an *experiential landscape*, a mixed synthetic-natural environment constructed to guide and direct visitors interpretation and experience during their authentic encounter with Otherness. Dickinson, Ott, and Aoki argue that experiential landscapes are spaces of memory which "invite visitors to assume (to occupy) particular subject positions" and "offer fully embodied subject positions that direct particular ways of looking."[56] As an experiential landscape, the environmental contours of the proposed park would enable visitors to feel transported into a distinctly non-Western world that was historical distant, primitive, and foreign. To provide visitors with a facade of an authentic encounter with difference, the island would be renamed from the "ancient Ohlone (Costanoan) language or from a suggestion provided by Indians across the country."[57] Visitors would be transported over a half an

hour from their distracting modern urban environment to a distant Indian-themed oasis positioned in the center of the Bay; the long trek mimicking the temporal and cultural distance visitors would traverse during their visit. Smith and Warrior write that a "hovercraft would zip visitors from Embarcadero in San Francisco, Sausalito, and other locations to Alcatraz. Operated as a business, proceeds from the state-of-the-art transportation system would be plowed back into the museum and cultural center."[58] Simulating the technological experience of traveling back in time, the advanced technology of the transportation system would contrast with the ancient relics displayed on the island. On the island, "real life" Indians would greet visitors as park rangers "professionally trained by the Park Service" to act as cultural interpreters and guide visitors through their encounter with the Other. Professionally trained and dressed in modern park service attire, Indian park rangers would stand in stark contrast to monuments adorning a more primitive traditionalist aesthetic associated with authentically historical Indians. Providing embodied evidence of the American Indian's advancement and civilization, successfully assimilated Indian professionals would direct visitors to gazing backwards at their own primitive past. The park rangers would occupy the subject position of the Noble Savage, proud remnants of a tragically-fated and vanishing culture, helpful in welcoming the inevitable progress of Western civilization. Visitors would occupy the subject-position of the lay anthropologist, chronicling and dissecting their new historically distant and foreign park environment. The park landscape would simulate at once the Euro-American experience of discovery, encounter, conquest, assimilation, and modernization. The implied foreignness and historical distance of American Indian culture would direct visitors to revere and experience

without identification, devoid of the relational qualities that transform history into collective memory.

Next, the proposal neutralized the movements' demands by filtering Indian voices and experience through the perspectives of professionalized Indian experts. In constructing the museums' content, the proposal was clear that Indians would serve an advisory role to the Department of Interior and the NPS:

> [A]n Indian Joint Planning Committee will be formed to work with professionals in the Department of Interior. This committee would be composed of Indian writes, historians, artists, religious leaders, "grass roots people," and so forth, and would be chose by the Secretary of Interior from lists supplied by Indian individuals and organizations throughout the country.

The standard, however, by which professionals in the Interior would be considered qualified to evaluate Indian input, and more importantly, which individuals or groups would qualify as authentic representatives of the Indian community was unclear. If the professionals in the Interior carried resumes as thin in the area of Indian affairs as Robertson and his negotiating team, the occupants' had reason to be concerned. The selection of the joint committee and the degree to which Interior professionals implemented the suggestions were completely at the government's discretion. The government's rhetoric of professionalism and legitimate authority was consistent with the type of debilitating bureaucratic administration practiced by the BIA. In the process of tribal consultation and consent, Indian experts and professionals seek out the most conservative and assimilationist voices to legitimize the pursuit of preexisting government interests. By eliciting the advice and consent of representative Indian

organizations and other experts the government could, in Alfred's words, "[buy] the legitimacy of their state, although they are buying it from people who have no right or authority to be selling it in the first place."[59] In sum, the voices that most closely mimicked and legitimized the ideological interests of dominant society would become those deemed *authentic*, as had been the case with government attempts to negotiate with more moderate groups on the mainland over the future of the Indian center. Deloria suggests that because of the pervasive influence of anthropologists and other non-Indian professionals in tribal life, the government would likely find individuals willing to flatter and rubberstamp Interior professionals. He argues that "[m]any Indian people have come to parrot the ideas of anthropologists…[t]hus many ideas that pass for Indian thinking are in reality theories originally advanced by anthropologists and echoed by Indian people in an attempt to communicate the real situation."[60] Due to the persistent and negative influence of anthropologists throughout Indian Country, the government would likely have been able to find individuals willing to corroborate their own historical interpretations.

With the federal government the ultimate arbiter of the authentic representative voice of Indian Country, there would be little chance that the reconstructed island would look anything like the living memory expressed by the radical and traditionalist sects of the American Indian community. The negotiators had asserted elsewhere that the IOAT views did not adequately represent the Indian community, nationally or in the Bay Area. Even before negotiations began, Robertson and Hannon expressed a desire to construct a settlement with putatively representative and moderate Indian organizations that shared non-Indian interests and willingness to compromise. Hannon argued "the 50 or so

American Indians on Alcatraz appear to have objectives quite different from the 17,000 or so on the mainland in this area."[61] Robertson asserted that the group was incapable of professionalism and reasoned judgment, that in his estimation they were "naïve and not used to responsibility."[62] In the context of such rhetoric and the non-responsiveness of the government's proposal to the occupants' demands, it would have been unlikely that groups and individuals that shared their perspective would be considered *representative*.

Perhaps even more threatening, the lengthy process of crafting the museum through months and even years of bureaucratic desiderata would have assimilated and translated the movement confrontation politics into singular assent. The proposal left the exact content and style of the museum intentionally vague and open to ongoing negotiation so that the "proposed process [could] evolve interesting results not even imagined at the beginning." Of concern, the IOAT would have to agree to a project with indeterminate results and abstract guidelines that could potentially be open to reinterpretation by the Interior at any phase in the process. While evolution and Indian input were a possibility, with some distance from the events of occupation, there would have remained sufficient room for the project to stray from the expressed goals of the movement and begin to reflect the interests of expediency and completion. Without holding the island, the IOAT would have been deprived of the necessary leverage to ensure fidelity to Indian interests throughout every stage of the museum's development. In the end, the process would move forward only within the parameters set forth by the Interior. Containing the fervor of Red Power, the consultation process would cipher the multivocal demands of the Indian community through Indian administrators,

anthropologists, and other Indian experts. A once confrontational and uncompromising demand would come out the other side resembling the interests of official history.

Finally, Robertson's proposal placed the education and political interests of non-Indians before that of the occupants' or the American Indian community. At Alcatraz, educating non-Indians would take precedence over educating future Indian leaders. The IOAT argued that the island should be devoted to present-day educational concerns, proposing a "a center for Native American studies which will educate them to them skills and knowledge relevant to improve the lives and spirits of all Indian peoples." The skills cultivated at the center would be directed at cultural survival, to "teach our people how to make a living in the world, improve our standard of living, and to end hunger and unemployment among all our people." In response, Robertson's proposal suggested that the government had already met the occupants' demands by establishing Indian colleges in other states. Claiming to understand and agree with the goals of Indian education, the proposal touted *existing* institutions:

> As you all know, the first Indian-run institution of higher education is now underway at Many Farms, Arizona-Navajo Community college. A number of major universities in the country now have courses in native American studies and there is an obvious need for advanced educational opportunity for Indian scholars so that maintenance of Indian culture and heritage will be maximized. The Indian Planning committee, meeting with appropriate Federal Agencies, could suggest how best this need can be met and where such an institution of advanced Indian studies might best be located. This administration is very desirous of cooperating in this endeavor.

While supporting an Indian university in the abstract, the proposal provided a self-congratulatory affirmation of the status quo and included only limited promises to cooperate in the future to advance Indian education. These concluding remarks also affirmed that negotiators had presented initiatives developed months prior to the occupation and independent of the demands of the movement. The occupants' responded that the proposal "was a study that was taken before the Alcatraz invasion, thereby putting the lie to the statement that they had even considered our proposal, if they had considered our proposal as they say they did, they would have worked with our proposal and made adjustments to it."[63]

While the occupants' also supported the development of educational institutions elsewhere throughout the country, the placement of the university at Alcatraz had special significance for the movement. Placing the university at the remote center of the Bay would signify a safe harbor for urban Indians visible to the both the Indian and non-Indian world. As a separate space committed to the cultivation and resurgence of American Indian peoples, the university would both symbolize and enact the vibrant living legacy of Red Power. The envisioned university would have been free of non-Indian control and accessible to a burgeoning urban Indian population. Instead, the federal proposal promoted an existing community college located in a remote corner of the Navajo Nation, a poverty-stricken reservation from which federal education programs relocated individuals to cities such as San Francisco. The federal insistence that an Alcatraz university would be infeasible overlooked the practical inaccessibility of rural Arizona to Indians living in the Bay Area, or any other location across America.

