

The Earth Memory Compass:
Diné Educational Experiences in the Twentieth Century

by
Farina King

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

Approved February 2016 by the
Graduate Supervisory Committee:

Donald Fixico, Chair
Peter Iverson
K. Tsianina Lomawaima
Katherine Osburn
Laura Tohe

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

May 2016

©2016 Farina King
All Rights Reserved

ABSTRACT

This dissertation explores how historical changes in education shaped Diné collective identity and community by examining the interconnections between Navajo students, their people, and *Diné Bikéyah* (Navajo lands). Farina King investigates the ongoing influence of various schools as colonial institutions among the Navajo from the 1930s to 1990 in the southwestern United States. The question that guides this research is how institutional schools, whether far, near, or on the reservation, affected Navajo students' sense of home and relationships with their Indigenous community during the twentieth century.

The study relies on a Diné historical framework that centers on a Navajo mapping of the world and earth memory compass. The four directions of their sacred mountains orient the Diné towards *hózhó*, the ideal of society, a desirable state of being that most translate as beauty, harmony, or happiness. Their sacred mountains mark *Diné Bikéyah* and provide an earth memory compass in Navajo life journeys that direct them from East, to South, to West, and to North. These four directions and the symbols associated with them guide this overarching narrative of Navajo educational experiences from the beginning of Diné learning in their home communities, to the adolescent stages of their institutionalized schooling, to the recent maturity of hybrid Navajo-American educational systems. After addressing the Diné ancestral teachings of the East, King focuses on the student experiences of interwar Crownpoint Boarding School to the South, the postwar Tuba City Boarding School and Leupp Boarding School to the West, and self-determination in Monument Valley to the North.

This study primarily analyzes oral histories and cultural historical methodologies to feature Diné perspectives, which reveal how the land and the mountains serve as focal points of Navajo worldviews. The land defines Diné identity, although many Navajos have adapted to different life pathways. Therefore, land, environment, and nature constituted integral parts and embeddedness of Diné knowledge and epistemology that external educational systems, such as federal schools, failed to overcome in the twentieth century.

DEDICATION

To Will, Wes, Luci, and Navajo children of yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

Háiiida kwá'ásini léi', Loved Ones.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many people and groups have supported me in the journey to produce this dissertation. My father, Phillip Smith, connected me to the Diné earth memory compass. He once told the To’Nanees’Dizi chapter community that my umbilical cord, or *Shits’éé’*, was buried in Tuba City, Arizona. Navajos believe that we return to the place of our umbilical cord; thus, *Diné Bikéyah*, Navajo land, beckons me home. My family’s unwavering faith in me has enabled me to complete this work. My father interpreted for me at the Navajo chapter meetings. My mother, JoAnn Smith, traveled with me to the archives. My husband, Brian King, has followed me all over the world for my doctoral research, and he and our three children are my heroes, always reminding me to persevere and continue pursuing my dreams. Many relatives and friends have assisted me in innumerable ways, sustaining me professionally and personally, especially the King and Smith families. Monika Bilka and Davis Henderson have been the best peer mentors, always willing to listen and offer guidance.

Thank you to the many faculty and staff from Arizona State University and Dartmouth College for their attention, support, and feedback throughout this project, especially Donald Fixico, K. Tsianina Lomawaima, Katherine Osburn, Laura Tohe, Peter Iverson, Colin Calloway, and the Native American Studies Program at Dartmouth. Skott Vigil, friends, and scholars at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, inspired me to pursue a doctoral degree in Native American History. Donald Fixico won the Outstanding Doctoral Mentor Award from ASU in 2015, and he well deserved it. I could not imagine a better advisor and dissertation committee. Thank you to the Navajo communities, chapter leaders, informants, interviewees, and the Navajo Nation Human

Research Review Board (NNHRRB) who approved and supported my research. The NNHRRB Chairperson Beverly Becenti-Pigman and Coordinator Michael Winney assisted and guided me through the protocol. Thank you to my Navajo family who love and welcome me into their homes and lives. Thank you to Crownpoint, Oljato, Tuba City, Leupp, and Birdsprings chapters for allowing me to enter their communities and bring this study to them. Regina Allison of the To’Nanees’Dizi chapter and Leonard Perry of the Crownpoint chapter provided valuable contacts as well as Sara L. Begay of the Leupp Schools Inc. Digital artists Justin Weiss and Maria Dailey assisted with several of the central images. I hope to make everyone who supported me proud and to serve them throughout my life.

I have depended on funding for my research from various organizations and groups including the Organization of American Historians, American Historical Association, PEO International, American Philosophical Society, Navajo Nation, American Indian Graduate Center, Max Millett Family, and others. Arizona State University offered me various awards through the School of Historical, Philosophical, and Religious Studies, Graduate Education, Graduate and Professional Student Association, and the Center for the Study of Religion and Conflict. Dartmouth College honored me with the 2015-16 Charles Eastman Dissertation Fellowship, which allowed me to finish my dissertation among one of the strongest communities of Indigenous scholars. Of all the awards and support I have received, my son made me the most precious certificate of “Best Mom Award” when I most needed the encouragement and love. *Ahéhee’*.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS AND MAPS	vii
GLOSSARY	ix
CHAPTER	
INTRODUCTION: EARTH MEMORY COMPASS	1
1 <i>HA'A'AAH</i> (EAST): BEGINNINGS OF DINÉ LEARNING	45
2 <i>SHÁDI'ÁÁH</i> (SOUTH): CHALLENGES TO NAVAJONESS	78
3 <i>E'E'AAH</i> (WEST): INTENSIFICATION OF DISTANT EDUCATION	130
4 <i>NÁHOOKQS</i> (NORTH): SELF-DETERMINATION FOR DINÉ STUDENTS	197
CONCLUSION: “WE ARE ALL DINÉ”	244
BIBLIOGRAPHY	260

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS AND MAPS

Illustrations and Maps	Page
1. Map of Hopi-Hopi’s Journey	9
2. The Earth Memory Compass	23
3. Symbol of the Navajo Basket	29
4. <i>Ts’aa</i> or Navajo Basket	30
5. Navajo Cradleboard	64
6. Navajo Wedding Basket	70
7. Phillip Smith	74
8. Tom Torlino	78
9. Map of Navajo Country Boarding Schools	81
10. Bobbie Becenti, “Indian Legends”	110
11. Crownpoint Boarding School Play Practice	112
12. Jim Benally, “Yei-be-chei”	113
13. Crownpoint Boarding School Boys in Program	113
14. Crownpoint Boarding School, Traditional Dances	114
15. Sidewalk to the Nazarene Church in Old Leupp	150
16. Map of Old Leupp, Arizona	162
17. Eunice Kelly in Old Leupp	193
18. Education on the Horizon	211
19. Map of San Juan High School Bus Route	212
20. <i>The New York Times</i> photo of the Monument Valley Bus	222
21. The East	248

Illustrations and Maps	Page
22. East: Teachings Immemorial	248
23. The South	249
24. South: Interwar Crownpoint	251
25. Chee Largo, “My Home”	252
26. The West	252
27. West: Postwar Tuba City and Leupp	253
28. The North	254
29. North: Self-Determination Era Monument Valley	255

GLOSSARY

Asdzáá Nádleehé: Changing Woman, one of the most revered Navajo deities, the mother of all the clans.

'Awéé' ch'ideeldlo': First Laugh Ceremony, when Navajos celebrate and bless their babies after their first laugh.

Awéétsáál: the Navajo cradleboard.

Chapter: the center of local Navajo government in communities on tribal land.

Ch'óol'i'i: Gobernador Knob, one of the sacred inner mountains on Navajo lands.

Dibé Nitsaa: the sacred mountain of the North, Hesperus Peak in Colorado.

Diné: “The People,” what the Navajos call their nation.

Diné Bikéyah: Navajo lands, demarcated by the four sacred mountains in the Four Corners region of the American Southwest.

Diné bizaad: Navajo language.

Dinéjí na'nitin: traditional Navajo teachings and ways of life.

Diyin Diné: the “Holy People,” gods, deities, or supernatural beings.

Dook'o'oosliíd: the sacred mountain of the West, the San Francisco Peaks in northern Arizona.

Dzil Ná'oodilii: Huerfano Mountain, one of the sacred inner mountains.

Earth Memory Compass: ancestral teachings embodied in the four directions and affiliated mountains that embed a self-understanding for Navajos to know themselves, their people, and their relationships with all things considered physical and metaphysical around them through *Si'qh Naaghái Bik'eh Hózhó*.

E'e'aah: West, affiliated with *Dook'o'oosliíd* (San Francisco Peaks), yellow, twilight, abalone shell, autumn, reflection, adulthood, and life.

Embeddedness: the effects of Navajo relations with all things and beings around them that they value, specifically on Diné decision-making and actions.

Ha'a'aah: East, affiliated with *Sis Naajini* (Mount Blanca), dawn, white, white shell, spring, preparation, birth, and thinking.

Hataalii: traditional Navajo healer, known as a medicine man or woman.

Hooghan: hogan, the traditional dwelling and home of Navajos.

Hózhó: the Navajo ideal of society, a desirable state of being translated as beauty, harmony, and happiness.

Hózhóójí: Blessingway ceremony that maintains *hózhó* through blessings.

Hwééldi: “The Land of Suffering,” the Bosque Redondo and Fort Sumner, located in eastern New Mexico, where the U.S. government interned the Navajos.

Indian Student Placement Program (ISPP): the program that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints organized, which placed Native American youth with Mormon families off the reservations to attend public schools in the late twentieth century.

Kinaaldá: the female puberty ceremony for young Navajo women who menstruated for the first time.

K'é: kinship and clan system.

Naakaai Bitooh: Rio Grande, one of the four sacred rivers.

Nahaghá: Navajo rituals.

Náhookos: North, affiliated with *Dibé Ntsaa* (Mount Hesperus), folding darkness, black, obsidian, black jet, winter, conclusion, new beginning, faith prayers, and old age.

Navajo Nation Human Research Review Board (NNHRRB): the review board of research that involves humans and the living on the Navajo Nation.

Nayee'iji: Protectionway ceremony that restores *hózhó* through protections.

Oljato: the Navajo community in southern Utah that represents the Monument Valley region and chapter.

Sá Bitooh: San Juan River, one of the four sacred rivers.

Si'ah Naaghái Bik'eh Hózhó: the Navajo philosophy of “Walk in Beauty,” or “live to old age in beauty.”

Sinajini, et. al. v. Board of Education of the San Juan District, et. al.: the series of court cases beginning in 1974 that ordered the development of Navajo community schools on the reservation in southern Utah.

Shádi'ááh: South, affiliated with *Tsoodzil* (Mount Taylor), blue twilight, blue, turquoise, summer, activity, adolescence, and planning.

Shits'éé': the umbilical cord with the first-person possessive pronoun, considered sacred to Navajos because of its continual connection to its person of origin.

Sis Naajini': the sacred mountain of the East, Blanca Peak in Colorado.

Special Navajo Program: a program that the Bureau of Indian Affairs established for Navajos in the postwar period to increase Navajo training in the English language and various vocations at off-reservation boarding schools.

Survivance: Anishinaabe writer Gerald Vizenor's concept that stresses how Indigenous cultures and peoples thrive rather than merely survive.

Táádidíin: corn pollen, the powder from the top of corn stalks on the tassels, which is sacred to Navajos.

Tólchi'ikooh: Little Colorado River, one of the four sacred rivers.

To'Nanees'Dizi: the Navajo word for Tuba City, Arizona, which the local chapter uses.

Tó Nts'ósikooh: Colorado River, one of the four sacred rivers.

Ts'aa: Navajo wedding basket.

Tsoodzil: the sacred mountain of the South, Mount Taylor in New Mexico.

Yéii' bicheii: Navajo ceremonial dance performed only in winter after the first snowfall.

INTRODUCTION: EARTH MEMORY COMPASS

Language is very sacred. Remember when we had the first laugh? It is the beginning of speech. That is why we have the first laugh celebration. Everyone has this speech. When our Navajo language is gone, we will all be common. The Holy People gave us our eyes and our mouth for a purpose. The Holy People gave us these things. They said do not be harsh when you speak. Our lips and our tongues are sacred. They are like lightning when we speak, from the East, South, West, and North. There is lightning in our mouths, and we must take care of what we say.

—Marilyn Help, *We'll Be In Your Mountains, We'll Be In Your Songs*, 2001

These sacred mountains are our thinking, our knowledge, and our ways of life (*Iina*). We as the Diné can use our psychological mind and common sense to see these sacred mountains, lands, valleys, rivers, trees, old hogans, old trails, to understand our stories of the past, present, and even the future.

—Wilson Aronilth, Jr.

A Navajo elder, known as Hopi-Hopi, once explained how he received his name for his abilities to compete with the Hopi runners, whom the Diné respected for their speed and agility.¹ His fast running alone, however, did not enable him to run away from the Santa Fe Indian Boarding School when he was about fourteen years old. His knowledge and understanding of the land and waters through a Navajo earth memory compass ensured his escape. In the early twentieth century, he and a small group of schoolboys collaborated and knew how to return to their homes by following the skies, rivers, and mountains.

The same river that directed the path homeward also presented their greatest obstacle. They had to cross the Rio Grande without a bridge, and the river ran “strong and deep” before major irrigation diverted its flow. Hopi-Hopi remembers, “We was talking about running away, but there was just only one thing in front of us . . . that was the river So we learned how to swim.” The teenage boys practiced swimming “almost every evening” at the boarding school for four months, preparing to face *Naakaai Bitooh* or the

¹ I use Diné and Navajo interchangeably throughout the text, since Navajos refer to themselves with both terms.

“Mexican River.”² Only when he and the other boys could control and propel their movement through the water with ease did they “make up our own minds” and “started out towards the mountains.” They headed north of the school, looking to the gray peaks that beckoned them. After a day they reached the San Felipe Mountains and then followed the river “towards the South.”³ The warmth of the night permitted them to sleep without a fire; they veiled themselves in the dark to evade search parties that actively sought to take them back to the school. Although the river rushed in force, the boys found a narrow part in the canyon of the mountain to practice swimming against the current. They stripped their clothing and shoes, embracing the cold water with their warm skin. After two days of swimming practice in the narrow river, they traced on foot the flow south to a wide crossing.

As the sun appeared high in the south sky, the boys tied their clothing and shoes into a bundle that they wrapped around their necks, and immersed their naked forms in the running water. The ball of clothing tugged at their throats while they pushed and pulled their bodies through the rapid current. Hopi-Hopi reached in front of him for land. The water blurred his vision, but he touched the wet soil and knew instantly that they all had crossed the river. They hurried to the nearby woods for cover, where they untied their bundles and hung their clothing to dry “by the sun and the wind.” The hot red sand

² Laurance Linford claims, “Navajos generally consider this [Rio Grande] to be a female river, ‘tooh ba’áád.’” Laurance D. Linford, *Navajo Places: History, Legend, Landscape* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2000), 251. Navajos often personify natural elements such as rivers and mountains. In Luci Tapahonso’s poetry, for example, she refers to the sacred mountains as female entities. See Luci Tapahonso, “This is How They Were Placed for Us,” *A Radiant Curve* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2008), 39. Hopi-Hopi does not provide many details concerning his escape from boarding school in his interview other than what I describe.

³ Hopi-Hopi’s oral history transcript refers to the “San Felipe Mountains,” but he could have meant the San Felipe Volcanic Field or the Sandia Mountains.

blanketed them during the hours that they waited before redressing and continuing “along the side of the river . . . towards our home.”⁴ Hopi-Hopi and his group of runaways passed a stage then in their journey homebound; they came from the East to the South towards the West, using an earth memory compass as their guide. In this narrative, Hopi-Hopi transitions from a boy to a man, which Navajos relate to the directional movements from south to west. Since the Diné affiliate the North with old age, the fourth direction does not pertain directly to this Navajo journey.

Throughout the twentieth century, Diné families thought and acted according to four sacred directions to embed a Navajo self-understanding in their children. Navajos learned to follow an earth memory compass to know themselves, their people, and their relationships with all things considered physical and metaphysical around them through their personal experiences. I use the term earth memory compass to refer to the Navajo philosophy of *Si’ah Naaghái Bik’eh Hózhó* that leads to *hózhó*, the ideal of Diné society and a desirable state of being and environment. English translations of *hózhó* include

⁴ Hopi-Hopi, interview by Tom Ration, Manuelito, New Mexico, January 1969, transcript, roll 1, tape 362, pp. 4-6, American Indian Oral History Collection [microfilm] (hereafter AIOHC), Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico, accessed at Labriola National American Indian Data Center, Hayden Library, Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona (hereafter cited as LNAIDC). Note that Hopi-Hopi estimates his age like many other Navajo elders who were born outside of hospitals. His mother was Navajo, and his father was Mexican. He does not specify his clans in the interview, but he explains that his mother was “captured by the Mexican people” before the U.S. military returned her to her Navajo family after the Diné internment at Fort Sumner, New Mexico. He dictated his interview in Navajo to Tom Ration who translated and transcribed it. He claimed to be seventy-six years old during the interview, which dates his birth year to 1893. He believes, however, that he first went to school in 1884 or 1885 when he was between nine and twelve years old (3). The “policemen” took him from his home in Tohatchi, New Mexico to a boarding school in Ft. Defiance, Arizona, where he lived for about five years. He then started the fifth grade at the Santa Fe Indian Boarding School, where he stayed for two years until he ran away (3-4). I assume that he was between fourteen and sixteen years old when he first ran away from the school in Santa Fe. The transcript is confusing to follow, since it only records Tom Ration attempting to simultaneously listen and interpret for Hopi-Hopi.

beauty, harmony, and happiness.⁵ Navajos understand the relationships that compose their world and *hózhó* through teachings of the earth and directions.⁶ They have come from diverse walks of life, adhering to different and at times conflicting religions, politics, and cultures, but the Diné earth memory compass has provided common grounds to know and understand their homeland as well as one another.⁷

I argue that Navajos made an effort to build moments of “place awareness” for their children, reinforcing Diné earth memories that would persist against affronts from non-Navajo educational influences. I refer to anthropologist Keith Basso’s concept of “place [as] the object of awareness” and Tewa educator Gregory Cajete’s emphasis on “an ecology of Indigenous knowledge.” My studies focus on Navajo education from the interwar period to the late twentieth century.⁸

Before attending schools, many Navajo children received lessons from family, during which they developed their identity and relationship with their natural environment and

⁵ Gary Witherspoon, *Language and Art in the Navajo Universe* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1977), 24-25. John Farella focuses extensively on the meaning of the overarching Navajo philosophy centered on *hózhó*, “*S’ah naaghai bik’eh hózhó*,” in *The Main Stalk*. See John R. Farella, *The Main Stalk: A Synthesis of Navajo Philosophy* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1984). I describe the meanings of this philosophy later in the chapter and throughout the dissertation. *Si’ah Naaghai Bik’eh Hózhó* also has different spellings and diacritical marks depending on the literature. I use the same spelling as the Division of Diné Education in their publications from the late 1990s.

⁶ Many different people identify as Navajo or Diné, and they choose diverse life pathways. Yet, they can relate to the earth memory compass in some form to affirm their identity as Diné. See Maureen Trudelle Schwarz, “*I Choose Life*”: *Contemporary Medical and Religious Practices in the Navajo World* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2008), 27. Schwarz discusses the plurality of Diné epistemologies. She stresses, for example, “*It is more accurate to say that their cultural heritage preconditioned the Navajo to practice medical and religious pluralism*” [italicized in her book] (27).

⁷ The earth memory compass is not a religion or political decree; it is a system of knowledge and epistemologies based on collective memories and values of the earth.

⁸ Keith Basso, *Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language among the Western Apache* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996), 55; Gregory Cajete, *Look to the Mountain: An Ecology of Indigenous Education* (Skyland, North Carolina: Kivaki Press, 1997), 17.

community.⁹ I show that these connections and teachings would remain with them for the rest of their lives; particularly in their later schooling and distant education experiences, as they journeyed in the four directions of life and time according to Navajo worldviews. The historical transformations of Navajo schooling have cycled through the twentieth century. Despite the challenges to their ancestral processes of learning and knowing, many Navajos have reoriented towards honoring *Dinéjí na'nitin*, or traditional teachings and living the Navajo ways, and *hózhó*, the ideal of beauty and harmony.

The landscape, waters, and skies of *Diné Bikéyah*, Navajo land, encapsulate these ancestral teachings and earth memories. Four mountains set the boundaries of Navajo land, representing the sacred directions from East, South, West, to North. *Sis Naajini*, or Blanca Peak in Colorado, towers over the Rocky Mountains like a lighthouse, shining in the daylight dawn to the East. *Tsoodzil*, or Mount Taylor of New Mexico, sits in the South among the piñon, juniper, fir, and spruce, adorned in the green and blue hues of turquoise. *Dook'o'osliid*, or the San Francisco Peaks in Arizona, reflects the amber rays of the sunset to the West. *Dibé Nitsaa*, or Hesperus Peak of Colorado, blends into the jet-black darkness of the night sky in the North. Four rivers stream life throughout *Diné Bikéyah*: the *Sq Bitooh* or San Juan, *Tó Nts'ósíkooh* or Colorado, *Tólchí'íkooh* or Little Colorado, and *Naakaai Bitooh* or Rio Grande.¹⁰

The Navajo Nation covers 27,425 square miles of these ancestral homelands within the state lines of Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah, encompassing various ecosystems of

⁹ See AnCita Benally and Peter Iverson, "Finding History," *Western Historical Quarterly* 36, issue 3 (October 2005): 353-358.

¹⁰ Linford, 70, 163, 105, 251.

deserts, plains, and coniferous forests.¹¹ Drought and aridity intersperse with the two moist seasons. By summer, some of the gritty brown plains turn “green with rows of dwarf corn.”¹² *Diné Bikéyah* reaches an altitude between 4,000 feet in the Colorado Valley and over 11,000 feet in the outlying San Francisco Peaks. Mesas, buttes, canyons, waterfalls, streams, lakes, and varieties of red cedar, pine, and cottonwood represent only a portion of the diverse landscape that Navajos know and call their home.

Navajos have developed frameworks for learning earth knowledge that sustain their decision-making processes and collective identity. The Diné have exerted their sovereignty in relations with external polities by ensuring the transfer of their collective rationale and identity, while embracing new elements. They continue to deliver their epistemologies to their posterity through emblems and layers of symbols in forms such as songs, oral repetitions, oral histories, stories, parables, sayings, prayers, and physical practices—like rituals and signs—relating to the earth and land. In *Dinéjí Na’nitin: Navajo Traditional Teachings and History*, Utah State University Professor of Navajo Studies and History Robert S. McPherson asserts, “Perception, framed through language, is embedded in a word, a phrase, or a sentence in which lies entire systems of classification and understanding.” Language transmits meanings that constitute worldviews and epistemologies.¹³

¹¹ “History,” *Official Site of Navajo Nation*, accessed November 3, 2015, <http://www.navajonnsn.gov/history.htm>.

¹² Washington Matthews, *Navaho Legends* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1994), 2.

¹³ Robert S. McPherson, *Dinéjí Na’nitin: Navajo Traditional Teachings and History* (Boulder: University of Colorado Press, 2012), 133.

Historical developments such as the penetration of mainstream American influence and hegemony through schooling have changed Diné ideologies and language. Schooling refers to the institutionalization of Navajo learning through the apparatus of the state and government, whereas Diné education implies the holistic experiences of acquiring knowledge throughout life. Navajos have learned to always pass on at least one song in *Diné bizaad*, the Navajo language, to their children. These emblems constitute a “map” or “compass,” with directions and landmarks that guide Navajos on a shared course of epistemology, knowledge, understanding, and decision-making.

Following Diné Knowledge—The Earth Memory Compass

In the early 1900s, Hopi-Hopi and fellow Navajo schoolboys used the earth memory compass to find their way home from the Santa Fe Indian Boarding School. Hopi-Hopi recounted his journey as a seventy-six-year-old man living in *Kin Hóchxó’í*, or Manuelito, New Mexico, in January 1969. He was born in *Tó Haach’i’*, New Mexico, where he lived with his maternal family before he went to a boarding school. He declared, “I know which direction that I came from. I can go by the sun. I went around Mount Taylor and Sandia Mountain and on to Santa Fe . . . This is the way I know our way, my way back to my home.”¹⁴

The Rio Grande had covered their scent, confusing the bloodhounds that tracked their trail; the search party did not pursue the runaways past the waters.¹⁵ From infancy,

¹⁴ Hopi-Hopi, interview. See also Andrew Woolford, *This Benevolent Experiment: Indigenous Boarding Schools, Genocide, and Redress in Canada and the United States* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2015), 133-136. Andrew Woolford cites the entire passage about Hopi-Hopi’s escape to emphasize that the runaways “are thorough and tactical in ensuring that they will not be returned to SFIS [Santa Fe Indian School]” (136).

¹⁵ Hopi-Hopi, interview.

these young Navajos had learned about their home and environmental surroundings. Their early teachings and experiences of respecting and knowing the four directions prepared them to map their way home by using an earth memory compass to follow the sun, waters, and mountains.

Hopi-Hopi and the other runaways continued several days “towards the mountain,” stopping for food and rest along the way.¹⁶ The boys met Zia Pueblos who fed and helped them, after learning that they ran away from school. They told the runaways that they were only sixty miles away from Navajo lands. The boys “went through the mountains there, right straight over the mesa,” making their own path. They reached Navajo territory and first sighted a shepherd with his flock. They recognized their “own people” and knew they “wouldn’t starve” and “were safe” in their land. They pushed on to the Torreon Mountain “towards the *West*.”¹⁷

When they reached *Be’ek’id Ligaii*, Lake Valley, New Mexico, the boys found their relatives and visited with them for about nine days. They then set off toward Tohatchi Mountain, walking the last stretch to their home in the moonlight.¹⁸ Hopi-Hopi remembered, “We was [sic] near the mountain there and we know where we live, it was

¹⁶ The boys found shelter and food from a Native American family at this point. Hopi-Hopi called them “Indians” without identifying their tribe. This family drew them a map to the Navajo reservation and pointed out the way there, advising them to stop at the Zia Pueblo village (*Tl’ógi* in Navajo or *Tsiya* in Zia).

¹⁷ Torreon Mountain could refer to *Tsé Naajiin* (Cabezon Peak), which is the head of the giant *Yé’iitsoh* according to Navajo oral tradition. Changing Woman’s twin sons (significant figures and heroes in oral tradition) killed *Yé’iitsoh*, an event preserved in ceremony, as he was the “Chief of the Enemy Gods in the *Yé’iitsoh Hatáál*, the Enemy Chant.” See Linford, 180. The transcript often included terms for places that do not correlate with common Diné or English names for them. I italicize the direction to add emphasis.

¹⁸ Tohatchi Mountain could mean *Ch’óshgai* (Chuska Peak), which is about six miles northwest of Tohatchi. The Chuska Peak is central to ceremony, specifically the *Tl’ée’ji Hatáál* (Night Chant). It is the head of *Yo’dí Dził* (“Goods of Value Mountain”). Linford, 194.

on the foot of the Tohatchi Mountain . . . We was, back home, where our real home was.”¹⁹ With the aid of Native American families and communities along the way, Hopi-Hopi and his entourage of schoolboys walked about two hundred miles following the maps that their ancestors transferred to them as young children through language, oral tradition, ceremony, and earth knowledge. The order of the four sacred directions led them, according to the Diné earth memory compass, *towards the mountains* heading from the East, southward toward the West. Hopi-Hopi’s journey to the North would happen later in his life, during the time that he recounted these memories in his elderly years.



1. Map of Hopi-Hopi’s Journey, circa 1900

¹⁹ Hopi-Hopi, interview.

