

Protecting Those Most Vulnerable: Building Beloved Families and Communities

To End Violence Against Native Women, Girls and Mother Earth

by

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A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

Approved April 2015 by the
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ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

May 2015

ABSTRACT

Tewa Women United (TWU) is a Native women-founded, centered and run organization located in northern New Mexico, in the original boundaries of the Tewa homelands.

TWU is the only independent Native women's non-profit organization providing direct services, advocacy and prevention services in the Pojoaque-Española Valley area within Northern Santa Fe and Rio Arriba Counties. TWU believes in building beloved families and communities to end all forms of violence against women, girls and Mother Earth and have been working for the past 25 years toward fulfillment of this vision. This dissertation, including a journal article, book chapter, and policy red paper, looks at what happens when Pueblo/ Tewa women become active agents in resistance to the Colonial-White Supremacist Capitalist Scientist Patriarchy. In these distinct dissertation pieces, I examine how TWU has developed a theory of *Opide* (pronounced Oh-Peh-dee) and Research Methodology to design and implement culturally responsive programs and projects which support ending violence against Pueblo/ Tewa women, girls and Mother Earth. In this instance looking at a campaign and project that Tewa Women United has developed: The *Protect Those Most Vulnerable Campaign* under the Environmental Justice and Health Program and *A'gin Healthy Sexuality and Body Sovereignty* project under the Women's Leadership and Economic Freedom Program. *Opide* means braiding and weaving together, it is a theory of practice to action.

DEDICATION

u vi a'gin di, before I begin this dissertation I would like to offer respect to all my relatives, those living and non-living, the two legged, the four-legged and the winged ones. I am sure the thoughts and recollections that I put down here may not be as others recall or remember. While I may not name names or give proper recognitions, I am grateful to so many that I cannot name everyone here. There are so many who have contributed in positive and in challenging ways to my process of *always becoming*, to the growth and evolution of how I see the world and what I attempt to describe and, most importantly, what we have attempted to co-create. My intention is to further the healing of my community. My hope is to spark critical reflection and dialogue in our circles wherever we find these circles to be. This journey can challenge people on levels of mind, body, heart and spirit. I hope every reader can understand this intention and use my words to further their own path. For us, as Tewa Women United, this process of reflection means to continue to reflect with mind, body, heart and spirit on what it means to live and to put into practice who we are as *Tewah Towah* (Tewa peoples) and as relatives to all.

I dedicate this dissertation to my beloved Tewa peoples, my family, my Pueblo PhD Cohort family, my friends, and especially the women, men, girls and children from various cultures and communities in Northern New Mexico and throughout the world who have touched my life and my heart's work through my journey and inner and outer growth with Tewa Women United. *Kuundah Wo-ha* with all my heart.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

With my mind, heart, body and spirit, I wish to acknowledge the following peoples and organizations, Kuundah Wo-ha, Thank You:

The Beloved Board and Staff of Tewa Women United and all who have passed through our doors, you have taught me so much. It is your hard work, dedication and Love for community and our generational future that I highlight here.

My Beloved committee: Bryan Brayboy, Elizabeth Sumida Huaman, Elizabeth Swadener, and Patricia Trujillo, your gentle guidance and support throughout this journey will forever be remembered. I hope to be as good a support for others as you have shown me.

My Tewa/ Pueblo family and community, I carry you deep in my heart wherever I go. The values, wisdom and spiritual grounding with which I move in this world is a reflection of my ancestors, this I would not have without you.

My friends and constant supporters: Scott 'Spongie' Davis for holding my tears and fears and those endless nights of last minute edits, Julee Clear and Angela Moreno for your solid cheering, Maylei Blackwell for your editing pen and academic sheroism, Maxine Martin for your policy skills guidance, and to the many other lights in my life your words of encouragement and prayers got me through the darkness of doubt.

Nancy Winn and Marie Levie for your tireless hours, working to ensure every one of us walks across that stage.

Carnell Chosa and the team of the Leadership Institute at the Santa Fe Indian School, your vision and hard work moved mountains, making all this possible. Affirming for me, once again that dreams can become reality.

The WK Kellogg Foundation, Santa Fe Indian School, McCune Charitable Foundation, Marguerite Casey Foundation, Chamiza Foundation, First Nations Development Institute, Santa Fe Community Foundation, Women's International Study Center, Pueblo of Pojoaque, Robert Wood Johnson Health Policy Center, Crow Canyon Archeological Center for your funding and support of our Pueblo communities.

And, to my Pueblo PhD Cohort family, whose support and love throughout this journey has been unwavering, we have much more to accomplish together, this is only the beginning.

Most importantly, what I have accomplished here was possible through the Love, support, prayers and belief of my mom and dad (Kathy and J. Gilbert), my sister (Liana Joy) and brothers (Gilbert and Wayland), my nieces (Aspen and Sage) and nephews (Marcus, Wayland, Okhuuwa po', and Cosmo).

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Photograph 1. Protect Those Most Vulnerable Campaign Photo

JOURNAL ARTICLE - PROTECTING THE MOST VULNERABLE: OPIDE AND THE BRAIDING OF ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AND REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE

INTRODUCTION: *KNOWINGNESS, STORY SHARING, AND HERSTORIES*

The steep mountain valleys and rolling plains of our beautiful Tewa ancestral lands are sustained by mountain streams, which feed small rivers that in turn, join the Río Grande and flow through what is known now as “the Valley” or the Española-Pojoaque region. This Valley has been home to agriculture for several millennia. The history of genocide and colonization has transformed the physical, mental and spiritual landscapes and peoples of this place, beginning in the mid-1500s with the coming of the Spanish, followed by the occupation by Mexico in 1821, and then the establishing of a settler colonialism by United States in 1846 (Sando, 1992). In more recent times, the continued settler imposition on the land occurred in the war economy, which took root in the mountains of Northern New Mexico at the onset of World War II. In 1942, the federal government used its power of eminent domain to take over the Los Alamos Ranch

School, all the remaining Spanish land grant homesteads, as well as the most sacred lands of the Pueblo/Tewa peoples (Sando,1992; Drewnainy, 2013). An act of executive fiat erased thousands of years of occupancy, history, care, and worship of sacred spaces and places; the peoples of the land were dispossessed once again.

Furthermore, our relatives—the lands, air, and waters—have witnessed tragic declines in quality. One of the most significant examples is the invasion of a noxious weed was introduced in 1942 via the Manhattan Project, the research and development project that produced the first atomic bombs. With the invention of the “secret city,” this unwelcomed weed took root, Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL). New Mexico can claim to be the state in which the full nuclear war cycle lives, from mining of uranium on Native lands, to research and development of nuclear war heads on appropriated Native lands, to testing (Trinity site/Alamogordo area), and storage (Waste Isolation Pilot Plant). Given this reality of land theft and history of the destruction, Tewa Women United (TWU), a Native woman-centered organization, found our selves stepping into the arena of environmental justice (EJ).

With the dispossession of Indigenous/Native peoples from our ancestral homelands and sacred spaces, we are now confined to greatly reduced land bases. We understand more clearly than most, the threat the contamination of land, air and water can pose to our peoples, culture and life ways. As my father, J. Gilbert Sanchez, former Governor of San Ildefonso Pueblo and founder of our Pueblos’ Environmental Department, stated in initial meeting with LANL officials in 1989 when I was a senior in high school,

The land we live on contains the total genetic gene pool which will be there for the next seven generations. We (I) want this gene pool [that will] be there for the next seven generations to come to be as perfect as this gene pool is, so that it is not altered by the introduction of pollutions.

Inclusive of what disease may be triggered by [such] contamination.

I carried my father's words with me as I left to college to pursue an undergraduate degree in environmental studies. I had to do all that I could to protect what was left of what my ancestors fought so hard for, our future as *Tewah Towah* (Tewa peoples). In 1993, after graduating from college, I returned home to a circle of nurturing Pueblo/Tewa women who would guide and mentor me in self, family and community transformation through my work with TWU.

Tewa Women United (TWU) is a Native organization centered, founded and run by women. TWU is the only independent Native women's non-profit organization providing direct services, advocacy and prevention services within the original boundaries of our Tewa homelands in what is now the Pojoaque-Española Valley of northern New Mexico. Our name comes from the Tewa concept *wi don gi mu*, which translates to "we are one," and the mission of TWU is to provide safe spaces for Indigenous women to uncover the power, strength and skills they possess to become positive forces for social change in their families and communities. Our work is infused with the language, values, and practices of our Tewa life ways. The spirit of our work is embodied in the Tewa concept of *wo watsi*: with our breath is our commitment to live life as a prayer and view life as a cycle, knowing that what we do and give comes back.

Therefore, we, as *Tewah Towah* (Tewa peoples), should move in this world with generosity and a life affirming reciprocity guided by the following values.

wina ta yay - together we live these values.

kwee wa sen wa vi tuu – male and female energy/balance, ancestral *knowingness*.

a'gin – respectful caring of self and others, to act with agency and self-determination.

seegi ma vay i – loving and looking out for each other and our Mother Earth.

nung ochuu quiyo – our Mother Earth, multi-versity

bin mah pah di – letting go

As Tewa peoples, we are taught that it is the responsibility of each of us to protect the most vulnerable in our community.

TWU sees women as a reflection of *nung ochuu quiyo*. That is, each woman is an embodiment of Mother Earth. For us, our reproductive health is connected to the health of the earth and the environment. Every act of violence against a woman, on her mind, heart, body and spirit, is a direct assault upon our Earth Mother. The foundation of TWU's work is social justice. We have come to understand that our work of building beloved families and communities is about reclaiming who we are as *Tewah Towah* (Tewa peoples). This process of re-claiming our culture and re-naming and re-defining who we are is intimately linked to addressing a matrix of domination (Hill Collins, 1991) rooted in a culture of violence – brought into our homelands by peoples and cultures whose worldviews, values, teachings and practices were foreign to the spaces and places we have called home for thousands of years.

It is our responsibility to maintain full awareness of this history and our ancestral worldviews. Translated into philosophy of action, this means that we are also responsible for learning from our lineage of farmers to simultaneously uproot this new and dominant culture of violence while continuing to plant our seeds of *knowingness*. My mother, Kathy Sanchez known in our Tewa language as Wan Povi was an early core member of TWU, former Executive Director of the organization and now serves as elder and Program Manager for our Environmental Health and Justice (EH/J) Program. She describes *knowingness* as an active embodiment of information from all realms, dreams, prayers, intuition, and cosmology. Wan Povi offers this theory through the Butterfly Model (Sanchez, K., 1984; Sanchez, C. & Sanchez, K. forthcoming), a contrasting contradictions management framework or two-world harmony model, which she developed and has shared with Indigenous and non-indigenous peoples and organizations since the early 1980s. The Butterfly Model is based on the image of the butterfly which to Tewa people signifies transformation, mobility, vulnerability, and power to impact the multi-verse because of and despite its delicacy. Wan Povi states that pre-dominant worldview sees education as knowledge and in Indigenous worldview education is continuously in process. It is action oriented. It is alive. *Knowingness* inspires and radiates from the inside out (Sanchez, 2000). The model continues to serve as the foundational philosophical model for TWU because it discusses our wholeness of being, using identity, language, and spirituality as a strength that leads to our mobility (fluidity) in changing and challenging times.

These seeds of *knowingness* are metaphorical and literal (as in corn plant) that

have been co-created over several millennia with careful discernment of our Tewa *knowingness* while braiding in the helix of what can be referred to as our Indigenous or Tewa DNA, which includes our genetic memory as Tewa peoples. TWU nourishes these seeds with the life giving energies of spirit and love to continue cultivating a culture of peace, which feeds the well-being of beloved families and communities. Similarly, *beingness* is a critical way to extend the idea of *knowingness* and practice *knowingness*. *Beingness* understands the process of to be, being, and you are as the embodiment of *knowingness* that weaves Western and Indigenous ways of knowing.

In order to discuss the notion of *Opide* and environmental and reproductive justice, I draw on the technology of story sharing, which is a critical yet ignored or marginalized archive of our Tewa way of life. Stories and the collection of stories are also increasingly recognized as a central method of data collection and documentation in Indigenous research methodologies (Absolon & Willet, 2005; Kovach, 2005; Wilson, 2008; Brayboy, 2005). Additionally, the approach aligns with Wan Povi's Butterfly Model which offers a framework of the 3 Ts of Culture: Thought (values/ beliefs), Technology (methods), and Techniques (activities). As a Technology, story sharing is the method through which we learn about our Mother Earth (the world) and our relationship and responsibility to her. It is through this technology that we, as *Tewah Towah*, learn Thought - how our community works, our place, and our roles and responsibilities to the cycles and rhythms of life. The other side of story sharing involves Technique, deep listening and observation.

The story sharing used here is the *herstory* of Tewa Women United and our

practice of *always becoming* (Morse, 2013; Grande, 2008) or our continuing evolution as an independent, Native women created and led non-profit organization. Locating myself in this always becoming includes my own identity as the daughter, niece, relative of those who came before me and my lived experiences from multiple standpoints as volunteer, recipient of services, and provider of services, and relationships from student to teacher, from mentee to mentor, from youth organizer to community builder, and from staff to executive director. These multiple identities I carry provide simultaneous lenses and are incorporated into who I am today and my story sharing of TWU.