Diffusing the symbols of Indian resurgence and cultural survival in remote and desolate areas of the country and putting monuments to the past in its place erased the visible evidence confirm the movements' ongoing struggle for self-determination. Furthermore, suggesting that Indian input could steer federal education initiatives elsewhere ignored the degree to which existing programs would likely not have existed without the confrontational politics and collective organizing by activists such as Richard Oakes and LaNada Means who demanded and helped develop such programs at San Francisco State and UC Berkeley. Agitation and protest, not capitulation and cooperation, were responsible for the successful rise of these programs. In short, the proposal's commentary on education erased the long struggle of Indian activists to achieve indigenous centered curriculum against the hegemonic influence of federal Indian boarding schools and Christian missionary education. Replacing education with memorialization, federal rhetoric of commemoration transformed the site of the occupation into a site of *reverence* rather than *perseverance*. Education and cultural preservation would be the responsibility of non-Indians and thus reflect their values and interest. The federal proposal would remove evidence of the movements' radical project from official history and preserved Indians for posterity.

The Anthropocentric Gaze

The IOAT envisioned Alcatraz as a fully functioning ecology center to work in conjunction with the cultural center, university, and museum. Redesigning the architecture of the island was one of the occupants' central preoccupations. In the first proclamation the IOAT argued, tongue-in-cheek, that by "the white man's own standards," Alcatraz was "suitable for an Indian reservation" because of its dearth of

resources and inability to sustain life.[64] The occupants expressed a desire to showcase the beauty of an Indian land ethic through architectural design and arrangement. Reconstructing the island to embody Indian values and striping it of a prison-industrial aesthetic would demonstrate the redemptive power of a return to traditional Indian lifestyles. At the same time, their demands for an Indian ecology center, university, and museum would have created spatial arrangements designed to advance Indian collective memory. While it was obvious that these centers would be devoted to the restoration of Indian lands, education of American Indians, and representation of the endurance of traditional culture, their authenticity would be defined by unity of function and form. In a Round Table discussion on design and layout, several of the occupants argued that the proposed buildings must be devote solely to Indian purposes and must be designed around traditional Indian philosophies. Put differently, architectural design had to be clearly distinguished from the non-Indian megastructures across the Bay. They agreed that "buildings and grounds must express the unique purpose that Alcatraz Island is dedicated to the American Indian." The Round Table agreed that the construction must use "traditional Indian art ideas as basic to the architecture structures so as to be authentic, and to use contemporary architectures, knowledge and art skills to express these ideas in a way to say that this must last forever." The key idea was to reconstruct the island as place with which all Indians could identify and relate to shared and recoverable past.

According to the planners, a uniquely Indian spatial arrangement would be "1) functional, 2) beautiful, 3) original in concept, 4) [and] traditional Indian, yet

contemporary."[65] A symbol of traditional Indian environmentalism, the IOAT also emphasized the evocative power between form and function. They proposed:

> An Indian Center of Ecology which will train and support our young people in scientific research and practice to restore our lands and waters to their pure and natural state. We will work to depollute the air and waters of the Bay Area. We will seek to restore fish and animal life to the area and to revitalize sea life which has been threatened by the white man's way. We will set up facilities to desalt sea water for human benefit.[66]

The facility would have functionally enacted the environmental philosophy derived from the movements' traditionalist orientation structured around a concept of redemptive pastoral landscapes. The stone and concrete of the island would be transformed to restore balance with the local ecosystem, "as a protective barrier for the return of fish, sea otters, sea lions, and other creatures of the sea and air who would take shelter here."[67] By regenerating the collapsed ecosystem at Alcatraz, the center would simultaneously exhibit the practical and ethical viability of traditional ecological practices important to pan-tribal identification and unity, demonstrating the symbiotic relationship between humans, culture, and landscape. The traditionalist restoration project also resisted the environmental attitudes and practices of Euro-American economic progress. Rather than create an ecological preserve or park, the occupants envisioned Alcatraz as a model center for the cultivation of traditional ecological knowledge, designed to reverse environmental destruction with sustainable and subsistence practices in contradistinction to technological resource management characteristic of Western environmental history. While diverse, Indian ecologies and conservation philosophies can be characterized as

interconnected and *enspirited*; all of the physical world embodies consciousness, thus is valued as an integral part of an expansive and interconnected natural community.[68]

The envisioned Indian ecological center would have diverged from Western environmentalism, typically characterized by anthropocentric philosophy, technological management, and binary dualisms between nature and culture. The inverse of American Indian ecologies, the "white mans' way," so to speak, was rooted in *disconnection* and disharmony from the natural world, manifest in the present-day environmental crisis. Euro-American attitudes toward nature derive from the philosophical teachings of Western metaphysics in which the individual is defined in terms of separation from and primacy over the otherness of the physical world. Jeffrey Meyers contends that the Western subject's illusory separation from nature is displayed through mastery and domination of the physical world. The construction of natural otherness and the dualistic partitioning of human consciousness from the physical world rationalize human domination over nature. The otherization of the physical world manifests in domination of human over nature, and concomitantly, human over human. Meyers writes,

> European culture has a long tradition of viewing the natural world as separate from and inferior to the individual, European conscious self. As such, when Europeans extended their imperialist reach to other continents, Africans, Native Americans, and other non-Christian living in what Europeans views as the 'wilderness' were often see as heathens in league with the devil. [69]

The metaphysical separation of human consciousness from the natural world is part and parcel of an interlocking system of domination in which the Western subject is also defined in opposition to its racial other, lacking the habits of Euro-American civilization.

Defined by Euro-Americans in terms of lack and opposition, both the natural and racial Other are transformed into fetishized objects of control and domination.

The metaphysics of Western environmental attitudes frames the IOAT resistance to establishing Alcatraz as a national park. Further, the IOAT resistance to the NPS should be understood in the context of its historical relationship with Indian Country. Established in 1916, the NPS embodied the romantic and sentimental environmentalism arising out of late Nineteenth Century conservation movements. Amplified by the rise of outdoors enthusiasm near the turn of the century, preservation environmentalists sought to partition and construct eco-sanctuaries that would conserve what was believed to be pristine untouched wilderness. The concept of wilderness preservation is reflected in the writings of nineteenth-century landscape painter George Catlin, who travelled throughout American West to capture on canvas, and for posterity, the pristine virgin wilderness West of the Mississippi River and the land's noble yet vanishing inhabitants. Catlin wrote in 1833 in defense of "some great protecting policy of government" preserve large tracts of wilderness in 'it's pristine beauty and wildness…where the world could see for ages to come, the native Indian in his classic attire, galloping his horse…amid the fleeting herds of elk and buffaloes." Such a sanctuary would be a "magnificent area…*Nation's Park* containing man and beast, in all the wild and freshness of their nature's beauty!"[70] Part wildlife sanctuary, part human zoo, Catlin's park sought to preserve, manage, and memorialize segments of nature and Indian peoples fated by the inevitable advancement of the modern world. Catlin's romantic vision would freeze nature and Indian in time for posterity, simultaneously celebrating and mourning their tragic loss.

Mark David Spence notes that while Catlin's romanticism girded the contemporary national park system, many environmentalists have ignored that his "conception of a wilderness preserve included the presence of Indians; they found, instead, only those elements that reflected on later preservation efforts."[71] While providing a highly problematic caricature of the ecological savage, Catlin's vision recognized that Western landscapes were not uninhabited or undiscovered. Spence writes that the "uninhabited wilderness had *to be created* before it could be preserved, and this type of landscape reified in the first national parks [emphasis added]."[72] Tribal land-use practices were incompatible with Western preservationist philosophy, as its later derivative and revisionist practice was based on the illusory notion that pristine wilderness was devoid of human presence. Whereas Indian environmentalism was based on functionality and interconnectedness, preservationist ecology removed the human presence from nature, placing it outside and in control of the physical world.[73] Thus, the creation of national parks was predicated on the termination of tribal land-use and dispossession of Indian lands for conservation and management. As far as the NPS was concerned, historically, American Indians either avoided parkland entirely or were the national park system's first visitors.[74]

The park system developed concurrent, and often in conflict with, the Indian reservation and allotment system. While both considered were protected from unscrupulous developers, the differences between each were clear. Philip Burnham writes that "the parks showed the grandeur of the American outback while the reservation trailed behind like a poor government relation, a holding place for defeated enemies (and friends), many living in abject poverty."[75] The park system protected and commemorated

the American west's sublime beauty, while the reservation was a site for mourning vanishing Native culture. Despite existing as federally-protected treaty land, reservation boundaries were not insulated against incremental land transfers to the NPS. Since both were held in trust by the federal government and classified as economically marginal or worthless land, thus "treaty land was ideal for incorporation in the parks."[76] The creation of the largest national parks, including Grand Canyon, Yellowstone, Yosemite, Glacier, Badlands, Mesa Verde, and so on, resulted in the displacement of tribes living on the land prior to the parks establishment or post-hoc dispossession of treaty lands through incorporation of lands adjacent to the park. If offered, compensation for dispossession typically came in the form of temporary employment and residence in the park. The compensation was usually temporary and meager. The two most egregious cases of abuse of American Indian employees in residence involved the Havasupai at the Grand Canyon and the Miwok and Mono Paiutes of Yosemite. In both cases Indian employees were quickly terminated and their settlements, considered too unsightly, were removed within a year.[77]

The philosophies, practices, and goals of the NPS are at odds with those of American Indians. The commemorative ecology at work in the NPS constructed a sentimental history of Western landscapes that erased the presence and vitality of American Indian culture. The construction of pristine and untouched landscapes highlights the dualistic separation of human from nature in Western metaphysics and the mastery of the former over the later. As fictional spaces of reverence girded by an anthropocentric worldview, national parks necessitated the dispossession and erasure of Native presence for an "authentic" encounter with the grandeur of Western landscapes.