Elements of the Compass: Diné Bizaad and Oral Tradition

Some Navajos refer to the earth memory compass, that guided Hopi-Hopi home, as a “map” or “formula.” As director of the Center for Teacher Education at Diné College in 1994, Benjamin Barney claimed, “I think the Navajo formula and this little map of getting there is within families, within the Navajo. It might be a slightly different map from one family to another, but you need to have that piece of a map, a sense of becoming really a person.”²⁰ Navajos interacted more effectively with different peoples and cultures in past centuries, according to Barney, because they knew this map of Diné identity on various personal levels. This map, however, pertains to Diné youth to this day because of processes of globalization, urbanization, and migrations that have separated Navajos from their communities and homeland.²¹ As a core stem, *Diné bizaad*, Navajo language, connects the various parts composing this map.

Barney clarified that the Diné map does not necessarily bind Navajos in a frozen static state. The map enables them to experience a wider world and adjust while maintaining a “rooted” self-identity. As Diné, Barney asserts, “I do have a home, but the home is not a burden. That I have a culture, a language, but it does not stifle me.”²² Diné foundations of identity have shifted like the earth’s surface of moving tectonic plates. The earth maintains its characteristic shape but consistently, and at different rates, transforms within itself. Barney described these mechanics in terms of Navajo language, culture,

²⁰ Benjamin Barney quoted in Deborah House, *Language Shift among the Navajos: Identity Politics and Cultural Continuity* (Tucson: University Press of Arizona Press, 2002), ix.

²¹ Benjamin Barney quoted in Deborah House, *Language Shift among the Navajos: Identity Politics and Cultural Continuity* (Tucson: University Press of Arizona Press, 2002), ix.

²² Barney quoted in House, *Language Shift among the Navajos*, x.

knowledge, and epistemology—the plates of Diné identity. The Diné earth memory compass empowers Navajos by providing them the tools to forge their own paths. Hopi-Hopi used the mountains, skies, and earth as a map, but he also made his “own road” by applying the earth memory knowledge as a compass.²³

Navajos have shaped and transferred the guides of the earth memory compass as oral traditions through *Diné bizaad*, which establishes the epistemology and conveys the knowledge of the people. Thus, the language and epistemology coexisted in a reciprocal relationship through the twentieth century. The Diné ceremonial system, the basis of Navajo knowledge and epistemology, exists through *Diné bizaad*.²⁴ John Harvey, a Navajo who identified himself as a “medicine man initiated into several chants,” claimed during a Navajo Tribal Council meeting in 1940, “There is a very distinctive mode of performance—different Navajo chants—they are so classified according to the laws of nature that without it we will perish. It is in our blood, the songs, the wonderful prayers and sincerity that goes with the Navajo religion.”²⁵ To Harvey and other Navajos of the twentieth century, their body, spirituality, and language together support their existence as a people. The Navajo language in forms of song, prayer, speech, and performance actualizes the Diné and their natural world.

“It is through language that the world of the Navajo was created,” anthropologist Gary Witherspoon explains, “and it is through language that the Navajos control, classify,

²³ Hopi-Hopi, interview.

²⁴ Gladys Amanda Reichard, “Prayer: The Compulsive Word,” *Monographs of the American Ethnological Society* 7 (1944): 2-3.

²⁵ John Harvey, Testimony on Peyote by Howard Gorman, Vice-Chairman, Navajo Tribal Council, Lukachukai, Arizona, May 9, 1940, quoted in Peter Iverson, ed., “*For Our Navajo People*”: *Diné Letters, Speeches, and Petitions, 1900-1960* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2002), 224.

and beautify their world.”²⁶ According to ancestral teachings, the *Diyin Diné*, meaning the “Holy People,” are gods, deities, or supernatural beings, who created the Navajo world with their thoughts that they “realized through speech, song, and prayer.”²⁷ To this day, the Diné reiterate the origins of thought and speech in their oral traditions and ceremonies—the *Hózhóǵí* or Blessingway in particular. In the chants of the *Hózhóǵí*, two beings emerge from First Man’s medicine bundle. First Man recognizes the first of these beings as Thought and calls him *Si’ah Naaghái* (Long Life).

Unlike the first being, the second being is female. First Man identifies her as Speech and *Bik’eh Hózhó* (Happiness.) Thought and Speech unite as *Si’ah Naaghái Bik’eh Hózhó*, bringing “long life” and “happiness” to the Diné world and defining their ways of life since time immemorial.²⁸ *Si’ah Naaghái Bik’eh Hózhó* undergirds Navajo conceptualizations of place and earth knowledge. “The goal of Navajo life in this world is to live to maturity in the condition described as *hózhó*, and to die of old age, the end result of which incorporates one into the universal beauty, harmony, and happiness described as *sá’ah naagháii bik’eh hózhó*,” Witherspoon expounds.²⁹ Navajos refer to the sacred directions and mountains in ceremony and everyday life to reinforce the process of *Si’ah Naaghái Bik’eh Hózhó*.

²⁶ Witherspoon, *Language and Art in the Navajo Universe*, 7.

²⁷ Witherspoon, *Language and Art in the Navajo Universe*, 16.

²⁸ Witherspoon, *Language and Art in the Navajo Universe*, 17. According to oral traditions and ancestral teachings, the Navajo deity, Changing Woman or *Asdzáá Nádleehé*, personifies *Si’ah Naaghái Bik’eh Hózhó*. She embodies the abilities of Navajos to procreate and transform as a people. See Witherspoon, 18.

²⁹ Witherspoon, *Language and Art in the Navajo Universe*, 25.

Diné bizaad embodies Speech and the female entity of *Bik'eh Hózhó*. Navajos have recognized the language as a female being who breathes and thinks on her own.³⁰ She provides the code and communication system that encapsulate Navajo rationale and epistemology. The structures, concepts, terms, and applications of *Diné bizaad* to the earth, specifically the sacred mountains and directions, distinguish Navajos from other peoples while relating them to each other. Dmitriy Nezzhoni, a Navajo graduate student in Curriculum and Instruction at Arizona State University, describes the relationship between his identity and *Diné bizaad* as inseparable, “It is the language that my Holy People understand, the language my spirit understands, the language my ancestors understand, my language is my existence.”³¹ *Diné bizaad* has linked Navajos to their origins and family through all generations. Navajo students turned to the earth memory compass for guidance throughout the twentieth century, which they accessed through *Diné bizaad*.

Although foreign influences and language hybridizations have occurred consistently, the perpetuation of the Navajo language through teachings of sense of place connects the *Diné* with the decision-making processes that define them.³² Navajo learners have

³⁰ Dmitriy Zoxjkie Nezzhoni, “*Diné Education from a Hózhó Perspective*” (master’s thesis, Arizona State University, 2010), 12.

³¹ Nezzhoni, “*Diné Education from a Hózhó Perspective*,” 4. He cites Wilson Aronilth, *Diné Bi Bee Ohoo'aah Ba'Sila: An Introduction to Navajo Philosophy* (Many Farms, Arizona: Diné Community College Press, 1994), 5.

³² Until the end of the twentieth century, most Navajo children learned the Navajo language fluently, even though they went to school. In Rock Point, Arizona, for example, “98% of the children entering school in 1979 were dominant in Navajo, but ten years later only 3% knew Navajo fluently.” See Leanne Hinton, “The Death and Rebirth of Native American Languages,” in *Endangered Languages and Linguistic Rights on the Margins of Nations: Proceedings of the Eighth FEL Conference, Barcelona (Catalonia), Spain, 1-3 October 2004*, eds. Joan A. Argenter and R. McKenna Brown (Bath, England: The Foundation for Endangered Languages, 2004), 19. See also Frank Todacheeny, “Navajo Nation in Crisis: Analysis on the Extreme Loss of Navajo Language Use Amongst Youth” (Ph.D. diss., Arizona State University, 2014),

experienced cycles of confronting tensions and struggles both inside and outside their communities that influence their epistemology and ways of life. In these cycles, they continue to draw from Diné collective memories of earth knowledge sustained by vehicles such as oral traditions, thought, song, and prayer. These devices serve as the elements of the earth memory compass, by which Navajos remember who they are as a people and kin.

Dmitriy Nezzhoni traces the Diné history of their language, which follows the central Navajo philosophy ingrained in the four sacred directions, colors, worlds, and mountains. According to oral tradition, the *Diyin Diné* created the language “with holiness, prayer, meditation, thought, sound, and through that process came forth the *Yoolgai Saad* or the White Shell language.”³³ Four kinds of languages developed, correlating with the sacred directions and stages of life. Nezzhoni summarizes them,

- (1) *Yoolgai Saad* is the representation of Early Dawn, the East, reflected by good thought, strong planning and organization abilities;
- (2) *Dootl'izhii Saad* or the Turquoise language is the representation of the Blue sky, the South, reflected by strong thinking abilities, mental stability and having a strong mind;
- (3) *Diichilii Saad* or the Abalone language is the representation of Evening, the West, life and all that life has to offer the good and bad, including how to make sense of life;
- (4) *Baashzhinii Saad* or the Jet language is the representation of the Night, the north, reflected by hope and protection.³⁴

25. Todacheeny, who earned his doctoral degree in Education, explains, “language loss among Navajos began to accelerate in the 1970s and 1980s” (25).

³³ For more consideration of the origins of white shell in Navajo land, see Donald Baars, *Navajo Country: A Geology and Natural History of the Four Corners Region* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995), 7. According to Navajo oral tradition, First Man and First Woman “anchored [Blanca Peak or *Sis Naajini*] with lightning and decorated it with white shell, white lightning, white corn, and dark clouds to produce the sudden and harsh male rains” (7).

³⁴ Nezzhoni, 11.

The four languages tie into the condensed system of Navajo decision-making, or the “map” and “compass” of collective memories and knowledge.

The language also evolved to reflect the balance between genders, male and female. The “Corn Pollen Boy language” or *Tadaadiin Ashkii Saad* parallels “Thought” and *Si’ah Naaghái* (Long Life).³⁵ The “Corn Beetle Girl language,” *Taniltanii Ateed Saad*, corresponds with “Speech” and *Bik’eh Hózhó* (Happiness). The Diné compass of the four sacred directions leads to these higher entities of Navajo Thought and Speech, which together maintain the societal ideal of *Si’ah Naaghái Bik’eh Hózhó*, long life in beauty.

A Cultural Hybrid Framework

Several scholars of Indigenous studies have recently addressed American Indians in academia, including Jennifer Nez Denetdale, Eva Garroutte, and Bryan Brayboy. They ask Native Americans to draw from their cultural heritage in their work and to “unlearn” colonized methodologies. Professor of Indigenous Education and Justice Bryan Brayboy and several of his colleagues identify “Critical Indigenous Research Methodologies” as the answer to such calls by academics and Indigenous communities. They assert,

For this reason Indigenous scholars have been calling for Indigenous communities to (re)claim research and knowledge-making practices that are (1) driven by Indigenous peoples, knowledge, beliefs, and practices (2) rooted in recognition of

³⁵ *Táádidíin* or corn pollen, the powder from the top of corn stalks on the tassels, is sacred to Navajos. The pollen is “the very fine usually yellow dust that is produced by a plant and that is carried to other plants of the same kind usually by wind or insects so that the plants can produce seeds” (*merriam-webster.com*). See “pollen,” *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, accessed November 20, 2015, <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/pollen>. Emily Fay Capelin, a graduate in Southwest Studies at The Colorado College, explains, “The source of the sacred is corn pollen,” which she names, “the common underlying thread that connects the complexity of myth, metaphor, and tradition of the Diné people” (4). See Emily Fay Capelin, “Source of the Sacred: Navajo Corn Pollen: *Hááne’ Baadahoste’ígíí* (Very Sacred Story)” (Senior thesis, The Colorado College, 2009), 4; and Thomas M. Raitt, “The Ritual Meaning of Corn Pollen among the Navajo Indians,” *Religious Studies* 23, no. 4 (Dec. 1987): 523-530.

the impact of Eurocentric culture on the history, beliefs, and practices of Indigenous peoples and communities; and (3) guided by the intention of promoting the anticolonial or emancipatory interests of Indigenous communities.³⁶

My methodology hybridizes Diné historical study by creating a framework based on *Si'ah Naaghái Bik'eh Hózhó* and the four directions process of rational thinking.

This dissertation examines Diné educational history by approaching and evaluating cultural hybridity as it relates to the Navajo people. Homi K. Bhabha, Harvard professor and theorist, explains that cultural hybridity occurs when “cultures of a postcolonial *contra-modernity* may be contingent to modernity, discontinuous or in contention with it, resistant to its oppressive, assimilationist technologies.” Peoples of these cultures “deploy the cultural hybridity of their borderline conditions to ‘translate,’ and therefore reinscribe, the social imaginary of both metropolis and modernity.”³⁷ In this research, “metropolis and modernity” refer to Western culture and what Antonio Gramsci identifies as hegemony—the control of a capitalist Eurocentric system involving both the state and civil society.³⁸ I “reinscribe” this hegemonic culture, as other Navajos and

³⁶ Bryan McKinley Jones Brayboy, Heather R. Gough, Beth Leonard, Roy F. Roehl II, Jessica A. Solyom, “Reclaiming Scholarship: Critical Indigenous Research Methodologies,” in Stephen D. Lapan, Mary Lynn T. Quartaroli, and Frances J. Riemer, eds., *Qualitative Research: An Introduction to Methods and Designs* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2011), 448.

³⁷ Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 9. Bhabha emphasizes “contra-modernity.” See also Bhabha, pp. 351-353. Bhabha explains “contra-modernity,” “The ‘subalterns and ex-slaves’ who now seize the spectacular event of modernity do so in a catachrestic gesture of reinscribing modernity’s ‘caesura’ and using it to transform the locus of thought and writing in their postcolonial critique” (353). The colonized and marginalized shape modernity towards their own ends.

³⁸ Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith, eds. and trans., *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1971), 5, 12-13. Gramsci uses “fundamental social group” to refer to the dominant class that establishes and maintains hegemony (12). In this study, hegemony represents the dominant Euro-American “superstructures” and their “functionaries.”

subalterns have done in their everyday lives, to create a new framework of study through cultural hybridity between Diné and Western epistemologies.³⁹

Societies such as the Diné have faced colonialism and modernity as forces of difference and challenges to their sovereignty, culture, and paths of life. Appropriation and cultural hybridity, however, have enabled Navajos to determine the influence of these forces such as the indoctrination of their youth in schools. In his studies of colonization and decolonization, historian Frederick Cooper criticizes scholars who “[posit] a colonial modernity,” which “reduces the conflicting strategies of colonization to a modernity perhaps never experienced by those being colonized.”⁴⁰ Rather, he emphasizes “the ways in which colonized people sought—not entirely without success—to build lives in the crevices of colonial power, deflecting, appropriating, or reinterpreting the teachings and preachings thrust upon them.”⁴¹ This study creates a cultural hybrid framework in order to understand such “crevices of colonial power” and ways that Navajos have persisted as a people within post-colonial structures.⁴²

³⁹ The “subalterns” are the marginalized people in the hegemonic order, and hegemony aims to control them along with all others. Subalterns, however, are excluded in the formation of the hegemony. See Robert J.C. Young, *Postcolonialism: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003) and Gayatri Spivak, “Can the Subaltern Speak?” *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture* (1988): 271-313.

⁴⁰ Frederick Cooper, *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 16. Cooper rebukes scholars that have assumed and embraced terms of “modernity” in histories of colonialism, and he questions the very concept of “modernity.”

⁴¹ Cooper, 16.

⁴² Navajos have also been teaching and speaking of colonialism in their own terms, incorporating discourse of decolonization in their ceremonies and oral traditions. In a personal conversation with Navajo graduate student Emery Tahy at Arizona State University, Tempe, in 2013, he described oral traditions of the “gambler” and how they referred to the potential harms of the white people. He remembered participating in Diné ceremonies that addressed decolonization, and he valued the advice of his elders who have told him, “You may go away to be educated, but you will always be Navajo.” Navajos have created their own discourse of colonization in their language and culture.

My study aims to demonstrate how Indigenous peoples have sustained relationships with their environment on metaphysical as well as physical levels, shaping Native American rationale and the formation of identity. Historian Donald Fixico discusses three dimensions of Indian history. Historians of the Western tradition, who examine Native American histories outside of their respective communities, think and write in the First Dimension. Scholars understand American Indian histories through the Second Dimension, when they emphasize the interconnections and significance of both Native American and Euro-American historical figures.⁴³ The “Third Dimension is Native ethos,” Fixico defines, “how Indian people view history from their own perspective.”⁴⁴ The Native ethos and perspective of the Third Dimension, unlike the other dimensions, rests upon various relationships that Native Americans have developed with human and non-human beings.

“We need to construct a cross-cultural bridge of understanding,” Fixico concludes, “to permit people to cross back and forth between western-mindedness and the Natural Democracy of Indigenous existence.”⁴⁵ The Natural Democracy, a reciprocal “respect” for many things, encompasses the exchanges between Native Americans and elements of their environment including other Indigenous peoples, the earth, animals, skies, and spirits. I consider how the Diné embedded their children in values and relationships of a “Natural Democracy,” especially through oral traditions and rhetoric

⁴³ See “Glossary” in Fixico, *Call for Change*, xvii-xviii.

⁴⁴ Donald Fixico, *Call for Change: The Medicine Way of American Indian History, Ethos, and Reality* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2013), xi, 5.

⁴⁵ Fixico, *Call for Change*, 15.

such as ceremony, stories, songs, and prayers, that they passed on from generation to generation.

Jennifer Nez Denetdale, a Diné historian, asserts, “Clan narratives . . . shape Navajo perspectives on the past when placed within a historical and cultural framework that emphasizes the creation narratives as the foundation.”⁴⁶ The “clan narratives,” oral traditions, and ceremonies connected to “creation narratives” embody the Diné ethos and historical approach, which includes the relationship between Navajos and their natural environment. My research brings together primary components of oral traditions and an academic historical narrative about Diné education in the twentieth century to feature Navajo student connections with the earth memory compass.

The Process of the Sacred Directions

Si’ah Naaghái Bik’eh Hózhó represents life as a journey, which necessitates ceremonies to maintain and restore the ideal. Navajo healer Anderson Hoskie stresses, “Healing is done within ceremonies, and every ceremony has a story that takes the patient on a journey.”⁴⁷ The journey to heal and persevere in life applies to everyday existence. Anthropologist John Farella describes how oral traditions provide the patterns for “the curing achieved through the ceremonials, of which this journey is a necessary part, and, more generally, through knowledge acquisition, where all of us necessarily return to the source or the beginning.”⁴⁸ Learning and knowledge propel the journey of life. The

⁴⁶ Jennifer Nez Denetdale, *Reclaiming Diné History: The Legacies of Navajo Chief Manuelito and Juanita* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2007), 179.

⁴⁷ Anderson Hoskie, “Hataal: Navajo healing system,” *Leading the Way: The Wisdom of the Navajo People* 11, no. 6 (June 2013): 2.

⁴⁸ Farella, 156.

sacred mountains and other markers of the earth remind Navajos how to find *Si'ah Naaghái Bik'eh Hózhó* by taking what is called the “Road of Beauty” or the “Corn Pollen Road.” The mountains preserve knowledge of their origins, which Navajos consider crucial to persist as a people.⁴⁹

Navajos have developed what anthropologist Clifford Geertz calls “thickness” of culture in their early years at home, which shaped their experiences in schooling and solidified their identity as Diné through the changes in Navajo education over the twentieth century. Building on Geertz’s “thick description,” “thickness of culture” refers to the layering of cultural symbols and meanings that support and preserve a particular rationale and sense of being that affects decision making—a collective Diné identity based on their geopiety and symbiotic relationships with natural environment.⁵⁰ Their attachment to Navajo land, spirituality, family, and community has persisted regardless of their mobile experiences in their youth as they transferred from one schooling and work system to the next one. Visits and time spent with family and community could have reinforced their home learning and memories of early experiences.

⁴⁹ Four is a sacred number to the Navajo, and they emphasize the “four” directions. However, there are actually seven key directions that represent the Diné worldview compass: “east, south, west, north, zenith, nadir, and center.” Mountains, as discussed, “mark these directions in Navajo sacred geography: east, Sinaajini or Blanca Peak; south, Tsoodzil, Mount Taylor; west, Dook’o’oosliid, San Francisco Peak; and north, Dibé Nitsaa, La Plata Peak, with two additional landforms in the center [Ch’ool’í’í or “Governador Knob,” and Dziłná’oodilii or Huerfano Peak].” Maureen Trudelle Schwarz, *Blood and Voice: Navajo Women Ceremonial Practitioners* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2003), 28.

⁵⁰ Geertz’s conceptualization of the process of “thick description”: “What the ethnographer is in fact faced with... is a multiplicity of complex conceptual structures, many of them superimposed upon or knotted into one another, which are at once strange, irregular, and inexplicit, and which he must contrive somehow first to grasp and then to render” (9). Scholars must work towards piecing together the interpretative meanings of cultures exhibited in everyday life. My study considers how cultures developed these meanings and instilled them in their people as earth memories. See Clifford Geertz, “Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture,” *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 9.

Luci Tapahonso, the celebrated Diné poet of the Salt Water, *Tódik'ózhí*, and Bitter Water, *Tódich'í'nii*, clans, describes in “A Radiant Curve” how Navajos celebrate a baby’s first laugh with a First Laugh Ceremony, *'Awéé' ch'ideeldlo'*, involving family and friends. Tapahonso writes, “This occurrence [the first laugh] showed that Shisóí [my grandson] had consciously performed the act of thinking, Ntsékees, which is associated with the beginning of creation, childhood, and sunrise.”⁵¹ Through traditions which teach the process of the sacred directions, such as the First Laugh Ceremony, the Diné solidify their collective identity and connect all their children to their ways of life.

Navajos value family and home, *k'é dóó hooghan*, which they develop through oral tradition, relationships, and the earth memory compass of the sacred mountains. Tapahonso explains that to the Navajos, “the ‘proper way’ to begin any task or project is to start in the east, then south, then west, and finally, north. This idea can be applied to cleaning a home, stirring a pot of food, leading a discussion, developing a project, or in this case, preparing for a First Laugh dinner.”⁵² The main four directions of earth knowledge orient the Diné towards *hózhó* throughout their life journey and through struggles from east to north, symbolizing the different seasons and stages as follows:

Ha'a'aah- East, *Sis Naajini*- Mount Blanca, Dawn- *Hayoolkáál*, White, White Shell- *Yoolgai Dziil*, Spring- *Daan*, Preparation, Birth- *Oochíil*, *Nitsáhákees*- Thinking

Shádi'ááh- South, *Tsoodzil*- Mount Taylor, Blue Twilight- *Nihodeetl'iizh*, Blue, Turquoise- *Dootl'izhii Dziil*, Summer- *Shí*, Activity, Adolescent- *Tsílkéi* or *Ch'ikéi*, *Nahat'á*- Planning

⁵¹ Luci Tapahonso, *A Radiant Curve* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2008), 7.

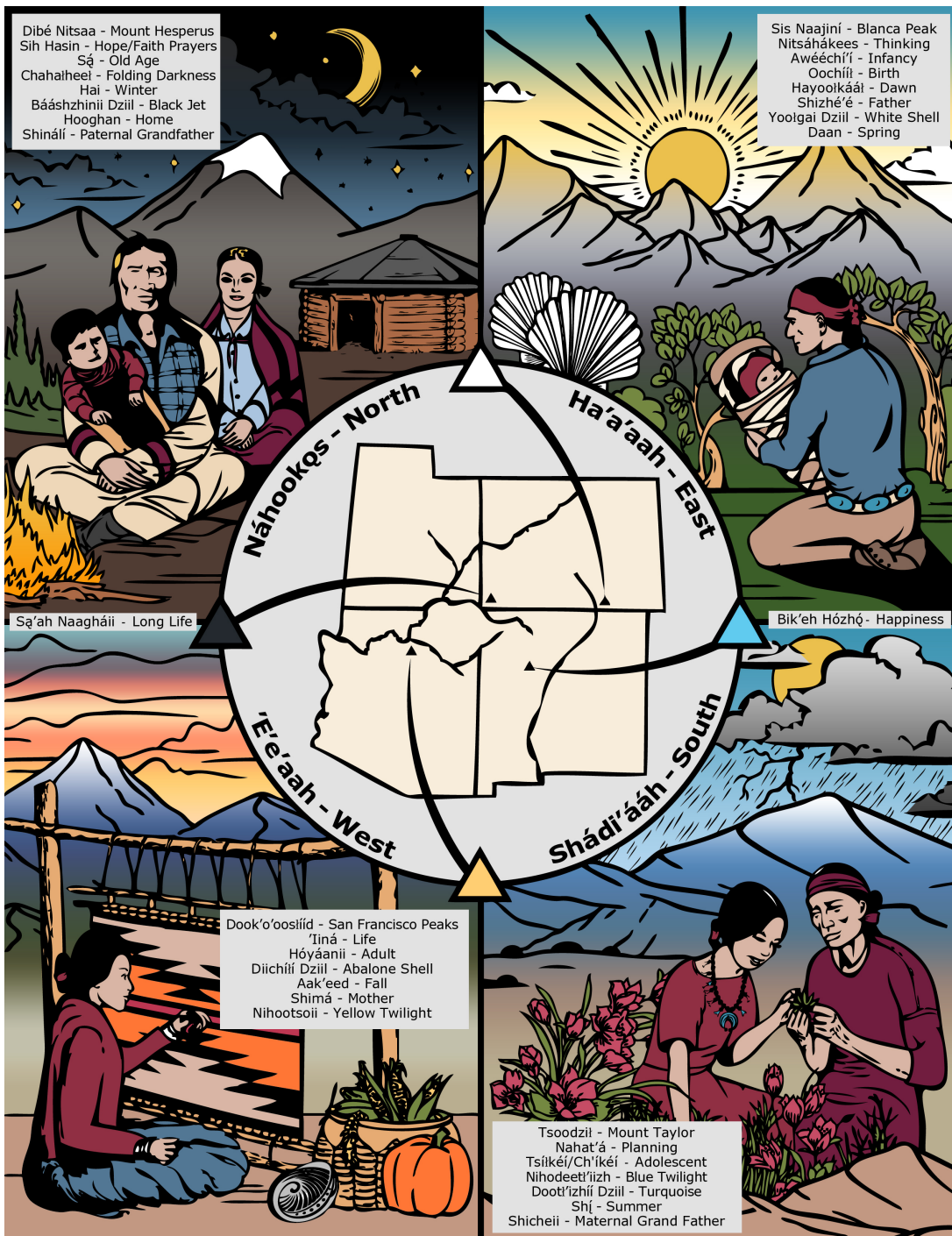
⁵² Tapahonso, 14.

E'e'aah- West, *Dook'o'oosliid*- San Francisco Peaks, Yellow, Twilight-
Nihootsoii, Abalone Shell- *Diichili Dziil*, Autumn- *Aak'eed*, Reflection, Adult-
Hóyáanii, *Iiná*- Life

Náhookos- North, *Dibé Ntsaa*- Mount Hesperus, Folding Darkness- *Chahaltheel*,
Black, Obsidian or Black Jet- *Bááshzhinii Dziil*, Winter- *Hai*, Conclusion, New
Beginning, *Sihasin*- Faith Prayers, Old Age- *Sá*⁵³

These four directions and symbols associated with them guide this overarching work on Navajo educational experiences.

⁵³ *Diné Cultural Content Standards for Students*, ix; “Si’ah Naaghéí Bik’eh Hózhóón” handout provided by Freddie Johnson (Navajo language instructor) for the Phoenix Indian Center Children’s Navajo Classes, Mesa Public School Student Services Center, Mesa, Arizona, June 2013. Copy of handout in author’s possession. Johnson used the handout for teaching urban Navajo children and their parents the language and culture. I attended the summer children’s Navajo classes with my son in 2013. See the image by Evangeline Parsons Yazzie and Margaret Speas, eds. *Diné Bizaad Bináhoo’aah: Rediscovering the Navajo Language* (Flagstaff, Arizona: Salina Bookshelf, 2007), 276. Various renditions of this Navajo four-direction model exist.