In this work, I offer a complex study of land, TWU, story sharing, and herstories by starting with a description of Tewa Women United's theory of *Opide* (oh-peh-dee). *Opide* means weaving together or braiding, and it is a theory of practice to action. For TWU, *Opide* is a figurative braiding which establishes a social justice framework or pattern that utilizes an intersectional analysis (Crenshaw, 1993) based in the everyday lived experiences of Pueblo/ Tewa women. Strands in this braid represent the cultural *knowingness* and *beingness* of Pueblo/ Tewa peoples, our values, beliefs, teachings, practices and language interwoven with Western theoretical frames. I describe how TWU has puts into practice the theory of *Opide* to design and implement culturally responsive programs and projects which support building beloved families and communities to end violence against Pueblo/ Tewa women, girls and Mother Earth and offer the case of a campaign implemented by TWU that braids together Environmental and Reproductive Justice as we live our Pueblo/Tewa teaching of protecting the most vulnerable among us.

FROM “REFERENCE MAN” TO OPIDE: RESEARCH AND COMMUNITY-

BASED IMPLEMENTATION

TWU's Protect Those Most Vulnerable campaign is our cultural translation of the Institute for Energy and Environmental Research's (IEER) *Healthy from the Start Campaign* (HFTS) to shift focus of radiation exposure standards from "Reference Man" to *those most at risk* (www.ieer.org/projects/healthy-from-the-start/ accessed April 30, 2013). "Reference Man" is an outdated model, which bases standards for worker exposure and acceptable environmental releases on a fabricated assumed universal ideal concept of "Reference Man," an adult, 154 lb., Caucasian (White) male living in an urban setting. Or, "Ken" as Wan Povi, current Program Manager of TWU's Environmental Health and Justice Program, has humorously come to call him—a play on the stereotypical Ken and Barbie figures. In other words, "Reference Man" resembles very little to nothing of our realities and values. Through our unique gendered and cultured lens TWU is joining other community and individual voices to call for a model that recognizes our different lived realities and protects the most vulnerable in our communities. For TWU this model is a *pregnant Native farmer*. For us "Reference Man" represents those of the pre-dominant society who are doing harm to our homes and our peoples. In order for our peoples and places to be truly protected, "Reference Man" must be replaced with our pregnant Native farmer, which becomes the baseline from which we work and for why we do this work.

In this case, Opide becomes an alternative framework for engaging in this process and this is the story sharing of how it came into being:

When we (my sisters, cousins and me) were sitting as young children, we

all had long, long hair. My grandmother would have five of us waiting in a line so she could braid our long hair. When she was braiding she would say she is braiding in good thoughts and she would be saying it in Tewa too. So it's like one strand and another strand and another... as you are braiding these different strands together, each strand carries different purposes, different values but their path is in the same direction. The strength of the braids, the strength of the material, and the strength of the thought is what gives it the ability to hold things together or to keep you strong in your ways. So if one strand gets weak along the path, the others are carrying it through. (Sanchez, 2014)

Opide is an intersectional analysis that looks at our social locations in systems of oppression that is grounded in the everyday lived experiences Pueblo/Tewa women face within a matrix of domination (power), which leads to an exponential growth of trauma. Wan Povi describes the growth of trauma across generations spreading like cancer, which exhibits an exponential growth pattern. Current research on trauma also speaks to a cumulative effect over multiple generations (Bombay, A., Mathesan, K. & Anihan, K., 2009; Bombay, A., Mathesan, K. & Anisman, H., 2013).

These effects manifest in our lives, our children, families and communities in ways that reflect high suicide rates, unemployment, poverty, alcohol/substance abuse rates and violence, such as but not limited to sexual, inter- and intra- family violence, domestic violence, economic, verbal, spiritual, institutionalized and internalized oppressions of all the isms – sexism, classism, racism, ableism, heterosexism, and

ageism. On the other hand, the simultaneity of *Opide* shows us that we have the ability to counter and heal these afflictions through the power and strength that lies in our culture and through the continual process of observing, learning and sharing. Through prayers, love, spirit and action. On our journey to always becoming, TWU has been influenced by a number of theoretical frames, some of which are non-Indigenous but have nevertheless become strands of the braiding:

- **Post-Colonial Psychiatry** draws on Pueblo and Apache traditions and psychological framework (Jungian, empowerment, identity and individualism, self-esteem) for effective clinical intervention. Duran and Duran (1995) promote that we need to think differently as colonized peoples. We are co-creators of knowledge that is liberating and healing.
- **Feminist/ Critical Race Theory** recognizes that racism is engrained in the fabric and systems of American society. Critical Race Theorist put forward that power structures are based on white privilege and white supremacy, which perpetuates the marginalization of people of color (Hill Collins, 1991; Williams, 1991; hooks, 1992).
- **Women of Color/ Feminist Theory** examines women's voices and contributions to the world. Many question the differences between women, including how race, class, ethnicity, sexuality, nationality, and age intersect with gender (Anzaldúa, 1987; Silko, 1996; Gunn Allen, 1992; Smith, 2005).

- **Intersectionality** helps us to understand the simultaneity of race, gender, class, sexuality, age and nationality and that privileges/forms of oppression are not often separable (Hill Collins, 1991; Crenshaw, 1993).
- **Historical Trauma** describes a combination of immense losses and traumatic events that are perpetrated upon an entire culture. For Native Americans, these losses include: culture, language, land, people (deaths due to diseases and war), way of life, religion, and family structure (Brave Heart & DeBruyn, 1998; Duran, Duran, & Brave Heart 1998; Brave Heart, 2000; Brave Heart, 2004),
- **Intergenerational Trauma** are effects of harms that have occurred but have not been resolved and have been transmitted from one generation to the next. Recognized as the hurt, suffering and pain of trauma/injustice that when left unresolved continues to cause harm until it is finally addressed (Bombay et al., 2009; Bombay et al., 2013).
- **Complex Individual Trauma** refers to children's experiences of multiple traumatic events including emotional abuse and neglect, sexual abuse, physical abuse, and witnessing domestic violence that occur within the care giving system – the social environment that is supposed to be the source of safety and stability in a child's life (Van der Kolk, B., Roth, S., Pelcovitz, D., Sunday, S., & Spinazzola, J., 2005; www.nctsn.org).
- **Tribal Critical Race Theory** provides a way to address the complicated relationship between American Indians and the United States federal government

and begin to make sense of American Indians' liminality as both racial and legal/political groups and individuals (Brayboy, 2005).

Opide is an intergenerational, multi-cultural, multi-racial approach that weaves the above strands together, yet is both gender-specific and family/community embracing.

Our interaction with such theories and practices comes from years of dialogic circles TWU has been a part of, on family, community, state, national and international levels with women, girls, tribal leaders, men, boys, community members, scholars, researchers, and elders from indigenous and non-indigenous communities, from a multitude of gender identities, sexual orientations, economic and social levels, representing the huge diversity found in this world. It is from and through these relationships, the exchange of ideas, energies and breath that fuels our continued learning and building of knowledge and practice, as well as from articles, journals, poems and books we have individually and collectively read or written as we are always in the process of information gathering, analysis, reflection, integration and adaptation.

Kimberle Crenshaw exposed TWU to her work on intersectionality as part of a multicultural leadership group in the early 1990s which would take us to Puerto Rico together, along with other Native women and women of color. It is in this circle of women that we began to discuss the implications and applicability of intersectionality. In this same leadership group TWU connected with Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart who was working on developing her theory of Historical Unresolved Grief. Her groundbreaking work has led to the acceptance and acknowledgement of Historical Trauma and its impact on the soul and collective psyche of Indigenous peoples. TWU's

understanding of the impact of colonization and trauma on Indigenous/Pueblo/Tewa peoples was enhanced and furthered by our work with Eduardo Duran and Bonnie Duran and their book *Post-Colonial Psychology* (1995). They helped anchor TWU's work in a trauma informed framework that looks at the impact of colonization and genocide on our mind, body, heart and spirit. More recently, the connection we have made with Dolores Subia Bigfoot is further strengthening our work in developing projects, which support the healing through trauma for Indigenous/Pueblo/Tewa children, mothers, families and communities. Bigfoot's *Honor the Children*, a cognitive behavioral therapy model is based on Indigenous world-view. Clearly, the influences in TWU's evolution are many grounded in our protocol to give acknowledgement to our Mother Earth. This is comparable to the notion of praxis, which is praxis = thought + action (Freire, 1970) which serves as acknowledgement in our case that the thought and *beingness* originated here, in the places of our emergence as *Tehwah Towah*, the lands of our peoples.

In this process, it is important to also recognize that the research completed in order to share the story of TWU and our work on environmental and reproductive justice is organic and incorporates oral tradition and free memory recall, narratives, and even the retrieval of organization flyers and documentation. Drawing from organizational notes, reports to funders, and data from community participatory research dating as far back as 2003 to the most recent needs assessment conducted in 2011, this research reflects a particular challenge for cultures and organizations that come from an oral tradition as well as the ones challenged with time to document as we are in the process of doing the work. Regardless, such challenges highlight why it is important for us as

Indigenous/Pueblo/Tewa peoples and organizations to uniquely create and re-create and re-memberⁱ (Daly, 1990; Minh-ha, 1989; Wa Thiong'o, 2009) the ways we pass on knowledge, *knowingness*, and stories of our lived experience.

Much of what I share here is from a space of spiritual interaction established and maintained by TWU through conscientious effort. It comes from the gifts of our ancestors and the sharing of the sacred, which has a multiplicity of ways of revelation. In many ways, I am limited in written form using the language and tools of the Colonial-White Supremacist Capitalist Scientist Patriarchy. Therefore, full expression of the inner to outer transformations experienced through participants in TWU, I fear, is never fully achieved in this type of medium. However, I focus on TWU herstory because it is through the process of *always becoming* the women of TWU realized that we must make sure our Pueblo/Tewa children know who they are and where they come from—and there must be a way to share this for other generations and across cultures.

HERSTORY OF TEWA WOMEN UNITED

“We owe our children – the most vulnerable citizens in any society – a life free from violence and fear.” - Mandela

In the late 1980s, Tewa Women United (TWU) got its start as a *Women in Transition* (WIT) support group for those who had recently separated from their husbands, suffered the loss of a loved one or were struggling with addiction. WIT groups are about learning coping tools to deal with feelings and issues that one can run into when faced with a life transition. These groups are about expressing feelings and receiving peer support. It's about positive changes, actualizing potential, and building lives free of

violence and free from addictions to drugs and alcohol. In this group the women gained inspiration and support from one another; realizing they were not alone in experiencing these issues. In the formative years women could not speak to these issues in their families and communities due to ramifications of patriarchy from a history of colonization which manifested as gynocide (Daly, 1990) the killing of women and the feminine, literally and figuratively. Native women's voices have been silenced (Smith, 2005; Silko, 1996; Gunn Allen, 1992) and in multiple ways: through colonization—in the narratives of the colonizer, Indigenous women's voices are absent from the historical record, other than to describe them as over sexualized beings, temptresses, or witches; through the patriarchy (the exclusion of women from power); through sexual assault, through the cultural stripping of the birthing process—every human being must come through the body of a woman, yet why are women so harmed and abused?

After two years, the women in the WIT group had the vision of offering this type of support to more women. In 1989, *wi dung gi mu*, we are one, blossomed into Tewa Women United (TWU). My mother, Wan Povi, after experiencing the loss of the great-aunt who raised her, joined the group at this time. Together, the women fortified their strength, courage and voices. TWU created a space for a Pueblo/Tewa women's perspective to be forged. In the protection of circle gatherings, women began to recall stories passed down by their grandmothers that spoke of the sacredness of women, the power women possess and the vital role they play in carrying on our Pueblo/Tewa way of being.

Power through an indigenous lens, according to Brayboy (2005), is an expression of sovereignty – defined as self-determination, self-government, self-identification, and self-education. In this way, sovereignty is community-based and rooted in a community’s conceptions of its needs, past, present and future (p. 435). Through engagement in TWU, the women began to reclaim their power to practice their self-determination, sovereignty and independence. For some, this came through the decisions to leave violent relationships. For others, this meant staying in relationships but actively working on communication and boundary setting. Others decided to gain more skills through education and training and other women created programs/projects, which drew on the strength of our families and communities. The ability of the women to transform individual, unarticulated, yet ultimately powerful expressions of consciousness into articulated, self-defined standpoints is monumental to the survival of the oppressed as Anzaldúa (1987), Hill Collins (1991), hooks (1992), and Paula Gunn Allen (1992) share in their works. For if we accept the idea that we are stupid, dumb and inferior and that we cannot or should not develop the power of our minds, we lose our ability to dream, to envision and to create other realities. The *self*, claimed here, by women is not defined as the increased autonomy gained by separating oneself from others (Hill Collins, 1991, p.105). “By being accountable to others, one develops more fully human, less objectified selves” (Hill Collins, 1991, p. 105). This is *seegi ma vay i* – loving and looking out for each other and our Mother Earth. It is seeing *self* in connection to others, in the context of relationship and responsibility, in family and community.

In these TWU peer circles, awareness of the impact of colonization, genocide, gynocide, forced relocation, the boarding school era on the mind, heart and spirit of our Indigenous/Pueblo/Tewa peoples grew. Influenced by the research and mentoring of the Durans, TWU began to discuss how we could start healing the historical traumas, intergenerational traumas and individual/complex traumas inflicted on our Pueblo/Tewa peoples over time and over our lifetimes. By 1994 the women began to have the courage to speak about incidents of sexual assault and child sexual abuse within family and community. TWU decided to focus on sexual violence directed at women and children in our communities because in our circle gatherings we heard that sexual violence touched the lives of 100% of the women. Today, research shows that Native women are 2.5 times more likely to experience sexual assault than any other group (Perry, 2004). Statistics on child sexual abuse for boys and girls reveals that 1 in 7 Girls and 1 in 25 boys will be sexually abused before the age of 18 (Townsend & Rheingold, 2013). With the help of Scott Thomas, an indigenous psychiatrist and Katia Delgado, an indigenous mental health practitioner, TWU developed and established our V.O.I.C.E.S. Program in 1995. V.O.I.C.E.S. is a culturally-specific response to sexual violence.