The separation of nature and culture in Euro-American environmentalism, by definition, negated the existence of Indian life in such landscapes. The NPS preservationist ecology and no-use land policies denied human interconnectedness within natural ecosystems and affirm human distance from and mastery over the physical world. As such, they work to the exclusion of traditionalist cultural and ecological practices.

By displacing and dispossessing geographical spaces that gird tribal identity, Western commemorative ecology facilitated the erasure of the Indian collective memory and the triumph of Western history. As discussed in the previous chapter, landscape serves as important symbolic touchstones in the creation and maintenance of many tribal traditions, identities, and memories. Distinguished from history, the persistence of landscapes stories in many Indian oral traditions points to the ways in which the geographic symbolism of homeland evokes important shared memories of place. Many contemporary Indian writers, such as Momaday and Silko, note that the distinct features of tribal homelands function as repositories for cultural values and beliefs.[78] Geographer Kenneth Foote observes that "the physical duration of landscape permits it to carry meaning into the future so as to help sustain memory and cultural traditions."[79] Much like Ricoeur's notion of history as acculturated externalization, Western environmentalism approaches landscapes as something objective, external, and disconnected from the self. Removal, dispossession, and imposition of ecological control disrupted the intimate relationship between people and landscape as such that, in the words of historian Tiya Miles, "the cultural values embedded in those stories could no longer be reinforced through the visible markers of place."[80] Thus, evacuating lands of tribal memory and

reconstructing them as *tabula rasa*, brought them into the fold of Western environmental history.

The context of the NPS history and philosophical underpinnings provides a rationale for the IOAT resistance to constructing a national park at Alcatraz. I echo Spence's insight that "national parks serve as a microcosm for the history of conflict and misunderstanding that has long characterized the unequal relations between the United States and native peoples."[81] The NPS proposal for Alcatraz would have simulated the historical experience of dispossession by relocating the island's Indian community and replacing it with a simulated natural environment and mythical Indian subjects. While the IOAT ecology center sought to reestablish the islands' interconnectivity with the local ecosystem and provide a model of traditional Indian ecology, the national park would construct and preserve the island's environment for the commemorative experience of non-Indian tourists. The IOAT envisioned a much different type of tribute, suggesting that "should hundreds of tourists visiting Alcatraz daily, it would become just another park, trampled and noisy…Each of our tribes identifies with mountains, rivers, valleys, deserts, and other natural landmarks. These are the only monuments we need or want."[82] With clearly divergent interests and philosophical investments, the proposals embodied a rhetorical struggle between a functional Indian ecology and a commemorative Western environmentalism. For the IOAT, embedded and functional interconnectivity defined humanity's relationship with the environment, as opposed to the capacity to transcend and control the physical world. The triumph of commemorative ecology, however, would remove an imminent American Indian presence and ecological relationship from the landscape and replace it with distant anthropocentric reverence. Symbolically and

materially, the park's commemorative ecology would deny the Indian collective memory and connection with the island.

Finally, the island's new Indian park rangers would enact the subject position of the ecological displaced. The rangers would stand outside of the physical world without mastery, control, or dominion. Like other national parks, the revamped Alcatraz Island would employ Indian workers; however, in this case they would serve as representatives of the agency historically tied to dispossession. While the presence of ecological savages would amplify the visitor's authentic encounter with racial and natural otherness, the park rangers would adopt the role of modern environmental professionals who would care for, display, and manage the island's environmental aesthetics. In the same way the rangers would provide evidence of the American Indian's ascendance from primitivism, their participation in the arrangement, display, and management of the island's ecosystem would affirm the park service's preservationist philosophy and negate the tenability of traditionalist ecologies. In their formal rejection, the occupants contended that the commemorative ecology of the NPS was a denigrating and patronizing form tribute. They wrote,

> Mr. Robertson, in his press conference concerning our meeting of March 31, presented such a pretty picture for the public of an open air park with lovely Indian statues secluded here and there among the Indian Cultural Center and Museum, with Indian guides strolling around showing people where all the birdbaths are… he public thinks this is really going to be a tribute to the American Indian, but this proposal of the government's provides for a park which will have some supervision by handpicked Indians subjected to government control and

> then from then on Alcatraz will become just another government park. Thus, we feel it is our obligation as Indians of All Tribes, Inc. and to Indian people to ask the government to submit a counter-proposal to the proposal that we gave them.[83]

The IOAT rejection embodied a refusal to participate in and facilitate the symbolic and physical dispossession of Native peoples. Whereas the park would domesticate and preserve both Indians and nature for non-Indian audiences, the IOAT refusal and counterproposal would enact a functional ecology that refused disembodiment. With final say over the parks development residing with the NPS and the Interior, Alcatraz would symbolize the triumph of Western environmental management. Symbolically and materially dispossessed, the savage qualities of the Indian landscape could be domesticated through preservation and commemoration.

Erasing the Occupation

The commemorative rhetoric and selective history employed by the federal government throughout the occupation either contained Indians in a mythic past or rendered their presence and cultural practices invisible. For this reason, the IOAT argued the government's proposal would have denied the fundamental symbolic meaning and memory of the occupation:

> We are willing to negotiate on money and the time and the day that they will turn over the deed to this island. That is all that is negotiable. There will be no park on this island because it changes the whole meaning of what we are here for. We are tired, and we are very sad that the government did not fulfill their words. While

> they speak of helping Indian people, their actions belie their words, in that they want to do our thinking for us.[84]

The IOAT rejection of the government's proposal, however, did nothing to change Robertson, Hannon, or Secretary Hickel's response. In May, the Interior department continued with its plans and transferred the island to the jurisdiction of the National Park Service.[85] During the negotiations, the Robertson argued that "[in] all this, we have not forgotten the admonition given us by the Sioux medicine man who conducted the peace-pipe ceremony on the occasion of our last visit to the Island. He said that we should never utter that which we did not mean and that which would hurt others. We have abided by his admonition in preparing this proposal."[86] Meanwhile, however, federal officials ignored the IOAT successive counterproposals and waited out the end of the occupation as the group's numbers dwindled to only a handful. After federal marshals removed the remaining occupants, on 12 June 1971 the Interior department announced plans to include Alcatraz in the Golden Gateway National Recreation Area. U.S. Attorney James L. Browning, in charge of the removal, acknowledged "some relationship" between the Interior departments preexisting park plan and the marshal's pre-dawn raid on the island. With the last occupants gone, Browning remarked, "we only want to get on with the business of developing the island." [87] Browning's comments highlighted that Euro-American and American Indian ecology and memory were hopelessly at odds with one another. The emergence of the park initiative began first as a compromise to bring a quick end to the occupation, and then transformed into a way to completely unmake the occupation and erase all signs of an Indian presence. Federal officials and the press mourned the destructive impact of the occupants on the island's infrastructure. Instead of

focusing on the issues spotlighted by the IOAT – stolen land, poverty, unemployment, health care – stories of about the their careless and violent disregard for public property dominated public discourse. Hannon remarked that "[v]andalism has made the island pretty much of a [sic] shambles" and complained that the occupants had stolen, littered, or otherwise destroyed the island.[88] Hannon even asserted that there was evidence of "drugs and accumulation of firearms."[89]

Advancing a familiar argument, the government argued that the occupants had shown no respect for public property. They "did nothing with the land" while they had it. Thus, vandalism became an ironic showcase of American Indian self-determination and ecology. Unfortunately, highlighting their defamation of the island drew attention away from the occupants' critique of Euro-American attitudes toward land and ecology. For the IOAT, the prison complex had to be demolished and removed so the island could be transformed into a center of Indian cultural life. Outrage over defamation, however, showed care and affinity for an oppressive prison structure that never once showed such affection for those it held its walls. Federal officials and the news media showed more concern for an abandoned prison complex than the people who sought to fill it with life. While political agency cannot be afforded to each act of destruction, tearing down the prison walls and dismantling government property was an embodied expression that symbolized the occupants' resistance to constructed edifices of Euro-American civilization; a reassertion of an Indian connection with place. The IOAT resisted and sought to dismantle the artificially constructed landscapes that characterized the progress of Western history and civilization. Trashing property was a radical act that dismantling the island's prison aesthetics and sought to erase the signs of colonization.