2. The Earth Memory Compass, designed by Farina King and Justin Weiss

Diné bizaad names four sacred mountains that teach Navajos how to live by *Si'ah Naaghái Bik'eh Hózhó*. Each mountain or direction signifies a major step in the historical

methodology that I adhere to as a Diné scholar. Starting in the early twentieth century, this dissertation traces the historical transitions of Navajo education through the perspectives of Diné students from the reservation by using the four-directions model of Navajo philosophy. George Blueeyes, a Diné elder, refers to the Diné worldview that oral tradition encapsulates:

Díí Dził ahéénínilígíí
Nihí Bee Haz'áanii át'é.

Our Navajo Laws are represented by
The Sacred Mountains, which
surround us.

Sis Naajinií
Tsoodzil
Dook'o'oolííd
Dibé Nitsaa
Dzil Ná'oodilii
Ch'ool'i'i

Blanca Peak
Mount Taylor
San Francisco Peaks
Hesperus Peak
Huerfano Mountain
Gobernador Knob

Kót'éego éi nihá ályaa.
*Éi nihighan át'é.*⁵⁴

They were placed here for us.
We think of them as our home.

Blueeyes defines *Diné Bikéyah*, the Navajo land, by the sacred mountains that represent a compass and guide to the Diné. The four mountains mark the boundaries of *Diné Bikéyah*. Each mountain also symbolizes a direction and stage in natural processes, which guides this research as I interpret Diné schooling experiences over the past century.

The meanings of the four directions are reflected in four chapters, which trace the transitions in Navajo student experiences through the twentieth century in various regions, cases, and time periods in *Diné Bikéyah*. The first stage is *Sis Naajinií*, the White Shell Mountain that stands for *Ha'a'aah*, the East—the time for goal setting and

⁵⁴ George Blueeyes, “Sacred Mountains,” Ofelia Zepeda and Larry Evers, eds., *Home Places: Contemporary Native American Writing from Sun Tracks* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1995), 7-9.

intellectual development. This part of my narrative focuses on Diné learning experiences before schooling. It considers how Diné from throughout the reservation instilled their values and collective identity in their children. Through oral traditions such as stories, songs, and prayers that they passed on from generation to generation, the Diné prepared their children to uphold their “Navajoness” in schooling away from home. Navajos also performed oral traditions with physical activities such as dance and running. In *Ha’a’aaah*, Navajos learned to find their “way home” by the earth memory compass.

The second phase of the dissertation explores the South, *Shádi’ááh*, and *Tsoodzil*, Mount Taylor, period of Navajo education, during the interwar era in which Diné youth attended boarding schools and community schools to learn important elements of life such as self-sufficiency, responsibility, and leadership skills. *Tsoodzil*, the Turquoise Mountain, represents the summer of life and adolescence. At this point of Diné education, Navajo youth faced pressures to receive such crucial lessons far from home, although some schools such as the Crownpoint Indian Boarding School were located on the Navajo reservation. This chapter turns to Crownpoint, the eastern region of the reservation affiliated with *Tsoodzil* to understand challenges of Navajo students in the early twentieth century. By examining student writings from the 1930s and intergenerational perspectives of the Crownpoint Boarding School, this part emphasizes the ongoing struggle to not teach “Indians to be Indians” but to “teach Navajos to be Navajos.”

The West, or *’E’e’aaah*, section features Navajo educational experiences after World War II, between 1945 and 1965. This chapter examines the postwar school developments and student experiences in the western area of the reservation, centered on

Tuba City and Leupp, Arizona as communities near the mountain of the West, *Dook'oo'sliid*. Increasingly, more Navajo students attended schools, both denominational and governmental institutions, which accelerated effects of Western forms of learning on Diné families and communities. Navajos continued to be schooled distant from their home and ancestral teachings, which perpetuated colonial affronts to their peoplehood. This chapter delves into the mystery of a Navajo girl's death during an influenza epidemic that hit the Old Leupp Boarding School in 1957, tracing the dynamics between the school and Diné community that shaped Navajo student experiences and lives. The tragic "Leupp incident" offers a window into the ways that Navajo communities sought to regain control and restore *hózhó* in Diné education.

The chapter of *Náhookos*, or the North, brings the dissertation a full circle in the four-directions framework by examining the self-determination era of Navajo education, epitomized by the efforts of the Rough Rock Demonstration School and Navajo Community College. Since 1965, Navajos have led Indigenous peoples in re-directing their learning systems and asserting their sovereignty in schooling. This chapter highlights major transformations in the northern region of the reservation, around Monument Valley and southern Utah, of the reservation when community members united to build their own schools. These grassroots efforts referred to student experiences and testimonies, culminating in the *Sinajini* case of 1974 and the terms of its legal agreement that ordered the development of Navajo community schools in Monument Valley. The introduction and conclusion frame the four-directions chapters, outlining this hybrid Navajo-Western historical approach.

Jan Vansina, a senior scholar who has advanced interdisciplinary approaches to African history, notes, “Whether memory changes or not, culture is reproduced by remembrance put into words and deeds. The mind through memory carries culture from generation to generation.”⁵⁵ Vansina defends oral tradition as a historical methodology by stressing the connections between language, memory, and culture. Jennifer Nez Denetdale upholds oral traditions as the key to “[enlarging] the historical scope to include those people conventional Western history has ignored and excluded” such as Navajos.⁵⁶ Diné oral traditions and historical perspectives not only pertain to the connections that Vansina describes but also center on meanings of the land and water. The oral traditions of the sacred directions and mountains underlay this hybrid approach of Diné educational history.

Reconciliations between Navajo and Western historical methodologies include the hybridization and the focusing on the interstices of Indigenous experiences. As schooling spread throughout the twentieth century, American hegemony of culture, ideologies, and epistemology surrounded the Diné and shaped their interstices. Homi Bhabha identifies interstices, “It is in the emergence of the interstices— the overlap and displacement of domains of difference— that the intersubjective and collective experiences of *nationness*, community interest, or cultural value are negotiated.”⁵⁷ Navajos have searched to understand themselves in the interstices of the American hegemony. In such liminal and transitional spaces, Navajos formed a cultural hybridity that entangled multiple languages

⁵⁵ Jan Vansina, *Oral Tradition as History* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), xi.

⁵⁶ Jennifer Nez Denetdale, *Reclaiming Diné History: The Legacy of Navajo Chief Manuelito and Juanita* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2007), 9-10.

⁵⁷ Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 2.

and epistemologies. This study highlights Diné voices of the interstices to trace these entanglements and hybridities of languages, oral traditions, and epistemologies.

This dissertation primarily relies on oral histories, including twenty-six interviews that I conducted between May and July 2015 in the focal communities of Leupp, Tuba City, Crownpoint, and Monument Valley. Informal conversations also contributed to this research. In the interviews, Navajos had to translate meanings of their learning experiences since early childhood in their minds, although most of them spoke English fluently. This work also represents hybridity in that Navajos have interpreted their world and experiences into English to engage in exchange and convey their understandings of Diné epistemology and knowledge. My father, Phillip Smith, who is fluent in the Navajo language, has served as my principal informant and interpreter throughout my life and research. Other supporting sources derive from various records, especially the Bureau of Indian Affairs archival files, and legal documents.

Each of the chapters follow the four-directions process in its case study, as I emphasize the struggles and journeys of students in the South and West phases of their lives—the learning and experimental stages—to their return North when a new cycle re-starts with the East. This methodology focuses on particular microhistories and local cases, as I delve into the intricacies of Navajo lives and community to comprehend how they self-identify and relate to each other and their world by passing on an earth memory compass. The chapters reflect the diverse but interconnecting experiences of Diné students from different times and regions of the reservation. Their journeys move in revolutions around the earth memory compass that their families instilled in them through the ancestral teachings and practices of the East since infancy.



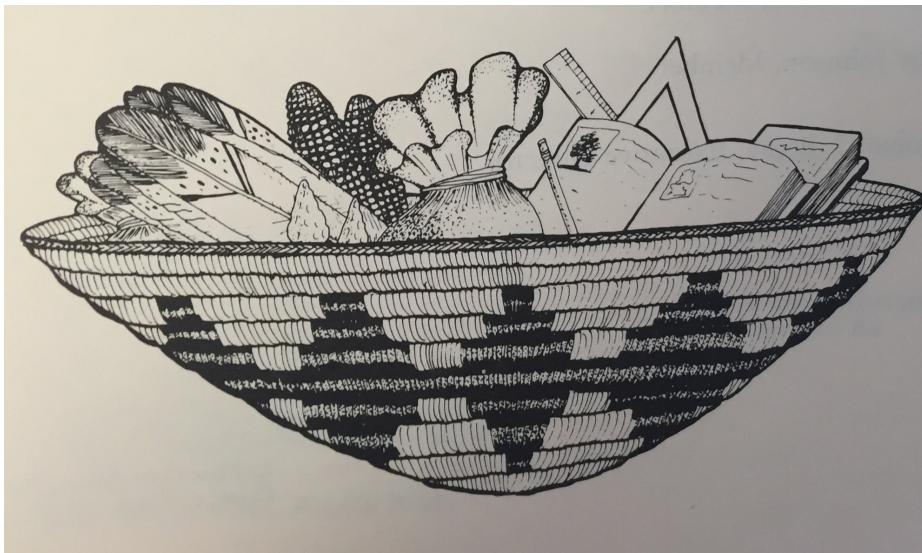
The Rough Rock Demonstration School strives to fit its students for life in the modern world while, at the same time, keeping the best of Navaho tradition and culture.

3. Symbol of the Navajo Basket, *Grandfather Stories of the Navajos*, Rough Rock Press, 1974

Navajo poet laureate Laura Tohe has discussed how the Diné acculturate and maintain their Diné identity by describing the symbol of the Diné basket, *ts'aa'*. Several publications of the Navajo Curriculum Center have featured this emblem. The Diné, she said, hold onto *ts'aa'*, an emblem of their oral tradition and culture, and accept only what fits in this basket from outside influences. This image of the *ts'aa'* stands for the stage of winter, the North, as an example of cultural hybridity.⁵⁸ Although my study concludes

⁵⁸ Laura Tohe, Diné Narratives course, Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona, 2013. See also Sydney M. Callaway, Gary Witherspoon, et. al. *Grandfather Stories of the Navajos* (Rough Rock, Arizona: Rough Rock Press [formerly Navajo Curriculum Center], 1974), n.p. front matter; Norman K. Eck, *Contemporary Navajo Affairs* (Rough Rock, Arizona: Navajo Curriculum Center, 1982), n.p. front matter.

with the North, the revolving point of all Diné narratives and life experiences, *Dibé Nitsaa* (Hesperus Peak), demarcates the beginning of new cycles. I consider the future of Diné education, family, and community while reflecting on the previous phases of the four directions. *Shizhé'é yázhí*, “My little father” or uncle, Albert Smith said, “The mountain is a church.”⁵⁹ As my Diné elders have taught through *Diné bizaad* since time immemorial, the mountains guide Navajos in understanding themselves—past, present, and future.



4. *Ts'aa'* or Navajo Basket, *Contemporary Navajo Affairs*, Navajo Curriculum Center, 1982

Literature Overview

Since the late nineteenth century, Native American scholars have incorporated the oral traditions and voices from their communities to depict Indian boarding school experiences. The historiography of American Indian education begins with the former Indian boarding school students who shared their stories and experiences in writing. This

⁵⁹ Albert Smith, quote from public speech given at Utah Valley University, Orem, Utah, November 7, 2011. The author was present during the talk.

historiography begins with the Indian education history in the works of former twentieth-century boarding school students. The literature later includes studies of reclamation and decolonization that apply Indigenous methodologies of oral traditions and historical paradigms.⁶⁰

The U.S. government separated Native Americans from their families to attend schools based on Euro-American standards from the founding of America. The historiography of American Indian education has developed along two main methodologies and source bases. One methodology involves examining the official documentation of the federal government and schools, sifting through the written evidence to understand Indian schooling experiences.⁶¹ The other methodology rests upon oral histories and interpretations of the narratives that Native Americans pass on about school life and their identities.⁶²

⁶⁰ For examples of Indian intellectuals in the early twentieth century, see Luther Standing Bear, *My Indian Boyhood* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 2006, originally published 1931), Zitkala-Sa, "Impressions of an Indian Childhood," in *American Indian Stories* (Washington: Hayworth Publishing House, 1921), and Charles Alexander Eastman, *Indian Boyhood* (New York: Doubleday, Page, & Company, 1915). Robert Trewnert and Sally Hyer were some of the first scholars to publish monographs on the history of specific boarding schools. See Robert Trewnert, *The Phoenix Indian School: Forced Assimilation in Arizona, 1891-1935* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988) and Sally Hyer, *One House, One Voice, One Heart: Native American Education at the Santa Fe Indian School* (Santa Fe: Museum of New Mexico Press, 1990). Scholars have revised the histories of Indian boarding schools through the twenty-first century; see, for instance, Clifford E. Trafzer, Jean A. Keller, and Lorene Sisquoc, eds., *Boarding School Blues: Revisiting American Indian Educational Experiences* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006).

⁶¹ See David Wallace Adams, *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928* (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 1995) and Margaret Connell Szasz, *Education and the American Indian: The Road to Self-Determination since 1928* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 1999).

⁶² K. Tsianina Lomawaima modeled this approach. See K. Tsianina Lomawaima, *They Called it Prairie Light: The Story of Chilocco Indian School* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994).

Scholars have combined both of these methodologies.⁶³ Some historians, such as Margaret Jacobs and Michael C. Coleman, have examined the many parallels between Indian schoolchildren experiences and those of other Indigenous children during past eras of worldwide colonialism and imperialism.⁶⁴ The main points of these historical works include the intentions and goals of the U.S. government and society that operated Indian schools, child removal and continual military conflict, and resiliency and resistance among Native Americans.⁶⁵

Some scholars, who identify as Native American, have started to use a tribal-specific paradigm to understand boarding school history. Professor Matthew Sakiestewa Gilbert (Hopi), for example, wrote *Education Beyond the Mesas: Hopi Studies at Sherman Institute, 1902-1929* about Hopis who went to the Sherman Institute in California before the 1930s. Gilbert emphasizes that migrations and movements have been integral parts of Hopi experiences since times immemorial, but the Hopis have remembered to return to their homeland. He frames the Hopi boarding school experience at Sherman as one of many migrations that develop and strengthen that Indigenous people. Gilbert sees Hopi educational history through a Hopi perspective and commits to

⁶³ Refer to John R. Gram, *Education at the Edge of Empire: Negotiating Pueblo Identity in New Mexico's Indian Boarding Schools* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2015). Gram uses a combination of oral histories and archival documents on the Santa Fe Indian Boarding School and Albuquerque Indian Boarding School.

⁶⁴ See, for example, Margaret Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race: Settler Colonialism, Maternalism, and the Removal of Indigenous Children in the American West and Australia, 1880-1940* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011), 38-39. See also Michael C. Coleman, *American Indians, the Irish, and Government Schooling: A Comparative Study* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007), 1.

⁶⁵ For example, Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race*, 25-26. Jacobs explains this “child removal” as “the removal of Indigenous children from their kin and communities to be raised in distant institutions. Instead of breaking with the past use of violence and force, these new approaches are best seen as part of a continuum of colonizing approaches, all aimed ultimately at extinguishing Indigenous people’s claims to their remaining land” (25).

practicing shared authority by working with his tribe on his study and recognizing their intellectual contributions.⁶⁶

Similar to Gilbert, Diné scholars have sought to “reclaim” ancestral intellectual processes in the histories and general studies of their people. Jennifer Nez Denetdale calls for “reclaiming Diné history,” and Native American Studies professor Lloyd L. Lee collaborated with various Navajo intellectuals to produce *Diné Perspectives: Revitalizing and Reclaiming Navajo Thought*. Former President of Diné College, Ferlin Clark, modeled a version of the four-directions methodology in his dissertation, “In Becoming Sa’ah Naaghai Bik’eh Hozhoon,” which examines the historical developments and educational designs of the Navajo Community College (now Diné College). These works apply ancestral Navajo teachings and methodologies to address academic questions and research, which this dissertation follows in an overarching narrative of Diné educational history and experiences of the twentieth century.

Historians have come to see American Indian school experiences from personal, national, and global viewpoints. The global historical developments represented by similar Indigenous experiences of peoples such as the Canadian First Nations, Australian Aborigines, and West Africans in colonial school systems have informed this research but are the focus of possible future studies. After considering a vast array of American Indian education histories, this dissertation prepares to decolonize Diné history and tell the Navajo story in a similar model to the approaches of Native American intellectuals such as Denetdale, Clark, and Lloyd.

⁶⁶ Matthew Sakiestewa Gilbert, *Education Beyond the Mesas: Hopi Studies at Sherman Institute, 1902-1929* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010), xxxii.

My research examines education in Navajo communities as a colonial remnant of United States and Diné relations. Most studies on American Indian boarding schools analyze the time period from 1879 to 1930.⁶⁷ After 1940, federal policy drastically changed by closing most off-reservation boarding schools. However, American Indians, especially the Diné in the Southwest, still attended boarding schools and programs with assimilationist goals. Navajos, including tribal leaders, came to value schooling, but they continued to struggle with U.S. governmental control over education. Into the late twentieth century, government schools altered American Indian familial relationships and ties to home in a similar way that off-reservation schools did in earlier decades. My study investigates the ongoing influence of schools as colonial institutions among the Navajo from the 1930s to 1990 in the southwestern United States. As I researched for this dissertation, I was guided by the desire to know how schools, whether far, near, or on the reservation, affected Navajo students' sense of home and relationships with their Indigenous community during the twentieth century.

A generation of Indigenous intellectuals have led this research. They may not have attended boarding schools, but the stories of their ancestors' boarding school experiences influenced them and their histories of Native American education. In *Boarding School Seasons: American Indian Families, 1900-1940*, for example, Brenda Child of the Red Lake Ojibwe concentrates on American Indian families, unlike most

⁶⁷ For example, see Brenda J. Child and Brian Klopotek, eds., *Indian Subjects: Hemispheric Perspectives on the History of Indigenous Education* (Santa Fe: School for Advanced Research Press, 2014). Most of the chapters focus on the time period, 1879-1940. See also Michael C. Coleman, *American Indian Children at School, 1850-1930* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1993); Clyde Ellis, *To Change Them Forever: Indian Education at Rainy Mountain Boarding School, 1893-1920* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996); and Amelia V. Katanski, *Learning to Write "Indian": The Boarding School Experience and American Indian Literature* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2007).

previous works on Indian boarding schools. She looks at Indian boarding school history as a part of personal family histories, as she considers boarding school experiences in her own family.⁶⁸ Her essay, “The Boarding School as Metaphor,” explains the intergenerational meanings of boarding school narratives among Native Americans. The “boarding school metaphor” often refers to “colonialism.”⁶⁹

K. Tsianina Lomawaima of the Mvskoke/Creek also relates Indian boarding school history to her family history, specifically the Chilocco Indian School history, in *They Called it Prairie Light: The Story of Chilocco Indian School*.⁷⁰ The story of American Indian boarding schools, as such works show, rests upon personal details that delve into realms of intimacy, including the home, family, and affections. Some studies dwell on the boarding school experience as a complete separation from family and community, which school administration sought in various cases. This research, on the other hand, concentrates on the ongoing relationships and ties between Diné schoolchildren and their families on the reservation.

Oral histories of students bring concrete reality to historical narratives of American Indian education. Despite the hardship and tragedy in American Indian boarding school history, much of the literature recognizes the resiliency and positive qualities of these Indigenous experiences. Lomawaima finds that American Indian

⁶⁸ Brenda Child, *Boarding School Seasons: American Indian Families, 1900-1940* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), xiv.

⁶⁹ Brenda J. Child, “The Boarding School as Metaphor,” *Indian Subject: Hemispheric Perspectives on the History of Indigenous Education* (Santa Fe: School for Advanced Research Press, 2014), 268.

⁷⁰ K. Tsianina Lomawaima, *They Called it Prairie Light: The Story of Chilocco Indian School* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995), 174.

students established a new community at boarding school.⁷¹ She portrays the students’ “ingenuity” and abilities to claim boarding school education and experiences for themselves. Lomawaima was one of the first scholars in this field to rely on oral histories and interviews with former boarding school students to focus on their perspectives, stories, and memories.⁷² She features the former students’ voices in her book by incorporating large passages from her interviews with them. My use of oral histories emulates this approach, relying on Indigenous historical perspectives and building on established frameworks to incorporate Diné thought processes in the structure and approach of academic research.

Following the standards of decolonizing methodologies and Indigenous Studies, my work addresses the needs and pertinent questions to my people, the Diné, in conjunction with my interests in colonial studies.⁷³ Before graduate school, I interned for the Diné Policy Institute (DPI) where the director, Robert Yazzie, encouraged me to consider how my research could affect Navajo tribal policies and communities. This dissertation depends on the approval and communication with the Diné by fulfilling the requirements of the Navajo Nation Human Research Review Board (NNHRRB) and Navajo Nation Historic Preservation Department.

⁷¹ Lomawaima, *They Called it Prairie Light*, 160, 167.

⁷² Other groundbreaking works include Sally McBeth, *Ethnic Identity and the Boarding School Experience of West-Central Oklahoma American Indians* (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 1983) and Sally Hyer, *One House, One Voice, One Heart: Native American Education at the Santa Fe Indian School* (Santa Fe: Museum of New Mexico Press, 1990).

⁷³ See Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (London: Zed Books, 1998), 4.

Gaining this approval required discussing the project and working with local communities of the chapters in Leupp, Tuba City, Oljato, and Crownpoint. The NNHRRB directs research towards benefiting the Diné. In order to receive community support and approval, I traveled extensively throughout the Navajo reservation, attending and presenting at chapter meetings and the NNHRRB meetings. I am responsible for reporting to the chapter leaders and communities as well as the NNHRRB quarterly. During the summer of 2015, I appeared in person at meetings and learned to translate enough of my presentation in the Navajo language with the help of my father and a colleague who are fluent. My research aligns with relationships that I sustain with Diné communities, as I prepare parts of this project for Diné Education and community historical preservation through collaborations with tribal representatives.

The academic discourse on boarding schools has not yet explored several topics in depth, some of which this dissertation covers. American Indian boarding schools exist to this day, but few studies have yet examined the process of historical change in Indian education and boarding schools during the late twentieth century and early twenty-first century. In this project on Diné educational history, I examine the influence of the Civil Rights Movement on Native American boarding schools and Indian education during the late twentieth century. New pressures of assimilation developed after the federal U.S. government no longer officially upheld boarding school policy in the postwar period. Legal historian Charles F. Wilkinson sheds light on the more recent challenges to the ties between American Indian youth and their tribal communities and culture. He mentions the Latter-day Saint Indian Student Placement Program (ISPP), for example, which placed Native American youth with Latter-day Saint families off the reservations to go to

school.⁷⁴ Despite the good intentions of its sponsors, ISPP created distance and estrangement for some American Indian students.⁷⁵

Scholars have begun to discuss forms of Indian child and family separations in the historiography of boarding schools, comparing the programs, policies, and practices. After an era of assimilation in Indian education, numerous Native American students have attended a variety of different schooling systems.⁷⁶ The Diné youth have experienced an eclectic array of educations, including ISPP, BIA day schools, boarding schools, mission schools, on-reservation state schools, and off-reservation state schools. This study begins to address the impacts of attending such a range of different schooling systems.

From global comparative studies of colonial relations to a personal family and Indigenous viewpoint, the history of American Indian boarding schools illuminates essential lessons of survival, perseverance, and life for individuals and communities. This dissertation adds another layer of perspectives. One personal lesson and perspective, for example, comes from my father who once told me that he “did not run from the education” when he tried to escape boarding school as a child. He always stressed the value of education in our family.

My father’s older brothers, Ray, George, and Albert Smith, attended boarding schools in the 1930s and later fought in World War II. They had encouraged my father to

⁷⁴ Charles F. Wilkinson, *Blood Struggle: The Rise of Modern Indian Nations* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2005), 259.

⁷⁵ See Matthew R. Garrett, “Mormons, Indians, and Lamanites: The Indian Student Placement Program, 1947-2000,” (Ph.D. Dissertation, Arizona State University, 2010).

⁷⁶ Wilkinson, 286.

pursue an education. Despite their schooling experiences that pressured them to forget their Navajo language and heritage, the Smith brothers and my forbearers still embraced and passed on to their posterity Diné songs and oral traditions. They worked to preserve the Diné philosophy of *Si'ah Naaghái Bik'eh Hózhó* and its embodiment in the compass of the four sacred mountains that mark *Diné Bikéyah*. As a Diné scholar with personal connections to this history, I contribute to the historiographies of American Indian boarding schools and Native American identity, which reveal the processes of Indigenous persistence and regeneration.

Twentieth-century Navajo youth experienced a “distant education” in government schools, at times without traveling far from their communities. “Distant education” represents the mechanics of schooling that isolate the student from personal connections to home. American Indian boarding schools exemplified distant education by teaching and applying foreign mannerisms to Navajo pupils, and by attempting to transform their identity in relation to their home. Navajos including my family have had to reconnect since processes such as distant education have fractured traditional relations that solidified their community in the past. This study shows how Navajo educational experiences and learning evolved from distant education to re-center on home and the community through the journey of the four directions. Navajos redirected their education towards their home through periods of maturity and self-determination in the late twentieth century. Yet, their journey as a people continues with constant challenges. This project exemplifies a way to apply a hybrid Indigenous-Western historical approach, which indigenizes history and scholarship.

Diné Song in My Self-Identity

The songs and *saad nazch 'qq'*, poetry, that I have learned from Diné instructors, mentors, and elders have altered my self-understanding and sense of my Diné heritage, which permeate this study. According to Navajo tradition, I introduce myself:

Shí éí Bilagáanaa nishlį́ dóó Kinyaa 'áanii báhishchiín. Bilagáanaa dashicheii dóó Tsinaajinii dashináli. Ákót 'éego asdzáá nish 'lį́.

I am of the Crosslan family (Anglo-American or white on my maternal side), born for the Towering House Clan. My maternal grandfather is of the Harris family (white). My paternal grandfather is of the Black-streaked Woods People Clan. Because of this, I am a woman.

While my family lived in Maryland, my schoolteachers often asked my father to come to my classes to present on Native American culture. Friends wanted him to sing a Navajo song during their sons' Eagle Scout ceremonies. The Boy Scouts feel a strong affinity to Native Americans, and they like to "play Indian" or learn from "Indian wisdom."⁷⁷ I learned of my Navajo heritage and cultural background from my father during these public performances of "Indianness." I did not recognize at the time, however, the layers of my father's presentations and songs. Andrew Natonabah advised, "We should live by the stories [songs] given to us long ago."⁷⁸ He stressed the importance for Navajos to know even one song. My father has taught me at least one song. I hope to "always wear the songs [our ancestors] gave us," as Luci Tapahonso tells Navajos.⁷⁹

⁷⁷ See Philip J. Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 127.

⁷⁸ "Introduction," "By This Song I Walk: Navajo Songs" with Andrew Natonabah, in Larry Evers, et. al. eds., *Words and Place: Native Literature from the Southwest*, accessed October 3, 2013, http://parentseyes.arizona.edu/wordsandplace/natonabah_intro.html. See Kenneth M. Roemer, "It's Not a Poem. It's My Life: Navajo Singing Identities," *Studies in American Indian Literatures* 24 (2012): 90.

⁷⁹ Luci Tapahonso, *A Radiant Curve* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2008), 89. See Roemer, 84.