Since the early 1990s, TWU has been involved in local community and state efforts around environmental issues. The women came to the commitment that TWU could not focus on one issue in particular but must focus on the interdependent forms of violence that mark Pueblo/Tewa history and our lives. As Pueblo/Tewa women, we recognized the need to protect our connection to our spirituality, as a culture. We recognized the need to protect our sacred lands--the giver of life. Our Pueblo/Tewa

worldview sees our Mother Earth as a living being with unique energy and spirit of life. In 2001, TWU became a non-profit organization. After a 5-year participatory research process, TWU established in 2009 our Yiya Vi Kagingdi (The Mother's Helper) Doula Project under our Indigenous Women's Health and Reproductive Justice Program. Having worked to address sexual violence and child sexual abuse for 15 years in Pueblo/Tewa communities, TWU understood that intervention and criminal justice systems are not the only answers to ending child sexual abuse or sexual violence in communities. It is at this time that TWU began to refine our *Trauma Rocks* modelⁱⁱ, as a form of acquiring and disseminating herstory, which will be shared in a later paper. TWU saw the establishment of the doula project as a preventative measure for child sexual abuse and family violence, reclaiming and putting into action the core value of protecting those most vulnerable in our communities.

In 2010, TWU wanted to honor the sovereignty of our young people by guiding them to develop skills and experiences that would help them make decisions to support their overall well-being. Young women and men who can claim Body Sovereignty, acting with respect and self-determination, making wise decisions guided by their minds, hearts and Spirits, with ancient and new ways of *knowingness*. From a yearlong needs assessment process, TWU established our A'Gin Healthy Sexuality and Body Sovereignty Project under the Women's Leadership and Economic Freedom Program with the involvement of community support, such as youth, elders, parents, cultural consultants, service providers, tribal leadership, evaluators, facilitators, and community members (Sanchez, C., forthcoming).

Since its creation TWU has been providing spaces for comfort and resistance through the promotion of peer support circles (circle gatherings). This journey of insurgence (Hou, 2010) and emergence has led to our *always becoming* not only as individual women but also as a collective community of Tewa Women United. We value and believe in our Pueblo/Tewa ways of knowing, teaching and passing on language, and values and practices. These are important to the survival of our Pueblo/Tewa culture and Nations, and are braided into all our programs/projects.

WOMEN AS THE FIRST ENVIRONMENT

Woman is the first environment. In pregnancy, our bodies sustain life. At the breast of women, the generations are nurtured. From the bodies of women flow the relationship of those generations both to society and the natural world. In this way the earth is our mother, the old people said. In this way, we as women are earth. (Cook, 2003)

These are the profound words of Katsi Cook, Mohawk midwife and environmental researcher of the Akwesausne Nation and friend and mentor of Tewa Women United. In 2004, TWU met Katsi who affirmed for TWU our belief that reclaiming birth would help heal our Pueblo/Tewa communities. Cook came to New Mexico to visit with our doula project in 2010. She spoke of the importance of birth work as an element of a sustainable community. She said this work is not only about the reproduction of individual people; it is also about the reproduction of a culture (Logghe, 2010). Through birth and childbearing mothers are connected intimately to our children. It is this umbilical cord that was severely injured generations ago with the

implementation of various genocidal, gynocidal and Indian Education strategies, including boarding schools (1600-1970) where Indian children were removed from their mothers and their families in a process of assimilation and acculturation (Noreiga, 1999; Brave Heart, 2004; Gunn Allen, 1992; Smith, 2005).

In reclaiming birth, Pueblo/Tewa women are re-enforcing the importance of protecting and ensuring the health of our Mother Earth, what happens to women's bodies happens to Mother Earth, *nung ochuu quiyo*, we are directly linked. What a mother consumes and what a mother experiences during her pregnancy impacts the growing life within her. The intersection of environmental justice, reproductive justice and sexual violence cannot be denied or underemphasized. Winona LaDuke put this simply and profoundly in her plenary speech at the UN World Conference on Women in Beijing, China on August 31, 1995:

If we can no longer bear children, and if our bodies, themselves are wracked with poisons, we will have accomplished little in the way of determining our destiny, or improving our conditions. And, these problems, reflected in our health and well-being, are ails inherently resulting in a decline of the status of women, and are the result of a long set of historical processes, processes, which we as women, will need to challenge if we will ultimately be in charge of our own destinies, our own self-determination, and the future of our Earth our Mother.

For the past 25 years, TWU has called upon our spirits and ancestors to give us strength to work courageously and openly for healing in our Pueblo/Tewa communities. An organizing principle of TWU is the belief in the strength of our Pueblo/Tewa culture to

re-plant a culture of peace so our beloved families and communities can thrive. Even as indigenous communities face incredible loss and devastation, we possess a resiliency of spirit. We are still here, the women of Pueblo/Tewa Nations. Our power as Pueblo/Tewa communities lies in spirituality. Our cultural continuity and strength lies in our ability to continue to birth and nurture our children in healthy environments. As women as we carry our daughters, we carry our grandchildren. This is because the specific ovum from which each person is made was formed in his/her mother during fetal development (Makhijani, A., Smith, B., & Thorne, M., 2006, p. 12). Radioactive and/ or contaminated water crossing the placenta above background levels should not be acceptable. It has the potential to affect the development of the fetus, possibly resulting in miscarriage, genetic damage, or birth defects as well as pose the risk of multi-generational problems (Makhijani et al., 2006, p. 12). It was with this epiphany that our environmental justice work took on more urgency.

SPACE, INSURGENCE AND RESISTENCE

The *herstory* of TWU reveals a number of tactics and strategies used to empower and transform women, families and community. One of the strategies used is the creation of safe spaces for women to dialogue, share and vision for healing, reclaiming and transforming their lives and that of their families and communities. As Lim recognizes in her work, “space is fundamental to any exercise of power” (Foucault 1984, p. 252 cited in Lim, 2008, p. 227). A second strategy, used by TWU is grounding our work of family and community-building in our culture, language, spirituality and values envisioned as part of the work of re-building and re-claiming a culture of peace and beloved families

and communities. The third strategy, Founding mothers used was to create TWU as an independent Native women-led organization. TWU is not tied to any tribal government, unlike many other tribal nonprofits. TWU is a stand-alone nonprofit. This independence has allowed for consistency over time to our vision and mission and the creation of innovative projects. Our sovereignty and self-determination, as an independent non-profit has allowed us to bring to the forefront many issues in our Tewa/Pueblo communities that people do not want to acknowledge such as sexual assault, domestic violence, child sexual abuse, LGBTQ issues, and Colonial-White Supremacist Capitalist Scientist Patriarchy.

TWU draws upon the strengths and talents of our young people in our environmental justice working group who call upon our cultural wisdom to strengthen their voices and leadership by using creative interventions and acts of resistance, creating insurgent spaces so Pueblo/Tewa women, families and communities can be heard. For example, TWU's Tres Rios Environmental Justice (EJ) Group signifies the three cultures (Native American, Hispanic, and Anglo) found in northern New Mexico and is symbolic of the three rivers (Rio Grande, Canadian, and Pecos) that sustain our land-based communities. In 2012, Tres Rios was comprised of 12 teenage and adult Native women of color, 2 Native grandmothers, and 3 Hispanic males (2 teens and one adult). In forming Tres Rios, the Environmental Justice and Health (EJ/ H) Program worked to self-educate, empower, strengthen leadership skills, and reconnect cultural knowledge in a way that would help the group take action on Environmental Justice and Reproductive Justice issues. "Since the formation of this group in 2009, there has been a shift in the

group members' knowledge, understanding and comfort level in learning and speaking to these issues," commented Beata Tsosie-Pena, EJ/EH Coordinator. This she said, "Can be seen in their willingness to speak, engage in public meetings, and organize within the larger communities" (personal communication, 2013).

Tres Rios, has: a) began to reconnect our agricultural heritage as a way to directly combat the environmental pollution that we are constantly exposed to, while learning sustainable ways of producing nutritious food, b) worked to self-educate around the nuclear industry because of limited exposure to these issues, and because LANL (Los Alamos National Laboratory) documentation and the bureaucratic process is very technical and hard to comprehend, c) documented public meetings and oral histories, garnered community support to help inform our state representatives, Sen. Tom Udall and Sen. Jeff Bingaman, so they could sponsor an amendment to the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA) legislation, d) created media and art projects to gain attention to these issues, and e) invited community members into meetings to solicit an increase in public comment (2010-2012 Funding Reports).

Tres Rios developed an EJ comic book in 2013 to educate children on "Reference Man" and environmental contamination. Local community engagement has increased because of these media projects they call *Art through Activism*. Tres Rios is increasing their knowledge and cultural understanding by learning from elders, attending public meetings, working on group comment letters, engaging with the local community, and identifying where EJ/RJ issues intersect in order to empower their voices. For example, one participant commented, "It has been a powerful experience to learn from our elder

Grandmothers how to center ourselves with our connectedness to the earth with good thoughts in support of our spirit to keep hope alive” ” (Report to funder, 2013). It has become an EJ practice to have a centering table, where the group can visually center their spirits, and their inner strength around actual physical representations of our Mother Earth in order to speak the truth of the poisonous toxins coming down to our communities. They did so at public meetings with 300 people that included legislative representation, and at meetings with the Center for Disease Control.

Tsosie-Pena further commented that the program “has shifted the perception of the people at these meetings, the majority of whom are white, highly educated males, to learn from us that the spirit of the plants, animals, water, earth, insects, air, and our ancestors are present in the room with us, listening and bearing witness to the decisions being made that directly impact them and future generations” (Report to funder, 2013). The EJ group is working with the Yiya Vi Kagingdi Doula Project to grow healthy babies in order to grow a healthy community. As a result, they have created a series of “mobile” mural projects that reflect shared Pueblo/ Tewa values toward TWU’s Protect Those Most Vulnerable campaign and this local work connected TWU to a global movement.



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Photograph 2. LANL’s Plastic Man “Reference Man” Photograph 3. Pregnant Native Farmer mural and Beata Tsosie-Pena

THE REVOLUTION AGAINST “REFERENCE MAN”

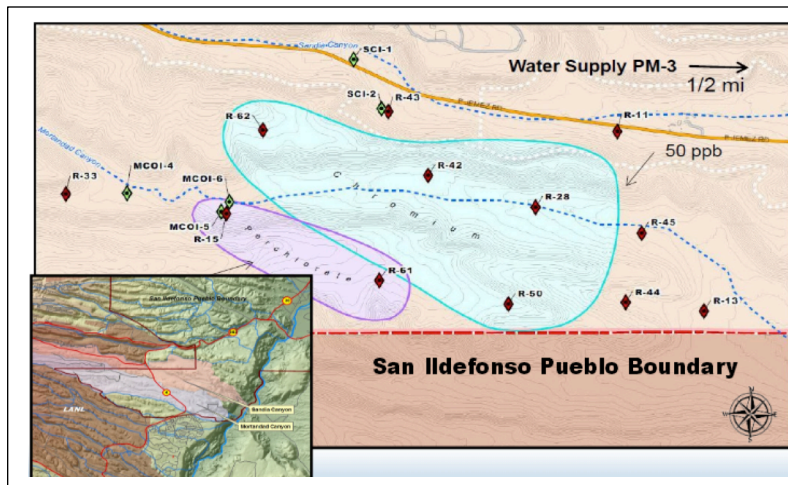
In the late 1990s and early 2000s, Tewa Women United participated in a program established by Institute of Social Action and Renewal in Eurasia (ISAR) to connect

communities in Russia to communities in the United States that were impacted by the nuclear war industrial complex. During our travels we shared stories, visited communities and learned of the environmental and ecological degradation that was occurring in Russia due to its nuclear war industrial complexes. Russian community representatives shared with our group that Chernobyl was not the largest nuclear accident to occur in their country. This did not surprise our group of activists, as 3-mile Island was not the largest nuclear spill to occur in the US. For TWU knew that the largest occurred actually on the Navajo Nation in 1979. And we found other parallels.

Like the early years of Los Alamos's history, there were secret and closed cities in Russia (US DOE, 1996). Russia displaced Indigenous communities due to environmental radiation contamination (US DOE, 1996, p. 77). What had the most impact on the group was the number of children in orphanages due to the death of their parents from radiation poisoning and cancer. Our group was able to take a tour of several orphanages. Another striking revelation was the high rates of sterilization among the Russian people who were in their twenties and the high rates of suicide and substance abuse^{iv}. Through our sharing, the U.S. and Russian community groups acknowledged that although we were thousands of miles apart, separated by oceans, our stories at the hands of the nuclear war industrial complexes were very similar.

The story of the sterilization of thousands of young, seemingly healthy Russians was haunting. If this could happen there, this could happen anywhere. The recent situation at Fukushima, Japan reminds us of this reality. Native communities have suffered a history of forced sterilization under the federal government (Smith, 2005).