The park plan then was a remedy for, rather than a tribute to, the IOAT presence. Without formalizing any agreement over the future of the island, the Interior and NPS were under no obligation to design the park around their original proposal submitted to the IOAT. With the occupants gone and plans finalized well before the end of the occupation, on 12 June 1971 the Interior Secretary promised to secure funds from Congress immediately. Hannon suggested that the new park would include "some Indian cultural attractions," but would be designed around the prison features of the island.[90] The new park would not involve Indian input, Indian park rangers, Indian monuments, or a cultural center. With the occupants' image tarnished and public interest and support for the group at its lowest point, the government did not have to seek the Indian community's approval. The IOAT suspicions were confirmed: without holding the island they would have no ability to determine its future. Negotiations and assimilationist strategies were no longer required to neutralize the occupants' demands. Rather than using commemoration as a cipher for neutralization, the government could overtly erase the occupation, leaving behind trace remnants as a cultural attraction.

In this discussion, I have presented the myriad of ways in which the rhetorical struggle over the Alcatraz Island has consequences for the memory of Red Power and the American Indian experience in North American. Informed by the distinctions between history and memory advanced by Halbwachs and Ricoeur, it is arguable then that the federal government used the distant and dispassionate gaze of *history* to displace the emergence of a *living collective memory* at Alcatraz Island that would have made Indian demands relevant in the present. As a struggle over the interpretation of present-day social reality rather than specific details of the island's future, the exchange of proposals

between the federal government and the IOAT highlights the tensions between history and collective memory, the former always denying and diverging from the latter. From the perspective of the IOAT, Robertson's strategy of commemoration historicized the American Indian out of existence, confining modern day activists within the confines of museum glass. The strategy for the Red Power movement was to shatter the historical Indian through the evocative collective memory of traditions relevant to Indian self-determination in their present moment. The commemorative approach employed by the federal government did not respond to the demands of surviving and dynamic Indian community.

Rather than assent to the group's critique of American history, the federal government adopted a distant gaze deliberately ignorant of violence and destruction perpetrated against Indian peoples. The federal proposals ignored the degree to which history and memory were defining symbolic and structural problem for American Indian communities; a problem not easily remedied by better or worse historical representations. Without confronting racial privilege and accepting culpability for a legacy of violence, Euro-American commemorations of past American Indians could never meet their demands for social justice. While seeming reasonable and even respectful at some points, commemorative rhetoric advanced the arch of Western history to avoid an earnest discussion of ongoing atrocities and their relevance to present-day Indian communities. The IOAT resistance to a commemorative park reflected a demand for a different kind of Indian collective memory, a living memory that honored Indian cultural survival by recognizing the relevance of Indian values in the present. With the occupants removed

from the island, however, Western historical narratives would continue to masquerade as authentic collective memory.

Chapter 6: Endnotes

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Chapter 7

Legacies

Although the criticism that unfolds in this dissertation has book-ended the narrative arch of the occupation with a near simultaneous rupture and reconstitution of colonial time and space, the rhetorical legacy of Red Power exceeds its foundational enactment. Reflecting on the legacy of Red Power, Smith and Warrior make a more modest and defeatist assessment, writing that "as quickly as Indian radicalism had exploded on the national stage, it faded, disintegrating under the weight of its own internal contradictions and divisions, and a relentless assault by federal and state governments."[1] Smith and Warrior are less sanguine about the legacy of the occupation and Red Power activism; however, I want to suggest a less temporally-limited and result-oriented assessment. Even without permanently holding the island, there are ways in which the occupation and its rhetoric facilitated widespread social transformation in the American Indian world. And while not necessarily prophecy, there are cues provided in its symbolic repertoire as to what and how American Indian peoples may cultivate community empowerment beyond the genesis point of Red Power. Returning to the founding document of the occupation, there is a striking phrase interpreted throughout this dissertation that I also argue situates the imagined, existing, and enduring legacy of the occupation. The document reads,

> Further, it would be fitting and symbolic that ships from all over the world, entering the Golden Gate, would first see Indian land, and thus be reminded of the true history of this nation. This tiny island would be a symbol of the great lands once ruled by free and noble Indians.[2]

As I argued in the previous chapter, the inclusion of this phrase and other rhetoric of its kind, suggested that the IOAT sought to create a legacy beyond Alcatraz Island that, while establishing a marked relationship with a forgotten Native past, also imagined how the past may be interpreted to create a different future. Sean Kicummah Teuton argues that Red Power leaders were moved to create a different encounter with the Indian legacy in North American, writing that "the movement grew not out of romantic claims to a pure Indian past and culture, as often characterized in the mainstream, but rather through an ongoing encounter with the world as members sought to produce more enabling accounts of American Indian lives." [3] With the island as a metonymic object, reclaiming Alcatraz, even for a brief moment was about reclaiming the lives, memories, histories, experiences, communities, and land of the Native America. By shattering the expectations and conventions structuring American Indian life, the occupation resonated and reverberated throughout Indian Country in ways that forever changed what was considered possible for American Indians.

With hindsight and critical inquiry, in this dissertation I set out to identify the various modes of radical cultural transformation that emerged during the occupation, and the role played by confrontational and evocative rhetorical practices in that transformation. The rhetoric of the IOAT articulated the common frustration experienced by Indian communities, critiqued the ironies built into American colonialism, affirmed native traditionalism, positioned land (and homeland) at the center of a project of self-determination, and constructed an all-inclusive tribal identification. To the extent that the group put its ideas in motion through the rhetoric of confrontation and collective action, fashioning an empowered concept of Indian identity attuned to the modern era, they were

successful in their cause. It is important to note that Alcatraz was only one moment in a continual metamorphosis of American Indian activism and collective identity formation. When reflecting on the so-called posthumous rhetorical legacy of Red Power, the theories and events that followed the occupation point to important and lasting effects derived from the unfolding visions of the Alcatraz occupants. In this conclusion, I identify several important legacies for American Indian self-determination, as well as critical lessons and failures as it were, that emerged from the Alcatraz Island occupation and shed important light on the continual function of Red Power rhetoric.

Personal Transformations

To speak of the legacy left by the occupation is to suggest the existence of a shared relationship or identification with the past. The relationship that many in the American Indian community share with the event now serves, even as it did then, as the foundation for both personal as well as communal self-awareness. The personal transformation from disempowered individuals to valued members of a community is an important experience made possible, albeit not exclusively, through the performance of social protest. While difficult to measure at points, an important lasting legacy of the occupation is its past and continuing resonance in the personal and consequently political lives of American Indians. Enrique Larana, Hank Johnson, and Joseph R. Gusfield contend that while personal motivations and dynamics are central to emergence and development of social movement organizations, they often remain underappreciated in public discourse. In some contexts, the payoff from social activism can be found in the affective experience of collective action, identity, and agency. Put differently, participation in collective action and the resonances of confrontational messages within

vernacular communities can alter consciousness, transforming and empowering the collective and personal identity of the group. Alberto Melucci claims that through the performance of protest "what individuals are claiming collectively is the right to realize their own identity: the possibility of disposing of their personal creativity, their affective life, and their biological and interpersonal existence."[4] The personal payoff also goes beyond the participatory experience because, especially in this case, members of the community were literally *fighting for their lives*. Larana, Johnson, Gusfield write that social movements often "involve personal and intimate aspects of human life" that "extend into arenas of daily life: what we ear, wear, and enjoy; how we make love, cope with personal problems, or plan or shun careers."[5] To the extent that the rhetoric of protest provided an empowering experience, enabled collective catharsis, changed a community's self-image, or otherwise transformed their lives for the better, it can be said to be effective.