My father's displays of Indianness, specifically his singing, conveyed and taught Navajo philosophy and worldviews. My recent Navajo studies allow me to finally hear the song that my father was singing during his presentations. In a way similar to how Keith Basso's description of "Earth Stalking," I perceive the Diné way of life like a "song that only we are hearing."⁸⁰ "We" refers to the people like my father and I who understand certain meanings and significance of these performances and songs. Many audiences including some of my siblings who have not learned about Navajo philosophy still cannot fully hear the song that my father sings. I do not fully hear the song to this day, but I understand more of it as I learn the earth memory compass.

I only began to interpret the meaning of his songs and presentations later in life, after returning to spend more time with my Navajo family and studying *Diné bizaad* and culture. Such learning opportunities have revealed more layers of meaning within the messages that my father carried through his songs. My father was trying to pass on certain teachings and worldviews from his upbringing as Diné to his audiences, including his own children, but his audience could not fully grasp them. Kenneth Roemer explains that Navajos shape and internalize their identity by singing certain songs.⁸¹ The audiences of my father's performances often exoticized his singing and did not recognize the songs as Diné philosophy. Navajos also can forget their songs, and their songs can fade along with the knowledge that they transfer.

⁸⁰ See Basso, 38 cited in Fixico, 154; Andrew Lloyd Weber and Don Black, "Unexpected Song," in *Song & Dance*, 1984.

⁸¹ Roemer, "It's Not a Poem. It's My Life: Navajo Singing Identities": 84-85.

My father often sang one song during Eagle Scout ceremonies and later at the weddings of my siblings. He would simply call the song, “The Honor Song.” He never translated what he sang in Navajo during these events. He explained the song in more detail at my younger brother’s wedding in 2012. He told the audience that he was singing about the life of my brother, Aaron, and his bride, Loren. He described how Aaron has grown over time and the impact of meeting Loren. He sang about their future together as they would build their family. He ended by emphasizing that he does not sing about the North, because they must avoid the North at this point in their lives. I still did not understand the song after his explanation until I reviewed Navajo origin stories, oral traditions, and meanings of songs.

Andrew Natonabah sings “By This Song I Walk,” George Blueeyes recites “*Díí Dził ahééninilígíí Nihí Bee Haz’áanii át’è*” (“Our Navajo Laws are represented by the Sacred Mountains which surround us”), Luci Tapahonso writes “This Is How They Were Placed for Us,” and my father sings “The Honor Song.” Their words and contexts are not the same, but their central messages are identical as compact forms of Navajo philosophy in *Diné bizaad*.

My father was singing about the compass of Navajo life—an earth memory compass—the four directions, sacred mountains, and stages of life. He was describing the laws that guide Navajo ways of life. He was teaching about the way to walk with *hózhó* in our lives. He begins the song by focusing on the East, the Dawn, of the honoree’s life. He then describes the South, the youth and possibilities of his or her life. He then speaks of the future and hopes that the honoree will live a long life to see the West and eventually the North (the Old Age and Dusk) of life. His song was a condensed version

of Navajo philosophy, which he learned orally in *Diné bizaad* from his parents and ancestors. My siblings and I have memorized the melody, but I have just begun to learn the words and started to “hear the unexpected song that only we are hearing” when he sings. I aspire to sing with him and to my children. I desire that my children may one day learn these songs, which orientate us and guide us to happiness as Diné.

I sing “The Honor Song” with my father as in this following version:

<i>Heé ya 'ho hwe'yaajineé</i>	[Navajo Chanting]
<i>Heé ya 'ho ha'aa'a'déé hwe'yaajinéé</i>	In the East...
<i>Baahozhogo hwe'yaajinéé</i>	
<i>Baahozhogo bidiishch'i' dóó biyaaho'a'</i>	He was born.
...	
<i>Heé ya Heé, hwe' ya heé hwé ya heé</i>	[Chanting]
<i>Heé Heé ya, heé ya heé heé ya heé ya heé</i>	
<i>Heé ya ho hwe'yaajinee</i>	
<i>Heé ya ho shadi'ahdeéé hwe'yaajinee</i>	In the South...
<i>Binilsi'kee yá'át'ééhgo biyaaho'a</i>	He grew up and went to school.
<i>Olta'go biyááho'a'</i>	
...	
<i>Hee ya hee, hwe ya ho hwe' ya hee</i>	[Chanting]
<i>Hee hee ya, hee ya hee hee ya hee ya hee</i>	
<i>Hee ya ho hwe yaajinéé</i>	
<i>Hee ya ho a'a'ááhdeejí hwe' yaajinéé</i>	In the West...
<i>Binaanish nizhogo dóó bidzilgo nína'</i>	He went to work and started his own house.
<i>Bighan yá'át'ééhgo bił haash'a'</i>	
...	
<i>Hee ya hee, hwe ya ho hwe yahéé</i>	[Chanting]
<i>Hee hee ya, hee yahee hee ya hee ya hee</i>	
<i>Hee ya ho, hwe' yaajinéé</i>	
<i>Hee ya ho nahokosdee hwe'yaajinee</i>	In the North, we do not speak of yet.
<i>Hee ya ho hwe haa ho— hwei ya héé.⁸²</i>	

⁸² Phillip Smith wrote out and translated the song for his daughter (the author), Farina King, July 26, 2013.

Through the medium of *Diné bizaad*, the Holy People may recognize us as Diné.

Marilyn Help, a former Miss Navajo, outlines these connections:

Our traditional way of living, our religion, reflects the teachings of the Holy People. They say that before the Holy People left, they taught the Diné everything about life and what it is going to be like.... When they were ready to leave, they said, 'We'll be in your mountains, we'll be in your songs. That's the way to remember us. We'll be in your symbols. That's how you will remember us and our teachings so that you may have a good life.' And that is how we remember them and their instructions. We remember them through our stories and through our songs.⁸³

Diné bizaad is the key to creating these symbols and “universe” (as Witherspoon may describe it) of Navajo epistemology. The entanglements between Navajo language, oral tradition, knowledge, and epistemology reveal understandings of the experiences and effects of Navajo education and learning in the twentieth century on Diné identity formation and community. The Diné relationships to earth, spirits, and all things are crucial parts of these foundations of epistemology. Marilyn Help stresses that the Holy People will be in “your mountains, we'll be in your songs.” The mountains are the symbols and living spirits of the earth. By working through the ties between language, its forms and epistemology, I trace historical transformations of the Diné and hybridizations of Navajo and mainstream American ways of knowing and being. The Diné earth memory compass embodies the intricacies of the ties between historical experience, memory, language, environment, knowledge, epistemology, and peoplehood that Navajos carried with them through the four directions of Diné education into the twenty-first century.

⁸³ Marilyn Help quoted in Ellen McCullough-Brabson, *We'll Be In Your Mountains, We'll Be In Your Songs: A Navajo Woman Sings* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2001), 155.

CHAPTER 1

HA'A'AAH (EAST): BEGINNINGS OF DINÉ LEARNING

Beginning with Prayer

Hózhóǫ́jí, the Blessingway, are the prayers and songs associated with the “basic system that operates as part of the [Navajo] ceremonies.” *Hózhóǫ́jí* encompasses one of the most recognizable and revered Diné philosophies.⁸⁴ Anderson Hoskie, who is a *hataalii* or Navajo ceremonial practitioner and medicine man claims, “There are four basic systems that operate as part of the [Navajo] ceremonies: *Hóchó'íjí*, loosely translated as Evilway; *Diyin kehgo*, sandpaintings; *Nayee'íjí*, Protectionway; and *Hózhóǫ́jí*, Blessingway.”⁸⁵ Major ceremonies often combine components from these different systems. Everyday Navajo songs and prayers also incorporate Blessingway components. John R. Farella, an anthropologist, describes *Hózhóǫ́jí* as “the main Navajo rite; the main stem from which all other ceremonies branch out. It is the ‘main stalk.’ One cannot overestimate its centrality in Navajo thought. It is for the Navajo synonymous with the continuation of their way of life.”⁸⁶ Navajos have understood *Hózhóǫ́jí* as “living

⁸⁴ Anderson Hoskie, “Hataal: Navajo Healing System,” *Leading the Way: The Wisdom of the Navajo People* 11, no. 6 (June 2013): 2. Various anthropological works describe and explain the Blessingway at length including Leland Clifton Wyman and Bernard Haile, *Blessingway* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1970) and Linda Hadley and Roger Hathale, *Hózhóǫ́jí hane: Blessingway* (Rough Rock, Arizona: Rough Rock Demonstration School, 1986). The Encyclopedia Britannica defines the Blessingway succinctly: “Blessingway, central ceremony of a complex system of Navajo healing ceremonies known as sings, or chants, that are designed to restore equilibrium to the cosmos.... Parts of the general Blessingway, especially the songs, are included in most Navajo ceremonies. Unlike the other healing ceremonies, the Blessingways are not intended to cure illness but are used to invoke positive blessings and to avert misfortune.” See *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, s.v. “Blessingway,” accessed October 17, 2013, <http://www.britannica.com.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/EBchecked/topic/69323/Blessingway>. For Navajo names of places, see Laurance D. Linford, *Navajo Places: History, Legend, Landscape* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2000).

⁸⁵ Hoskie, 2.

⁸⁶ John R. Farella, *The Main Stalk: A Synthesis of Navajo Philosophy* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1984), 32. Farella explains, “The name of the ceremony *hózhóǫ́jí* obviously comes from *hózhó*.”

on the corn pollen road,” a ceremony and way of life that restores balance with all physical and metaphysical beings around them. Hoskie stresses, “*Hózhó* [Blessing] is all around us. Blessingway guides us in enjoying the natural elements around us while teaching us not to over-extend.”⁸⁷ Navajos have learned Blessingway prayers and songs since time immemorial, demarcating them as fundamental inheritances of and inductions to Diné life and society.

In 1998, the Division of Diné Education (DDE) defined the “Navajo Foundation of Education” by reciting verses from the Blessingway prayers. Gladys Amanda Reichard explains that prayer represents a fundamental element of ritual “as a part of the whole to which it belongs, but it may also be considered by itself because it richly demonstrates all that a Navajo does in his ritual, his fears, his aspirations and his attainment.”⁸⁸ The DDE applies prayer “by itself” in its introduction to Diné Education as follows:

Learning the Diné Way of Life is interwoven with traditional legends and values on becoming a whole person and to receive a spiritual blessing and guidance only expected from the higher authorities not of this world, but of the Sa’ah Naaghái Bik’eh Hózhóón, as the Diné people rejoice with affirmation of receiving this gift:

Shitsijj’ hózhó doo	Let there be blessing before me
Shikéédéé’ hózhó doo	Let there be blessing behind me

According to him and anthropologist Gary Witherspoon, *hózhó* represents the culture that maintains harmony in an otherwise chaotic natural world and *hózhóóji* “[reinforces] this quality on the worlds of the People.” He concludes, “The source of this quality is the entities (or perhaps they are a single entity) sa’ah naghái bik’e hózhó” or the “benevolent holy people” that have various identities known and translated from oral tradition including Changing Woman and Talking God (32). “Sa’ah naghái bik’e hózhó” is a complicated concept, which I later discuss. See Gary Witherspoon, *Language and Art in the Navajo Universe* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1977), 17-25.

⁸⁷ Hoskie, “Hataal,” 4. Hoskie does not directly translate *hózhó*, but I address later this central Diné concept. Simple translations have used “blessing,” “happiness,” and “beauty” to represent *hózhó*, but none of these words fully signify the same idea. I use the spelling of “*hózhó*.” Spellings of Navajo terms vary in the literature, as the language has evolved especially in written form.

⁸⁸ Gladys Amanda Reichard, “Prayer: The Compulsive Word,” in *Monographs of the American Ethnological Society* no. 7 (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1944), 3.

Shiyaagi hózhó doo
Shik'igi hózhó doo
Shinaagi hózhó doo
Shizaad hahóózhó doo

Let there be blessing below me
Let there be blessing above me
Let there be blessing all around me
Let there be blessing through the
words I speak;

Si'ah Naaghái Bik'eh Hózhó Nishłí doo.⁸⁹ I have become one with the spirit. I am what the spirits want of me. Let there be blessing.

The *Hózhóóji* prayer opens this discourse towards *Ha'a'aah*, the East, beginnings of learning and systems of knowledge that form the embeddedness of Diné identity and the earth memory compass. Embeddedness refers to Diné connections with both physical and metaphysical beings and things in their environment that affect their decision making and behavior. The understandings of ceremonies and epistemologies including *Hózhóóji*, *Si'ah Naaghái Bik'eh Hózhó*, and *Ha'a'aah* establish and express Diné embeddedness.

Deborah E. De Lange uses organizational theory to explain “Embeddedness” as the “concept that social relations shape economic behavior such that social structure affects economic action.” She aims to “broaden” the definition and use of Embeddedness beyond “economic actions” and “orientation.”⁹⁰ She concentrates on “why certain mechanisms accompany the various forms of the different types of Embeddedness to explain why they affect decision making. These mechanisms generate differential power and/or influence which explains why the Embeddedness has an effect on decision

⁸⁹ *Diné Cultural Content Standards for Students*, “*T'áá Shá Bik'ehgo Diné Bí Ná nitin dóo ihoo'aah*” (Window Rock, Arizona: Office of Diné Culture, Language, & Community Service, Division of Diné Education, 1998), ix. The source does not italicize Navajo terms and translates hózhó as “blessing,” although hózhó has various translations. Farella argues, “*Sa'a Naghái Bik'e Hózhó* is the key concept in Navajo philosophy, the vital requisite for understanding the whole.” See Farella, *The Main Stalk*, 153. The verses of the Blessingway prayer vary in different sources, but the main idea remains the same: “We pray for beauty in front, behind, under, over, around me, and in my voice.... We Navajos were made to live a humble life.” See Hoskie, “Hataal,” 3.

⁹⁰ Deborah E. De Lange, *Power and Influence: The Embeddedness of Nations* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 1, 11.

making.”⁹¹ I expand and redirect this use of Embeddedness to examine the effects of Navajo relations with all things and beings around them that they value, specifically on Diné decision-making and actions. This chapter traces how Navajos have become embedded since the earliest stages of life with systems of relationships to physical and metaphysical beings. These relationships to living and non-living things shape their rationality and decision making throughout their lives. Donald Fixico explains such systems of relationships as “Natural Democracy” in the “Third Dimension.” Native Americans understand the “Third Dimension” through the “Medicine Way,” or “the worldview in an Indigenous paradigm, whereby American Indians experience physical and metaphysical realities as one.”⁹²

Navajos of the twentieth century immersed their children in ancestral knowledge and ceremonies during the earliest stages of life, including pregnancy, birth, and infancy. Families introduced *Hózhóǵí* prayers and songs to their fetuses and newborns. Expecting mothers participated in Blessingway ceremonies to ensure a safe delivery, and they spoke positively to their babies in the womb. They prepared their “psyche to be harmonious with life,” and “increased their feelings of harmony” through the *Hózhóǵí*.⁹³ Newborns also received blessings that centered on *Hózhóǵí* prayers. Hasteen Nez, *hataalii* from *Tsé Lichíí’ Dah ’Azkání* or Red Rock, New Mexico, shared his birth narrative that

⁹¹ De Lange, 22.

⁹² See “Glossary” in Donald Fixico, *Call for Change: The Medicine Way of American Indian History, Ethos, and Reality* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2013), xvii-xviii.

⁹³ R. Cruz Begay, “Changes in Childbirth Knowledge,” *American Indian Quarterly* 28, no. 3 (Summer 2004): 553.

emphasized his father's baby blessing for him.⁹⁴ He was born in Red Rock sometime between 1881 and 1889 during a cold winter. He recounted the events of his birth according to oral accounts by his family who were present, his mother, father, and aunt. Hasteen Nez explained the birth ritual that his father performed for him. "In these earliest days, there was a little prayer that always been set up, how people we used to have birth in the Navajo way or Navajo religious," he described, "but we have forgotten all these things today on account of the hospital."⁹⁵ After his mother had waited to feed him for about four hours, following the "Navajo way," his father blessed him with a prayer before she could nurse him.

According to this Diné practice, the father carries the baby outside when the sun appears "in the middle of the earth." Hasteen Nez's father held him as a newborn in the fresh air, beginning to bless him by facing east. "Today, I pray towards the east, my boy

⁹⁴ Hasteen Nez was also known as John Collier, but his name in the interview title is Joe Joshie. He was born near Red Rock, New Mexico and did not specify his contemporary residence or his clans during the interview. His parents came from Canyon de Chelly but started their family in Red Rock. He claimed to be between 80 and 88 years old when he was interviewed. Joe Joshie, interview by Tom Ration, February 1969, transcript, roll 2, tape 340, American Indian Oral History Collection [microfilm] (hereafter AIOHC), Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico, accessed at Labriola National American Indian Data Center, Hayden Library, Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona (hereafter cited as LNAIDC). I use transcripts of oral histories from AIOHC, which sometimes consist of translations by Navajo interviewers such as Tom Ration. Hasteen Nez's interview was "taped in English" according to the transcript, which could mean that Hasteen Nez spoke in English or Tom Ration interpreted in English on the tape. I listened to the original interview recordings in the Center for Southwest Research, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM. However, it only recorded Tom Ration's voice speaking in English. Working through translations without the original voices of the interviewee poses several issues, since one must rely on interpretations by an intermediary.

⁹⁵ Joe Joshie, interview. Before the baby blessing, his father named him after his grandfather who was "a tall man" (*Hastiin Nééz* in Navajo). Robert W. Young and William Morgan explain, "The personal name did not formerly function as an instrument for general identification among Navahos, as it does among Europeans." A close relative named the baby soon after birth, and the name became the "property of the individual" that they did not share openly. As children and adults, they were identified by nicknames often descriptive of their personal qualities. Robert W. Young and William Morgan, eds., *Colloquial Navajo: A Dictionary* (New York: Hippocrene Books, 1951), 428 [re-printed in 2004]. See also Evangeline Parsons Yazzie and Margaret Speas, eds., *Diné Bizaad Bináhoo'aah: Rediscovering the Navajo Language* (Flagstaff, Arizona: Salina Bookshelf, 2007), 56. According to Yazzie and Speas, Navajo families bestowed their children with "sacred name[s] of strength."

that is born, I give him praise that he shall live good,” his father prayed, “he shall grow into a richness, he grow into happiness, he shall learn every trade that comes up, he shall be a great hunter he shall follow orders, he will have a very best behavior in his life and he shall live in happiness.” He repeated the prayer four times, while lifting the baby and facing different directions in the following order: east, south, west, and north.

After praying towards the North, he recited the Blessingway prayer according to this translation: “In front of him will be happiness, in the back will be happiness. Underneath his shoe, he shall have happiness. Above his head, he shall have happiness, all around him in four directions, he shall have a great happiness, out of his mouth-holy and good way of talking will be coming out of his voice. I pray for the everlasting God that we got.” Hasteen Nez’s baby blessing incorporates the same *Hózhó’ó’jí* prayer that the DDE featured in the description of its educational philosophy.⁹⁶ He shared this oral account to encourage “teaching our younger [Diné] generation . . . teach them how to learn about the old ways that the old forefather used to do” so that they would not forget. By telling about his baby blessing, Hasteen Nez aspired to fulfill the central role of elders as teachers and guardians of Diné ways to the youth during the time of his interview in 1969.⁹⁷

⁹⁶ Joe Joshie, interview. The translator of Hasteen Nez’s interview uses “happiness” for *hózhó* rather than “blessing.” Although the prayers that the Division of Diné Education and Hasteen Nez’s father evoked may not appear exactly the same, their meanings and significance parallel each other.

⁹⁷ During a presentation by Navajo linguist, Mary Willie, she explained that Navajo parents did not traditionally talk much with their children. The grandparents most often interacted with the children and taught them. Mary Ann Willie, “‘your nizhóní self’: The Spoken Varieties of Diné Bizaad (Navajo Language),” (lecture, Plenary Session of the Western Conference on Linguistics and Arizona Linguistics Symposium, Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona, November 8, 2013). The author was present and has notes of the presentation in her possession.

The father's prayer initiated the newborn to a life as part of society and community and generally as a mortal being in the system of Diné relationships. Hasteen Nez learned about his birth and blessing through oral stories, but he internalized the memories as his own and as a foundation of his Navajo identity. His father blessed him the Navajo "old way" according to the processes of the four sacred directions, the earth memory compass, and *Hózhóǫ́jí*. Oral histories from the Doris Duke American Indian Oral History Collection, my family oral histories, and Navajo poetry serve as key primary sources to understand how Navajos remembered and referred to Diné epistemologies in their schooling and later life.⁹⁸ Many Navajo children shared similar experiences of immersion in Diné society before they ever associated with any institutional forms of learning and development. These early-life moments were imprinted in their memories and would affect their futures, connecting them to the Diné earth memory compass.

Early Stories and Songs to Remember

Navajos begin to learn stories, songs, and prayers, especially from their maternal grandparents, during their early childhood to set the most basic layers of their thickness of culture.⁹⁹ Jim Dandy, a Navajo from Blanding, Utah, remembered, "[My grandmother] also taught about the four directions and how to do things in a respectful way, especially during a ceremony and the blessing of a hogan. Each one of us [children] had our turn to

⁹⁸ The family of Doris Duke funded major American Indian oral history collections between 1968 and 1972. To learn more about the Doris Duke American Indian Oral History Collection, see Dianna Repp, "The Doris Duke American Indian Oral History Program: Gathering the 'Raw Material of History,'" *Journal of the Southwest* 47, issue 1 (April 2005): 11-28; and Dianna Repp, "Inscribing the Raw Materials of History: An Analysis of the Doris Duke American Indian Oral History Program" (Ph.D. diss., Arizona State University, 2009). I interviewed some of my own Diné relatives for the LDS Native American Oral History Project sponsored by the Charles Redd Center of Western Studies and for personal family history between 2006 and 2008.

⁹⁹ Clifford Geertz, "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture," *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 9.

learn.”¹⁰⁰ They learn to introduce themselves as Diné, the People, or *Ni’hookaa Diyan Diné*, which translates as “We are the Holy Earth People.” The Diné origin story tells how they came from three underworlds before reaching this fourth world by climbing a powerful reed. The first people were insects, animals, and masked spirits. ‘*Altsé Hastiin*, First Man, and ‘*Altsé ‘Asdzáá*, First Woman, came from the first world, the Black World. The people went through the different worlds represented by the colors black, yellow, and blue before finally settling in this world, the Glittering World. These colors correspond with those of the sacred mountains and directions, although they are in reverse order.

Different versions of the Navajo creation story exist, but they all teach the Diné how to relate to their natural environment.¹⁰¹ Navajos have condensed their stories in songs and other oral forms to preserve their collective identity and history for generations. “We should live by the stories given to us long ago,” said Andrew Natonabah, a Navajo elder and teacher who formerly directed Navajo Studies at Diné College. “Songs, stories, prayers extend from the Canyon to the Navajos and created by the Holy People and carries one through old age.”¹⁰² The various oral forms embody the sacred directions and *Si’ah Naaghái Bik’eh Hózhó*, which Navajos have learned and remembered from their earliest years of life.

¹⁰⁰ Jim Dandy cited in Robert S. McPherson, *Dinéjí Na’nitin: Navajo Traditional Teachings and History* (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2012), 140.

¹⁰¹ Peter Iverson, *Diné: A History of the Navajos* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2002), 8. See also Paul Zolbrod, *Diné Bahane’: The Navajo Creation Story* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1984).

¹⁰² See Kenneth M. Roemer, “It’s Not a Poem. It’s My Life: Navajo Singing Identities,” *Studies in American Indian Literatures* 24, no. 2 (Summer 2012): 84-103; and Andrew Natonabah, “By This Song I Walk,” in Larry Evers, et. al. eds., *Words and Place: Native Literature from the Southwest*, accessed October 3, 2013, http://parentseyes.arizona.edu/wordsandplace/natonabah_intro.html.

In “This Is How They Were Placed for Us,” Luci Tapahonso evokes Diné prayers and songs of the sacred mountains to perpetuate the earth memory compass. She emphasizes the layers of meanings in the directions, as she personifies the mountains. She concludes her poem:

All these were given to us to live by.
These mountains and the land keep us strong.
From them, and because of them, we prosper.

With this, we speak,
with this we think,
with this we sing,
with this we pray.

This is where our prayers began.¹⁰³

Recitations of Navajo stories, songs, and prayers preserve the law and process of the “mountains and the land.” Robin R. Fast assesses the sense of home in Tapahonso’s poetry as “within [a] double historical framework, between the knowledge of sacred, traditional locatedness and the knowledge of exile.” The U.S. government exiled Navajos from their homelands and sent them to Hwééldi, or Fort Sumner in Bosque Redondo, New Mexico, and sent their children to boarding schools in the late nineteenth century.

“Tapahonso examines the meanings of home,” Fast claims, “understood both as specific geographical places and as emotional, spiritual, and intellectual ‘spaces’ of relationship to land, people, and culture; the necessity and difficulty of maintaining connections to home, in the face of modern disruptions and real or potential alienation;

¹⁰³ Luci Tapahonso, “This is How They Were Placed for Us,” *A Radiant Curve* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2008), 42.

and the possibility of doing so.”¹⁰⁴ These “meanings of home” apply to Navajo educational experiences in the twentieth century, which often involved forms of separation from home and family. The stories and songs extended Diné logic of home for those who went to schools and programs far away; thus, Navajos such as Hopi-Hopi and Hasteen Nez could remember the process of the sacred directions and their path home.

As the runaway Hopi-Hopi traveled through mountains and across rivers, he could have carried songs and prayers with him as Navajos learned to protect and ensure their safe passage during travels. Natonabah shared some verses of the song entitled, “By This Song I Walk,” which Navajos rehearsed to bless their journeys especially beyond *Diné Bikéyah*. The introduction to the transcript of Natonabah’s singing explains the centrality of songs in Navajo everyday experiences: “Outside ceremonies, Navajo songs are aimed at maintaining an environment of order and beauty, hozho, in the daily life of Navajos. There are countless everyday songs of this sort.”¹⁰⁵

Many songs and the Navajo language itself emphasize movement and transition.¹⁰⁶ Journey represents a sacred concept, and the “very act of traveling sanctifies.” In the context that Natonabah performed the traveling songs, he sang to children for a recording that he knew would preserve the songs that his ancestors

¹⁰⁴ Robin Riley Fast, “The Land Is Full of Stories: Navajo Histories in the Work of Luci Tapahonso,” *Women’s Studies* 36, no. 3 (2007): 186.

¹⁰⁵ “Introduction,” “By This Song I Walk: Navajo Songs” with Andrew Natonabah, in Larry Evers, et. al. eds., *Words and Place: Native Literature from the Southwest*, accessed October 3, 2013, http://parentseyes.arizona.edu/wordsandplace/natonabah_intro.html.

¹⁰⁶ “Introduction,” “By This Song I Walk.” For example, over 350,000 different conjugations of “to go” exist.

initiated. Rehearsing the songs enabled him and other Navajos to exist in *hózhó*, “an environment of balance and harmony [or order and beauty].”¹⁰⁷

George Smith of the *’Áshjìhí* (Salt People) and *Tsinaajinii*, (Black-streaked Woods) clans went to boarding schools at Fort Wingate and Crownpoint, New Mexico during the 1930s. He remembered that he had to know certain songs to travel and explore the mountains and some areas. The songs protected him, and the mountains and *Diyin Dine’é*, Holy People, would recognize him by the verses. Smith described the teachings of his parents and elders:

The only thing that they wanted us to learn was how to sing and many traditional things. They really impressed that and pushed that when we were younger like the language and culture. You don’t just go into the mountains just to go, but you have a song to go with you, a protection song. When you had that song within you and sing it when you go into the mountain, you don’t have any problems with the animals and such.¹⁰⁸

Song served as the medium for passing on Navajo identity, which they used to not only relate with other peoples but also with the earth, animals, spirits, and various elements of their environment and universe. Speaking to children, Natonabah has taught, “The Holy People know you by the songs. So, learn the songs. Don’t be ashamed of your songs and stories.... When one has even one song, He will live a long time. He will live by it. He will guide his children by it. He will guide his people by it.”¹⁰⁹

In an introduction to her collection of poetry about her boarding school experiences, *No Parole Today*, Laura Tohe of the *Tsé Nahabiānii* (Sleep Rock People)

¹⁰⁷ “Introduction,” “By This Song I Walk.”