According Makhijani et al. (1995), while radiation has no superficial effect (libido remains intact) localized radiation to the extent of 500 to 600 roentgens will produce complete sterility, both in the male and female (7). Furthermore, it is not just a matter of environmental exposure to radiation that creates EJ/RJ concerns. Other carcinogenic compounds released from Los Alamos National Laboratory, such as chromium, are real threats to lands, waters, and to our people (U.S. EPA, 2010).



Photograph 4. Chromium plume spreading toward San Ildefonso Pueblo Boundary from Los Alamos National Laboratory.

What this means for TWU is that our women and the future of our Tewa/Pueblo lands and communities are at unacceptable risk from Los Alamos National Laboratory. As Indigenous peoples we barely survived the devastation of colonization, genocide and gynocide. Now our people face direct and indirect assaults from contamination and pollution from multiple industries but especially Los Alamos National Laboratory. The words I heard my father speak years earlier echoed again in my mind, heart and spirit. These lands, our Pueblo/Tewa homelands hold the total genetic pool of our peoples and we must take a stand for the generations yet to come.

Healthy from the start. TWU learned about the *Healthy from the Start* (HFTS) initiative in 2006. Wan Povi, saw an interview with Arjun Makhijani on the HFTS initiative. The information was brought to the attention of women and EJ youth in our community. The women and youth gathered once again in circle and found the initiative resonated with the values, spirit, mission and vision of TWU. In 2009, TWU joined onto the Initiative. The long-term goal is to get all exposure standards for both radiation and nonradioactive toxic chemicals to protect the most vulnerable among us (from www.ieer.org). Based on Makhijani's (2006; 2009) research, HFTS contends that the model of the generic nondescript "Reference Man" places women and children at high risk. "Reference Man" was defined in 1975 by the International Commission on Radiological Protection, as being between 20 to 30 years old of age, weighing 70 kg [154 pounds], 170 cm in height [5'7"], and living in a climate with an average temperature of 10° to 20°C. He is a Caucasian and is Western European or North American in habitat and custom (Makhijani et al, 2006). "This description makes virtually 90% of the world invisible. Nowhere does this perfect Ken doll exist," commented Wan Povi. Makhijani's research confirms this (2006; 2009), as IEER, declares the use of "Reference Man" as scientifically inappropriate because the vast majority of people, including women and children, fall outside the definition. Countering such universality and objectivity of Colonial-White Supremacist Capitalist Scientist Patriarchy at the expense of all else has been the driving force of the EJ Movement and critical theorists (Williams, 1991; Smith, 1997; Whitt, 2004; Di Chiro, 2007). Based on the brief history of health standards established on "Reference Man" for nuclear workers (see Appendix A), between 1896

and 1925 no dose standards existed for radiation and there exists no single set of radiation protection standards (DOE – OEM, 1996).

What is unbelievable is that standards for protection and safety of the general public has been set since 1968 and basically has not been changed even as the “science” has advanced. Based on an IEER Talking Points (2009), the problem is that groups (women, children and the embryo fetus) other than adult males are more sensitive to the harmful effects of radiation or toxic materials. The document highlights for instance that:

- For the same radiation dose, women have a 52% greater chance of getting cancer.
- A female infant drinking milk contaminated with radioactive iodine is 70 times more at risk of thyroid cancer than an adult male for the same radiation exposure.
- Radioactive hydrogen called tritium crosses the placenta and can cause early miscarriage as well as malformations.

By placing a gendered lens on this scientific data one sees the patriarchal ideology behind the science.

IEER also emphasizes that the standards for legal radiation doses and contamination levels focuses on ‘allowable’ level. TWU’s Tres Rios group asks, “Allowable by whom?” Wan Povi adds, “The difference on focusing on risk and not dose limits is the interpretation of whiteness. By whose standard is it ok to harm life?” She goes on, “To see the risk and who is at most risk, you are looking at it from the

precautionary principle of ‘do no harm.’ You must ask what harm will be done? And, if it does harm, do not allow it to happen.”

Of particular interest to Tres Rios is the finding by IEER (2009) that combined exposure to radiation and synthetic chemicals may contribute to increased rates of breast cancer. Exposure to ionizing radiation could increase the number of cells that have the potential to proliferate to form breast cancer later in life and exposure to chemicals that mimic estrogen could preferentially enhance the survival of such cells (IEER, 2009). U.S. environmental health standards continue to ignore these combined risks (IEER, 2009; Drewniany, 2013).

This is significant because as TWU summer intern and doctoral candidate Morgan Drewniany dissertation research confirms (2013):

Chemicals are poured into the environment, exposing communities daily to small amounts through many different routes. For example, in the Southwest, a community member living in the desert may be exposed to arsenic through their water supply, through soil on their hands after gardening, as well as through inhalation of airborne dusts, all at small levels. This is in combination with hundreds of other single exposures throughout the day in the same and different exposure pathways. From a scientific point of view, such combinations are especially dangerous because they have the capacity to do immense harm while yielding meaningless data. The problem with the majority of contaminants is not longevity, but the fact that we are continuously exposed to them through multiple routes (Steingraber 1998 cited in Drewniany, 2013, p. 53).

The findings and publications by IEER are increasingly important since TWU recently learned that our community garden in Española has high levels of contaminants. If our garden was affected one can hypothesize many others are as well. According to Drewniany (2013):

- The average levels of RDX (research department explosive, its chemical name is cyclotrimethylenetrinitramine), hexavalent chromium, perchlorate and arsenic in the soils of the TWU Community Garden in Española, NM were all found to be significantly higher than institutionally-set public health standards (Drewniany, 2013, p. 148).
- The risks of perchlorate exposure are largely connected to perchlorate's tendency to reduce iodide uptake at the thyroid (Irizarry et al., 2010 in Drewniany, 2013, p. 152). Babies exposed to perchlorate in the womb and then through breast milk in their infancy will not have sufficient hormones and fetal brain development is at risk (Ting et al., 2006 in Drewniany, 2013, p. 152).
- Perchlorate and RDX are man-made chemicals used widely in munitions, and pre-World War II, was used abundantly in open-air testing of explosives (Hundal et al., 1997 in Drewniany, p. 151). Looking at the surrounding area, it is clear that Los Alamos National Laboratory, where many munitions were produced before World War II and open air testing was common practice, is most likely the source of RDX. It is not a chemical commonly used in other industry (Drewniany, 2013, p. 151).

- Chronic exposure to RDX has been seen to cause neurotoxicity, central nervous system disorders, hepatotoxicity, and brain and liver cancers. It is officially classified as a “possible human carcinogen” by the EPA. In rat studies, RDX has been seen to pass easily through the placenta and into breast milk. No direct birth defects were seen in these studies, but smaller babies were recorded (Drewniany, 2013, p. 151).
- The risks put forth by hexavalent chromium are very well known in the public health sphere, one of the most studied anthropogenic and industrial contaminants. Clearly causes carcinogenicity, but mechanisms are still being figured out. Ingested chromium is reduced in the stomach and in exposed populations, and causes these cancers (Kimbrough et al., 1999 in Drewniany, 2013, p. 153). Through this route of exposure, risk of possible oral, intestinal, and stomach cancer is elevated highly (Holmes et al., 2008 in Drewniany, 2013, p. 153).
- The fact that there are chemicals which have been detected in the soil of the community garden and traced back to the labs concretizes the historical trauma which has taken place on this land (Drewniany, 2013, p. 156).

Drewniany’s findings affirm the importance of our commitment to organize and mobilize around the HFTS initiative. Who must be reached to change radiation standards set in 1968 and have not been addressed even as the science has advanced? IEER would like for President Obama to direct federal agencies – including the Department of Energy, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and the Environmental Protection Agency – to

review and update their exposure standards. In particular, IEER would like the Environmental Protection Agency to adopt an approach of protecting the most vulnerable and tighten drinking water limits for tritium as one way to reduce risk of miscarriage and to gain leverage for similar changes at the national level. Tewa Women United is currently organizing to have many, if not all, 19 Pueblos in New Mexico adopt standards on their sovereign lands to be based on protecting those most vulnerable in our Tribal Nations. TWU is supporting IEER in broadening support for this much needed paradigm shift.

RELATIONSHIP BUILDING: BRAIDING – ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AND REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE

Through this process of researching and Tewa Women United's *always becoming* we are reclaiming our cultural sovereignty and re-centering a Pueblo/Tewa women's epistemology and de-centering Colonial-White Supremacist Capitalist Scientist Patriarchy. Tewa Women United understands deeply what Grande (2008) articulates and what community organizers have always known as Indigenous/Pueblo/Tewa and people of color communities, we must extend our borders and build coalitions and networks founded on our shared liberation and practice of *organic relational-tivity* with our relatives, all who are connected to us through our Mother Earth. TWU's *Organic Relational-tivity Model* (ORM), is a sustainability framework (Sanchez and Davis, *forthcoming*). ORM is the term TWU has created for expressing the way in which we approach and build intra- and extra- organizational relationships. Strong ties to traditional community, has been core strength of Tewa Women United since our inception. We have

not gotten to the place we find ourselves as families, communities and societies on our own. We will not get to the place of inner and outer peace alone either. Our struggle here in northern New Mexico is very similar to other grassroots community and Indigenous organizations involved in social justice. We are demanding a place in the decision-making process of government agencies on a tribal, city, state, federal and international levels created supposedly for the protection of peoples but we are also simultaneously practicing our cultural sovereignty and actively creating the world in which we wish to live.

What is the appeal to TWU about the Environmental Justice and Reproductive Justice movements? These are de-centralized movements based on the everyday lives of Indigenous peoples, poor people and people of color. These are movements for the most part that recognize the interconnectedness of the interlocking systems of oppression and the interdependence of our liberation. They are also not movements without contention. They are multi-racial, multi-cultural, multi-issue movements that place the expertise on the grassroots knowledge of the communities and individuals who are involved (Cole & Foster, 2001). Tewa Women United joined the Environmental Justice and the Reproductive Movement because they were social justice movements we could inter-generationally be a part. TWU as a collective of intertribal, multiracial, multicultural women could bring all our communities and all our identities to these movements. We did not have to be like so and so, but we could join with so and so. We could keep our multiplicities of identities and integrity intact, exercising our self-determination and sovereignty. What makes these social justice movements special and significant is

reflected in the ways that they transform the possibilities for fundamental social and environmental change through redefinition, reinvention, and construction of innovative political and cultural discourses and practices (Cole & Foster, 2001, p. 14).

Environmental justice frameworks assert that environmental health risks are not randomly distributed throughout the population. On close examination of the cost and benefits derived from an unpopular environment of decisions, Indigenous and communities of color have borne and continue to bear a disproportionate share of the burden of the nation's pollution problem (Bullard, 1993, p.11). Bullard's (1993) research found that environmental inequalities cannot be reduced solely to class factors or the economic ability of some people to "vote with their feet" and escape polluted environments (p. 11). Race, gender and class are intricately linked with colonialism. The reproductive justice movement arose out of women of color critique of the hegemony that existed within the women's movement and the reproductive health movement. According to the SisterSong web-site, RJ addresses race, sexual orientation and a host of other community centered concerns for Indigenous women and women of color. Both movements highlight the importance of intra-and inter-movement coalitions to draw in more participants. Coalition work is based on long-term relationship development in communities about issues that concern us, not just specific legislation (Cole & Luna, 2010). The HFTS initiative being part of a broader decentralized environmental justice movement meant that TWU could figure ways to make it more culturally meaningful for our Indigenous/Pueblo/Tewa communities and we could braid in all those strands, which are inseparable in our lives.

CONCLUSION

Tres Rios, a multicultural, multiracial and intergenerational group believes they can engage more young people utilizing “Reference Man.” In highlighting the concept of protecting the most vulnerable, we are pulling on cultural strengths of Pueblo/Tewa peoples to bring a paradigm shift for social change and transformation protecting those most vulnerable and in so doing protecting us all. For those powerful reasons, let me end by sharing this poem Beata Tsosie-Pena wrote in 2010:

...Let us hold the way open with linked arms of awareness
For the spiral of illuminated moment is approaching
To guide us on the path to gentle rains
Compassion and peace erasing generations of pain
Indigenous women uprising on rainbows
Singing songs of color and braiding our strengths
Vibrations of a blue world finally at liberty
To hold her children close in joyful reunion
Unconditional absolution, sacred revolution
Forming new ways of being alive with all our relations
Remembering what it is, to be a spiritual, human being
Protecting her, from ever being hurt again...”

**CHAPTER - A'GIN HEALTHY SEXUALITY AND BODY SOVEREIGNTY:
EXERCISING OUR SOVEREIGNTY IN THE LAND OF EVIDENCE-BASED
INTRODUCTION: TEWA WOMEN UNITED, A'GIN, AND THE EVIDENCE-
BASED CHALLENGE**

Tewa Women United (TWU) is a Native American women-centered, founded and run organization. Located in northern New Mexico, within the original boundaries of our Tewa homelands, TWU is the only independent Native women's non-profit organization providing direct services, advocacy and prevention services in the Pojoaque-Española Valley area. TWU believes in building *beloved* families and communities to end all forms of violence against women, girls and Mother Earth. Our work since 1989 has been towards this vision. Beloved families and communities are places and spaces where our children are able to grow into whom they were meant to be; loving, caring, nurturing, powerful, beings; where everyone is valued and has a role; and where Love of our Mother Earth and all beings, seen and unseen, drives our actions.