When occupation participants and other Indian activists speak of the legacies of Red Power, they often discuss their own personal transformation, and consequently describe a political experience of cultural rebirth. After learning about the takeover of Alcatraz in November of 1969, George Horse Capture recalls,

> It caught us all unawares; previous to this time, we had struggled quietly to survive as the government and state forces continued to take over Indian land or attempt to negate and abrogate our treaties. We had only just fended off termination, and suddenly the headlines screamed "Takeover." Wow! I remember reading about it at the breakfast table as I prepared to depart for work. I sat there stunned, unable to believe that we could get together and do such a thing – but

> here it was…It suddenly occurred to me that this was a key point in Indian history. No matter what happened, the Indian world would never be the same after this. Indian people were declaring their independence, challenging the status quo, taking chances, being committed, being warriors; none of these things is new to our race, but they have been absent of late, or forgotten. As each day passed, I became closer and closer to the situation, and I began to feel the superficiality of my present life. I knew it would be better for my children in the long run if I had at least explored this "Indian" alternative. So, one weekend, I went down to the bay, where the boats from the island landed, parked my car, and walked over to the wharf. Because of my dark hair and skin, I was immediately welcomed and accepted. I jumped down onto the small island-bound boat. Riding to the island, the refreshing spray of the bay splashing in my face, I felt, for the first time in decades, as if I belonged, as if I were home. There was no ridicule among us tribal people, only laughter. I knew I would never be the same again.[6]

Horse Capture's extended conversion narrative typifies the personal and political transformation that the architects of the occupation sought to evoke from the American Indian world. Present in this passage and his more extended reminiscence is Horse Capture's ambivalent frustration with his life experience in the Euro-American world and induction into a new yet familiar community. For many like Horse Capture who were disconnected from their reservation home, the symbolism of the event, the courageous actions of its participants, and confrontational messages of ethnic pride provoked both critical self-reflection and personal transformation. By articulating the collective frustration, hopes, and dormant pride of American Indians of *all tribes* trying to survive

in a Euro-American world, Red Power rhetoric called its community into being. The supratribal identification constructed by the IOAT offered their audience a new perspective with which to encounter the world and, in the process, membership in community.

Featuring tales of personal metamorphosis, much reminisce of the occupation shares many common features with Horse Capture's narrative. Many participants and sympathetic audiences recollect feeling out of place in some fashion or even spiritually lost before the seizure of the island. Likewise, either their participation in or affective response to the occupation awakened their conscious and changed their life in a way that made them feel, for lack of better words, "saved." In her Alcatraz narrative, LaNada Boyer detailed what she called her first truly spiritual or mystical experience while occupying the island. Narrating a near death experience on the island, Boyer writes, "I lifted my hands to the sun and prayed as it rose over the Bay Bridge in the east. I experienced a deep knowledge inside me that I would be all right."[7] Grace Thorpe explained that she was so moved when she heard word of the occupation that she put her furniture in storage and spent her life savings to make it to Alcatraz. Wilma Mankiller explained that after visiting Alcatraz she experienced an awakening that, in her words, "ultimately changed the course of my life."[8] The reflections and personal memoirs concerning Alcatraz highlight the very personal and spiritual nature of collective action typically characterized as public or political. Personal experiences of protest and confrontation, such as those at Alcatraz, transform individuals by offering voice and membership in something larger than themselves. Even for those present on the island, the event changed their idea of what Indians were capable.

Collective identity is also a process of transformation, rather than a finished product or discrete object. To this end, the rhetoric at Alcatraz initiated a process of collective maturation, or how a burgeoning community would shape the world in which they lived. Activist Lenny Foster describes the occupation as the political and spiritual moment of awakening in which Indians became activists and activists transformed into a movement. He writes,

> We were becoming Indian activists, and it was time to reclaim our Indian dignity. The Indian Nation had awakened…My participation in the American Indian Movement solidified my spirituality: I believe it was my fate to be part of this movement, and it was our destiny to go to Alcatraz in 1969… The movement returned and spirituality to Indian people. Beginning with Alcatraz on 19 November 1969, we got back our worth, our pride, our humanity; the prophecy was fulfilled that the Red Nation would occupy its rightful place as the caretaker of Mother Earth.[9]

With his emphasis on the abstract and very personal dynamics of spirituality, Foster provides an insight into a subtle victory for the occupants: *solidifying the spirit.* Here Foster identifies the group's emphasis on recovering traditional tribal religions and practices, and the ways in which asserting their demands reclaimed a sense of the sacred. Put differently, by expressing a concept of spirituality, the groups protest enacted or reclaimed the dignity destroyed through slow acquiescence to Euro-American colonialism. Red Power rhetoric, by placing spirituality and homeland at its center, evoked the lost traditional spirituality that once defined tribal identity. The legacy of the occupation can be understood in terms of its identity function: the rhetoric of the IOAT

transformed ingrained self-loathing, apathy, and frustration into an empowered image of Indianness fashioned for a modern era.

Rhetorical Challenges

The rhetoric that emerged at Alcatraz Island highlights two important problems, or recurring challenges, that were interrogated in this dissertation. First, the occupant's rhetoric created identification with militancy and confrontation. This rhetoric broke with the immediate past that valued silence and stoicism as a virtue of Indian culture. It instead recovered tactics of resistance traditions that framed Indian activism by metaphors of guerrilla warfare. Militant confrontation was framed as a tactic of survival, a last stand against colonialism and assimilation. Oakes remarks that "ten years from now, there may not be anybody out on the reservation to retain our culture and to be able to relate it."[10] While the 1969 occupation would involve different argumentation justifications and activist tactics, Dick McKenzie captured the new radical thinking that then dominated the thinking of young militants when he argued that "Kneel-Ins, Sit-Ins, Sleep-Ins, Eat-Ins, Pray-Ins, like the Negroes do won't help us. We would have to occupy the government buildings before things would change."[11] While it may be convenient to argue that Indian activism emerges out of the 60's protest culture in the Bay Area, it is important to take notice of the subtle elaborations and articulations that distinguish Indian tactics of resistance from that of the Civil Rights movement, Black Power, and other protest movements. The tactics of other movements were influential to American Indians, yet those tactics were suited for the particular historical exigency of those movements. The concept of occupation, the symbolic reclamation of physical space, was the most salient

tactic for American Indians because it was iconic of the struggle of invasion and repulsion that characterized the expansion of Euro-American civilization and Indian resistance to its drive. What's more, the goal of occupation was not to ascertain political rights or formal legal equality. Militancy was linked with expelling Euro-Americans from Indian affairs and land. Wallace "Mad Bear" Anderson reflected Indians of his time did "not want to be absorbed by a sick society."[12]

Militancy was reflected in the founding document of the occupation. Although the first occupation relied on the clever legal interpretation of Sioux attorney Elliot Leighton, it is clear from the text of the proclamation that this movement was not interested in fighting its battle within the norms, rules, and procedures of Euro-American society. They desire a different space, a rhetorical culture evacuated of Euro-American values and laws. Instead of leveraging the Fort Laramie Treaty, this movement claimed that "We, the Native Americans, re-claim the land know as Alcatraz Island in the name of all American Indians by right of discovery." This language certainly violated the cautions of the NCAI to perform as "good citizens" and hold to high democratic principles. This statement subverted the rationality of the law itself by arguing that the island was never a Euro-American possession. This also reflects the emergence of what Mel Thom called "the Indian way" of activism, which in the face of Euro-American oppression held to "high principles derived from the values and beliefs of our ancestors" and "rules based on Indian thinking."[13]

The militancy of Red Power, however, created its own exigencies which required careful attention. First, by rejecting any ethic of compromise or accepting Euro-American norms, at points the occupants were locked into an inflexible position whereby neither

they, nor federal officials, could give ground. This was militancy inspired Bob Robertson to lament that the occupants were wholly irrational and possessed no sense or faculty of reason.[14] As Deloria suggests, Euro-American and American Indian cultures approach politics with differing interpretations of rationality, the former preferring expediency, individualism, and compromise and the latter desiring consensus, holism, and communal goods. These cultural orientations clashed in the negotiation process as they had in the inner city of San Francisco. Militancy affirmed and empowered Indian civic life; however, it did not move federal officials to change. This tension highlights the fundamental audience dynamic at work in Red Power rhetoric. Such rhetoric is directed at constituting an Indian community and exercising political agency. As I have argued, the most significant affect of the occupation relates to community empowerment, not necessarily possession of Alcatraz. To be sure, the occupants did desire a space of self-determination; however, self-determination starts by enacting that autonomy within one's own community. The rhetorical culture of Red Power operates from a different concept of political efficacy. It does not privilege the type of rationality and political expediency preferred by Robertson and federal policy-makers. The challenge, then, of the occupants rhetoric was to create a new identity for American Indian imbued with political agency that also eventually produced substantive arrangement that change American Indians lives.

Second, militancy split two generations of Indian activists. The rhetoric of the occupants reflected the movement's urban youth bias. They were loud, boisterous, messy, angry, and disorganized. Intelligent and savvy, they lacked the organization skills and procedures of even the very radical NIYC nonetheless. They bristled at the compositional

and organizational elements of movement activism that required leadership and authority. Many of the occupants defined themselves in opposition to the older generation of those "stand-around-the-fort" Indians at the NCAI. Some even rejected authority so much that they even resented Oakes, the architect of the occupation. More than rejecting the invaluable organizational and financial help offered by older and more established Indian leaders, they at some points betrayed their expressed commitment to the *Indians of All Tribes.* What's more, the anarchical conditions at various times on the island reflected the rejection of *any* norms and procedures for communal governance. Rejection of the "organizational types" did not produce the radical freedom that Warrior had theorized in 1967 that would make Indians no longer "sold or coerced into accepting programs for our own good."[15] The lesson was that the militancy of Red Power functioned best when it was attached to a political project that reflected the values of Indian civic culture.