¹⁰⁸ George Smith, interview by author [the interviewee’s niece], Rehoboth, New Mexico, June 10, 2008, transcript in personal possession of author.

¹⁰⁹ “Transcript,” Andrew Natonabah, “By This Song I Walk,” accessed October 3, 2013, <http://parentseyes.arizona.edu/wordsandplace/bythissongiwalk.html>.

and *Tóóich'ii'nii* (Bitter Water) clans addresses a letter to Richard Henry Pratt that closes with the following words:

I voice this letter to you now because I speak for me, no longer invisible, and no longer relegated to the quiet margins of American culture, my tongue silenced. The land, the Diné, the Diné culture is how I define myself and my writing. That part of my identity was never drowned; it was never a hindrance but a strength. To write is powerful and even dangerous. To have no stories is to be an empty person. Writing is a way for me to claim my voice, my heritage, my stories, my culture, my people, and my history.¹¹⁰

The homeland defines Navajo identity, although many Navajos, such as Tohe, have converted to different faiths and lived away from *Diné Bikéyah*. Tohe masters the medium of writing to express her sense of self and worldviews, which stem from oral sources including prayers, stories, and songs. She continues Diné oral traditions by using her “voice” through the spoken word and writing in spite of Richard Henry Pratt’s legacy to “kill the Indian in him, and save the man.”¹¹¹ The land, environment, and nature have represented integral parts of Diné knowledge, epistemology, and relationships that they have relied on even after facing challenges and going great distances from their early teachings, where Diné learning confronts Western education in schools.

Corn Pollen (Táádidíín) and Symbols of the Sacred Directions

The ritualization of particular objects and substances also provided mechanisms for Navajos to ingrain the process of the sacred directions that oriented them towards

¹¹⁰ Laura Tohe, *No Parole Today* (Albuquerque: West End Press, 1999), xii.

¹¹¹ Richard Henry Pratt is credited for the idea of off-reservation federal Indian boarding schools. He founded the Carlisle Indian Industrial School, an Indian boarding school in Carlisle, Pennsylvania in 1879. See *Official Report of the Nineteenth Annual Conference of Charities and Correction* (1892), 46-59, reprinted in Richard Henry Pratt, “The Advantages of Mingling Indians with Whites,” *Americanizing the American Indians: Writings by the “Friends of the Indian,” 1880-1900* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1973), 260-271. For more on Richard Henry Pratt and the origins and effects of assimilationist policies in American Indian education, see David Wallace Adams, *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1995).

their community and home. From an early age, Navajos learned to recognize corn pollen, *táádidíín*, as a source and medium to fortify their connections within the Natural Democracy. Corn pollen has played an important role in most rituals, *nahaghá*, arguably representing a “common thread running through *every* aspect of Navajo ceremonial life.”¹¹² According to oral tradition, *Asdzáá Nádleehé* (Changing Woman) “created the Navajos,” introduced the Blessingway, and taught them how to use corn pollen “as a way of living in contact with her [and other Holy People].”¹¹³

A Navajo employee for the Indian Health Services, Ursula M. Knoki-Wilson, highlights a Diné “Earth Prayer” used in childbirth to encourage a return to traditional practices. She recites, “From the heart of Earth, by means of yellow pollen blessing is extended. From the heart of Sky, by means of blue pollen blessing is extended. On top of pollen floor may I there in blessing give birth!”¹¹⁴ The prayers with corn pollen evoke the law of sacred directions and connections between nature and the Holy People that have dictated a Navajo’s life from its earliest stages.

Parallel to the “Earth Prayer” of childbirth, Navajos traditionally would sing to grow corn, the source of the sacred corn pollen. The spring planting involved all of the

¹¹² Thomas M. Raitt, “The Ritual Meaning of Corn Pollen among the Navajo Indians,” *Religious Studies* 23, no. 4 (December 1987): 525. Raitt italicizes “every.”

¹¹³ Raitt, 524. See also Maureen Trudelle Schwarz, *Blood and Voice: Navajo Women Ceremonial Practitioners* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2003), 29.

¹¹⁴ S.D. Gill, “Earth Prayer,” *Sacred Words: A Study of Navajo Religion and Prayer: Contributions in Intercultural and Comparative Studies* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1981) cited in Ursula M. Knoki-Wilson (CNM, MSN, employee of Indian Health Services), “Keeping the Sacred in Childbirth Practices: Integrating Navajo Cultural Aspects into Obstetric Care,” accessed October 17, 2013, http://www.naho.ca/documents/naho/english/IG_Presentations2008/009KnokiWilsonUrsula.pdf.

generations in the family, from children to the elders.¹¹⁵ *Tábqqhí Ts'ósi*, known as George Blueeyes, practiced traditional Navajo healing and farming in Rock Point, Arizona during the twentieth century.¹¹⁶ As an eighty-year-old man in 1978, Blueeyes continued to follow ancestral teachings of growing corn with “a planting stick.” He waited until the *Dilyéhé* or stars of the *Pleiades* faded in the night skies of spring to begin planting corn with his family. He made a digging stick from greasewood, which he used to open the ground several inches deep. He would choose six or seven seeds of corn, covering them first with wet dirt. Dry dirt leveled the top of the holes.

Blueeyes and other Navajo farmers would start singing to the earth after planting four corn seeds, adhering to the example of *Haashch'éehoghan*, or the Home God, in oral tradition.¹¹⁷ “The holy blue corn seed I am planting. In one night it will grow and be healthy. In one night it grows tall, in the garden of the Home God,” *Haashch'éehoghan* sang with his kin. After the corn grows, the son of *Haashch'éehoghan* asks, “Why does the land look so beautiful with the corn?” *Haashch'éehoghan* responds in the verses:

Bee hozhonigo!
It is beautiful with this:
With the dark cloud,
With the dew of the cloud,
It is beautiful.

¹¹⁵ Rose Houk, *Navajo of Canyon de Chelly: In Home God's Fields* (Tucson, Arizona: Southwest Parks and Monuments Association, 1995), 6.

¹¹⁶ Sam and Janet Bingham, *Navajo Farming* (Chinle, Arizona: Rock Point Community School, 1979), 18.

¹¹⁷ George Blueeyes, interviewed by Lorraine Coggeshall, Laverne Gene, Rex Lee Jim, and Stanley Pahe (Rock Point eighth graders), Rock Point, Arizona, May 10, 1978, cited in Sam and Janet Bingham, *Navajo Farming* (Chinle, Arizona: Rock Point Community School, 1979), 18-19. See also Ruth Underhill, *The Navajos* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1956), 28-29. Underhill describes Navajo oral traditions of corn and other related songs. See also Brenda Norrell, “Classic book still a useful guide to traditional Navajo farming,” *Knight Ridder Tribune Business News*, June 30, 2004. Norrell cites Blueeyes and Bingham's *Navajo Farming*.

With blue corn,
It is beautiful.

Bee hozhonigo!
It is beautiful with this:
With dark mist,
With dew of the mist,
It is beautiful.
With white corn,
It is beautiful.¹¹⁸

Navajos repeated these songs in the cornfields. The planting ended by “the last quarter of the moon (*Oolijéé’ dahiitjhgó*).”¹¹⁹

The interval “between the last freezing night in the spring and the first freezing night in the fall” indicates the “growing season.”¹²⁰ Former Navajo Nation Vice Chairman Howard Gorman described how Navajos like his family reaped the harvest in the fall, after watching the corn stalks rise through the summer when the heaviest rains moistened the soil. They would “shuck” and “lay [the corn] out in the sun to dry” to later divide the dried corn evenly among the relatives.¹²¹ In the winter, the season for storytelling and ceremonies such as the *Yéii’ bicheii*, Navajos relied on their food storage and kept select corn seeds for the next planting.¹²²

The cycle of corn marks the seasons of life. Kayla Begay, a Navajo educator and activist who founded the Dził Dit Ł’ooí School of Empowerment, Action, and

¹¹⁸ Washington Matthews, “Songs of Sequence of the Navajos,” *Journal of American Folk-lore*, 7, no. 26 (September 1894), cited in Bingham, *Navajo Farming*, 3-5. The author formats the verses as shown here.

¹¹⁹ Bingham, *Navajo Farming*, 19.

¹²⁰ Bingham, *Navajo Farming*, 13.

¹²¹ Howard Gorman, interview at Window Rock, Arizona, October 1, 1974, cited in Bingham, *Navajo Farming*, 20.

¹²² Houk, *Navajo of Canyon de Chelly*, 6-7.

Perseverance (DEAP), upholds planting corn as a Navajo way of life. “Our ancestors went through the Navajo Long Walk and still came back and planted corn,” she said. “My dad didn’t finish school, and he still plants corn. And me—I still plant corn in our field. We recognize there’s power beyond us, whether it’s in the land or in each other.”¹²³ As long as the Diné can plant and grow corn, as Blueeyes, Gorman, and Begay show, they will survive and follow the “corn pollen road” with the earth memory compass.

The baby blessing of Hasteen Nez exemplifies how Navajos initiated their newborns to their ways of life and identity as a part of their community in a Natural Democracy. This Natural Democracy is a realm that involves reciprocal “respect” among both natural and metaphysical beings. According to an anonymous Navajo, “we anoint [a new baby] with corn pollen to give him *the power*. We start with the right knee cap, then the left knee cap; the right palm, then the left palm.”¹²⁴ Navajos would use the corn pollen to bless the pregnancy, childbirth, newborn, and person throughout their life. Families also greeted their new children by inducting them in their clans, which tied them to Diné community. The mothers first spoke to their babies of their clans, the four—the maternal, paternal, and the maternal and paternal grandfathers’—clans key to the matrilineal system.

Each familial figure played a particular role in the child’s upbringing and teachings from the beginning, especially the mother. After naming her child’s clans, the

¹²³ Kayla Begay, cited in Ting Yu, “A Generation Rising,” *One Day Magazine*, Fall 2014, accessed November 17, 2015, <https://www.teachforamerica.org/top-stories/generation-rising>.

¹²⁴ Interview with F.S. [anonymous Navajo “informant”] cited in Raitt, 526. Raitt italicizes “the power.”

mother would declare, ““in this way you are my baby.””¹²⁵ Linguists Evangeline Parsons Yazzie and Margaret Speas clarify, “This system helps us to learn that the world cannot be owned; instead, a person is a part of the world identified by the clan system.”¹²⁶ Navajos have claimed, “As our clans and names are the roots and foundation of who we are, the introduction of ourselves is a gift from the Holy People and the four sacred directions- The Early Dawn People, The Blue Twilight People, The Yellow Evening Twilight People, and the Folding Darkness People.”¹²⁷ The directions each affiliate with a part of the clan introductions, representing another foundational layer of the earth memory compass that connects to the clan system. *Shizhé’é*, father, represents the East. Thus, the father’s blessing of Hasteen Nez as an infant reinforces these connections. *Shicheii*, the maternal grandfather, affiliates with the South. *Shimá*, mother, embodies the West. Finally, *Shinálí*, the paternal grandfather, symbolizes the North.¹²⁸ Navajos refer to the clans of these familial figures in their introductions.

Traditionally, Navajos believed that they knew their clans while “still in our mother’s womb.”¹²⁹ The clans represent the relationships between the Diné and their natural and metaphysical environment. Navajos emphasized the ties between their people

¹²⁵ Evangeline Parsons Yazzie and Margaret Speas, eds. *Diné Bizaad Bíná’hoo’ aah: Rediscovering the Navajo Language* (Flagstaff, Arizona: Salina Bookshelf, 2007), 69.

¹²⁶ Yazzie and Speas, 70.

¹²⁷ “Proper Introduction in the Diné Way,” a handout presented to Navajo children and their parents by Freddie Johnson in the Phoenix Indian Center Children’s Navajo Classes, 2013. A hardcopy of the handout is in the author’s possession.

¹²⁸ Freddie Johnson, lecture on the ties between kinship and the four sacred directions, Phoenix Indian Center Navajo language and culture classes, Mesa, Arizona, May 13, 2015. I attended this lecture and kept my notes of it.

¹²⁹ Freddie Johnson, lecture.

and place at birth. One way of asking where someone comes from in Navajo, “Háadish nits’éé’ lee’ sitá?” translates as “Where are your umbilical cords buried?”¹³⁰ The language reflects Diné worldviews that the body parts, including “bodily fluids and offal,” always relate to the person; thus, they could sustain a force with “positive or negative effect throughout a person’s life.”¹³¹ Cultural anthropologist Maureen Trudelle Schwarz elaborates, “Parts of the body and bodily substances can affect the health and welfare of the individual and, by extension, her or his kin and community, long past detachment or elimination.”¹³² Navajo adults carried the responsibilities to influence and direct these connections between the child’s body and human potential towards strengthening and supporting kin, community, and *Diné Bikéyah*.

Mothers often kept the umbilical cords of their babies or buried them in revered places such as in a sheep corral or near the rug loom with the belief that the children would always return to the place of their cords due to the powerful force between the body part and personage.¹³³ They also buried the cords in the ground under the doorpost of their hogan or nearby to form the connections between the child and home.¹³⁴ Hoskie

¹³⁰ Terry Teller, daybreakwarrior, “Where Are You From?” (Navajo Language Study), *YouTube*, published September 25, 2012, accessed September 16, 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MYvRKHIE3VY>.

¹³¹ Maureen Trudelle Schwarz, *Molded in the Image of Changing Woman: Navajo Views on the Human Body and Personhood* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1997), 115. *Nits’éé’* refers to “your umbilical cords,” but Navajos cannot say “umbilical cords” without such a “pronominal prefix” to indicate possession.

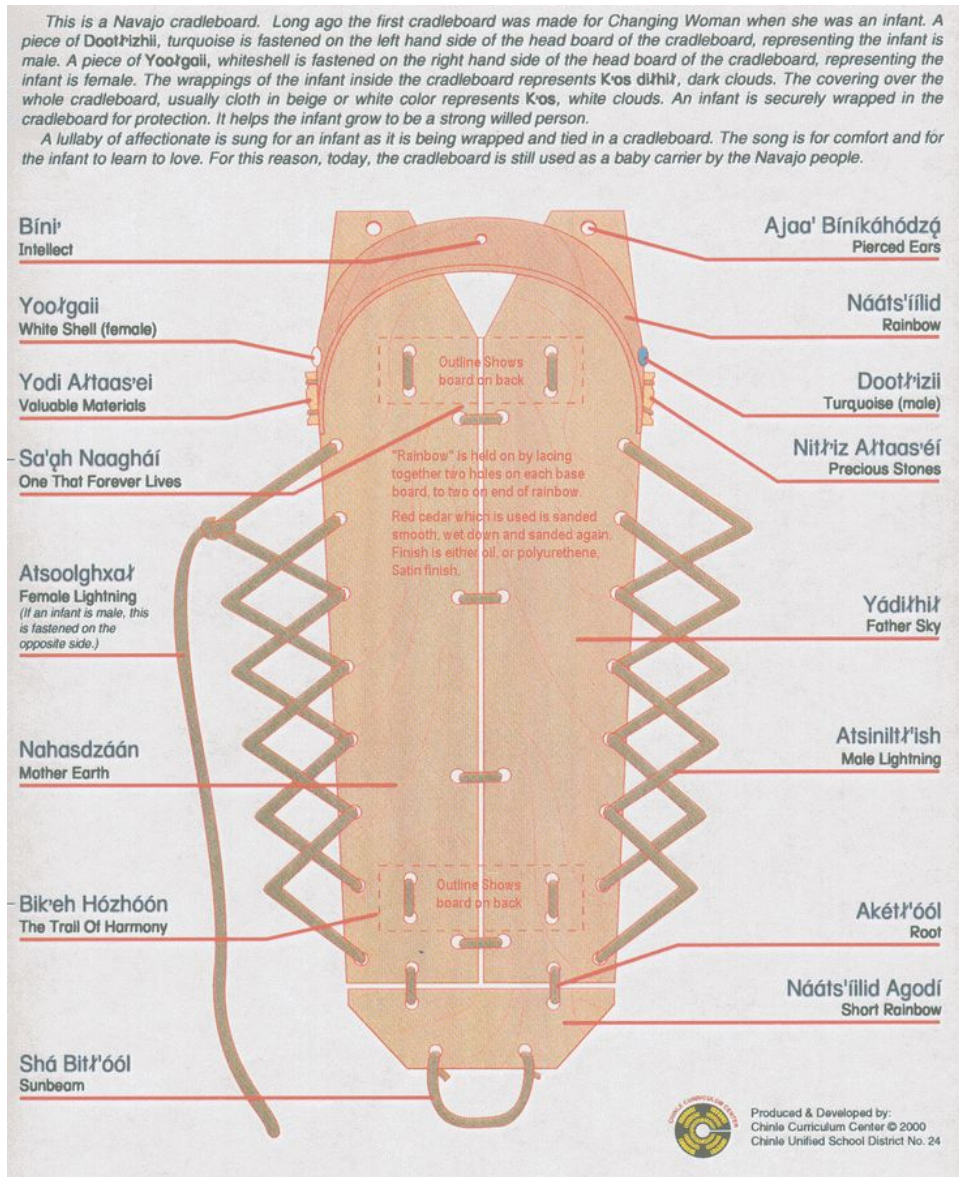
¹³² Schwarz, *Molded in the Image of Changing Woman*, 115.

¹³³ Ursula M. Knoki-Wilson (CNM, MSN, employee of Indian Health Services), “Keeping the Sacred in Childbirth Practices: Integrating Navajo Cultural Aspects into Obstetric Care,” accessed September 16, 2015, http://www.naho.ca/documents/naho/english/IG_Presentations2008/009KnokiWilsonUrsula.pdf.

¹³⁴ Teller, “Where Are You From?”

Benally, *hataalii* of Shiprock, New Mexico, explains, “In this way, the newborn makes a symbolic transition from being nourished by their natural mother to a life of nurturing by Mother Earth, the spiritual mother.” Navajos traditionally offered the placenta to “a young piñon or juniper tree, creating a sacred bond the two will share throughout their lives.”¹³⁵ Such practices exemplified how Navajos sought to influence and ingrain ancestral teachings and values in their children from the earliest stages of life. Families served as the guardians of these Diné pathways.

¹³⁵ Hoskie Benally, “A Sacred Relationship,” “The Five Sacred Medicines” in *Circle of Stories*, Public Broadcasting Service, accessed September 16, 2015, http://www.pbs.org/circleofstories/storytellers/hoskie_benally.html.



5. Navajo Cradleboard, design by Chinle Curriculum Center, 2000

Navajos continued to surround their children with Diné worldviews centered on nature and the spiritual world through everyday objects that presented sanctified symbols such as *Awéétsáál*, the cradleboard designed after the one that Changing Woman had in her infancy when First Man and First Woman found her.¹³⁶ The backboard, made of

¹³⁶ Changing Woman provided the example for Navajo ways of life including the *Kinaaldá* (the female puberty ceremony) for young women who menstruated the first time. *Kinaaldá* also reinforced the process of the sacred directions in the ceremonies, prayers, songs, and rituals involved, and the youth of varying

cottonwood or pine, consists of *Nahasdzáán* on the right side and *Yá'dilhil* on the left side, Mother Earth and Father Sky respectively. The *Náátsi'ílid*, Rainbow, is the piece of oak that bends over the board at the top in an arch. *Atsiniltl'ish* and *Shábitl'óót*, Lightning and Sun Beam, provide the lacings and loops that hold the baby in the cradle. The small rainbow, *Náásts'ílid Agodii*, serves as the footboard at the other end of the cradle. The baby is “under the rainbow,” enveloped in nature and metaphysical protection within the cradleboard.¹³⁷

Parts of the cradleboard correlate with the life process of the four directions. The foot base represents birth, and the bottom of the board stands for *Nitsáhákees*, “mental vision” or the thinking phase of the East. The middle of the board symbolizes puberty, and the upper part signifies adulthood and *Sihasin* or “awareness” that aligns with the North. Meanings of gender infuse the symbolism that underlay Diné ancestral ways of life. Navajos place the stone of the South, *Dootl'izii* or Turquoise, on the left side of *awéetsáál* if the child is male. For female babies, they attach the symbol of the East and White Shell Woman (also known as Changing Woman), *Yoolgaii* or White Shell, on the

ages were encouraged to participate. See *Kinaalda: A Navajo Rite of Passage*, directed by Lena Carr (New York: Women Make Movies, 2000), DVD. Carr narrates her personal oral history, while showing and explaining to viewers her niece's *Kinaalda*. Carr did not receive a *Kinaalda* but experienced it vicariously through her niece. The film provides another example of how Navajos revitalize and preserve ceremony, and thus their ways of life. See also Charlotte Johnson Frisbie, *Kinaalda: A Study of the Navaho Girl's Puberty Ceremony* (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1967); Shirley M. Begay, Verna Clinton-Tullie, and Marvin Yellowhair, *Kinaalda, a Navajo Puberty Ceremony* (Rough Rock, Arizona: Title IV-B Materials Development Project, Navajo Curriculum Center, Rough Rock Demonstration School, 1983); and Eulynda Toledo-Benalli, *Kinaalda: Diné Women Knowledge* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2003).

¹³⁷ “Navajo Culture,” *Discover Navajo*, accessed August 29, 2013, <http://discovernavajo.com/cradleboard.html>. See also “Navajo cradleboard” image, produced and developed by Chinle Curriculum Center, Chinle Unified School District No. 24, Chinle, Arizona, 2000.

right side of the cradleboard.¹³⁸ Navajos expect women to emulate *Asdzáá Nádleehé*, Changing Woman, while men follow examples such as Turquoise Boy through oral traditions.¹³⁹ *Awéétsáál* provides another medium to reinforce and imprint Diné epistemologies and the earth memory compass on Navajos since infancy. According to *Dinéjí na'nitin*, traditional teachings, the cradleboard prepares the infant for life in the world by fortifying him or her with the blessings and positive forces of the environmental and spiritual elements, specifically Nature and the Holy People, which define the Blessingway and *Si'ah Naaghái Bik'eh Hózhó*.

Although Navajo twentieth-century youth may have been immersed and grown up within the Diné symbolic system, their experiences in institutional schooling challenged their understandings and consciousness of Navajo life ways. R. Cruz Begay explains, for example, “These school children knew that they had younger siblings born at home, but few of these children were actually able to observe the birth of siblings. A consequence of this was that knowledge about childbirth practices at home began to disappear [during

¹³⁸ “Awee tsaal- Cradle Board,” *Diné Cultural Content Standards for Students*, “T’áá Shá Bik’ehgo Diné Bí Ná nitin dóó ihoo’ aah” (Window Rock, Arizona: Office of Diné Culture, Language, & Community Service, Division of Diné Education, 1998), 79.

¹³⁹ Joanne McCloskey, *Living Through the Generations: Continuity and Change in Navajo Women’s Lives* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2007), 18. Navajos accredit Turquoise Boy, son of Changing Woman, for bringing horses to them through his brave journey in the four directions. See Peter Mitchell, *Horse Nations: The Worldwide Impact of the Horse on Indigenous Societies Post-1492* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 103. See Walter L. Williams, *The Spirit and the Flesh: Sexual Diversity in American Indian Culture* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992), 19. Williams stresses the ambiguities of the sexes, which complicates gendered meanings of White Shell Girl and Turquoise Boy. White Shell Girl, however, is a different figure than White Shell Woman and Changing Woman. Williams refers to the Diné oral tradition of White Shell Girl and Turquoise Boy as examples of the “first berdaches” or those “who take on a social role that is distinct from either men or women” (19). During the separation of the sexes, according to oral tradition, Turquoise Boy “could do all manner of women’s work as well as women,” which Williams uses to argue how Navajos believed “that the very survival of humanity is dependent on the inventiveness of berdaches” (19). See also Eda Lou Walton, *Turquoise Boy and White Shell Girl* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1933).

the 1960s].”¹⁴⁰ Navajo boarding schoolchildren and those in other educational programs often did not continue to learn and understand early Diné teachings such as traditional childbirth and infant care knowledge through their growing stages of life. Yet, revitalization, persistence, and lingering earth compass memories of these practices and their meanings have ensured their survival as fundamental parts of collective Diné rationale.

Ceremony has enabled the Diné to preserve the framework of the sacred directions and cyclical sense of journey directing how they shape their environment such as their home dwellings and revered spaces—the *hooghan* or hogan—the traditional Navajo living structure in particular. Navajos build two types of hogans known as *hooghan bika’* (the male hogan) and *hooghan ba’áád* (the female hogan). The male hogan has a “forked-stick” shape, and the female hogan is round. Navajos traditionally would use the male hogan only for “praying, singing, making plans, and ceremonial purposes”; whereas, the female hogan provided shelter as “places for children to be born and nurtured, as well as locations in which families might eat and rest.”¹⁴¹ They would often construct the female hogan with fifty-six logs, setting the logs of five to six feet long for the walls. They combined mud and straw to cement the structure. Three to four inches of dirt covered the top of the hogan, which had a small opening for the smoke of the fire to escape. While they built five or six sides of the hogan they would distinguish four posts to symbolize the sacred directions. The single door of the *hooghan* always

¹⁴⁰ Begay, “Changes in Childbirth Knowledge,” 551.

¹⁴¹ Schwarz, *Blood and Voice*, 28. Navajos speak more often of the female hogan in general terms, since it serves as the common dwelling place.

faced east, so that Navajos could rise to pray towards *Ha'a'aaah*, the East, in the mornings.¹⁴²

Tom Ration, a Navajo who interpreted and interviewed for the Doris Duke American Indian Oral History Collection, intertwined material culture, ceremony, oral tradition, and environment in his oral history. He connected the significance of white clay in ceremony and the *hooghan* structure to the intergenerational transmission of Diné knowledge. He began by explaining how Navajos found white clay to use in healing ceremonies such as the *Yé'ii' bicheii*.¹⁴³ In their search for white clay, Navajos first looked east, south, then west, and finally to the north in the same order of directions as the sacred mountains. The people then sent an eagle to find the clay that also went the “four ways” and eventually discovered the clay on a mesa, and so “the eagle is used in ceremonial from there on, and that’s the way it’s still being used.”¹⁴⁴

Ration continued to describe that *Yé'ii' bicheii* dancers “wash themselves with the white clay, from the face all down to the foot and all around the body and they dance that way.”¹⁴⁵ The dancers perform the ceremony inside and “they get in front of the hogan and then they chant and then the fellows that are up on other side again... they throw out

¹⁴² Sosie Hosteen Nez Benally, “Hogan,” and Betty H. Nez Begay, “The Navajo Hogan,” in *For Our Navajo People: Diné Letters, Speeches, and Petitions, 1900-1960*, ed. Peter Iverson (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2002), 217-218. Iverson includes these passages in “Toadlena schoolchildren explain how a rug is created, how sheep are cared for, and how a hogan is constructed, ca. 1930” (216-218).

¹⁴³ The *Yé'ii' bicheii* was not necessarily a ceremony conducted to cure a patient, but Navajos performed it to maintain harmony and balance in their environment—a significant form of healing. Adult males traditionally performed this ceremonial dance for healing rites only after the first frost of fall. See Katherine Spencer Halpern and Susan Brown McGreevy, *Washington Matthews: Studies of Navajo Culture, 1880-1894* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1997), 38.

¹⁴⁴ Tom Ration, interview by Terry Lee Carroll, 1969, transcript only, reel 1, tape 358A, p. 11, AIOHC, LNAIDC.