My work here highlights Pueblo/Tewa women becoming active agents in resistance to the Colonial-White Supremacist Capitalist Scientist Patriarchy. To resist is to retrench in the margins, retrieve who we were and make ourselves (Smith, 2012, p. 4). I share TWU's research methodology to design and implement culturally responsive programs and projects, supporting ending violence against Pueblo/Tewa women, girls and Mother Earth. Drawing from the oral tradition of story sharing, this chapter describes TWU's selection, enhancement and implementation of an "evidence-based" teen pregnancy prevention curriculum, the *A'Gin Healthy Sexuality and Body Sovereignty*

Project (A’Gin). This included working with Indigenous youth, elders, parents, cultural consultants, service providers, tribal leadership, evaluators, facilitators, community members, and the gifted and dedicated A’Gin staff. In addition to direct impact on local families, this project ultimately strengthens the self-determination and sovereignty of Tewa youth and nations. When our women and girls claim *body sovereignty*, our Pueblos can claim cultural and collective sovereignty (Coffey & Tsosie, 2001), strengthening Tribal sovereignty. While others might call A’Gin a teen pregnancy prevention strategy, TWU sees it as part of a larger framework involving social transformation through beloved families and communities, starting with healthy, loving, caring, responsible individuals.

I ask critical questions; evidence-based by whom and to who’s standard? What does evidence-based mean from our Tewa way of knowingness, worldview and values? How does TWU, as a service provider, practice sovereignty and self-determination in the creation of culturally responsive programs for Pueblo/Tewa families and communities?

Herstory of this Place – Our Tewa homelands. TWU is located in the Espanola-Pojoaque Valley of Northern New Mexico found in Rio Arriba and Northern Santa Fe Counties; the fifth largest state (by area) in the country with a widely dispersed rural population. Our beautiful land includes steep mountain valleys and rolling plains; scenic byways and wild rivers, all of which Tewa peoples hold in deep love and respect. Our homelands hold the legacy of ancestors who settled along the Río Grande and its tributaries. Our ancestors were some of the first to come into contact with Spanish explorers. They were leaders and instigators in the Pueblo Revolt against the Spanish in

1680 (Sando, 1992; Cajete, 2010; Wegner, 2009). Once flourishing Tewa communities were drastically reduced after the Second Pueblo uprising of 1696. The Tewa Pueblos of Nambé, Ohkay Owingeh (formerly San Juan), Pojoaque, Santa Clara, San Ildefonso, and Tesuque as well as the Hopi-Tewa in Arizona are all that remain from our Tewa speaking ancestors.

Since 1539 the legacies of colonization, militarization, and religious inquisition with practices of genocide and gynocide have transformed the physical, mental and spiritual landscapes and peoples of our Pueblo homes. Militarization and domination are nation-state building with the rule being conquest. This history is important to reflect upon as Daly (1990), hooks (1995), and Gunn Allen (1992) encourage, because of critical impacts on the continuity of Pueblo/Tewa cultural identity. Our tribes have endured a long history of colonization and violence, including repeated attacks on cultural and ceremonial traditions, as Wegner describes:

Political turmoil, colonial oppression, disease epidemics decimated Pueblo populations and resulted in new tribal consolidations. The pueblos were forced to accommodate to the Spanish authorities and the religion they brought. Especially early in the 18th century, the open practice of indigenous ceremonies risked violent reprisals. To compensate – or perhaps to create a public front for their own traditions – they gradually added Catholicism to the religious repertoire, reorienting their public ceremonial calendars around the Catholic holy days. Among most of the pueblos, the Catholic patron Saints became the most visible public religious festival, and holy week and Christmas came to be celebrated with

indigenous ceremonial dances. The deer dance, traditionally held to thank the deer for this gift of life, now also honored the birth of the Christ child. (Wegner, 2009, p. 25)

This accommodation was useful to the Pueblo Indians themselves (Wegner, 2009, p. 28).

In 1821, New Mexico became a province of Mexico after it won independence from Spain. Mexico's Declaration of Independence reaffirmed that Indians are equal citizens (Sando, 1992, p. 253). War in 1846 between the U.S. and Mexico resulted in New Mexico's annexation by the United States. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed in 1848, stipulating the U.S. honor the Spanish and Mexican land grants to Hispanos and Pueblo Indians. Unlike most tribes, the Pueblos hold legally recognized title to their land (Sando, 1992, p. 254). Starting in the late 19th century, the Pueblo Indians faced new attacks on their indigenous traditions from U.S. officials and missionaries, whose policies represented an overwhelmingly Protestant America (Wenger, 2009, p. 29). In this colonial moment, the imposition of religion and nation-state worked in tandem to subjugate Pueblo/Tewa women into a patriarchal schema that had not previously existed.

In their books, hooks (1995), Daly (1990) and Gunn Allen (1992), write of the need for women, especially African-American and Native women, to re-claim the power of self, subjectivity, and consciousness. This is possible through the remembering and re-telling of history, as hooks (1995) claims, "It is the telling of our history that enables political self-recovery" (47). These authors focus on colonization, gynocide, and genocide by the United States and the psychological trauma inflicted on those named

“Other”. Gunn Allen (1992) tells stories of various feminine powers and traditions of woman leadership before colonization. These feminist theorists believe that validating and acknowledging historical experiences of the oppressed (women) makes revolution, resistance and survival possible.

Trauma of generations. Today, the challenges that our Pueblo/Tewa families and communities face are magnified; not only by historical trauma and institutionalized oppressions, but by factors of intergenerational, and complex individual traumas resulting in disproportionate levels of violence and substance abuse. New Mexico ranks among the worst in the nation for deaths from illicit and prescription drugs and alcohol, and has among the highest rates of health problems associated with substance abuse. Rio Arriba County’s death rate associated with chronic alcohol abuse is 4-5 times the national rate, with the highest death rate due to drug overdose (NM DOH, 2011). The 2009 Youth Risk and Resiliency Survey (YRRS) for grades 7-12 indicates that:

- 36% of students experienced violence in school or community;
- 27% carried a weapon; 60.2% have a gun at home;
- 52% experienced sexual intercourse; 31.4% were sexually active;
- 13.5% seriously considered suicide; 9.6% attempted suicide.

The suicide rate in NM has been nearly twice the U.S. rate for twenty years. Of all suicides, 10.6% were Native Americans. The New Mexico Department of Health (2007) states suicide as the second leading cause of death among New Mexicans ages 10 to 34. Recognizing this effect is critical for the healing of community, however, there continues to be an overabundance of research by outsiders and non-Indigenous peoples in Tewa

communities. Much of this research supports what we already know. Native American and Alaskan Native women are over 2.5 times more likely to be raped or sexually assaulted than women in the U.S. in general (Perry, 2004). 1 in 3 Native women will be raped during their lifetime (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). Our youth die at a younger age from often preventable violence. We are losing our existing languages at alarming rates. We understand that historical trauma is real and exists.

Research is one way in which the underlying code of imperialism and colonialism is regulated and realized (Smith, 2012, p. 7). What troubles TWU is that this research continues to prove similar findings, absent real solutions or approaches *with* communities. The ultimate purpose seems to be establishing credentials for primarily outsider-researchers as Discoverers; experts on things already known (Smith, 2012), and painfully felt by these communities. TWU's work focuses on the interdependent forms of violence that mark Pueblo/Tewa history and lives, while centering Pueblo/Tewa epistemology and worldview.

RE-SEARCHING AND TWU'S RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

I come from a lineage of peoples who are deep thinkers and powerful strategists. I come from a lineage of peoples who listen and observe with quiet intent and deep contemplation. I come from a lineage of peoples who create theory and put it into practice. I come from a lineage of peoples who love deeply and are guided by their hearts and spirituality. I come from a lineage of peoples who believe and work for social justice and social change. Because of this lineage, I have always considered myself an activist. A researcher? That is not so natural for me to embrace.

If the purpose of critical research is, as Linda Smith describes, focusing, thinking critically, reflection, and being strategic (Smith, 2002, p.184 in Kovach, 2005, p. 23), then I come from a lineage of re-searchers. Reflecting upon the journey that lead me here today – as Executive Director of Tewa Women United (TWU) and PhD candidate in Justice Studies, I recognize my philosophy and approach to re-search is rooted in my experience working in, with, and for TWU. I see that TWU has been in the process of creating an Indigenous Women’s Research Methodology, or more precisely, a Tewa Women United’s Research Methodology in the course of *always becoming* (Morse, 2013; Grande, 2008) to fulfill our vision of building beloved families and communities to end violence against women, girls and Mother Earth. It is re-search with a purpose. Transforming our current reality as we put observations, learning, sharing, ideas and dreams into action.

I reflect upon the gift of participating in the co-creation of approaches to remember, reclaim, reaffirm, and reinforce who we are as Pueblo/Tewa women, families and communities, and am overcome with tears. These tears are not uncommon for me. It was almost an everyday experience while growing up. Most often those tears were hidden, shed alone. They came from feeling overwhelmed, tears of shame and fear. There are periods when I denied my tears as a piece of my resistance. I would not let others see how I hurt, how they hurt me. I did not want to reveal my vulnerability, my perceived weakness.

I embraced anger as my friend, protector, and shield. Through the loss, of self, family, friends, innocence, culture, and my spirit, anger helped me. It kept me alive, as I

moved through the darkness. But anger was also killing me; killing the loving, open, authentic, powerful, and cultural being that I was dreamed to be through time immemorial. I am the connection, the collection, the vessel in which the breath of the ancestors, the ancients, and the divine, coalesce.

Anger, and anger's companions of guilt and shame, "GAS," as my mother, core visionary and former Director of TWU, Kathy Wan Povi Sanchez, names it, were blurring my ancestral ability to name me, honor me and claim my power. Moreover, it was strategic and heinous genocide and gynocide that spread across oceans. It continues to spread across generations, hijacking our consciousness, masterminded by the Culture of Violence. Its legacy is fragmentation of the spirit of each of us. It is visible in manifestations of violence - war, abuse, suicide, substance abuse, and corporate greed, the institutionalization of oppression. It is visible in the inability to hold space for multiple worldviews. How do we uproot the Culture of Violence, which is the foundation of this country that many of us love and embrace but is slowly killing us, and our Mother Earth?

TWU encourages reconnecting to the ancient *knowingness* (Sanchez, *forthcoming*) of the ancestors to re-claim and re-plant ourselves in the Culture of Peace. Restoring values and epistemologies that center the sacredness in everyone and everything. TWU focuses on Pueblo/Tewa women, girls, and Mother Earth. It is *bin mah pah di* - letting go - healing and embracing Love, to re-learn how to Love, feed Love, grow Love, and be generous with Love to others and self. Replanting the Culture of

Peace means stepping into our power from a space rooted in spirit to liberate our consciousness.

For this, TWU prayed, dreamed, envisioned, and planned. Statistics show that none are immune to violence and there are among us those who are most vulnerable. Vulnerability is not weakness, as I once thought. Healing takes a willingness to be vulnerable and courageous at the same time, to say no to violence in all forms, and take action.

Tewa Women United's research methodology. TWU's research methodology is grounded in spirituality and the power of *seegi ma vay i*, loving, caring, and looking out for one another, those yet to come, and our Mother Earth. Thus, TWU's Research Methodology, includes the following components:

- Our culture is our strength
- Mindful practices to decrease harm into future generations - protection of those most vulnerable
- Personal and collective sovereignty - self-determination, self-identification and self-education
- Healthy relationships – re-building and uplifting Beloved Pueblo/ Tewa families and communities
- Connectedness to Mother Earth and her gifts
- Honors feminine strength - centering Pueblo/Tewa women and girls

Our methodology comes from thousands of healing, discussion, talking, and power circles TWU has hosted and been invited into, locally to internationally. It is the

cumulative wisdom of hundreds of thousands of women, families and communities upon which TWU builds and contributes. TWU is a collective of intertribal women's voices who are multi-cultural, multi-racial, and intergenerational residing in our Tewa homelands of Northern New Mexico.

Our culture is our strength. TWU believes in the strength of our Pueblo/Tewa culture to re-plant a Culture of Peace so our beloved families and communities can thrive. Fundamentally, colonization affects a people's understanding of their universe and their place within it (Gunn Allen, 1992, p. 90). Gunn Allen (1992) comments that, "The colonizers' revisions of our lives, values, and histories have devastated us at the most crucial level of all -- that of our own mind, our own sense of who we are" (p. 93).

There is an insurgence (Corntassel & Bryce, 2012; Hou, 2010) to reclaim traditional ways of living and caring for our selves, and Mother Earth. To do this means to re-member our herstory, re-learn our Tewa language and re-tell our narratives and collective stories. According to Absolon and Willett (2005), stories include important teachings that pass down historical facts, share culture, traditions, and life lessons. Traditionally, stories taught values, beliefs, morals, history, and life skills to youth and adults.

Our Tewa language is important in the perpetuation of our culture, our peoples. Language forms the basis of identity through communication, which is communal and within relationship. Language includes the verbal and non-verbal, the written and unwritten. Christine Zuni Cruz, states, "Language is critical because it contains our laws, in symbols and architecture and our understanding of the world"^v. According to Tessie

Naranjo of Santa Clara Pueblo, “Language is a living spirit. It is our duty to nourish the spirit. It is how we show our deepest love for our Creator.” “Language is the only thing that will articulate to the world who we are,” says former Governor Richard Luarkie of Laguna Pueblo.