While factionalism plagued the island at many points, Robert K. Berkhofer contends that American Indians may "differ among themselves over what their desired future is, but most of their leaders see Indianness continuing to be separate from mainstream Americanism."[16] This idea is in part responsible for the rhetoric of pan-Indian unity featured prominently throughout the occupation. Even at the most divisive times, the occupants made it clear that the occupation was about unifying Indians from *all tribes*. The rhetoric was an empowering response to the detribailization process at work in policies of termination and relocation. The occupants sought to negotiate their historical differences - even hatred and animosity - in order to form a community capable of resisting a common source of oppression. Collective pronouns redefined Bay Area Indian problems, such as the fate of Alcatraz development, as universal American Indian

problems that required collective struggle. As a first step at constructing collective identity, this rhetoric constructed a new collective Indian community that cut against the practices of assimilation and relocation. The collective framing of Indian fate was directed at breaking down tribal isolation and allowing Indians to draw strength from one another.

While pan-Indian rhetoric was poetic, artful, and deeply meaningful, it also posed a daunting challenge for the occupants. First, prior to termination, American Indians did not conceive of themselves as a distinct racial or ethnic group in the same way as other minority groups. In fact the term "Indian," as broad referent for the indigenous people of North America, was a European invention "as a way of differentiating aborigine from European."[17] Berkhofer explains that the concept of collective ethnic identity was troubled by the Euro-American construction of Indian peoples as an indistinguishable aggregate:

> Since the original inhabitants of the Western Hemisphere neither called themselves by a single term not understood themselves as a collectivity, the idea and the image of the Indian must be a White conception. Native Americans were and are real, but the *Indian* was a White invention and still remains largely a White image, if not stereotype. According to a modern view of the matter, the idea of the Indian in *general* is a White image or stereotype because it does not square with present-day conceptions of how those peoples called Indians lived and saw themselves.[18]

While whites categorized Indians as a collective for descriptive and analytical purposes, the then-existing indigenous peoples of North America were comprised of nearly two

thousand distinct cultures and societies with diverse customs, rituals, religions, and language. Nagel argues that "the uniformity implied by the common label "Indian" reflected the singleness of purpose in European, and later American social, economic, political, and military dealings with the varied indigenous communities they confronted: an unrelenting demand for native land and resources."[19] What's worse is that federal Indian policy after the Dawes Act was directed at "detribalizing" Indian Country by individualizing land ownership to enable the transformation of reservations into assimilated American communities. Allotment is but another example of how breaking down tribal barriers served Euro-American goals of assimilation rather than collective mobilization.[20] What's more, while pan-Indian resistances had been tactically deployed by Indians in the past, they were provisional and temporary, never achieving the grand vision expressed by the occupants.

Life and Lessons after Alcatraz

While many were uncertain what would follow the occupation, the IOAT expressed concern about the future of activism after Alcatraz. Self-reflective about the group's youth, Richard Oakes told reporters that "we're only young people concerned about our future…These are the future leaders of most of these tribes…and we might – might – just wake up the conscience of America."[21] While Oakes did not live to witness and likely participate in the national movement that emerged in the 1970's, in part his words and deeds inspired his colleagues and future tribal leaders to fight on behalf of self-determination. While at points critical of the IOAT, Deloria explains that as a symbol, Alcatraz marked the beginning of a national cultural rebirth. He argues,

> Alcatraz became the focal point of Indian protest and the inspiration of Indians everywhere. Many Indians regarded the capture of Alcatraz as the beginning of a new movement to recapture the continent and assert tribal independence from the United States, and it was finally this issue that Alcatraz came to symbolize.[22]

Further, the Alcatraz occupation was unique in that it put the issue of land reclamation and treaty rights at the forefront of Indian activism. During and immediately after the occupation, Indian activists followed the direct action model of the IOAT and occupied federal surplus lands, abandon military bases, and national monuments at sites all across America. Similar occupations by groups espousing pan-Indian ideals at Pitt River, Fort Lawson, Stanley Island, Plymouth Rock, Mt. Rushmore, and Wounded Knee point to the immediate symbolic resonance of the seizure of Alcatraz. Learning of the occupation in national headlines and *Akwesasne Notes*, Indian activists across the country were clearly inspired by the IOAT to take power through direct action.

While some occupations provide clear evidence of reception, they do not necessarily demonstrate the most significant symbolic impact of Alcatraz nor do they provide evidence of the emergence of a national movement. While guided by important principles, model occupations were sporadic at best, lacked badly-needed national coordination, and did not incorporate important lessons learned at Alcatraz Island. For example, these occupations featured land reclamation as their central tenet without addressing the fundamental legal issues and sovereignty questions left unresolved by the IOAT and their lawyers. The IOAT were fortunate enough to have garnered the leverage necessary to even receive attention and resources at the federal level, let alone to have entered into negotiations without a preexisting legal relationship with the federal

government. Arguments concerning the enforcement of treaty rights received an unsympathetic reception from the federal government because existing treaties lacked any formal guidelines for land reclamation. Even in instances in which the occupant's claims were perhaps just, their statutory interpretations were misguided. These activists failed to notice that the IOAT had exchanged the legalistic appeals to Fort Laramie Treaty for a more irreverent and abstract interpretation of inherent sovereignty in part because the document did not support their claims. The treaty process itself had to be entirely reevaluated. Some tribal leaders interested in the land issue split with younger activists to pursue land claims through formal legal venues established by the Indian Claims Commission which had and were likely to yield more immediate and tangible benefits in the future. The occupations following Alcatraz failed to think beyond the moment of direct action, to the second or third phase of the movement which would necessarily involve negotiating the complicated legal relationship between the tribes and the federal government. Much in the same way that collective identity can be understood as a process, occupations, image events, and direct actions should help put into motion larger social transformations characterized by evolution, maturation, and adaptation. Put differently, the means of the transformation should not be conflated with its ends. While striking visions of recolonization, occupations alone could neither rewrite treaties nor facilitate large scale land reclamation.

While their results may have been mixed, the direct action model established at Alcatraz did serve as an important catalyst for other local and national groups seeking to defend tribal rights and lands. By 1972, the Alcatraz occupation was overshadowed by the rise of confrontations between AIM and law enforcement. Incidents, including

violence, between AIM members and police across the country were increasingly frequent from 1972 to 1975, including some of the most remote parts of Indian Country. In February of 1972 AIM members seized the town of Gordon, Nebraska to protest law enforcement's failure to prosecute the murder of Oglala ranch hand Raymond Yellow Thunder. Yellow Thunder had been beaten severely, stripped naked, and paraded through a local dance hall, and left for dead by a group of intoxicated men. AIM members were outraged by the unwillingness of law enforcement to pursue murder and assault cases involving Indian victims, as well as what they considered the de fact sanctioning of racial violence directed against American Indians. A rash of other unprosecuted Indian murders in California and Arizona, combined with unresponsiveness on behalf of the Justice Department, provoked AIM members and other activists to pursue a national audience and march on Washington D.C. as the Civil Rights movement had successful done in 1963. Anti-Indianism was palpable. Unfortunately, AIM would not experience the degree of success as African Americans had a decade earlier.

After drafting plans in the summer, in October 1972 AIM organized a national caravan to begin on the West Coast and move east to Washington D.C., picking up Indians and momentum along the way. Calling the event "The Trail of Broken Treaties," the caravan was intended to generate national publicity, build unity, and seek federal concessions in the last weeks of the 1972 Presidential election. The caravan's founding document, "The Twenty Points," demanded, among other things, a new framework for evaluating existing treaty commitments and the status of federal-tribal relations. The Twenty Points was a remarkable document, that while direct and confrontational, built on nascent demands of the IOAT to place treaties at the center of federal-tribal relations (the

sixth point demanded that all tribes be governed by treaties). While lacking comic stylization, the Twenty Points evolved and elaborated the ideas that emerged from Alcatraz. The document showed clear legal acumen and embodied a holistic notion that treaties had to be reconceptualized yet provided a logical method to establish a just relationship between the federal government and tribal nations. Further, the Twenty Points resonated with reservation communities who were frequently the target of legal violation and redefinition. Deloria notes that the Twenty Points "were extremely accurate in their assessment of the feelings of Indians around the nation."[23] Many tribal members – trusting neither the federal nor their tribal government – desired a clear and less complicated set of guidelines and governing procedures for tribal issues at a federal level. Whether intentional or otherwise, the Twenty Points bridged gaps between urban and reservation communities by addressing a common set of concerns thus establishing common points of identification and agreement. What's more, traveling the Twenty Points through both urban and rural parts of Indian Country created a common sense of purpose absent at moments during the Alcatraz occupation. The architects of The Trail of Broken Treaties extended the Red Power notion of tribal unity with arguably a more advanced and nuanced understanding of federal treaty law.