¹⁴⁵ Ration, interview, 12.

things like candy and cracker jacks and cigarettes, all those things they throw it out to the people and that's part of the ceremony, that's the way it's been done." Although Ration referred to the handouts of material goods associated with Western capitalistic markets such as processed and commercialized candy, cracker jacks, and cigarettes without disconnect to Diné tradition and ceremony, he expressed his concern that such ceremonies are "dying off." He claimed,

We don't ask our old grandpa or grandma, but some of these days they'll be gone forever, nobody will ever know how to do it. That's the reason we want some more young generation 'cause we don't seem to care about it . . . Well, I guess a lot of Indians are having trouble with the younger generation. In other words, it's kind of hard to learn, words that you can't understand the meaning of it and even us Navajo that we know how to talk Navajo but a lot of the language, a lot of the old time language we don't know how to trace it or to find out the meaning, what the meaning is.¹⁴⁶

He cautioned that if one does not "know much about the song [one] can't cure a person."¹⁴⁷ The language provides the base for the effectiveness of ceremony, which allows Navajos to impress Diné epistemology centered on their compass of earth knowledge.

¹⁴⁶ Ration, interview, 14.

¹⁴⁷ Ration, interview, 14.



6. Navajo Wedding Basket

His narrative then focused on the ceremonial and common living space of Navajos and how they link their metaphysical and physical worlds in the symbolism and rituals of the hogan, *hooghan*, and Navajo wedding basket, *ts'aa'*. Before Navajos knew how to sing, Talking God created *ts'aa'* with an opening in the center that extends towards the edge and a “rope” going round the basket from the east, as depicted in the image of the basket. Ration explained that the basket “represents part of the hogan, built on top, it’s built just like a basket. . . . It’s built like this all the way to the top and then the man that made this was what they call a talking god, he made this basket way back in centuries and he said this basket [is] to be one of the religious ceremonial for the coming generation and this must be made as a hogan.” He warned, “Don’t ever set your door way to the north, west, or to the south, always face the east because the minute the time when the sun raise the ray hits the doorway inside to make a light and they claim that the talking god is a sun that rises.”

Navajos must welcome the sun within their homes, opening their doors that face the east to allow the first rays of sunlight to warm them and their *hooghan*. This ritual

appeased Talking God who made the *ts'aa'* and helped to maintain *hózhó* through the sacred directions process.¹⁴⁸ In a single dialogue and recitation of oral tradition, Ration traced the connections between ceremony, earth (white clay), animals (eagle), Holy People (Talking God), and everyday objects and life, which underlay the thickness of Diné culture.

Performance and Nahaghá: Generational Changes and Continuities

Performance and ritual, *nahaghá*, have permeated everyday Navajo life, reinforcing the embeddedness of Diné early learning experiences despite generational changes. Hopi-Hopi's oral history reveals continuities in Diné acquisition and retention of knowledge through running and bathing in the snow. Navajos regarded Hopis as the fastest runners, and so they called him "Hopi-Hopi" for his abilities to race.¹⁴⁹ The Hopi assumed a major role in ceremonials because of their running, which indicates the connection between spirituality and running in southwestern Indigenous cultures.

Hopi-Hopi continued to describe his experience with traditional Navajo teachings of holistic health: "In my early days, I used to run races early in the morning before sunrise . . . while it was dark still, in the morning, around 4 o'clock. I used to run as fast as I can . . . Navajo people used to do that in the early days, in order to keep their children healthy and happy they used to practice running. . . . So the Navajo people used to be one of the greatest runners, once and they were strong."¹⁵⁰ He added, "We used to roll in the snow when it snowed. The first snow while it is soft, we used to roll in it every morning;

¹⁴⁸ Ration, interview, 17-19.

¹⁴⁹ Hopi-Hopi, interview by Tom Ration, January 1969, transcript, roll 1, tape 362, AIOHC, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico, accessed at LNAIDC.

¹⁵⁰ Hopi-Hopi, interview.

this is what made our skin tough. In these days, we never heard of a Navajo Indian catch cold or catch pneumonia. . . . We were used to cold, to cold weather. . . . That is the way that we been built in life and coming along from the beginning of time.”¹⁵¹

His memories of bathing in the snow and running before the dawn as a child demonstrate two examples of ancestral Diné teachings. Outside of elaborate ceremonies, Navajos understood their physical and spiritual worlds through rituals, which are part of the life path that Navajos call *nahaghá*. Running is a form of *nahaghá*. Hopi-Hopi would wake and run several miles towards the east before the sunrise every day. The act of running in the morning strengthened the connection between Navajos, their environment, and the Holy People, maintaining *hózhó*. Albert Smith of the *’Áshjìhí* (Salt People) and *Tsinaajinii* (Black-streaked Woods) clans went to boarding schools at Crownpoint and Wingate, New Mexico in the 1930s. He explained,

You know, our elders used to tell us to talk to the early people [Holy People]. They’re up at four o’clock in the morning. They said if you really want to know them, to speak to you through the mind, you can talk to them at that hour. They’re the ones that made our churches, the four sacred mountains. The north is where our protectors are because they can see things at night. They even tell us that they are protectors of things on Mother Earth; they help them; they complete them. And all of us that live on Mother Earth, and all those that are in the sea, and all those that are roaming above us, that’s their responsibility.¹⁵²

As prescribed by oral tradition and ceremony, the waking before the dawn and seeking the sunrise by running towards it to communicate with the Holy People as Hopi-Hopi did reinforces Diné identity by keeping balance and place in the world together.

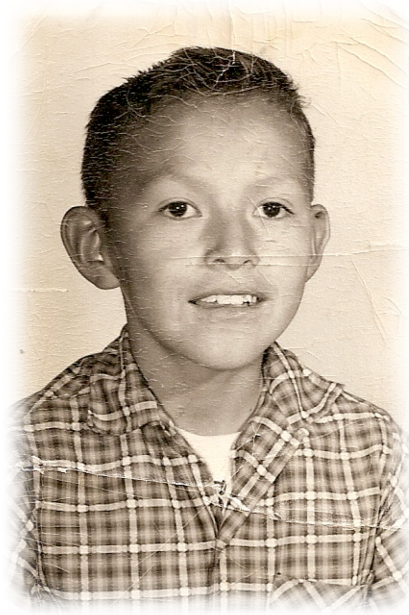
¹⁵¹ Hopi-Hopi, interview.

¹⁵² “Albert Smith” in Laura Tohe, *Code Talker Stories: Nihizaad bee nidasiibaa’* (Tucson: Rio Nuevo Publishers, 2012), 137. Albert Smith was George Smith’s younger brother, and both of them were the author’s uncles.

Although institutionalized schooling introduced Navajo youth to new forms of spirituality and disrupted their ancestral teachings, their interactions with family and community continued to connect them to Diné ceremony and knowledge. Phyllis King of the *Kinyaa'áanii* (Towering House) and *Tsinaajinii* (Black-streaked Woods) clans recounted how her parents responded when her brother, Phillip Smith, hurt himself. King and her brother went to the Ramah Boarding School in New Mexico during the 1950s. Smith listened to reports of local sports while standing on a table, because his parents always kept the radio high on top of a dish cupboard.

King remembered, “He got a charley horse, a cramp, when he was up on the table with his knees bent. He fell off the table, and then he was rolling around on the floor. . . . Dad asked, ‘What’s wrong with you?’ Phillip went to Mesa Verde, where the Anasazi were, and he wasn’t supposed to go there. He needed to have another squaw dance.”¹⁵³ Smith visited Mesa Verde, Colorado for a school fieldtrip, which violated traditional Navajo taboos. His father, however, restored *hózhó* by preparing a ceremony for him. Navajos have negotiated their identity over innumerable generations, and Diné family has continually sought to transfer their collective knowledge and culture—the essence of ceremony intertwined with the natural environment—to their children to preserve their peoplehood.

¹⁵³ Phyllis King, interview by Farina King, Iyanbito, New Mexico, December 8, 2007, LDS Native American Oral History Project, Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. Phyllis King is the author’s aunt, and Phillip Smith is the author’s father.



7. Phillip Smith (the author's father) at about 10 years old of age, circa 1960

On Christmas Day of 2012, Phillip Smith as an adult reminisced with his children about the holiday season in his past years. When his children asked him if his family ever had a Christmas tree, he smirked and described the single time that he almost convinced his father to allow them one. His household never had a Christmas tree. Smith explained, “We were Diné and lived and believed the traditional ways.” In school, however, Smith and his siblings were introduced to Christianity and became involved with certain denominations. He was aware of popular American seasonal festivities and traditions such as decorating a Christmas tree.

As adolescents, Smith and his siblings wanted a Christmas tree and approached their father about it. “We convinced my father that we should have a tree to celebrate the winter solstice and a cleaning or renewal of the Earth Spirit in preparation for spring. We were successful and so when my dad went to get herbs we left him to get a tree,” Smith remembered. They persuaded their father to tolerate a Christmas tree by framing their

request in a way that respected Diné traditions. They found and cut down a tree in some hills above Crownpoint or Thoreau, New Mexico. “As we were riding back to the house in our pickup,” Smith recalled, “my dad and I were in the back holding the tree when he let out a horrible scream like someone died. The cause was that we had cut a tree that had been used in a sacred ceremony and desecrated it.” They soon returned to the place where they discovered the tree and “had a short ceremony, followed by several major ceremonies to correct the wrong [they] did.” Smith concluded, “Needless to say, we never had another Christmas tree in our home during my youth.”¹⁵⁴

Smith’s experiences reflect how youth learned certain traditions and how to relate to their elders and previous generations in their community, but they also developed new traditions and ideas at school that challenged their family values and teachings. They represented transition in their communities by trying to combine or direct their family in new ways by relating to the pre-existing Navajo discourse. The tree, for example, showed reverence to the Earth Spirit in harmony with the Medicine Way of the Diné. In the particular case of Smith, however, such efforts did not always succeed as he offended his father in the end by not recognizing a sacred tree and desecrating it. Smith, as an adolescent, again learned from his father through ceremony and healing about the dangers of combining cultures and introducing new practices.

The process of Diné embeddedness entailed such tensions and friction as generations of the twentieth century experienced rapid changes, varying influences both

¹⁵⁴ Phillip Smith to his immediate family, December 25, 2012, self-published family history book in possession of the author. Smith publicly shared the story with his family, including the author (his daughter), during a 2012 Christmas celebration in Monument Valley, Utah. He also wrote the story as a letter to his family on the same day, which the author added to a family history book that she assembled.

internal and external of the community, and cultural hybridization. Although Smith later decided to allow Christmas trees in his home, he not only remembered his father's teachings but also preserved and transferred them to his children through oral history.

Hopi-Hopi Returns

The boarding school runaway Hopi-Hopi found his way home to his family at the foot of Tohatchi Mountain. He and his friends had to hide from the officials and police who would force them back to school. Hopi-Hopi lived with his aunt for six months before he resided again with his mother in Tohatchi. He went back to school the following fall when policemen came to pressure families to enroll their children. He decided to run away again, following almost the same path as his first escape. After the second escape from boarding school, Hopi-Hopi never finished his schooling. Looking back on his experiences and choices, he wished that he had stayed in school and testified of the good intentions of the “white people.”¹⁵⁵ Whether Hopi-Hopi regretted his decision or not, his ability to return home by the mountains and lands that he came to know as a child in both a physical and metaphysical sense demonstrates the foundational lessons of Diné knowledge that continued to define Navajos through the twentieth century.

Navajos immersed their children from the earliest stages of life in the earth knowledge and flow of societal relationships, preparing their youth to follow certain decision making patterns and behaviors that identified them as Diné. These beginning lessons of Diné life were embedded in earth compass memories, developing a thickness of culture for many Navajos that their actions and rationalization manifested throughout their lives despite their transitional and ongoing growing experiences. Many Navajos

¹⁵⁵ Hopi-Hopi, interview.

would become aware of these experiences from early childhood, understanding them in their consciousness because of their families and communities that continued to reinforce them outside of institutional education even before the Diné Division of Education and other tribal self-determination efforts.

Ha'a'ah introduces what Navajos have valued as education for their posterity since times immemorial, the fundamental teachings and first steps of development—the earth memory compass of the four sacred directions and *Si'ah Naaghái Bik'eh Hózhó*. The repetition of the sacred directions in processes, ritual or *nahaghá*, and everyday experiences oriented Navajos in their life journeys and quests for knowledge. Diné educational experiences between 1930 and 1990 correlate with the changing seasons and sacred directions. Non-Navajo institutional settings challenged these early lessons of Diné knowledge between the *Shádi'ááh* (South) and *E'e'ah* (West) stages. In the *Náhookos'* or North period, Navajo-determined school systems later reaffirmed and appropriated Diné teachings in cultural hybrid models.

Ha'a'ah is the beginning, and Navajos like Hopi-Hopi constantly return to the East and its foundations through the earth memory compass. The seasons of Navajo life ways parallel the growth of corn, cycling through the four directions with the philosophies of *Hózhó'jí*, *Si'ah Naaghái Bik'eh Hózhó*, and *Ha'a'ah* embedded in the center.

CHAPTER 2

SHÁDI'ÁÁH (SOUTH): CHALLENGES TO NAVAJONESS

The boarding school is a home, a class room, a farm and a town- all in one.
—Lucy Wilcox Adams, Director of Navajo Education, 1939

Home Land

The land
around my mother's hogan
is big.
It is still.
It has walls of red rocks.

And way, far off
the sky comes down
to touch the sands.

Blue sky is above me.

Yellow sand is beneath me.

The sheep are around me.

My mother's hogan is near.
—Ann Nolan Clark, *Little Herder in Autumn*, 1940



8. Tom Torlino, 1882 and “three years later” at Carlisle Indian School

Two iconic images from federal Indian boarding schools feature Tom Torlino, a Navajo from Coyote Canyon, New Mexico, who was one of the first students to attend

Carlisle Indian School in the 1880s.¹⁵⁶ The first photograph shows Torlino in 1882, when he first arrived at Carlisle with long hair, wearing a blanket and cloth headband. The second photograph, taken three years later shows a transformed Torlino with a short haircut, a tie, and a dark jacket.

“He could put on a suit when he needed to, but he was just as comfortable in traditional (Navajo) clothing,” Francis Torlino said of his father, Tom Torlino.¹⁵⁷

Numerous scholars have used Torlino’s images to illustrate the assimilationist project of Indian boarding schools, but they omit Torlino’s voice and perspective.¹⁵⁸ They exclude his story after the boarding school, when he returned to his home in Coyote Canyon and “picked up his career as a rancher and medicine man right where he had left off.”¹⁵⁹ He served as an intermediary between the United States and Navajos, using his background in English to assist Diné leaders such as his uncle, Manuelito, in their correspondence with the federal government. Torlino continued to follow the earth memory compass,

¹⁵⁶ M.E. Frye took the photographs separately, but government officials often showed the pictures together. Thos. Torlino tribe (Navajo), John N. Choate, contributor, Title, “Before entering Carlisle School,” “Indians Navajo Biograpy Torlino, Tom” and “M.E. Frye” hand-written on back of print, 1886, Denver Public Library Digital Collections. See also “Tom Torlino Student File,” National Archives and Records Administration, RG 75, Series 1327, box 18, folder 872, Carlisle Indian School Digital Resource Center, accessed November 18, 2015, http://carlisleindian.dickinson.edu/student_files/tom-torlino-student-file.

¹⁵⁷ Francis Torlino, cited in Cindy Yurth, “Manuelito’s legacy: Several famous Navajos called Coyote Canyon home,” *Navajo Times*, February 14, 2013.

¹⁵⁸ See Genevieve Bell, “Telling Stories Out of School: Remembering the Carlisle Indian Industrial School, 1879-1918” (Ph.D. diss., Stanford University, 1998), 2. Bell emphasizes the students’ experiences and stories, but her work like many others only refers to Torlino’s photographs. See also Peter Iverson, *Diné: A History of the Navajos* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2002), 83. Iverson considers Torlino’s life beyond his time at Carlisle: “The contrast between the two images is dramatic, but in the hail of criticism that surrounds this subject, one never hears about what happened to Torlino.” He continues to explain that Torlino returned to his home, “farmed his land and lived out his days... not traumatized to the point of complete inactivity” (83).

¹⁵⁹ Yurth, “Manuelito’s legacy.”

sustaining ties with the land and Navajo family. His posterity remains “within site of the place where Manuelito’s and Torlino’s hogans once stood.”¹⁶⁰

Most scholars of Indian boarding school history focus on Torlino’s era between the 1880s and 1920s, when American Indians traveled far from home across the country to attend school. Historians of American Indian Studies call this period the Assimilation Era. The Johnson-O’Malley Act of 1934 directed Indian education to public schools by enabling contracts with states and private groups.¹⁶¹ Some off-reservation boarding schools were closed by 1940. However, many of the Diné continued to attend boarding schools throughout the twentieth century.

Between 1946 and 1959, for example, 50,249 Navajo students enrolled in off-reservation boarding schools through what was called the Special Navajo Program.¹⁶² The Intermountain Boarding School in Brigham City, Utah, for example, opened in 1950 specifically for Diné youth with a “full capacity of 2,300 students.”¹⁶³ Diné schooling experiences after 1930 illuminate the changes, trials, and impacts of Diné education on Navajo youth, family, and community. The Diné went through a cycle that they would

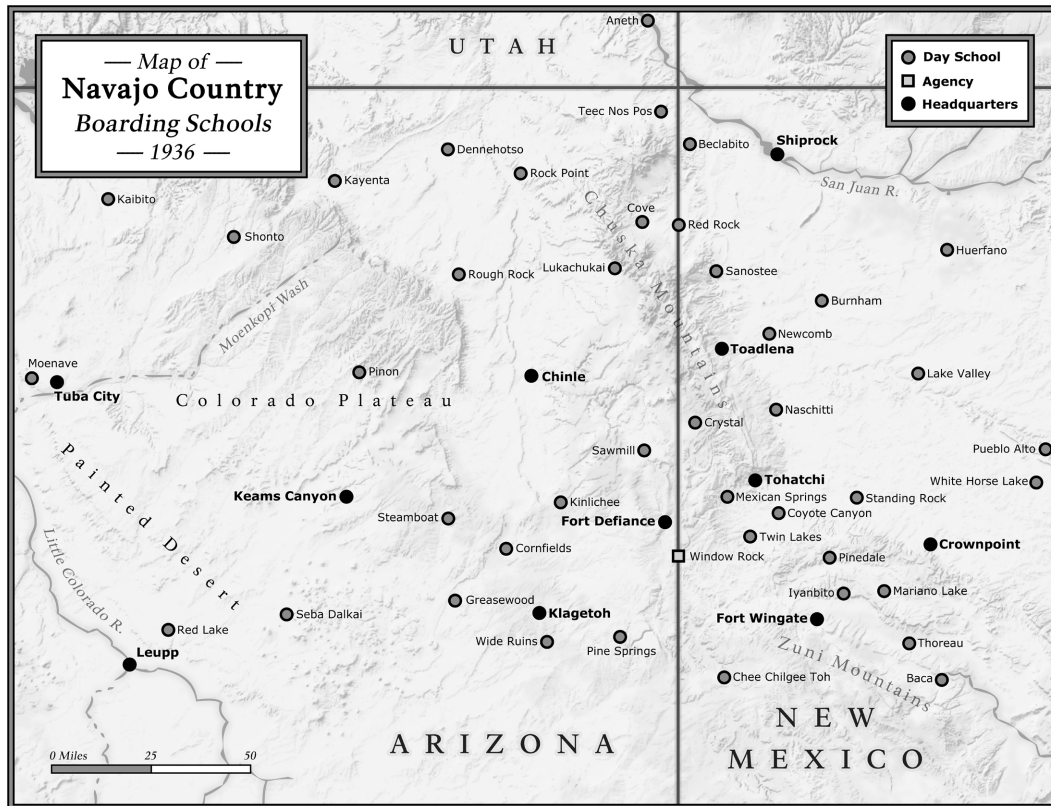
¹⁶⁰ Yurth, “Manuelito’s legacy.”

¹⁶¹ *Johnson-O’Malley Act*, 25 U.S.C. 452-457 (1934). See also Lawrence R. Baca, “*Meyers v. Board of Education: The Brown v. Board of Indian Country*,” *University of Illinois Law Review* 2004, no. 5 (October 2004): 1166.

¹⁶² Robert A. Roessel, Jr., *Navajo Education, 1948-1978: Its Progress and Its Problems* (Rough Rock, Arizona: Navajo Curriculum Center, Rough Rock Demonstration School, 1979), 18. The “Special Navajo Program” included the following schools: Sherman, Chilocco, Phoenix, Stewart, Chemawa, Albuquerque, Concho, Intermountain, Haskell, Fort Sill, and Riverside. See also Peter Iverson, *The Navajo Nation* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1981), 57, 60-61. Iverson notes, “Enrollment in BIA reservation area boarding schools increased from 6,009 in 1950-51, to 9,850 in 1960-61” (57). Navajos went to boarding schools both on and off the reservation.

¹⁶³ Jon S. Blackman, “A History of Intermountain, A Federal Indian Boarding School” (M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1998), 64. Blackman also explains that the Intermountain School “reached its maximum of 2,300” Navajo students by 1953 (71).

recognize in their conceptualizations of time and space that moved towards regaining control and sovereignty over the education of their youth and people from the 1930s to the twenty-first century.



9. Map of Navajo Country Boarding Schools, 1936¹⁶⁴

Boarding school experiences became an intergenerational narrative among Navajos with legacies that persist. Brenda Child, an Ojibwe scholar, explains “the boarding school as metaphor,” which applies to Navajo experiences. “It is not necessarily

¹⁶⁴ Justin Weiss and the author designed the map, “Navajo Country Boarding Schools, 1936,” based on the “Navajo Service School Map” in the BIA archival records. See “Navajo Service School Map,” Department of the Interior, Office of Indian Affairs, Educational Division, Winslow, Ariz., received December 28, 1936; Central Classified Files, 1907-39, Navajo, Box No. 226, File 806, 1936; Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75; National Archives Building, Washington, DC.

the job of the historian to explain how Indian people today remember the past,” she says. “But the intensity with which Indian people in the present day explain and respond to the role of boarding school in the broader history of their families and communities suggest that for many, boarding school is also a useful and extraordinarily powerful metaphor for colonialism.”¹⁶⁵

Many Navajos have correlated boarding school experiences with those of colonialism, and such comparisons embody the ambiguity and tensions that continue in understanding and remembering this past. As a historian, I seek to contextualize the past, but I also aim to comprehend the boarding school experiences and consequences on Navajo family and community. As a Navajo, I carry the metaphor of the boarding school. Most of my close Navajo relatives went to a boarding school at some point. The experiences of Diné students at the Crownpoint Boarding School and other schools reveal the myriad meanings of that metaphor.

Of the four-directions approach, the second phase features the South, *Nahat’á*, and *Tsoodzil*, Mount Taylor, when Diné youth went to boarding schools and community schools in the 1930s to learn essential life skills, self-reliance, responsibilities, and roles in their community. The Turquoise or Blue Mountain, *Tsoodzil*, embodies youth and the Blue Twilight—the planning time. During this *Nahat’á* (Planning) stage of education, the Crownpoint Indian Boarding School and other on-reservation schools exposed Diné youth to distant education to imbue foundational lessons. Samuel F. Stacher, the “first Indian agent in charge of Eastern Navajo Jurisdiction,” supervised the opening of the

¹⁶⁵ Brenda J. Child, “The Boarding School as Metaphor,” in *Indian Subjects: Hemispheric Perspectives on the History of Indigenous Education*, eds. Brenda J. Child and Brian Klopotek (Santa Fe: School for Advanced Research, 2014), 268.

Pueblo Bonito Boarding School in 1910, which was re-named the Crownpoint Boarding School.¹⁶⁶

American policymakers intended that these on-reservation schools would reinforce attachments between the children and Navajo community in *Diné Bikéyah*, Navajo land. School curriculum and activities propagated lessons that white Americans considered relevant to life on the reservation. Navajos received instruction on how to be “modern” Americans through the realization of educational policy in federal schools. Despite the intentions of the policymakers, the schools jeopardized certain valuable ties between Navajo schoolchildren and their community by imposing cultural transformations. Their experience in federal schools affected Navajo children’s sense of home because of new relationships that they developed with family, the school, and the reservation. Although the federal schools introduced Diné youth to different conceptualizations of their homelands and community, many of the Diné have continued to follow the overarching framework of Diné worldview that the four sacred mountains emblemize in the earth memory compass while embracing some lessons from the boarding school.

Sites such as Chaco Canyon and *Kin Ya’a* (the Towering House) have become symbols of the Crownpoint region in New Mexico. My ancestors the *Kiyaa’áanii* (Towering House People) came from the Crownpoint area, also known as *Tiist’oosi Ndeeshgizh* (“The Gap Where Thin Trees Grew”). When I was sixteen years old, I traveled alone from Washington D.C. to Gallup, New Mexico to stay with my uncle

¹⁶⁶ Leonard Perry, “Inside look at early Crownpoint Boarding School,” *Crownpoint Baahane’* 1, no. 5 (May 22, 2009): 3, in “Crownpoint New Mexico: Past and Present as viewed through the *Crownpoint Baahane’* Newsletter” (Volume 1), ed. Leonard Perry, self-published.

Albert Smith. I returned to *Diné Bikéyah*, my birthplace and ancestral homeland, to interview my uncle about his experience as a Navajo Code Talker in World War II. Instead of telling me war stories, my uncle shared memories with me about his life on *Diné Bikéyah*. Uncle Albert described his childhood in the Crownpoint Indian Boarding School during the late 1930s.¹⁶⁷ He told me during an interview, “I spoke Navajo to my toys and wildlife when I wasn’t inside the school in my private time. On campus, we couldn’t speak Navajo. There was a mark system. If we spoke Navajo, they gave us a mark and we had to work it off in the kitchen and by doing janitor work.”¹⁶⁸

The irony of his experience continues to affect me as well as many others, Native Americans and non-Native Americans. Federal Indian boarding school personnel punished my uncle and other Navajos for speaking their language. The United States government, however, recruited Navajos such as Uncle Albert to use Navajo as a secret military code only a few years later during WWII.¹⁶⁹ From my studies of American Indian educational policy and Navajo schooling experiences during the twentieth century, I found another angle to this irony. American government officials claimed to establish schools that protected American Indian cultures and communities, but the experiences of my uncle and other Navajos who attended boarding schools testify to the continual

¹⁶⁷ My uncle, Albert Smith, joined the military when he was only fifteen years old in the early 1940s. He provided false information about his age when he enlisted. He attended boarding schools before his enlistment, including the period under analysis (1938-1939). I believe that I once found his name in one of the Crownpoint school rosters.

¹⁶⁸ Albert Smith (Navajo Code Talker veteran), interview by Farina King, Gallup, New Mexico, March 5, 2005.

¹⁶⁹ On the history of the Navajo Code Talkers, see Nathan Aaseng, *Navajo Code Talkers* (New York: Walker & Company, 1992); Sally McClain, *Navajo Weapon: The Navajo Code Talkers* (Tucson, Ariz.: Rio Nuevo Publishers, 2001); Doris A. Paul, *The Navajo Code Talkers* (Pittsburgh, Penn.: Dorrance Publishing, 1973); and Laura Tohe, *Code Talker Stories* (Tucson: Rio Nuevo Publishers, 2012).

assaults on Navajo ways of life and ties to home. K. Tsianina Lomawaima and Teresa L. McCarty explain these apparent contradictions as hegemonic efforts to designate “safety zones,” through which schooling sought to domesticate Indigenous cultures and relationships. They assert, “Federal Indian schools were largely superseded by public schools in the late 20th century, but forces to transform Native students and control a safety zone of allowable cultural expression continued largely unabated.”¹⁷⁰

Navajo children faced subtle affronts to their cultural identity in the Crownpoint Indian Boarding School during the interwar period, especially the 1930s.¹⁷¹ This brief period was a pivotal era in American history, when Navajos and all Americans grappled with the Great Depression, the New Deal, and preparation for world war. Many studies tackle grand historical narratives of the time, but they often overlook the experiences of American Indians and their children. The story of Navajo children in Crownpoint Indian School relates the efforts and effects of American governmental policies on local communities. Their experiences also provide more depth to a dramatic period in American history because of contradictions between educational policy theorization and implementation that American educators presented to them.