Goodyear--Ka'opua beautifully articulates in *The Seeds We Planted*, the strength of being multi-lingual with multiple literacies. Our ancestors practiced multiple literacies as they read weather and seasonal patterns to grow crops, sustaining their economy for thousands of years, built homes, and interacted with foreign governments and educational systems. Power and strength also come from knowing our place of birth, our emergence – it is our sense of *connectedness*. This umbilical cord ties Pueblo/Tewa peoples to one another and to Mother Earth, the places of our *knowingness*, our core values. Passing on values, language, and life ways, ensures the cultural continuance of our families and communities.

These multiple literacies also include, as Walters and Anderson (2013) encourage, literacy of the entire research cycle of qualitative and quantitative tools and methods (p. 134). From the construction, collection, interpretation, and dissemination of such research processes and information sharing. If we want our research to be effective in achieving positive changes and benefits, we must communicate the successes and challenges to our communities and broader audiences.

Mindfulness to decrease harm into future generations –protection of those most vulnerable. Cultural survival of African-Americans and Native Americans, means engaging in a politics of resistance addressing the psychological trauma of the

colonization experience; past and present (hooks, 1995; Gunn Allen, 1992). hooks (1995) realizes that:

By not addressing psychological wounds, by covering them, we create the breeding ground for a psychology of victim hood wherein helplessness, uncontrollable rage, and/or feelings of overwhelming powerlessness and despair [reside] in the psyche [of the oppressed] (p. 137).

Revolutionary liberation movements for self-determination for Native and African American peoples must incorporate paths of healing and recovery, claiming triumph and pain without shame (hooks, 1995, p. 135). In order to re-claim Beloved families and communities, we move from prayer and dream to reality. Prayer is part of our ontology. Dreams have long been a source of knowledge for Indigenous cultures (Kovach, 2005), through which another level of consciousness is tapped.

According to Wan Povi, dreams can be pathways where our multi-versal consciousness comes forward with deepest intentions to be of a loving presence (personal conversations). TWU begins gatherings with prayer to ask ancestral spirits to guide us, give us strength and help us heal as we look to the past, assess the present, and give voice to visions of cultural sovereignty (Coffey & Tsosie, 2001) for our future as Pueblo/Tewa peoples.

It is time to begin healing – releasing and unlearning. We must continue to pray and vision together for what we want for our children, their children and their children's children. Resiliency and thriving is found within the process of healing. As families and

communities doing the hard work now, we transform the reality of future generations to come. This is agency, self-determination and sovereignty.

Personal and collective sovereignty - self-determination, self-identification and self-education. Since TWU's beginning, peer support circles have been foundational to our work. TWU has created spaces for a Pueblo/Tewa women's perspective to be reaffirmed. As the women gathered, they nurtured their strength, courage, and voices. In the protection and safety of these circles, similar to consciousness-raising talks described by Poupart (2003), the women recalled stories of women's sacredness and vital roles in carrying on Pueblo/Tewa ways of *beingness* (Sanchez, *forthcoming*). They began to reclaim and reinforce the power that always existed within them.

Our conception of power is fluidity of energy; flowing throughout the cosmos, accessible by all. It is not power exercised by force or deprivation, absent empathy or compassion, leading to oppression (Hanna, F., Talley, W., & Guindon, M., 2000). Brayboy (2005) describes power through an Indigenous lens as expression of sovereignty (p. 435). Sovereignty is practicing our self-determination, self-governance, self-identification, and self-education on our terms, as individuals, families and communities, as well as an organization. Self-determination is exercising power from *a'gin*, respectful caring of self and others, acting with agency and *seegi ma vay i*, loving responsibility and looking out for each other, those yet to come and our Mother Earth, for *eco-systemic sustainability*. These concepts are similar in spirit to *sustainable self-determination* (Corntassel, 2008; Corntassel & Bryce, 2012), referring to cultural, social, spiritual, and economic continuance and sustainability. *Eco-systemic sustainability*, a term used by

Wan Povi, describes encompassing the whole spirit, lives, cultures and economics of land-based peoples, sustained by the gifts of Mother Earth. Self-governance is individuals', families', and communities' control over our bodies, home places (land bases), economies and ways of knowing. It is *wo watsi*, living life as a prayer guided by core values. Self-identification is defining who we are from multiplicity and fluidity. Sovereignty is, therefore, practiced and found in the context of relationship, to our bodies, our families and communities, and to our Mother Earth.

Healthy relationships – re-building and uplifting Beloved Pueblo/Tewa families and communities. Building *Beloved* families and communities, is about strengthening and at times re-building relationships. Relationships can be harmful and hurtful as we see in inter- and intra- personal/familial violence, while simultaneously providing comfort and resistance to grow. In relationship, one must communicate. The women of TWU practiced this through dialogue in circle. They used dialogue to share realities they faced in their families and communities. They spoke unspoken truths, acknowledging hurt, pain and sorrow but also beauty and strength. They supported one another through their own epistemological development, working to change their lives (Belenky, M., Bond, L. & Weinstock, J., 1997, p. 71). Dialogue, open and honest communication, is fundamental to creating healthy relationships.

Paulo Freire (1970) recognized the importance of dialogue in liberation of the oppressed when he commented, “Critical and liberating dialogue, which presupposes action, must be carried on with the oppressed at whatever the stage of their struggle for liberation” (p. 52). Supportive dialogue dislodges isolation and sponsors growth of self,

voice, and mind (Belenky et al., 1997, p. 80). Taylor, Gilligan, and Sullivan (1995) highlight the importance of dialogue and relationship with older women, to development in the lives of young women, as they write:

Having opportunities to talk through -- and thereby think through -- issues of importance to them without fear of judgment, betrayal, or misunderstanding and anger, girls may be better able to know and understand her own thoughts and feelings. This process in turn may help them cultivate their ability to make thoughtful and responsible decisions (p. 121).

We must have courage to gather in circles for critical dialogue with family, women, men, and our young people to share, release, vision, create/recreate or claim/reclaim and build upon/rebuild healthy relationships. Speaking heart to heart.

Connectedness to Mother Earth and her gifts. As Pueblo/Tewa peoples know, we do not exist apart from our Earth Mother, *nung ochuu quiyo*, rather we exist because of her and her gifts. It is not our right to exist; but our privilege and responsibility. It is our duty to ensure that those who come after us are blessed as we are, with life nourishing and sustaining gifts of our Mother. This is our commitment to generations to come.

Our connection to Mother Earth is embedded in memories of our creation stories. Here we learn the interconnectedness and responsibility the two legged have to all living and nonliving beings, seen and unseen, known and unknown. Since the early 1990's TWU has been involved in local community and state environmental efforts. TWU realized that one of the greatest threats we face is to the quality of our land, air, and water, affecting our ability to live, grow, and be in a healthy way.

TWU's women came to the commitment to protect our connection to spirituality, as central to our culture. This meant protecting our sacred lands -- the giver of life. From this TWU affirms that women are a reflection of our Mother Earth. We see our Mother Earth as a living being with unique energy, healing power, and spirit of life.

Honors feminine strength – centering Pueblo/ Tewa women and girls. Central to TWU's research methodology is retelling our lived subjective truths about herstory by listening to the experiences and stories of women from our Pueblo/Tewa communities; ignored as the histories of men have dominated. In this way we honor the contributions of women to our survival as a living culture. Today, many Pueblo/Tewa communities have taken on Christian views of dominance and gender binary that excludes, as Goodyear-Ka'opua (2013) comments, “a multiplicity of native expressions of gender and sexual identity and practices” (p. 28).

Our communities teach lessons and practices that are gender and age-specific. As children, we are taught to accept this and not be jealous or envious. These are the sacredness of our roles. Each in unique ways is strengthening our Pueblos. Before colonization, men and women were equal. They played different roles in the context of family and community without hierarchical value.

According to Andrea Smith (2005):

Prior to colonization Indian societies for the most part were not male-dominated. Women served as spiritual, political, and military leaders, and many societies were matrilineal. As women and men lived in balance, native societies were consequently much less authoritarian than their European counterparts (p. 18).

In contrast, European societies were thoroughly misogynistic. The Christian patriarchy, structuring European society, is inherently violent, as has been thoroughly documented (Smith, 2005; Sando, 1992; Cajete, 2010). Gunn Allen recovers the buried memories of gynocratic societies and exposes the myth of Colonial-White Supremacist Capitalist Scientist Patriarchy, as she writes:

Ethno historians' inaccurate representation of gender in historical documents has erased gynocratic practice from early history. It falsifies the record of people who are not able to set it straight: it reinforces patriarchal socialization among all Americans, who are thus led to believe that there, have never been any alternative structures: it gives Anglo Europeans the idea that Indian societies were beneath the level of organization of Western nations, justifying colonization by presumption of lower stature; and masks the genocide attendant on the falsification of evidence, as it masks a gynocidal motive behind the genocide. (Gunn Allen, 1992, p. 36).

Goodyear-Ka'opua comments that critical scholarship and queer indigenous studies call us to look at how hetero-patriarchy – “the normalizing and privileging of patriarchal heterosexuality” based on binary gender systems is a fundamental logic and organizing force within settler colonialism (Goodyear-Ka'opua, 2013, p.27).

As *Tehwah Towah* (Tewa peoples), we are born with a male or female physical shell, infused with both male and female energy, *kwee wa sen wa vi tuu*. The expression of this may not be a reflection of our physical shell. There is fluidity between the energies. Neither is better; rather, they are complimentary.

Smith (2005) proclaims that when the nation-state is acknowledged as a perpetrator of violence against women, particularly indigenous women, and genocide against indigenous people, we are challenged to imagine alternative forms of governance that do not presume the continuing existence of the nation-state in general (p. 5). Native Feminists have long pointed out the need to challenge masculinist nationalism and to historicize the "family" since archetypal patriarchal family has been an organizing metaphor and institution rendering nationalist movements dismissive of or directly hostile to healthy and just gender relations and sexual practices (Goodyear-Ka'opua, 2013, p. 33).

From this cumulative understanding, which permeates not only our generationally lived experiences, but also our paths of healing and knowledge building, TWU has realized the A'Gin project.

STORY SHARING: A'GIN HEALTHY SEXUALITY AND BODY SOVEREIGNTY PROJECT

TWU calls on us, through remembering our herstory, and sharing our stories with one another, to claim our place in a world that erases our existence as women and as Indigenous/Pueblo/Tewa peoples. It is time to tell our stories. Much of this re-searching is based on oral tradition and free memory recall; accuracy of dates may be incorrect. I have, where possible, retrieved flyers and documentation to confirm. I draw from notes, reports to funders, and community participatory research in 2003 and needs assessment in 2011. I narrate from a more general, overview perspective.

This sharing is from people willing to be vulnerable and honest; from the courage to speak truths. It is our journey to share with our children, our love, prayers, and dreams for them to grow into powerful, loving, caring, and nurturing beings. Young women and men claiming *Body Sovereignty*, acting with agency and self-determination, making wise decisions guided by their minds, hearts and Spirits, with ancient and new ways of knowingness.

In 2010 TWU submitted an application to the US Health & Human Services Department, Administration for Children and Families Affordable Care Act Tribal Personal Responsibility Education Program for Teen Pregnancy Prevention Grant (Tribal PREP). We started with the vision of honoring our young people's sovereignty by guiding them to develop skills and experiences to make informed decisions supporting their overall well-being. Our responsibility is to give them accurate, honest and truthful information on sex, sexuality, contraception and relationships. Honoring our roots, TWU wanted to develop a curricula/project that drew on cultural values, language and strengths. We were challenged by the Government's insistence upon a tried and tested, evidenced-based model. Evidence-based by whose standard? Indigenous peoples know that we are the most over researched population in aspects of our "conditions" and cultures. But we are also the most underfunded and under-acknowledged in our ability to conduct research and create models and programs that honor Indigenous Knowledge.

TWU has been co-creating our knowledge and skills as women in community since inception. We have partnered with Universities: Columbia University via Beverly Singer of Santa Clara Pueblo and former Board member of TWU; the University of New

Mexico (UNM) via Bonnie Duran and University entities such as the Center for Native American Health at UNM via Gayle Dine Chacon and Julie Lucero. The majority of our experience conducting research has been positive co-designing and co-creating as a community, contributing to the well-being of our peoples. TWU has been strategic in pursuing funding that uplifts and supports our vision and values, even when the process seems contrary to who we are. We discern opportunities without compromising our integrity or core values. TWU has become confident in speaking from our heart, our center. We exert our sovereignty as Pueblo/Tewa women through self-education, self-determination, and self-awareness; always in relationship to one another, our families and communities and Mother Earth. TWU entered the Tribal PREP grant agreement with caution; not because we felt unable to undertake this project, but because the grant's premise, teen pregnancy prevention in Tribal communities, echoes the history of genocide and forced sterilization by the very government offering this funding (Smith, 2005).

Initial Planning. The TWU Staff, having long worked in the community building relationships with service providers and community members, compiled a list of individuals and programs that would be helpful in selecting and implementing a curriculum to strengthen decision-making of young people in the six Tewa speaking Pueblos of New Mexico. We were given a predetermined list of 24 programs/models, implemented in communities of color, to choose from. Of these, only four were with or in Indigenous populations. None were developed by Indigenous peoples.

Community Health Research groups, healthcare providers, school personnel, youth group coordinators, community representatives and tribal leadership, among others, were invited to our first public Planning Committee meeting on January 19, 2012. Over 25 representatives from regional organizations attended, revealing a high degree of relationship building, history of quality programming and community commitment. The agenda included introducing the project, team-building exercises, and opportunity for all to express their thoughts, concerns, and commitment to the success of the project.