Underestimating the Enemy

Following the Trail of Broken Treaties, AIM's confrontational politics and national recognition attracted the attention of those in federal law enforcement concerned about the emerging threat of domestic dissent. In some cases, radical confrontation "draws out the enemy" so to speak, forcing the system to display its cruelty and injustice

thus vindicating the movement's position. Robert L. Scott and Donald K. Smith observe that "the confronter who prompts violence in the language or behavior of another has found his collaborator. 'Show us how ugly you really are," he says, and the enemy with dogs and cattle prods, or police billies and mace, complies" and in turn, "gratifies the adherents of those presuppositions, and turns the power-enforced victory of the establishment into a symbolic victory for its opponents."[24] Unfortunately, after confrontations at the BIA headquarters and Wounded Knee, AIM and many other Red Power activists drastically underestimated the severity and scale of the federal response. Law enforcement was all too willing to show their ugly side; however, in many cases their efforts to neutralize Red Power successfully disrupted the movement's cohesion and resources all the while denying the rhetorical currency of confrontation. Complicating the symbolic payoff of drawing out the enemy, federal law enforcement was able to successfully disrupt AIM by controlling the reception of its rhetoric and public image. AIM's confrontational politics and growing membership quickly attracted the attention of national law enforcement agencies, particularly the Federal Bureau of Investigation, charged with the diffusing domestic political dissent. Under the FBI's counterintelligence program (COINTELPRO), radical or revolutionary political organizations such as the AIM, the Black Panther Party, the Communist Party, the New Left, the Puerto Rican Independence Movement, and even right-wing organizations such as the Ku Klux Klan and the American Nazi Party were targeted for infiltration, surveillance, and disruption. Some scholars observe that COINTELPRO and other related programs were particularly effective at neutralization because they also incorporated insights from foreign counter-intelligence programs that utilized public relations techniques to win the "hearts and

minds of the public" by controlling the available public interpretations of radical activism.[25] In AIM's case, law enforcement took active steps to distort their so-called "warrior persona" as a call to terrorist violence and communist revolution.[26] Efforts to disrupt AIM had a profound impact on the last legacy of Red Power activism.

Several events following the Trail of Broken Treaties provoked a strong, and certainly underestimated, display of force by the federal government against Indian activists. The climax of the Trail of Broken Treaties was an improvised occupation of the Bureau of Indian Affairs in Washington D.C. Although an occupation was not planned, when caravan participants were harassed by guards at the BIA building on 3 November 1972, the fearful group seized the building in self-defense. The occupation lasted but a weekend yet the group had nearly destroyed the building with some damage estimates in the millions of dollars.[27] Of particular interest to the BIA were a number of documents stolen by the occupants. After a settlement was negotiated by Hank Adams, caravan participants received $66,000 in travel money to return home and a promise that the BIA would seriously take the Twenty Points under consideration. Much as was the case at Alcatraz, the government and the news media focused on the activists' destruction of property rather than their frustrations and concerns. In Congressional hearings the next month, the House Subcommittee on Indian Affairs held a hearing on the occupation, concerned mostly with property damage and a the few non-representative "bad apples" responsible for the direct action. The Nixon administration did finally respond to the Twenty Points yet it was only to note the administration's previous accomplishments and reject the idea that treaties could govern tribal affairs in light of Indian enfranchisement

in the early twentieth century. It was at this point that AIM, already the target of federal criminal investigation, grew increasingly impatient and recalcitrant.

The 1973 stand-off at Wounded Knee in Pine Ridge, South Dakota is the most iconic event in the history of Red Power activism. On the behest of residents of the Oglala Sioux nation, AIM activists returning from the Trail of Broken Treaties became entangled in a bitter feud between traditionalists and members of the elected tribal government of Richard "Dick" Wilson. Feeling that Wilson's government was corrupt and abusive, Pine Ridge residents asked for AIM's assistance. Wilson had already banned AIM activities on the reservations and allegedly used a personal security force to harass political opponents and AIM sympathizers. With tensions escalating, on 28 February 1973 Russell Means and Dennis Banks led AIM members in an occupation of the historic site of the 1890 Wounded Knee Massacre and declared Oglala an independent nation. Federal marshals and tribal police barricaded the site and both sides fortified in preparation for violence. The result was a seventy-two stand-off between AIM traditionalists and law enforcement marked by daily gunfire from both sides, resulting in the death of two AIM members and the severe injury of one federal marshal. During the stand-off, the federal government showed an overwhelming display of police and even military force that, according to John Williams Sayer, included "fifteen armored personal carriers, clothing, rifles, grenade launchers, flares, and 133,000 rounds of ammunition, for a total cost, including the use of maintenance personnel from the national guard of five states and planes for aerial photographs, of over half a million dollars."[28]

The clash prompted an increased federal law enforcement presence throughout Indian Country in the years that followed and a sustained, effective effort to diffuse the

movement's strength through the courts. The legal trails following the Wounded Knee occupation sapped the movement's strength and financial resources. Although seldom resulting in convictions, the Wounded Knee trails effectively disrupted the movement's momentum, divided its membership, and drained its monetary coffers. In 1975, the movement was dealt its final and most devastating set back when a shoot-out involving AIM members near Pine Ridge resulted in the deaths of two FBI agents. While considered fraudulent by many movement members, Leonard Peltier's conviction for the murders tarnished AIM's public reputation and overshadowed the more positive and empowering messages offered by Red Power activists. By this point, the symbolic value of confrontation showed diminishing returns; the system had shown its ugly side yet demonstrated resilience and adaptability to Indian resistance, leaving many to conclude that Red Power was a naïve and amateurish distraction from the real work of self-determination. Though able to limit institutional responses at Alcatraz, the introduction of sophisticated law enforcement countermeasures into the struggle over the future of Indian Country proved too powerful and protean to continue to resist through direct action.

Wounded Knee was a troubling event for law enforcement, paranoid that foreign insurgency had migrated back home from Vietnam. Two FBI Agents in charge of the siege and subsequent investigations, Special Agents John and Joseph Trimbach, recently published a cavalier tell-all book in which they argue that contrary to their rhetoric, AIM was a tightly-run mafia, or domestic terrorist group, committed indiscriminate violence and murder under the guise of Indian liberation.[29] Lacking strong evidence for this claim, this book highlights little about AIM's supposed terrorist activities but speaks volumes about the FBI's perception of the movement's legacy. In this vein, Trimbach and

Trimbach provide perhaps unintended insights as to the reasons the FBI devoted an overwhelming amount of time and resources into disrupting and discrediting the movement. The FBI presence throughout Indian Country from 1973-1975 not only undermined the movement, but discredited future Indian activists seeking radical change outside of approved legal channels.

Beyond Red Power

The setbacks in the years following Alcatraz do not necessarily enable a hindsight assessment of failure. In 1969, the same year the occupation of Alcatraz began, Scott and Smith introduced a theoretical perspective they argued was suited to the rhetoric and discontent of the era. With update and elaboration, their insights on confrontation provide a useful insight into the ongoing legacy of indigenous struggle today. They write that "a rhetorical theory suitable to our age must take into account the charge that civility and decorum serve as masks for the preservation of injustice, that they condemn the dispossessed to non-being, and that as transmitted in a technological society they become instrumentalities of power for those who 'have.'"[30] Thought of through this perspective, Red Power can be appreciated in a modern context for the ways in which it laid a foundation for an advanced social critique of Euro-American colonialism and opened inventive pathways to resist the reduction of Native identity to "non-being." Highlighted by his study of what he calls the contemporary "red power novel," Tueton writes "the revived interest in the recovery of Indian cultural identity and homelands, which consumes contemporary Native culture, derives directly from the intellectual and political vision of Red Power."[31] I argue that Red Power set the agenda for the future, establishing

what was important to the survival of traditional Native communities in a modern context. Red Power rhetoric broke down barriers between Native communities and suggested new directions for indigenous activism. Rhetorical critics and theorists must stay attuned to the seriousness and intellectual veracity of indigenous critique and struggle as it continually pushes its audience to re-imagine the political possibilities of their time, outside of the judgment of the "haves."