Although students faced ambiguities and contradictions in their schooling, some Navajos also recognized opportunities to thrive and learn from such challenges. After I shared this research with Leonard Perry, an activist and leader of the Crownpoint region, he asked for more acknowledgment of the benefits and positive memories of the boarding

¹⁷⁰ K. Tsianina Lomawaima and Teresa L. McCarty, *“To Remain an Indian”: Lessons in Democracy from a Century of Native American Education* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2006), 5.

¹⁷¹ The Crownpoint Indian Boarding School was located in Crownpoint, New Mexico on the eastern side of Navajo land.

school. The intergenerational connections to the Crownpoint Boarding School underscore such nuance by integrating oral histories from former students who attended the school after the interwar period into the 1970s. Navajos in the area have claimed the Crownpoint Boarding School as their own place, and those such as Perry, who heads the Crownpoint Historical and Cultural Heritage Council, seek to establish a museum centered on the school and community history.

In this chapter, some of the main sources that I rely on and analyze include journal entries of boarding school children who attended the Crownpoint Indian School between 1938 and 1939. The era of the New Deal on the Navajo reservation set the context of Navajo children at the Crownpoint Indian School who learned to be “modern citizens.” However, a broader sequence of historical developments shaped those Navajo students and their sense of home. The dynamics of Diné and U.S. government relations before, during, and after the 1930s affected the students’ connections to the earth memory compass. The oral histories from Crownpoint Boarding School students highlight intergenerational connections to the school dating to the interwar period. These intertwining histories trace how Navajos’ sense of home has changed and continued to connect to an earth memory compass during the *Tsoodzil* phase of their lives.

Navajo history reveals major effects of American schools on Navajos’ sense of home and the earth memory compass. Governmental schools on the Navajo reservation during the 1930s trained the future leaders of reform. The modernization that federal educational policy encouraged among the Navajo necessitated cultural adaptation, which entailed loss of specific Navajo traditions and values. This Navajo schooling experience reflects Karen Fog Olwig and Eva Gullov’s argument in *Children’s Places* that “places

for children are defined by adult moral values about a cherished past and a desirable future, clothed in commonsense notions about children's best interests."¹⁷² White American officials, not Navajo adults, devised the schools based on their vision for the Navajo future. Navajo schoolchildren experienced cultural transformation through American governmental efforts to address "The Navajo Problem" by modernizing the people.¹⁷³ The governmental agenda aimed to shift Navajo children's relations to home and community in various ways.

By the 1930s, the U.S. government set American Indian schools as sites of modernization where American Indian students would become modern and acquire a new sense of home that would integrate them into American society.¹⁷⁴ American educational policymakers hoped that students would return to their communities and uplift them according to this sense of their place in the United States. My analysis of American Indian boarding school history explores the schoolchildren's experiences and impressions by following their changing relation to home.

People identify "home" by sensing it as a place. Dolores Hayden, urban historian and writer, explains in *The Power of Place*, "an individual's sense of place is both a

¹⁷² Karen Fog Olwig and Eva Gullov, *Children's Places: Cross-cultural Perspectives* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 3.

¹⁷³ The phrase, "The Navajo Problem," appeared in American official documents and discussions during the 1930s that referred to the major problems that Navajos suffered, such as dependency and poverty. It also expressed general concern for the future of the Navajo tribe. On the "Navajo Problem," see *The Navajo Indian Problem, An Inquiry Sponsored by the Phelps-Stokes Fund* (New York: Phelps-Stokes Fund, 1939).

¹⁷⁴ Olwig and Gullov present a disclaimer to their research that I share: "Places constructed for children do constitute important frameworks of life for children. They do not, however, determine children's lives, nor do they preclude the existence of other kinds of places that may be of central importance to children." Olwig and Gullov, *Children's Places*, 7. I do not argue that schooling experiences determined American Indians' lives. American Indian education had a variety of effects on individual schoolchildren.

biological response to the surrounding physical environment and a cultural creation.”¹⁷⁵ Culture, the construct of society, connects people to place. Boarding schools affected American Indian students’ sense of home through cultural adaptation, specifically modernization. Keith Basso characterizes “sense of place” as a “close companion of heart and mind, often subdued, yet potentially overwhelming.”¹⁷⁶ Sense of place or “home” remains constantly with an individual. Because one’s perception of home influences his or her mentality and actions in society, many white American educators intended to shape students’ sense of home.

According to this study, home refers to a place that people value as their haven where their community thrives. For the Diné, home traditionally implies the family realm (generally the *hooghan*, the historic Navajo dwelling) and *Diné Bikéyah* as Blueeyes identified the land in “Sacred Mountains.” Luci Tapahonso wrote a similar poem to “Sacred Mountains” entitled “This Is How They Were Placed for Us,” which Robin R. Fast analyzes. Fast describes Tapahonso’s focus on Navajo history and sense of home in her poetry: “Within this double historical framework, between the knowledge of sacred, traditional locatedness and the knowledge of exile, Luci Tapahonso examines the meanings of home, understood both as specific geographical places and as emotional, spiritual, and intellectual ‘spaces’ of relationship to land, people, and culture; the

¹⁷⁵ Dolores Hayden, *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1995), 16. Hayden refers to the geographer, Yi-Fu Tuan’s “Space and Place: Humanistic Perspectives,” *Progress in Geography* 6 (1974): 211-252. Tuan posits that “...the primary meaning of ‘place’ is one’s position in society rather than the more abstract understanding of location in space...” (233-4). People understand “place” more as a “position in society” than a physical location. Society and its culture define “place” for individuals.

¹⁷⁶ Keith H. Basso, “Wisdom Sits in Places: Notes on a Western Apache Landscape” in *Senses of Place*, eds. Steven Feld and Keith Basso (Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research Press, 1996), 54.

necessity and difficulty of maintaining connections to home, in the face of modern disruptions and real or potential alienation; and the possibility of doing so.”¹⁷⁷

Tapahonso’s meanings of home apply to this study of Navajo boarding school experience, a form of separation from home and family. Boarding schools often called student dormitories “homes,” which they assigned to specific age and gender groups. The older boys (between ages ten and fifteen), for example, lived in “Home I” at Crownpoint Indian School during the late 1930s. Navajo schoolchildren referred to their dormitories as “home” because of school protocol. In this study, “home” also aligns with anthropologist Keith Basso’s “concept of dwelling,” which consists of “the multiple ‘lived relationships’ that people maintain with places, for it is solely by virtue of these relationships that space acquires meaning.”¹⁷⁸ Home is the space that generates sense of place, the meanings and purposes of life to people. *Diné Bikéyah* shapes the Diné, as the Diné shape *Diné Bikéyah* in a reciprocal relationship.

This study assesses changes in children’s sense of home through their expressions of boarding school experiences. Connections persisted between pupils and their communities, but federal officials sought to alter those relationships in the *Tsodzil* period when schooling became compulsory for Navajos and set the major planning and experimental phase of Diné education. Unlike works that study boarding schools located far away from Native American communities, this research examines schools on the Navajo reservation and concludes that manipulations of Indigenous cultures did not end after the establishment of on-reservation schools as federal agents claimed. While Navajo

¹⁷⁷ Robin Riley Fast, “The Land Is Full of Stories: Navajo Histories in the Work of Luci Tapahonso,” *Women’s Studies* 36 (2007): 186.

¹⁷⁸ Keith H. Basso, “Wisdom Sits in Places,” 54.

schoolchildren in Crownpoint confronted such cultural affronts that influenced their relation to home, they also demonstrated constant ties to the earth memory compass and Diné community.

Background of Diné Schooling

Navajos learned to adapt to white colonial aims long before their children began to attend American Indian boarding schools. From their earliest encounters with the Spaniards to their struggles with white Americans, Navajos adjusted to their changing circumstances in order to survive. Europeans and Euro-Americans used schools as a method to “civilize” and later modernize American Indians. As whites continually compelled Navajos to alter their ways of life, including their sense of home, many Navajos constantly defended their culture and identity as a people. The struggle included Navajo adaptations to schooling.

An elaborate program to educate Navajos in schools did not develop until after the signing of the Treaty of 1868, which concluded major military conflicts between the United States government and Navajo people. Before 1868, other forms of colonial influence transformed Navajo life. The Spaniards established Catholic mission schools to educate and Christianize Navajos in the eighteenth century, but Navajos deserted these schools by 1750.¹⁷⁹ Navajos’ indirect contact with Spaniards altered their lives more than the Catholic mission schools. Pueblo peoples and other tribes introduced livestock such as sheep to Navajos, which they received from the Spaniards.¹⁸⁰ Raising sheep eventually

¹⁷⁹ Davida Woerner, “Education among the Navajo: An Historical Study” (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1941), 13.

¹⁸⁰ Peter Iverson, *Diné: A History of the Navajos* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2002), 23.

became the center of Navajo livelihood.¹⁸¹ Navajo-Churro sheep, a common breed that Navajos used for wool and subsistence, could weigh between 85 and 120 pounds as mature ewes. Mature rams could weigh between 120 and 175 pounds.¹⁸²

During the early 1800s, Navajo schooling was nonexistent, as warfare with other Indigenous peoples, Spanish-Mexicans, and Americans threatened the Diné. Navajos raided other groups to survive and increase their wealth through horses, cattle, and sheep that they captured.¹⁸³ After Mexico achieved independence from Spain, the Mexican government sent an expedition in 1835 to subjugate Navajos to its authority. However, Mexican efforts failed to defeat and conquer Navajos.¹⁸⁴ When the U.S. seized the Southwest in the 1840s, the U.S. military began to demand Navajo submission to the federal government, and Navajos adapted again to new trials.

The U.S. government initially employed the military to control Navajos in the lands that they acquired from the Mexicans between 1846 and 1848. While adapting to their relationship with the Americans between 1846 and 1868, Navajos experienced immense changes that affected their sense of home. Although the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs in this era often recommended “an education of Indians through settled homes

¹⁸¹ On the process of this change, see Marsha Weisiger, “The Origins of Navajo Pastoralism,” *Journal of the Southwest* 46, no. 2 (2004): 253-282; and Lynn Robison Bailey, *If You Take My Sheep: The Evolution and Conflicts of Navajo Pastoralism, 1630-1868* (Pasadena, Calif.: Westernlore Publications, 1980).

¹⁸² “Navajo-Churro Sheep Association Breed Standard,” *Navajo-Churro Sheep Association*, accessed November 20, 2015, <http://www.navajo-churrosheep.com/sheep-standards.html>. To learn more about Navajo sheep, see Gary Witherspoon, “Subsistence in the Subsistence Residential Unit,” *Navajo Kinship and Marriage* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975), 86-93.

¹⁸³ Navajos also engaged in the slave and captive trade. For more background on the dynamics of this trade, see James Brooks, *Captives and Cousins: Slavery, Kinship, and Community in the Southwest Borderlands* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002).

¹⁸⁴ Iverson, *Diné*, 30-1.

and manual labor schools,” federal educational policy and plans did not reach Navajos until decades later.¹⁸⁵ During this period, Navajos engaged in violent conflict with New Mexicans and the U.S. military over the slave trade, livestock raiding, and grazing lands.¹⁸⁶

After U.S. General Stephen Watts Kearny occupied Santa Fe, New Mexico, in August 1846, he promised New Mexicans that the U.S. Army would “protect the persons and property” from enemies such as Navajos.¹⁸⁷ Navajos perceived this pledge as a declaration of war, since the U.S. military sided with New Mexicans who raided their people for slaves.¹⁸⁸ In 1852, Armijo, a Navajo headman, expressed his frustration with American policy. “Eleven times we have given up captives,” he said to Agent John Greiner. “Only once have [New Mexicans] given us ours. My people are yet crying for the children they have lost. Is it American justice that we must give up everything and receive nothing?”¹⁸⁹ Navajos resisted U.S. authority, as the U.S. government failed to address their discontent. Tensions escalated between Americans and Navajos until the U.S. Army initiated an active campaign to paralyze Navajo raiders between 1858 and 1863. In an effort to subdue Navajos, the U.S. Army applied tactics that scarred the land and people.

¹⁸⁵ Woerner, “Education among the Navajo,” 6.

¹⁸⁶ On Navajo warfare during this period, see Lynn R. Bailey, *The Long Walk: A History of the Navajo Wars, 1846-68* (Tucson, Arizona: Westernlore Press, 1988).

¹⁸⁷ J. Lee Correll, *Through White Man’s Eyes: A Contribution to Navajo History* (Window Rock, Ariz.: Navajo Heritage Center, 1979), 1:192-96, cited in Iverson, *Diné*, 34.

¹⁸⁸ Navajos also participated in the slave trade, as they captured people and sold slaves from their raids.

¹⁸⁹ Armijo cited in Ruth Roessel, ed., *Navajo Studies at Navajo Community College* (Many Farms, Ariz.: Navajo Community College Press, 1971), 26.

The U.S. government believed that settling the Navajo on a reservation was the best means to control and “civilize” them. The U.S. military under the leadership of General James H. Carleton and Colonel Kit Carson implemented this ideal through a “scorched-earth campaign” against Navajos in 1863. Carleton explained his plans of a Navajo reservation to the Adjutant General in Washington September 6, 1863. He envisioned a reservation “away from the haunts and hills, and hiding places of their country” where whites could “teach [Navajo] children how to read and write; teach them the arts of peace; teach them the truths of Christianity” so that they would “acquire new habits, new ideas, new modes of life.”¹⁹⁰ Carleton’s comment relied on the connection that the U.S. government made between Indian removal and education. The U.S. government decided to remove Navajos to the Bosque Redondo, where Fort Sumner was located in eastern New Mexico, known as *Hwééldi* or “The Land of Suffering,” to teach them obedience and adherence to white American society and culture.

Carson devised a strategy to defeat and remove the Navajos by destroying their homes and livelihood. Historian Lynn R. Bailey describes Carson’s tactics as “simple and basic—destroy the immediate means of subsistence—their agriculture—and then hound and harass them during all seasons so that they could not return to their farm plots, and scatter or slaughter their livestock and force tribesmen to consume their reserve of sheep.”¹⁹¹ In 1863, Carson and American soldiers ravaged Navajo lands and captured their families. After Carson violently gathered many Navajos, the U.S. Army forced them

¹⁹⁰ Charles A. Amsden, “The Navajo Exile at Bosque Redondo,” *New Mexico Historical Review* 8 (Jan. 1933), 39 cited in Woerner, 11-12.

¹⁹¹ Bailey, *If You Take My Sheep*, 236.

to walk more than 350 miles to Bosque Redondo. This tragic episode in Navajo history became known as the Long Walk. After enduring the Long Walk, Navajos remained in confinement at *Hwééldi* between 1864 and 1868.

American schooling for Navajos began with the Long Walk and four years in *Hwééldi*. These lessons included submission to a dominant U.S. government and dependency. The Navajo headman Barboncito expressed his sense of dependency in his discourse with General William Tecumseh Sherman during the treaty conference of 1868:

There are a great many among us who were once well off now they have nothing in their houses to sleep on except gunny sacks, true some of us have a little stock left yet, but not near what we had some years ago, in our old country, for that reason my mouth is dry and my head hangs in sorrow to see those around me who were at one time well off so poor now, when we had a way of living of our own, we lived happy, we had plenty of stock, nothing to do but look at our stock, and when we wanted meat nothing to do but kill it.¹⁹²

Navajos such as Barboncito became ashamed of their loss and dependence on the U.S. government for subsistence. In *Hwééldi*, Navajos remembered living comfortably in their homeland and providing for their families through livestock. *Diné Bikéyah* would always be their home despite American efforts to settle them on the Bosque Redondo reservation.

Although American authorities forced Navajos to relocate to *Hwééldi*, their removal from their homeland ironically strengthened their sense of home and identity as a people. U.S. government and military officials recognized the Navajo “experiment” at Bosque Redondo as a failure by 1868 due to rampant sickness, death, poverty, and poor

¹⁹² *Treaty Between the United States of America and the Navajo Tribe of Indians, With a record of the discussions that led to its signing* (Las Vegas, Nev.: K.C. Publications, 1968), 2-3.

farmland and water quality. They sought to move the Diné to Indian Territory in the Midwest, but Navajo leaders such as Barboncito refused and negotiated terms to regain some of the Diné ancestral homelands.¹⁹³

The Treaty of 1868 enabled the Navajo to return to *Diné Bikéyah*, now with reservation boundaries determined by the U.S. government. The Navajo were grateful to dwell between their sacred mountains where they knew they could prosper and rebuild. Barboncito declared when negotiating the treaty, “After we get back to our country it will brighten up again and the Navajos will be as happy as the land, black clouds will rise and there will be plenty of rain. Corn will grow in abundance and everything look happy.”¹⁹⁴ The Navajos’ attachment to their homeland intensified, and many vowed never to leave again. Navajos lost much when adapting to their new situations, but they also guarded much, including their ties to *Diné Bikéyah*.

American Indian institutionalized schooling was historically tied to the civilization and assimilation efforts of Euro-Americans. The U.S. Congress passed legislation as early as 1819 providing funds for American Indian schooling.¹⁹⁵ Few Navajos had exposure and experience in schools until the mid-twentieth century. Navajos have referred to the *Hwééldi* era and the Treaty of 1868 as major points in the legacy of “broken promises” from Euro-Americans, specifically as guaranteed by the U.S. government. One of the broken promises included the agreement to provide schools with

¹⁹³ Raymond Darrel Austin, *Navajo Courts and Navajo Common Law: A Tradition of Tribal Self-Governance* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009), 5-6.

¹⁹⁴ *Treaty Between the United States of America and the Navajo Tribe of Indians*, 9.

¹⁹⁵ Patrick M. Macy, “The Development of High School Education Among Utah Navajos: Case Study at Monument Valley Utah” (Ph.D. Dissertation, Northern Arizona University, 1996), 23; Macy cites Reyhner, 32.

sufficient staff and facilities to communities with at least thirty students between the ages of six and sixteen years old. Since 1868 and the time of this promise, Navajos have mostly been sent away from their communities and homes in a process of “distant education” to boarding schools and a variety of institutionalized, educational programs that did not represent their family and ancestral teachings. Even the day schools and boarding schools built amongst the communities in the early twentieth century challenged the influence and control of the community over the education of their youth.

In the Treaty of 1868, the federal government promised to provide a school for every thirty Navajo children. Navajos later referred to the treaty in their claims for local Navajo schooling opportunities throughout the twentieth century. Chief Manuelito was credited for saying to his grandchild just before his death in 1893, “My grandchild, education is the ladder. Tell our people to take it.”¹⁹⁶ Navajos recite this quote to encourage their youth to advance in institutionalized schooling to this day.

Navajos experienced the Long Walk and *Hwééldi* in different ways depending on their background. The Long Walk affected drastically Navajos from the areas of focus in this chapter, including Crownpoint. They were close to Fort Wingate, the point from which Navajos started the trek to Fort Sumner. On the other hand, most Navajos in the Utah strip territories did not go on the Long Walk and evaded the U.S. military. In a meeting with Navajo community members, one Navajo pointed out to me that certain groups such as those in Utah did not share the Long Walk and internment experiences. While Navajos have always differed in their experiences and perspectives depending on

¹⁹⁶ “History,” in “About Diné College,” accessed August 20, 2015, www.dinecollege.edu/about/history.php.

their regional communities and backgrounds, they have shared “metaphors” based on legacies such as those of the Long Walk and boarding schools. General Carleton claimed that he sought to educate Navajos, supposedly introducing the school system to Navajos at Fort Sumner. Denominational organizations offered schooling to some degree. Anglo religious groups received funding from Congress through the 1819 legislation to “civilize and assimilate” Native Americans through institutionalized education.¹⁹⁷ The effects of the Long Walk, specifically schooling, would eventually touch Navajos throughout *Diné Bikéyah*.

After Navajos returned from *Hwééldi* in 1868, Americans continued to disrupt Navajo life through plans to educate and assimilate them into mainstream society. American officials initially designed off-reservation boarding schools to distance American Indians from their homes and to teach them American societal norms. General Richard Henry Pratt recruited seventeen Navajos to attend the first off-reservation boarding school, Carlisle Indian School in Pennsylvania, in 1882.¹⁹⁸ Pratt and many Americans held that one must “kill the Indian” in order to “save the man” through schooling. Boarding schools threatened American Indians’ lives as well as their culture, since disease spread easily in most schools. The son of the well-known Navajo chief Manuelito became ill and died at Carlisle. After his son’s death in August 1883, Manuelito demanded the return of all Navajo boys from Carlisle. Navajos became wary of off-reservation schools since then, although the schools remained open and sought Navajo students through the twentieth century.

¹⁹⁷ Macy, “The Development of High School Education Among Utah Navajos,” 23.

¹⁹⁸ Woerner, 30.

Fort Defiance supposedly became the first site for Navajo Education with Miss Charity Gaston as the first assigned instructor in 1869. Children between six and sixteen years old were required to attend school by 1887.¹⁹⁹ More federal boarding schools were built on the reservation beginning in the late 1890s, whereas, off-reservation boarding schools opened as early as 1879. The government failed to provide schools and teachers for communities that had at least thirty students as promised in the Treaty of 1868, and many Navajos continued to avoid Anglo-American schools as well.²⁰⁰ Navajos later used the treaty agreement about the schools to support their efforts to build and operate their own schools on the reservation after the 1960s.²⁰¹

Some Navajos attended mission schools on the reservation instead of off-reservation schools as early as the 1880s, but mission schools also challenged Navajo customs and separated families.²⁰² Mission school educators often shared the view of Coccia Hartog, a teacher from the Christian Reformed Church's Rehoboth Mission School in 1910, who believed, "Although there is no doubt about the love a Navajo mother bears toward her child, yet with all her natural affection she does not know how to give it the proper care."²⁰³ Mission school educators considered Navajo parents as inadequate caretakers for their children, and so the mission school had the responsibility to separate

¹⁹⁹ Macy, 24.

²⁰⁰ Macy, 24.

²⁰¹ See Macy; and Kathryn D. Manuelito, "Self-Determination in an Indian Community Controlled School," (Ph.D. Dissertation, Arizona State University, 2001).

²⁰² The Presbyterian Home Missionary Society opened the first boarding school on the Navajo reservation at Fort Defiance, Arizona in September 1881. Woerner, 28.

²⁰³ Coccia Hartog, *Indian Mission Sketches: Descriptions and Views of Navajo Life, the Rehoboth Mission School and the Stations Tohatchi and Zuni* (Gallup, N.M.: self-published, 1910), 12.

the Navajo family and to raise the children. Hartog reported a controversy that ensued between a Navajo family and the mission school over the welfare of the children:

A girl had pneumonia and the mother wanted to feed her a corn preparation in the form of a dark green mush but the matron refused. The mother left with very unkind words. Her parents continually came and tried in every way to gain consent to take the child home, or to have a ceremony over her right at the school. The disturbance became so unbearable that the doctor had to forbid them to enter the sick-room.²⁰⁴

Hartog explained that the girl healed without the ceremony, thereby justifying the judgment and actions of the white matron and doctor. Although the Navajo parents attempted to care for their child according to their cultural values, the matron and doctor deterred them. Mission school personnel such as those at Rehoboth Mission School repressed Navajo ways of life including healing rites and family interactions.

American educators primarily followed a program to assimilate American Indians and to denounce their culture in boarding schools until the 1930s when the U.S. government implemented several educational reforms. In 1928, the Institute for Government Research (now the Brookings Institution) published a landmark report, *The Problem of Indian Administration* (also known as the Meriam Report). The Meriam Report exposed the failures of assimilationist policies and American Indian boarding schools. The correlation between the failures of assimilation and “attempts to eradicate Indianness” through boarding school education were evident by the late 1920s.²⁰⁵ The Meriam Report pinpointed and criticized these deficiencies, demanding change.

²⁰⁴ Hartog, *Indian Mission Sketches*, 21.

²⁰⁵ Lewis Meriam, *The Problem of Indian Administration: Report of a survey made at the request of Hubert Work, Secretary of the Interior, and submitted to him February 21, 1928* (Baltimore, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1928), 9, 11. See also Margaret L. Archuleta, Brenda Child, and K. Tsianina Lomawaima, eds., *Away from Home: American Indian Boarding School Experiences* (Phoenix, Ariz.: Heard Museum, 2004), 77.

Community day schools and public schools rapidly replaced boarding schools. For the Navajos, the U.S. government also built more boarding schools on the reservation to accommodate the isolated populations that lived far from the day schools. The Assimilation Era was supposedly over, but white Americans still pressured Navajos to modernize and integrate into mainstream American society.

Navajo Schooling in the Indian New Deal

After President Franklin D. Roosevelt appointed John Collier as Commissioner of Indian Affairs in 1933, the direction of Navajo education turned drastically as part of the “Indian New Deal.”²⁰⁶ Collier, who studied “abnormal psychology” at the College de France in Paris, became convinced that “traditional American ideals of individualism and capitalism” hurt society.²⁰⁷ He applied his ideals of cultural pluralism and communalism in his role as the Indian Affairs Commissioner (1933-1945), by supporting the Indian Reorganization Act and the Johnson-O’Malley Act.²⁰⁸ Collier led the federal movement to adapt the educational program to the Navajo context. His educational policy aimed to respect American Indian cultures and heritage, and he intended for schools to “teach Indians to be Indians.” Federal schools would preserve certain ties between Navajo students and their communities, while simultaneously creating new ones between Navajo pupils and mainstream American society.

²⁰⁶ The “Indian New Deal” refers to Collier’s program of American Indian reforms that he implemented during the era of the New Deal.

²⁰⁷ *Encyclopedia of Politics of the American West*, 2013 ed., s.v. “Collier, John,” by Farina King, 249.

²⁰⁸ *Encyclopedia of Politics of the American West*. See *Indian Reorganization Act*, 25 U.S.C. 7 (1934); and *Johnson-O’Malley Act*, 25 U.S.C. 452-457 (1934). See also *Encyclopedia of Native American Legal Tradition*, ed. 1998, s.v. “Indian Reorganization Act,” by Donald A. Grinde, Jr. and Bruce E. Johansen. The Indian Reorganization Act terminated the “allotment system and established Native American governments for some reservations under systems that were partially self-governing” (147).

The United States government committed to develop a state apparatus for education that unified the nation through school programs and curriculum especially during the interwar period. According to Tracy Steffes, Professor of Education and History, these changes emphasize the ties between the “school, society, and state.” Steffes argues that government reformers “defined children’s education and welfare as a public interest that transcended the family and community and justified new state interventions.”²⁰⁹ Collier’s plans for reformed education, for example, severed some relations between students and their communities in the process.

Collier used education for a governmental agenda to modernize Navajo society and to transform their relationship with the reservation land and people. Official discourse on “The Navajo Problem” mandated a variety of changes among Navajos, particularly stock reduction and soil conservation beginning in the early 1930s with the support of “the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), the Soil Conservation Service, and other programs” that Collier and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) agents directed towards the Diné.²¹⁰ Collier and the U.S. administration planned to delegate Navajo students as carriers of such changes, and the on-reservation schools prepared them for this role. Navajo students would return from school with a responsibility to uplift their

²⁰⁹ Tracy L. Steffes, *School, Society, & State: A New Education to Govern Modern America, 1890-1940* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 2. She claims, “Beginning at the turn of the century, however, and especially after World War I, state legislatures and growing state departments of education were pressured from above and below to take a stronger role in governing public schools. Reformers operating at local, state, and national levels turned to schools to address a host of concerns stemming from the great social and economic transformations of the era, including problems of social cohesion and community, changes in the nature of work, and growing economic stratification brought about by industrialization and urbanization” (2).