Table 1.

List of All Institutions, Agencies, Organizations, and Constituencies Involved in A’Gin

Santa Clara Pueblo Behavioral Health	Native American Professional Parent Resources
First Born Home Visiting Program	Pojoaque High School
Women’s Health Services	Santa Clara Pueblo Juvenile Accountability Program
Espanola Valley Women’s Health	Peacekeepers Domestic Violence Program
Las Cumbres Community Services	Nambe Pueblo Community Health Representative
First Born Program	Ohkay Owingeh ICWA/ Social Services
El Centro Family Health Services	Center for Native American Health – UNM
San Ildefonso Pueblo Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA)	Las Cumbres Fatherhood Project
Breath of My Heart Birth Place	Santa Clara Recreation Program
Santa Fe Indian School (SFIS)	Leadership Institute at SFIS

We were encouraged that attendance at our first meeting exceeded capacity for the room. Individuals were excited and enthusiastic to share ideas and expertise with the A’Gin project.

Needs assessment. TWU honored the mandate of conducting a yearlong needs assessment to arrive at criteria for selecting the curricula, although this was not necessary. A Needs Assessment Committee was established at the first Planning Committee meeting and met on February 8, 2012 with bi-weekly meetings thereafter. The Needs Assessment Committee acquired secondary data from numerous community, tribal, regional, state, and national sources. The data was inventoried and reviewed for relevance to the project. Primary data were obtained via surveys, face-to-face interviews, focus groups and a Community Readiness Assessment. A survey was developed to look at key issues around sexuality and community youth resources. 137 surveys were administered in schools and various youth events.

TWU held four focus groups in which 33 youth (12-21 years) spoke about sexuality, resources and ideas for preventing teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections. Participants reflected the diversity of our communities including teens from the six Tewa speaking pueblos, other natives living in the area, lesbian gay bisexual transgendered questioning (LGBTQ) youth, and teen parents. The evaluation firm, i2i, was invaluable in complementing our skills and co-creating a research process of mutual respect and power sharing throughout development and implementation. The following points from i2i analysis of interview data, survey results, secondary data sources, and other community sources, confirmed our initial observations:

- a. The six Pueblo communities are geographically dispersed and heterogeneous with respect to resources, tribal leadership, schools, and other factors.

- b. The high prevalence of sexual trauma and relationship violence must be considered when addressing sex and sexuality. Programs working in these communities must be strongly trauma-informed.
- c. Many Tewa people are uncomfortable discussing sex and sexuality in groups. There are few adequate places (safe, private) or trusted providers (confidential, non-judgmental) on the Pueblos to foster discussions about these issues, for youth or families.
- d. Tribal traditions around onset of adolescence have been muted and sometimes lost.
- e. Pueblo change happens incrementally, especially with respect to tribal leadership.
- f. Teens receive intensive and often contradictory messages about sexuality from popular culture and sources outside family and community.

Furthermore, two surprising points emerged: First, parents want to talk with their children, but are afraid of being judged for behavior in their youth, and losing credibility in their children's eyes. Second, there is limited inter-agency communication. According to the information gathered, almost every provider felt inadequately informed about other programs/organizations, especially resources physically located on the Pueblos.

Selection of curricula. We extended our selection beyond the given list, searching for any and all programs developed by and for Indigenous people. TWU, with the input of the Planning and Needs Assessment Committees, selected Discovery Dating (DD), developed by Alice Skenadore, a Native American traditional midwife from the

Lac Courte Oreilles Chippewa, and utilized in the Oneida community in Wisconsin for nearly ten years. Discovery Dating is currently a “promising practice” through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA). TWU had a prior relationship with Skenadore; she was a beloved advisor in developing TWU’s Yiya Vi Kagingdi (The Mother’s Helper Doula Project). In discussion with Skenadore and Bev Scow of Wise Woman’s Gathering Place, TWU felt we could assist on their path to evidence-based. This is *wowatsi*, living our life as prayer with generosity and reciprocity. We believed this was the best choice for our young people. There are disparities in Oneida Nation that are similar, and the same, as those faced our Tewa communities. Throughout the process, we prayed, talked, and dreamed about what we would like to see in this curriculum. The Needs Assessment, compiled criteria showing the importance of addressing healthy relationships, dating and sexual violence, goals and dreams, and parent-youth relationships. Our communities wanted a curriculum incorporating aspects of our Tewa culture and spirituality, while addressing young people with fundamental respect for their *body sovereignty* and self-determination.

Based on TWU’s work with Eduardo and Bonnie Duran and their book, *Post-Colonial Psychiatry* (1995) and our influence from Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart’s work on historical trauma (1998, 2000, 2004), all agreed it was important to come from a trauma-informed perspective to build a web of support for our young people. We felt that DD incorporated much of what we wanted, working to assist youth in making healthier decisions about harm and risk behaviors. We faced challenges to our selection, and had to

justify ourselves to high-level staff of Tribal PREP. Our research and needs assessment methodology, enabled us to back up our selection.

Cultural enhancements. Despite the desirable elements found in each curriculum, they would have required extensive adaptation to be culturally congruent. This would have threatened program fidelity. The DD curriculum is aligned with our beliefs, values, and practices. Adaptation was minimal in comparison, and fidelity was more easily maintained.

Next we created the supplemental culturally enhanced sessions from TWU's vast experience and cornerstone models, Trauma Rocks and Butterfly Model (Sanchez, *forthcoming*) and one co-created with cultural consultants, Corn Model (Sanchez, *forthcoming*), which included: Tewa language teachers, Native educators from teachers to developers of indigenous charter schools, TWU's Circle of Grandmothers, and other cultural wisdom holders. We drew from Tewa ways of knowing and being upon our Mother Earth. We were challenged by the backwardness of financial support. Tribal Prep gives more money in the first year and cuts funding each following year.

There is a deficit in culturally grounded and responsive prevention and intervention approaches and models. More of our effort was in adapting and enhancing the model. Within the time frame, we were to conduct a needs assessment, select a curriculum, adapt or enhance the curricula; train newly hired staff to implement, without piloting or test running, while maintaining fidelity to the original model. This is counter to the natural evolutionary process of *always becoming*, continual adaptation and growth, inner and outer, physical and spiritual.

ESCAPING THE PROMISE LAND OF EVIDENCE-BASED

What is blaringly “evident” throughout this is process is that the Promise Land of Evidence-based is reinforcing Colonial-White Supremacist Capitalist Scientist Patriarchy by the tried and true tactics of assimilation, erasure, universality, and asserting science of the West as TRUTH. Many Indigenous researchers and organizations have written about the challenges “evidence-based practices” (EBP) pose for American Indian and Alaska Natives (NICWA, 2013; Lucero, 2011; Echo-Hawk, 2011; Bigfoot & Braden, 2007):

- Gatekeeping – authority to decide, exclusion at the expense of inclusivity.
- Erasure of unique cultural lenses and experiences.
- Cost prohibitive and ineffective.
- Lack of process for an approach/intervention becoming evidence-based especially for intersectional approaches and models.
- Lack of holistic evaluation for interventions and approaches utilizing Indigenous ways of *knowingness*.
- Reliance upon research methods which take years to replicate, produce, and confirm results.
- Lack of proof of effectiveness for small populations such as American Indians within data sets for general populations.
- Inflexibility of models and approaches – rigid fidelity model.

What these researchers and Native serving organizations, like TWU, support is evidence from careful observation of processes and measuring of outcomes. Practice-based evidence (PBE) is more in line with our Indigenous ways of *knowingness* utilizing

methods reflective of this knowledge building, such as focus groups, surveys, case review, and story sharing. There is no need for a comparison group. The majority of EBP's were not designed for populations of color (NICWA, 2013). While the process of EBP rolls slowly forward, without producing results applicable to populations of color, the effects of colonialism continue to multiply. There is no time to waste. Waiting for 'Science' to reach a conclusion ensures that the wounds will be deeper when intervention finally arrives and those interventions will likely not be relevant. EBP contributes to harm rather than mitigating it. Both overtly, by insisting that models and individuals conform to standardized norms, and covertly by delaying intervention for communities in need.

CONCLUSION AND PRAYER

This has been a challenging but worthwhile journey for TWU and our supporters. In moments of frustration and challenge we called on the strength and *knowingness* of our ancestors and spirits to guide us and offer support. We kept at the center of our intentions, our young people and the paradigm shift from a Culture of Violence to a Culture of Peace. TWU joins the National Indian Child Welfare Association (NICWA) and other Native organizations that are asserting self-determination and self-governance by articulating and utilizing research methodologies centering Indigenous epistemologies and worldviews, for "standpoint dictates research practice" (Walter & Allen, 2013, p. 85). TWU is practicing sovereignty by identifying and/or developing best practices for Pueblo/Tewa families and communities. Through *always becoming* and in the development of the A'gin Project, TWU is building organizational and community capacity for conducting research and evaluation for culturally responsive, community-

based programs/projects, freeing us from the restrictive boundaries imposed by the Colonial-White Supremacist Capitalist Scientist Patriarchal rulers of the Land of Evidence-based.

Our loving prayers and intentions remain to support our young people in claiming *Body Sovereignty*, with self-determination and agency, to make decisions supporting their dreams and goals through a culturally congruent curricula enabling them to create awareness of the lived history of our Tewa people and the strength of our cultural ways and practices; to create connections and sense of belonging to self, family and community; to create meaning that unfolds through language, story, and cultural practices; and to provide coping skills to handle grief and loss, trauma, stress and contradictions of life. As loving, caring adults it is our responsibility to do our healing in reclaiming our language and passing on our Tewa ways of *knowingness*. So our young people grow strong into whom they were meant to be, as *Tewah Towah*, peoples of this land.

Our prayer:

May our children carry forward in a good way that shows their love for self, Our Mother Earth and those yet to come.

RED PAPER - ADOPTING ENVIRONMENTAL EXPOSURE STANDARDS TO PROTECT THOSE MOST VULNERABLE IN OUR COMMUNITIES: THE PREGNANT NATIVE FARMER MODEL

I. POLICY REQUEST

Tewa Women United (“TWU”) requests that Eight Northern Indian Pueblos Council, Inc. (“ENIPC”) adopt a resolution to support environmental health exposure standards designed to protect the most vulnerable in our communities, based on the concept of a pregnant Native farmer and eliminating the unsuitable use of the “Reference Man” model.

II. ISSUE

Current policy guidelines for radiation protection and multiple exposure environmental health standards are based on an unhelpful and unrealistic universal model (“Reference Man”), which is based on an urban white male. Specifically, Reference Man was defined by the International Commission on Radiological Protection in 1975 as being between 20-30 years of age, weighing 70 kg [154 pounds], is 170 cm in height [5 feet 7 inches], and lives in a climate with an average temperature of from 10° to 20° Celsius [50 ° to 68° Fahrenheit]. *He is a Caucasian and is a Western European or North American in habitat and custom.*

This model is totally inadequate to address exposure threats to the most vulnerable in our Tribal communities, and should be replaced with a model that embodies the Mother and our traditional values and beliefs. TWU respectfully presents that this model should be based off of the pregnant Native farmer, based on TWU’s cultural framework of protecting *those most at risk* from radiation and multiple exposure to

pollutants. The pregnant Native farmer model recognizes Pueblo communities lived realities and protects the most vulnerable in Pueblo communities – pregnant women and children – and in so doing protects us all.

III. REASONING

- Use of Reference Man is scientifically inappropriate – the vast majority of people, especially women and children, fall outside this artificial norm.¹
- Science has advanced, but standards for protection and safety of the general public have not changed since 1968 – this is unacceptable.
- Official standards do not account for the interaction of radioactive and chemical pollution, which combine and multiply the risk of disease.

IV. ANALYSIS

A. Radiation Protection and Multiple Exposure Environmental Health Standards

- Methods for regulation between radiation and chemicals are different.
- There is no single set of radiation protection standards (see Table 2)². And, it is squeezed into a conceptual framework of absorbed dose.
- Traditional risk assessment focuses on exposure to a single chemical through a single pathway at any given time.
- People are constantly exposed to a shifting array of chemicals through one or more pathways; single chemical exposure analysis is unrealistic.

¹ Institute for Energy and Environmental Research, 2000.

² DOE – Office of Environmental Management, 1996.

³ Minnesota Department of Health, 2000.

- Risk of disease, inclusive of cancer, would be a more effective framework.
- Science does not currently provide definitive methods for considering the combined effects of these exposures.³ Combined risks of exposure to radiation and toxic chemicals are not considered in environmental protection regulations.

B. These Current Standards Are Not Meeting the Needs of Our Communities

General Overview

- Exposure to combinations of chemicals and radiation remains largely unaddressed for purposes of health protection.⁴
- The International Commission on Radiological Protection (ICRP) has recommended that the maximum limit for worker exposure to radiation be lowered to 2 rem per year. This recommendation has not been implemented by the United States.
- We face the risk of multi-generational problems – a part of each of us is as old as our mother – the specific ovum from which each person is made was formed in his/her mother during fetal development.⁵
- Radioactive water crossing the placenta, above background levels, should not be acceptable.
- For the same radiation dose as a male, women have a 52% greater chance of getting cancer.⁶

³ Minnesota Department of Health, 2000.

⁴ Institute for Energy and Environmental Research, 2006.

⁵ Makhijani, A., Smith, B. & Thorne, M., 2006.