The struggle for Red Power is not over. Present day activists have advanced their arguments into new forums and made great strides in evolving self-determination. In late 2007, a group of American Indian delegates of the International Indian Treaty Council, including Alcatraz participant Lenny Foster, successfully presented evidence of ongoing mistreatment, racism, and colonialism permeating American Indian lives to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.[32] The 87-page report included some of the strongest criticism leveraged against the United States to be recognized by an international body. The introduction reads,

> [T]he colonialist policies of racial subjugation have not ended for the Indigenous Peoples in the United States (US). Under US constitutional doctrine first established in the early 1800's, Indigenous Peoples can be unilaterally deprived of their lands and resources without due process of law and without compensation; indigenous governments can be terminated or stripped of their rightful authority at the whim of the federal government and their lands "allocated" as "surplus lands." Treaties made between Indigenous Peoples and the Colonialist governments and the Successor State may be arbitrarily abrogated. Religious freedoms and religious practice, Sacred Lands and the cultural integrity of Indigenous Peoples

> go virtually unprotected. The data reveals "a system of Apartheid and forced assimilation," where Indigenous Peoples are "warehoused in poverty and neglect" in the United States. The racism permeates Indian life, including life at its foundation, at American Indian sacred places.[33]

Resembling a Red Power manifesto, the document condemns the ongoing practices of racial discrimination and dispossession that continually undermine American Indian self-determination; including identifying the lasting impact of the doctrine of discovery, the trust doctrine, and Congressional plenary power. The issues fundamental to the IOAT – land, treaty rights, self-determination – are timeless concerns still relevant in the present moment. Moving the struggle to the international arena has evolved the Red Power vision to reach new audiences, facilitate global connections among indigenous peoples, and take advantage of new rhetorical forums outside of the traditional avenues of political change in the United States.

The lineage of the campaign of the International Indian Treaty Council has its roots in the Red Power-era. The IOAT devoted a great deal of space in their newsletters to spotlighting the genocide of indigenous peoples in Brazil, and while concerned primarily with recolonizing North American, spoke of the need for unity amongst all Indians. Although it was short-lived, the Alcatraz occupation and Wounded Knee grabbed headlines and garnered sympathy across the globe. At Wounded Knee, AIM attracted international attention when it declared Oglala an independent nation. Their rhetoric made strong appeals to the international oppression of indigenous peoples at the hands of Euro-American colonizers. Deloria observes that "Wounded Knee marked the first sustained modern protest by aboriginal peoples against the Western European

interpretation of history…In their declaration of independence, the Oglala Sioux spoke to the world about freedom for all aboriginal peoples from the tyranny of Western European thought, values, and interpretations of man's experience."[34] As some in the indigenous world or the international "fourth world" gained strength after World War II, national movements for self-determination and decolonization transformed the international order by throwing off the yoke of Western colonialism and gaining recognition by international bodies such as the United Nations. Indigenous groups have yet to transform the global order in the same way, but opportunities exist at the international level to rethink the concept of state sovereignty responsible for a history of Western colonization. A number of scholars argue that the international phase of American Indian activism may still yield results.[35]

Red Power rhetoric is not an anachronism. AIM chapters and hundreds of other Indian organizations are still defending Native rights and fighting for self-determination at the state, federal, and global level. Bay Area Indians still celebrate the anniversary of the occupation every November. Ritualized messages directed at cultural empowerment and collective identity still contain the power to transform the Indian world at the level of both macro and microcosm. Legacy is not about result but affect; power over self, not others; and transformation not stasis or regression. Traditional practices will always be relevant to the American Indian world, and while the methods may change, the concept of the sacred is always present. Traces of Red Power continue to affect and interpenetrate the future. The courageous acts and inventive rhetoric of the IOAT serve as an ongoing reminder that Indians are capable of acting as agents of change, and that for a brief period

of time enacted a rhetorical vision of Indian life that will forever remain a living icon of "the great lands once ruled by free and noble Indians."

Chapter 7: Endnotes

[1] Paul Chaat Smith and Robert Allen Warrior, *Like a Hurricane: The Indian Movement from Alcatraz to Wounded Knee* (New York: The New Press, 1996), 269.
[2] Indians of All Tribes, "Proclamation the Great White Father and His People" *Alcatraz Newsletter* 1, issue 1, (January 1970), 1.
[3] Sean Kicummah Teuton, *Red Land, Red Power: Grounding Knowledge in the American Indian Novel* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008), 3.
[4] Alberto Melucci, "The New Social Movements: A Theoretical Approach," *Social Science Information* 19 (1980), 199-226, 218.
[5] Hank Johnston, Enrique Larana, and Joseph Gusfield, "Identity, Grievances, and New Social Movements" *New Social Movements: From Ideology to Identity* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994), 8.
[6] George P. Horse Capture, "From the Reservation to the Smithsonian via Alcatraz," in Troy Johnson, Joane Nagel, and Duane Champagne, *American Indian Activism: Alcatraz to the Longest Walk* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 143-144.
[7] LaNada Boyer, "Reflections of Alcatraz," in Johnson, Nagel, and Champagn, *American Indian Activism*, 95.
[8] Thorpe and Mankiller interviewed in Johnson, Nagel, and Champagn, *American Indian Activism*, 30.
[9] Lenny Foster, "Alcatraz id Not an Island," in Johnson, Nagel, and Champagn, *American Indian Activism*, 138.
[10] Richard Oakes interviewed in *El Grito* (November 1970), 1.
[11] Richard McKenzie quoted in Steiner, *New Indians*, 45.
[12] Wallace Anderson quoted in Steiner, *New Indians*, 45.
[13] Thom, "Greater," 1.
[14] See Dean J. Kotlowski, "Alcatraz, Wounded Knee, and Beyond: The Nixon and Ford Administrations Respond to Native American Protest, *Pacific Historical Review* 72, no. 2 (2003), 201–227.
[15] Clyde Warrior, "Free," 20.
[16] Robert K. Berkhofer, *TheWhite Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from the Columbus to Present* (New York: Vintage, 1979), 190-191.
[17] Hazel Hertzberg, *The Search for an American Indian Identity: Modern Pan-Indian Movements* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1971), 2.
[18] Berkhofer, *White Man's*, 3.
[19] Nagel, *Ethnic Renewal*, 3.
[20] D'arcy McNickle, *Native American Tribalism: Indian Survival and Renewals*, (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1973), xx.
[21] Quoted in Lynn Ludlow, "Oakes has one goal for Alcatraz: Unity," *San Francisco Chronicle* (7 December 1969), A1.
[22] Vine Deloria Jr. *Behind the Trail of Broken Treaties: An Indian Declaration of Independence* (Austin: University of Texas Press), 37-38.
[23] Deloria, *Broken Treaties*, 53.
[24] Robert L. Scott and David K. Smith, "The Rhetoric of Confrontation," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 55 (1969), 8, 1-9.
[25] See David Cunningham, "Understanding State Responses to Left-versus Right-wing Threats: The FBI's Repression of the New Left and the Ku Klux Klan," *Social Science History* 27 (2003), 327-370; and David Cunningham, "The Pattern of Repression: FBI Counterintelligence and the New Left," *Social Forces* 82 (2003), 209-240.
[26] Casey Ryan Kelly, "Rhetorical Counterinsurgency: The FBI and the American Indian Movement," *Advances in the History of Rhetoric* 10 (2007), 223-58.
[27] Deloria provides evidence that the damage done during the occupation was the result of agent-provocateurs already embedded in AIM by the FBI to discredit the organization. For more see Deloria, *Trail*, 57.
[28] John William Sayer, *Ghost Dancing the Law: The Wounded Knee Trails* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), 146. Also see Steve Henricks, *The Unquiet Grave: The FBI and the Struggle for the Soul of Indian Country* (New York: Thunder's Mouth Press, 2006), 132-133.

[29] Joseph H. Trimbach and John M. Trimbach, *American Indian Mafia: An FBI Agent's True Story about Wounded Knee, Leonard Peltier, and the American Indian Movement (AIM)* (Denver, CO: Outskirts Press, 2007).
[30] Scott and Smith, "Confrontation," 8.
[31] Teuton, *Red Land*, 4.
[32] Brenda Norrell, "US Apartheid of Indigenous Peoples documented in UN report," *Atlantic Free Press* (18 January 2008), accessed April 9, 2009 at http://www.atlanticfreepress.com/content/view/3258/81/.
[33] Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, *Examination of the United States 4th, 5th, and 6th Periodic Reports of April, 2007: Racial Discrimination Against Indigenous Peoples in the United States Consolidated Indigenous Shadow Report*, accessed April 9, 2009 at http://www.treatycouncil.org/PDFs/ CERD_US_Indigenous_ Shadow_ Report%20amended.pdf.
[34] Deloria, *Trail*, 80-81.
[35] See Jeff Corntassel, "Self-Determination: Rethinking the Contemporary Indigenous-Rights Discourse," *Alternatives* 33 (2008), 105-132; Timo Koivurova, "From High Hopes to Disillusionment: Indigenous Peoples' Struggle to (re)Gain their Right to Self-Determination," *International Journal on Minority and Group Rights* 15 (2008), 1-26. Duane Champagne, "From First Nations to Self-Government: A Political Legacy of Indigenous Nations in the United States," *American Behavioral Scientist* 51 (2008), 1672-1693; Craig Scott, "Indigenous Self-Determination and Decolonization of the International Imagination: A Plea," *Human Rights Quarterly* 18 (1996), 814-820; and Abdulgaffar Peang-meth, "The Rights of Indigenous Peoples and Their Fight for Self-Determination," *World Affairs* 164 (2002), 101-115.

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