- A female infant drinking milk or formula contaminated with radioactive iodine is 70 times more at risk of thyroid cancer than an adult male for the same radiation exposure.⁷

Problems in Our Communities

TWU recently learned that its Community Garden in Española has high levels of contaminants. If our garden is affected, many others are likely impacted as well. The average levels of the chemical RDX (meaning research department explosive, or cyclotrimethylenetrinitramine), hexavalent chromium, perchlorate and arsenic in the soils of the TWU Community Garden in Española, NM, were all found to be significantly higher than institutionally-set public health standards.⁸ This is alarming for the following reasons:

- The risks of perchlorate exposure are largely connected to perchlorate's tendency to reduce iodide uptake at the thyroid.⁹ Babies exposed to perchlorate in the womb, and then through breast milk or formula in their infancy, will not have sufficient hormones and fetal brain development is at risk.¹⁰
- Perchlorate and RDX are man-made chemical used widely in munitions, and pre-World War II, was used abundantly in open-air testing of explosives. Looking at

⁶ IEER, 2009.

⁷ IEER, 2009.

⁸ Drenwainy, 2013.

⁹ Irizarry et al., 2010 in Drenwainy, 2013:152.

¹⁰ Ting et al., 2006 in Drenwainy, 2013:152.

the surrounding area, it is clear that Los Alamos National Laboratory, where many munitions were produced before World War II and open air testing was common practice, is most likely the source of RDX. It is not a chemical commonly used in other industry.¹¹

- Chronic exposure to RDX has been seen to cause neurotoxicity, central nervous system disorders, hepatotoxicity, and brain and liver cancers. It is officially classified as a “possible human carcinogen” by the EPA. In rat studies, RDX has been seen to pass easily through the placenta and into breast milk. No direct birth defects were seen in these studies, but smaller babies were recorded.¹² Low birth weight is linked to several developmental risks.
- The risks put forth by hexavalent chromium, one of the most studied anthropogenic and industrial contaminants, are very well known in the public health sphere. Hexavalent chromium causes carcinogenicity. Ingested chromium is reduced in the stomach and in exposed populations, and causes these cancers.¹³ Through this route of exposure, risk of possible oral, intestinal, and stomach cancer is elevated highly.¹⁴

¹¹ Hundal et al., 1997 in Drewnain, 2013: 151.

¹² Drewnainy, 2013: 151.

¹³ Kimbrough et al., 1999 in Drewnainy, 2013:153.

¹⁴ Holmes et al., 2008 in Drewnainy, 2013:153.

C. A New Standard to Protect Our Communities: the Pregnant Native Farmer Model

Pueblo peoples understand more clearly than most, the threat the contamination of land, air and water can pose. Pueblo land contains the total genetic gene pool which must continue to be there for the next seven generations – as healthy as possible. An exposure model based on the Pregnant Native Farmer Model is beneficial in the following ways:

- By protecting the most vulnerable, we protect all.
 - Each of us come from a woman, and by protecting her, we protect each of us.
 - Each of us eats the foods our lands provide to us, whether it is the corn, the chile, or the squash. By implementing standards protecting the farmer who grows the crop, therefore, experiences multiple pathways of exposure, we again protect each of us.
- A combined model of the pregnant woman and the farmer simplifies the need for separate analysis for two vulnerable populations and is the most protective model.
- The Pregnant Native Farmer Model reflects living Pueblo values – reclaiming our core value of protecting those most vulnerable in Pueblo communities.

V. CONCLUSION

For the reasons stated above, TWU requests:

1. That ENIPC adopt a resolution in support of environmental health exposure standards designed to protect the most vulnerable in our communities, based on the concept of a pregnant Native farmer. *See* attached draft resolution;

2. The opportunity to meet with Pueblo leadership to discuss the need of an appropriate model for radiation protection and multiple exposure environmental health standards, and specifically the suitability of the Pregnant Native Farmer model.

TWU thanks ENIPC for its thoughtful consideration of this request. See Draft Resolution in Appendix B.

TABLE 2.

REGULATORY AGENCIES AND RADIATION PROTECTION

	Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC)	Department of Energy (DOE)	Residual Radiation (RESRAD)
Use Reference Man	X	X	X	X
Regulation Based on Dose: Internal or External	X I/E	X I/E	X I/E	X I/E
Regulation Based on Risk				
Excludes Children	X	X	X	
Excludes Women		X		
Clean Air Standards	X ¹⁵			
Allows for exceptions: • Includes female organs • Age dose conversions • Pregnant worker	X X ¹⁶	X X ¹⁷ X ^{18, 19}	X ²⁰ X ²¹	X X ²²
Higher Risk to Women	X	X	X	X
Higher Risk to Children	X	X	X	X
Remediation				X

*Information from Makhijani, A. & Ledwidge, L. (2009). Retiring Reference Man: The use of reference man in radiation protection with recommendations for change. Science for Democratic Action, 16(1), pp. 1, 11-17.

¹⁵ Excludes children – universal dose for all of 100millirem/ yr.

¹⁶ Does not accurately reflect female dose – is male body with female genitalia added.

¹⁷ Minor adjustment for some external exposure calculations.

¹⁸ Once pregnancy declared – dose restricted to 500 millirems/yr (Set 1970).

¹⁹ Maximum public exposure is 100 millirems/ yr (Set late 1980s); pregnant worker exposure NOT changed.

²⁰ Exceptions require special permission and must be approved by DOE.

²¹ Does not accurately reflect female dose – is male body with female genitalia added.

²² In 2007 dose conversion includes children BUT these are NOT required to be used for compliance calculations.

ENDNOTES

ⁱ I hyphenate here and throughout this work as a way to lay claim to a language that is my first language but

ⁱⁱ Trauma Rocks is a model TWU developed after a dream Wan Povi had in the early 2000s. It is an experiential and visual process TWU uses to share the impact of historical trauma, intergenerational trauma, and individual complex trauma on families through story sharing. It is a powerful experience for participants as has been shared with TWU from verbal and written feedback from participants.

ⁱⁱⁱ Wright Langham and one of the Laboratory's plastic men. The plastic men could be filled with materials duplicating human organs for use in biological radiation effects studies (Photo pg. 59 in Science in the National Interest: Photos Celebrating Six Decades of Excellence. LANL: Regents of University of California, 2006.)

^{iv} No documents were shared but the scientist and community groups we met with discussed this situation.

^v These quotes come from the Pueblo Convocation held April 2012 at the Tamaya Resort in Santa Ana Pueblo.

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APPENDIX A
BRIEF EVOLUTIONARY HISTORY OF NUCLEAR WORKER HEALTH
PROTECTION STANDARDS

APPENDIX A

Brief Evolutionary History of Nuclear Worker Health Protection Standards. All based on “Reference Man” from *Closing the Circle on the Splitting of the Atom* (DOE-OEM, 1996, p. 38):

- 1896 radiation discovered by Henri Becquerel. No standards exist.
- 1915 “Safe Practice” for handling radium and x-ray machines published in Sweden and Germany. But, no dose limits.
- 1925 “Tolerance doses”, the amount of radiation a person is thought to absorb without harm estimated by Swedish and German scientist to be 156 rem per year **(over 45 times the current standard)**.
- 1931 The tolerance dose standardized at 6 rem/ month (72 rem/ year).
- 1933 Found radiation causes genetic effects in fruit flies.
- 1934 First International radiation safety standards based on damage to human tissues published by International Commission on X-Ray and radium protection. Workers are allowed up to 0.1 rem per day (30 rem per year).
- 1941 Recommended tolerance for ingested radium initially set at 1 ten-millionth of a curie per person by the National Commission on Radiation Protection. Based on studies of radium watch-dial painters.
- 1942 The Manhattan Project begins. The 1934 radiation exposure standards of 30 rem/ year are accepted by the University of Chicago’s

Metallurgical Laboratory. The “tolerance concept” is discarded in favor of the “maximum permissible exposure”.

- 1944 The initial tolerance limit for plutonium inhalation is set at 5 millionths of a gram per person by the Manhattan projects radiation protection laboratory.
- 1945 The first atomic bombs are produced, tested and used. Weighting factors for the different types of radiation are introduced to account for their different health effects. The plutonium tolerance limit is lowered to 1 millionth of a gram per person.
- 1950 Scientists discard the idea of the maximum permissible exposure, recognizing that any amount of radiation may be dangerous. Radiation protection scientists recommend that exposure be as low as reasonably achievable. Concern over latent cancer, life shortening, and genetic damage also causes standards to be halved: 0.3 rem per week or 15 rem per year.
- 1954 A quarterly limit of 3 rem per 13 weeks or 12 rem per year is introduced by the US National Bureau of Standards to allow more flexibility in exposure patterns. Workers are still allowed 0.3 rem per week up to this limit.
- 1958 In response to a study by the National Academy of Sciences of the genetic effects of radiation, a new dose limit is introduced using a formula that allows workers to receive 5 rem per year after the age of 18. Annual

doses are allowed to exceed this level up to 3 rem per 13 weeks or 12 rem per year. To protect the gene pool, a lower standard of 0.5 rem per year is set for the general public.

- **1968** The federal government updates its protection standards to the 5 rem per year recommended in 1958. **This standard has not been changed since.**
- 1971 Radiation protection standard is restated by the National Committee on Radiation Protection but not really changed: 3 rem per 13 weeks in the past, 5 rem per year in the future. By including exposure from internal radiation (“body burden”) the standard is effectively lowered by a significant amount.
- 1972 The National Academy of Sciences publishes its first study of the health effects of radiation since 1976. The report, Biological Effects of Ionizing Radiation I (BEIR I) becomes the first of a series.
- 1990 the National Academy of Sciences BEIR V report asserts that radiation is almost 9 times as damaging as estimated in BEIR I. Annual doses may no longer exceed 5 rem per year. **The international Commission on Radiation Protection recommends that an average dose of 1 or 2 rem per year not be exceeded.**

APPENDIX B
DRAFT RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT PROTECTING
THOSE MOST VULNERABLE

APPENDIX B

Draft Resolution to Support Protecting Those Most Vulnerable. This is a co-created document to be presented to Tribal leadership in the coming years in support of basing standards for contamination levels from radiation and chemicals within Tribal boundaries to that of Pregnant Native Farmer.

(DRAFT) RESOLUTION

WHEREAS: The Eight Northern Indian Pueblos Council, Inc. (ENIPC) is an organization that serves the Pueblos of Tesuque, Pojoaque, Nambe, San Ildefonso, Santa Clara, Ohkay Owingeh, Picuris and Taos; and

WHEREAS: ENIPC is concerned with the health, safety, education and economic programs of these eight Pueblos; and

WHEREAS: ENIPC provides leadership to strengthen governance of local resources and tribal sovereignty; and

WHEREAS: The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, was officially endorsed by the United States government on December 16, 2010, and joined the international community in recognizing that American Indians and other Indigenous Peoples have a permanent right to exist as peoples, nations, cultures, and societies; and

WHEREAS: The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Articles 21-23 re-affirms tribal rights to protect the health of Indigenous elders, women, youth and children, as well as from all forms of violence and discrimination; and Articles 24-26 re-affirm tribal rights to continue to maintain our cultural life-ways; and Article 29

re-affirms tribal rights to ensure the protection and conservation of their lands, resources, and productive capacity; and

WHEREAS: The Native populations of people living within the Eight Northern Pueblos are living within a 100 mile radius of nuclear and/or military facilities; and

WHEREAS: Many federal radiation protection standards, such as limits on how much residual radiation will be allowed in contaminated soil, worker exposures, allowable drinking water levels, and the Clean Air Act, are based on "Reference Man"; and

WHEREAS: "Reference Man" was defined by the International Commission on Radiological Protection in 1975 *as being between 20-30 years of age, weighing 70 kg [154 pounds], is 170 cm in height [5 feet 7 inches], and lives in a climate with an average temperature of from 10° to 20° C [50° to 68° F]. He is a Caucasian and is a Western European or North American in habitat and custom;* and

WHEREAS: The use of Reference Man in radiation protection regulations and guidelines, including those designed to protect the general public is scientifically inappropriate because the vast majority of people (90%), including women and children, and all peoples of color, fall outside the definition; and

WHEREAS: Native populations physical, cultural, spiritual, and other sustaining practices are land-based as they have been since time immemorial, and therefore are most vulnerable for generational, cumulative and multiple exposures from nuclear and chemical contamination; and

WHEREAS: The use of "Reference Man" does not protect those most vulnerable, who are often pregnant women and children; and

WHEREAS: Women's higher cancer risk per unit of radiation exposure is not properly reflected in current regulations; neither are early miscarriages or fetal malformations potentially caused by radiation and chemical exposure; and

WHEREAS: Children are disproportionately vulnerable to radiation and environmental hazards;

NOW, THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED, that ENIPC supports and recommends, to ensure survival of Pueblo Peoples, that President Obama and every future president of the United States of America, directs all federal agencies – including the Department of Energy, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and the Environmental Protection Agency – to review and update their exposure standards and policies to adopt an approach of protecting the most vulnerable, direct federal agencies to ensure their policies address the disproportionate risks of pregnant women and children, and support legislation or propose new legislation in Congress requiring all federal regulations that affect public health and the environment to be regularly reviewed and revised so as to protect those populations most at risk. Be it further resolved that as sovereign nations ENIPC supports the adoption of radiation and environmental health exposure standards in the eight northern Pueblo nations designed to protect the most vulnerable in our communities, based on the concept of a pregnant Native farmer and eliminating the use of “Reference Man”.

The foregoing resolution was considered and adopted by ENIPC on [DATE].