²¹⁰ Richard White, *The Roots of Dependency: Subsistence, Environment, and Social Change among the Choctaws, Pawnees, and Navajos* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1988), 255.

home, land, and people through their new sense of home that Collier and the U.S. government envisioned for them.

By the 1930s, the federal government mandated Navajos to send their children to school. A brochure for the Albuquerque Indian School registration dated 1934, for example, included the following statement: “The Secretary of the Interior is authorized by law to make and enforce such rules and regulations as may be necessary to secure the enrollment and regular attendance of eligible Indian children who are wards of the Government in schools maintained for their benefit by the United States or in public schools.” The pamphlet continued to emphasize that Native Americans should have at least one-fourth “Indian blood” to attend BIA schools, and they must seek to send their children to public local schools before off-reservation schools. The instructions stressed, “all superintendents are especially directed to exhaust every means to secure enrollment of Indian children in State public schools or in local day schools before recommending them for boarding school enrollment.” They also explained that families with a higher income or “ample financial resources” could not use the BIA schools without charge, and children under the age of fourteen could not be sent to schools outside of their home state. These provisions indicate the changes in American Indian education from direct efforts of separating Indigenous families and dissipating Native American cultures to deconstructing distant education and enabling American Indian children to attend school while living at home.²¹¹

²¹¹ “Instructions,” Albuquerque Indian School Student Case Files, School Folders, 1886-1954, Harvey, Tom to Henio, Henry, Box 78, Entry 30, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75, National Archives and Records Administration—Rocky Mountain Region (Denver, Colorado).

Collier and New Dealers based their vision for Navajo society and the reservation on scientific and modern solutions to what they called “The Navajo Problem.” American officials used the phrase to describe various issues that afflicted Navajos throughout the 1930s. In 1930, William Zeh produced one of the most extensive reports on Navajo overgrazing and soil erosion. Other studies followed to spur the federal agents’ determination to curtail what they viewed as “a threat to the economic development of the whole region,” which reached California.²¹² The Phelps-Stokes Fund sponsored a team of specialists to conduct an inquiry on the Navajo reservation and to assess “The Navajo Problem” in 1939. The Phelps-Stokes Inquiry also concluded that soil erosion “through over-grazing” caused “a crisis” for Navajos.²¹³ Soil erosion and livestock increase were central components of “The Navajo Problem,” which the U.S. government believed jeopardized both the Navajo and Southwest. American policymakers feared that soil erosion on the reservation was hazardous to the Hoover (or Boulder) Dam, a key source of economic and technological advancement, since it increased the silt in the Colorado River that could bury the dam.²¹⁴ Collier worked with social engineers to address “The Navajo Problem” through soil conservation, stock reduction, and educational programs. He recruited school personnel to support his plans.

²¹² White, *The Roots of Dependency*, 252.

²¹³ *The Navajo Indian Problem, an Inquiry Sponsored by the Phelps-Stokes Fund* (New York: Phelps-Stokes Fund, 1939), vii.

²¹⁴ George Arthur Boyce, *When Navajos Had Too Many Sheep: the 1940's* (San Francisco, Calif.: The Indian Historian Press, 1974), x.; see also Thomas James, “Rhetoric and Resistance: Social Science and Community Schools for Navajos in the 1930s,” *History of Education Quarterly* 28, no. 4 (1988): 606; White, *The Roots of Dependency*, 251-252.

Collier's administration designed "community education" in order to align Navajo children and their communities with the U.S. government's solutions to soil erosion and Navajo social ills. Lucy Wilcox Adams became Director of Navajo Education in 1936, and she collaborated with other officials on "a program of Education, Public Relations, Propaganda, and Publicity" that explained soil conservation and the reservation "problem."²¹⁵ Community education included practical courses in land management, soil and water conservation, and livestock reduction and herd improvement, which educators imagined would "strengthen tribal political organization and foster economic prosperity."²¹⁶ Schools would exemplify the necessary changes of Navajo life and educate children as initiators of such movements.

The Navajo Radio Station, KTGM, began broadcasting in 1938 with a series that propagated these governmental educational programs.²¹⁷ The director of the BIA schools on the Navajo reservation, Lucy Wilcox Adams, spoke in 1939, claiming: "The immediate future of the Navajos lies within the sixteen million acres, where basic land and water resources must be recreated and expanded, livestock reduced until it lives within its operating capital on the range, and new sources of livelihood developed to support the expanding population."²¹⁸ Adams upheld the governmental view of "The

²¹⁵ Iverson, *Diné*, 163.

²¹⁶ Katherine Jensen, "Teachers and Progressives: The Navajo Day-School Experiment, 1935-1945," *Arizona and the West* 25, no. 1 (1983): 51.

²¹⁷ Woerner, 160.

²¹⁸ Lucy Wilcox Adams, "The Navajo Boarding Schools," radio broadcast from KTGM, Window Rock, Ariz., April 18, 1939, p. 4, folder 28, reel 2, box 1, Indian Schools Collection, 1929-1945 (hereafter cited as ISC), Center for Southwest Research, Zimmerman Library, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque (hereafter cited as UNM). Lucy Wilcox Adams also served as the director for the Hopi and Southern Ute BIA schools, which the Office of Indian Affairs connected to the Navajo educational system and program. See Iverson, *Diné*, 151.

Navajo Problem,” which revolved around Navajo land use. She also stressed in the broadcast, “Time is a driving factor in the situation, and the necessity for saving the soil and at the same time developing a native leadership capable of guarding it must somehow be harmonized.”²¹⁹ Adams and other American policymakers believed that education would create the leaders who would save Navajo land and society, but they did not account for the resulting tensions of an education that forged a new generation with different values than their parents.

Collier’s team of officials, including Adams, identified soil conservation as a modern mode of life that Navajos needed to adopt. Collier decided that stock reduction provided the best means to conserve the soil because of overgrazing. Collier and his personnel failed to realize an important point that Richard White states in *The Roots of Dependency*: “Indians, like all peoples, live in a physical world which is not only natural but also historical—a creation of their ancestors and themselves.”²²⁰ The Diné had a physical and historical relationship with their homeland, which the U.S. government sought to alter by teaching Navajos how to care for the land.

Collier’s administration and Navajos differed in their approaches to nature, as Marsha Weisiger explains in *Dreaming of Sheep in Navajo Country*: “One saw nature through the lens of science, the other through the metaphysical lens of their spiritual world and ceremonies. One had faith that science and engineering could revive Navajo grasslands. The other insisted that maladies other than livestock lay at the root of their

²¹⁹ Adams, “The Navajo Boarding Schools.”

²²⁰ Richard White, *The Roots of Dependency*, xiii.

problems and that ceremony and rain would restore *hózhó*.²²¹ The New Dealers' modern solution of stock reduction clashed with the Navajo sense of *hózhó*, which epitomized the imperative to live in harmony and balance with their surroundings.

For centuries, livestock, especially sheep, symbolized life for Navajos. The Creator made the sacred mountain of the North, *Dibé Ntsaa* or "Big Sheep Mountain," with sheep. Navajos appealed to deities of the mountain for prosperity through the livestock.²²² The Diné blessed their livestock and land with rain, which they beckoned in prayers and ceremonies that used *dzileezh*, soil from the sacred mountain.²²³ Collier's program of education, soil conservation, and stock reduction overlooked these cultural values to the detriment of Navajo life.

Because Collier's administration imposed societal changes such as stock reduction, Navajos suffered and distrusted reforms of the "Indian New Deal" including educational policies. Police, specifically the "range riders," and courts enforced stock reduction from 1933 to the 1940s. The range riders slaughtered excess sheep, goats, horses, and cattle. Navajos compared this period to the Long Walk as Robert S. McPherson argues in *Navajo Land, Navajo Culture*: "The pattern in each instance is similar: betrayal, destruction, confinement, and the start of a new way of life."²²⁴ U.S.

²²¹ Marsha Weisiger, *Dreaming of Sheep in Navajo Country* (Seattle, Wash.: University of Washington Press, 2009), 10.

²²² Robert S. McPherson, *Navajo Land, Navajo Culture: The Utah Experience in the Twentieth Century* (Norman, Okla.: University of Oklahoma Press, 2001), 104. The Long Walk was a tragic episode of Navajo history when the U.S. Army destroyed Navajo subsistence and forced Navajos to walk approximately 300 miles to a reservation in Bosque Redondo, Fort Sumner, New Mexico in 1864. Navajos returned to their traditional homelands after tribal leaders signed the Treaty of 1868 with the U.S. government.

²²³ McPherson, *Navajo Land, Navajo Culture*, 104.

²²⁴ McPherson, *Navajo Land, Navajo Culture*, 119.

authorities forced Navajos to abide by stock reduction policies, which worsened Navajo poverty and “disrupted the very fabric of their existence.”²²⁵ Families who depended on livestock went hungry. The Navajo yearly per-capita income decreased from \$138.92 to \$78.13 between 1936 and 1940 when the U.S. government executed stock reduction.²²⁶ Consequentially, Navajos became wary of Collier’s educational reforms as well.²²⁷

“To Learn to be Good Citizens”: Diné Perspectives of the Crownpoint Boarding School

Despite the growing discontent with the “Indian New Deal,” some Navajo children continued to attend federal boarding schools during the 1930s. How did these Navajo students experience official efforts in boarding school? Navajo children from the Crownpoint Boarding School expressed impressions of their schooling in the school magazine, *Crownpoint News*, between 1938 and 1939. Their student compositions, reports, and drawings offer glimpses into the classroom and give them voice in this history.

These materials demonstrate how schools taught basic modern living such as nutrition and health. The curriculum that students described included instruction on familial relationships, health and personal habits, and soil conservation. Activities constituted a major part of the school curriculum, providing active learning focused on typical American gender roles, participation in a cash economy, agriculture, and American Indian culture. The curriculum and activities in which Navajo students

²²⁵ See Donald L. Parman, *The Navajos and the New Deal* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976), 67.

²²⁶ James, 625.

²²⁷ See Jensen, 60.

participated set them apart in their communities, and served to produce a cohort of modern American Navajos. In their writings, students often dwelt on the relationships that they developed in school with each other, their families, and their communities, as they attempted to spread their knowledge and new sense of home among their people.

Health initiatives became extremely important in Navajo schools during the 1930s, as students could exemplify in their community healthy lifestyles that followed “modern” medicine rather than traditional healing. Modernization provided a better life, which necessitated healthcare, according to school officials. Certified medical doctors who specialized in general health, eye care, and dentistry replaced the roles of Navajo medicine men and herbalists in schools. An eighth grader, Mabel Gray, remembered a Dr. Lane and a Miss Pierce, who came to Crownpoint for two weeks in 1939 to examine the children’s eyes and treat those with symptoms of trachoma.²²⁸ According to John Martino, Mabel’s classmate, a dentist and his wife visited the school children to examine their mouths and teach them dental hygiene such as how to brush their teeth.²²⁹

Students became well aware of these modern health professionals and gradually learned to accept their methods. Charley Toledo from Torreon Day School explained, “Dr. Coogan sticks a needle in our arm. It hurts. It makes our arm sore. He wants us to keep clean. The Doctor wants us to keep well.”²³⁰ Although Charley disliked the pain of immunizations, he gained confidence in these medical professionals who acted for his

²²⁸ Mabel Gray, “Upper Grades,” *Crownpoint News*, April 1939, p. 9, box 1, ISC, UNM.

²²⁹ John Martino, “Dentist Visits Us,” *Crownpoint News*, April 1939, p. 9, box 1, ISC, UNM.

²³⁰ Charley Toledo, “Torreon Day School,” *Crownpoint News*, April 1939, p. 21, box 1, ISC, UNM.

benefit. The schools hoped that students would share this confidence with their Navajo family and community, spreading American healthcare practices and information.

Students practiced teaching their acquired knowledge of modern healthcare and nutrition in their school compositions. Gladys Castillo displayed what she learned after Miss Blanche Chance, a field nurse from Fort Wingate, came to Crownpoint to help with the health program. In a written composition, Gladys defined tuberculosis and included details on how the illness spread and how to prevent it. Gladys also exposed a cultural clash that school health prerogatives presented for Navajos: “At home we eat meat and bread. When [a Navajo] goes to the sanatorium he tells his people he does not get anything to eat. This is not true. He does not get meat and bread but he is given foods with lots of minerals—like milk, vegetables, and fruits.”²³¹

Schools sent sickly students to the school sanatorium to recover, where their diets reflected American health guidelines. Since the sanatorium diet differed from Diné home meals, Navajos believed that the sanatorium did not nurture them well. As an educated Navajo, Gladys would enlighten her people by encouraging them to change their approaches to food and healthcare in a way that aligned with “modern” standards.

Schoolchildren followed a curriculum that defined their roles as members of households, since educators planned that they would return home to uplift their family. Schools sought to “strengthen” the Navajo family unit by instructing youth about effective family relationships and roles. Thomas James points out in “Rhetoric and Resistance” that “indirect controls through administrative consolidation, conservation programs, and localized community education where none had existed before” reached

²³¹ Gladys Castillo, “Tuberculosis,” p.1, box 1, ISC, UNM.

“more deeply than ever into the social and family structure of the tribe.”²³² Educational efforts to “improve” the Navajo home involved more influence from non-Navajos and their perspective of family life.

In a lesson plan called “Family Relationships,” schoolchildren completed the following assignments: list mother’s duties, carry on play imitative of real home, draw or paint mother at work, discuss father’s duties, discuss provision of shelter, draw or paint father’s occupations, discuss and appreciate that mothers add to income by weaving, and help small brothers and sisters get to school.²³³ Through such exercises, Navajo students learned non-Navajo definitions of home membership instead of traditional Diné family relationships. For example, schoolchildren became responsible for encouraging their siblings to attend schools. The curriculum focus on Navajo family life illustrates how schooling aimed to shape students’ understanding of Diné society and home.



10. Bobbie Becenti, “Indian Legends,” 1939

²³² James, 605.

²³³ “Family Relationships,” Crownpoint Boarding School Curriculum, 1938, reel 2, box 1, folder 13, ISC, UNM.

In an attempt to teach American Indian content, educators converted children's perceptions of Navajo culture. Non-Navajo teachers often decided how to include American Indian content in the curriculum. Katherine Jensen explains in "Teachers and Progressives," "Cultural differences between teachers and natives were a central stumbling block in Indian education."²³⁴ Most teachers were white women who had little knowledge of Navajo culture and lifestyle. Schooling consequentially transferred a white American view of Navajo culture, which affected how Navajo children perceived their own traditions and customs. Miss DuLay's third grade class read "Indian Legends," which "taught [the children] they must work. They taught them they must obey."²³⁵ Miss DuLay utilized "Indian legends" to teach morals that were compatible with American values such as hard work and obedience. In her classroom, "legends" such as Diné origin stories served as fictional narratives that only provided lessons in morality, not history.

One of DuLay's students, Bobbie Becenti, drew a picture of an "Indian storyteller" wearing a headdress and other Indians wearing feathers in their hair (see illustration 10). Navajo storytellers traditionally did not wear feather headdresses, but white Americans associated such regalia with all American Indians. Becenti's drawing of a storyteller in a headdress showed how Navajo youth replicated the American Indian image popularized by white Americans.

Navajos not only learned to view their culture through American stereotypes but also performed them in schools. In photographs dated 1930 from the collection of Mrs.

²³⁴ Jensen, 52.

²³⁵ Bobbie Becenti, "Third Grade, Miss DuLay: Indian Legends," *Crownpoint News*, March 1939, p. 6, box 1, ISC, UNM.

Ina Mae Ance, a former schoolteacher who started teaching at the Crownpoint Boarding School in 1927, students wear feathers in their hair and the kind of outfits depicted in Becenti's picture for a school play (see the images 11 and 13).²³⁶ The students learned to act "like Indians" according to generic stereotypes of "shooting bow and arrow."



11. Crownpoint Boarding School Students Play Practice, 1930

Student participation in school activities also demeaned the sacred value of certain Navajo ceremonies. A third grader, Jim Benally, described a school assembly called the "Indian Show" presented at Crownpoint Indian School by a group of Navajo students from Fort Wingate, in which they "danced the yei-bi-chei."²³⁷

²³⁶ Image 11, "Crownpoint Boarding School students prepare for a school play near the Eastern Agency Campus in 1930. Photo by Ina M. Ance," in "Looking at the Past," *Crownpoint Baahane* ' 1, no. 6 (June 18, 2009): 8; and Image 13, "Students from the Crownpoint Boarding School dressed for a school program in 1930," in "Looking to the Past," *Crownpoint Baahane* ' 2, no. 4 (May 14, 2010): 5, in "Crownpoint New Mexico: Past and Present as viewed through the *Crownpoint Baahane* ' Newsletter" (Volume 1), ed. Leonard Perry, self-published.

²³⁷ Jim Benally, "Third Grade, Miss DuLay," *Crownpoint News*, Dec. 1939, p. 6, box 1, ISC, UNM.



12. Jim Benally, “Yei-be-chei,” 1939

Yéii' bicheii is a Navajo ceremonial dance that adult males perform for healing rites after the first frost of fall (see illustration 12). The “Indian Show” showcased this consecrated dance before an audience of schoolchildren and white teachers who did not fully comprehend its sanctity. When a group of adolescents imitated the dance for entertainment at school, they desecrated the ceremony. Schools did not teach children ancestral meanings and practices of Navajo traditions, which constituted Diné senses of home.



13. Crownpoint Boarding School Boys in Program, 1930

Instead, schools transformed students' relation to their home by synthesizing ancestral Diné and "modern" American teachings. The performances of Indigenous dances on the school grounds exemplified the creation of new Navajo spaces and meanings. A photo from Ina Ance's collection illustrates Navajo students "displaying traditional dances at the school campus in May 1938" (see image 14).²³⁸



14. Crownpoint Boarding School, Traditional Dances, 1938

Navajos did not "display traditional [or ceremonial] dances" as forms of entertainment until white Americans introduced them to arenas such as schools and stages. Yet, such displays also celebrated and enabled students to connect with Diné culture in different ways than their ancestors did.

In 1938, a student from Miss Wykoff's class submitted a composition about a map of the Navajo reservation. This student studied how to place his homeland on a map according to Euro-American standards and terms. The child also recognized certain

²³⁸ Image 14, "Students from the Crownpoint Boarding School (Pueblo Bonito Boarding School) displaying traditional dances at the school campus in May of 1938. (Photos provided by Ina Mae Ance)," in "Photos and bits from the Past..." *Crownpoint Baahane* 3, no. 3 (April 11, 2011): 6, in "Crownpoint New Mexico: Past and Present as viewed through the *Crownpoint Baahane* ' Newsletter" (Volume 1), ed. Leonard Perry, self-published.

landmarks on the map that symbolized home and heritage according to Diné ancestral teachings, as follows:

We have a new map. The map is blue and white. The map is a picture of the Navajo reservation. We put the map on the wall. It has mountains on it. It has rivers on it, too. We found Standing Rock on the map. We found Shiprock on the map. We found Mt. Taylor on the map. The top of the map is always North. The bottom of the map is always south. The right of side of the map is east. The left side of the map is west. We like to look at the map. We will learn more about the map.²³⁹

Although the student pointed out a sacred mountain, Mount Taylor, and other Navajo holy places such as Shiprock and Standing Rock, he did not name them in *Diné bizaad* as *Tsoodzil* (“Mountain Tongue”), *Tsé ’Íí’áhi* (“Standing Rock”), and *Tsé Bit’a’i* (“Wings of Rock”).²⁴⁰ The map removes the sites from their Diné context, which the earth memory compass embodies through the four sacred directions and mountains that define *Diné Bikéyah*. The student learns to begin with the North rather than the East, which shifts the meanings of the directions.

The student’s understanding of the landscape represented a synthesis of Navajo and non-Navajo sense of place. Schools desired that students would combine Navajo traditions with American modernity, as the child’s map exercise illustrates. Such adaptation, however, alters Navajo perceptions of their culture and homeland, which sometimes obscures the respect and spiritual meanings of sacred places such as *Tsoodzil*. The student interpreted his homeland through a map that Euro-Americans charted and borders that they set, which figured in new senses of home. Yet, the child also continues

²³⁹ Miss Wykoff class, “Room 1: Miss Wykoff,” *Crownpoint News*, November 1938, p. 6, box 1, ISC, UNM.

²⁴⁰ Laurance D. Linford, *Navajo Places: History, Legend, Landscape* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2000), 235, 264, 267.

to recognize the landmarks of the earth memory compass. The visuality and mental mapping of Navajo landscape sustain the relationships between the Diné and the earth, composing the compass that enables their orientation as “The People.”²⁴¹

During the interwar period (as in earlier eras), schools often incorporated more domestic training and vocational workshops than classroom assignments to teach Navajos how to adapt modern lifestyles on the reservation. Students engaged in activities to practice manual and technical labor that their teachers and school staff expected them to specialize in as adults whether they were on or off the reservation. In the boarding school, Euro-American standards defined the distinct girls’ and boys’ labor roles in efforts of “gender assimilation.”²⁴²

According to the *Crownpoint News*, the sections on “Home Economics News” and “Shop News” differentiated between the working conditions of girls and boys. “Home Economic News” included accounts of female domestic training such as “Story about the Bakery” and “Story of a Loaf of Bread,” in which girls baked and prepared meals.²⁴³ “Shop News” reported boys’ work, including tanning animal skins, painting,

²⁴¹ Diné translates as “The People.” See explanations of “visual logic” in Donald Fixico, *The American Indian Mind in a Linear World: American Indian Studies and Traditional Knowledge* (New York: Routledge, 2003), xii; and Donald Fixico, *Call for Change: The Medicine Way of American Indian History, Ethos, and Reality* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2013), x. In *Call for Change*, Fixico argues, “Seeing is defined as how Native people who are close to their tribal cultures think and how this circular and visual logic has developed into a Native ethos” (x).

²⁴² Katrina A. Paxton, “Learning Gender: Female Students at the Sherman Institute, 1907-1925,” in *Boarding School Blues: Revisiting American Indian Educational Experiences*, eds. Clifford E. Trafzer, Jean A. Keller, and Lorene Sisquoc, 174-186 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006), 175.

²⁴³ See Mabel Barbona, “The Story about the Bakery,” and Della Wood, “Story of a Loaf of Bread,” *Crownpoint News*, March 1939, p. 12, folder 14, reel 2, box 1, ISC, UNM.

carpentry, and making curtain rod brackets for the “homes” or dormitories.²⁴⁴ The boys fulfilled the roles of manual laborers and main providers for the home. They studied handiwork and maintained school facilities by “painting the walls, re-slating the blackboards, sanding, repairing, and refinishing the floors.”²⁴⁵ Men labored outside while women worked inside the home in modern society according to Euro-American conventions. Students rehearsed this model of gender roles in school following their teachers’ guidance.

As well as teaching children appropriate occupations for men and women, school activities worked to modernize students by preparing them to use cash and engage in a capitalist economy. A student described “The Play Store” at school: “We have some play money. We play store. Henry Castillo was the storekeeper. It was a toy store. The children bought bulls, telephones, dolls, cars, dishes, an airplane, and a clock.”²⁴⁶ The items that the students bought revealed their increasing interest in technology and modern objects, such as telephones, cars, and an airplane. As they played the part of consumers, students practiced using money to purchase American market goods.

The schools also promoted Navajo arts and crafts for commercial purposes. Schools sponsored Navajo art lessons with the aim to “develop” traditional artistic work for exchange in a white economy. The words of former Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Francis E. Leupp, remained relevant to educational practice in the 1930s: “In truth we can do a great deal to help the Indians to make a good thing better . . . a shrewd teacher might

²⁴⁴ Fan Bruce, John Martino, and Jimmy Davis, “Shop News,” *Crownpoint News*, March 1939, p. 13, folder 14, reel 2, box 1, ISC, UNM.

²⁴⁵ Fan Bruce, John Martino, and Jimmy Davis, “Shop News.”

²⁴⁶ “Pueblo Pintado Day School: The Play Store,” *Crownpoint News*, April 1939, p. 15, ISC, UNM.

start the young people of the tribe to making the sort of things which command a market in white communities.”²⁴⁷ Navajo arts became a financial enterprise that whites could exploit in the American market. Schools created an environment that induced Navajo economic involvement in American society. At the same time, schools commodified Diné culture by designing Navajo arts as merchandise. American educators intended to modernize Navajos through economic strategies for the welfare of the reservation and people, but the implementation of their plans imposed modifications on Navajo culture and society that affected schoolchildren’s relation to home.

Different historical circumstances often compelled Navajos to adapt in order to survive, as they did in the Long Walk era of the 1860s, and so educators also utilized Navajo history to encourage Navajos to adapt again by embracing modern knowledge. An eighth grader, John Martino, summarized his teacher’s Navajo history lesson in a composition. John wrote about Chief Becenti who became “Chief of the Navajos” after Chief Manuelito died.²⁴⁸ John learned that “[Chief Becenti] had done a lot for his people by forcing them into education,” and he remembered Chief Becenti’s counsel to his people: “When you have a brand new car and it is full of gas, but no lights, you can’t travel at night where you want to go. You can’t see to go. You don’t have light . . . So a Navajo who can’t talk English and is uneducated meets a white man and can’t talk and

²⁴⁷ Francis E. Leupp, *The Indian and His Problem* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1910), 186 cited in Woerner, 78.

²⁴⁸ John Martino calls Chief Becenti “Chief of the Navajos.” Chief Becenti was the first documented Navajo leader of the Crownpoint area, and he was one of the first elected officials to represent local concerns in Crownpoint during the 1920s. John Martino, “Navajo History,” *Crownpoint News*, Nov. 1938, p. 12, ISC, UNM.

deal with him. He can travel around but he can't understand what he hears and sees."²⁴⁹

John valued Chief Becenti's admonition, which his teacher used to persuade schoolchildren of the necessity to adapt. Navajo youth such as John understood that they must matriculate and adjust to modern times in order to succeed and function properly. The educated ones would enable their communities to maneuver in a new world that required dealings with white Americans.

Students interacted within the school and community to spread the modern lessons that the U.S. government prioritized, such as soil conservation between 1938 and 1939. Their schooling focused on Navajo economic and environmental conditions, and the school curriculum emphasized soil erosion. The eighth grade boys housed in home 1 at the Crownpoint boarding school studied the soil erosion issue in the spring of 1939.

Wilfred Martino, a student, explained the program that they organized for the school:

We go home each summer and help our families with their small farms and herds. We ride our horses over our reservation and see how little vegetation is left . . . In school, we have received some valuable material from the Soil Conservation Service. We have studied this material and have learned some of the causes of soil erosion and know of some of the things that we and our people must learn to do in order to conserve our soil . . . because we want the younger children in our school to realize what is destroying our reservation and to learn how to prevent this destruction, we decided to have our assembly program built around the subject of soil erosion and erosion control.²⁵⁰

Wilfred acquired a new view of his land through knowledge of soil erosion and conservation that white educators provided him. Modern science identified the little vegetation that he observed, as an indicator of soil erosion. Soil erosion implied

²⁴⁹ John Martino, "Navajo History," p. 12.

²⁵⁰ Wilfred Martino, "Home One Assembly Program," *Crownpoint News*, April 1939, p. 13, ISC, UNM.

overgrazing. Schools taught Navajo students about soil erosion so that they could instruct their communities and future generations. U.S. governmental reforms such as soil conservation and stock reduction needed messengers and supporters among the Diné.

The boys in Home 1 did not wait to return home before sharing their message on soil erosion. Wilfred continued to describe the soil erosion program:

Mr. Henry Gatewood who conducts the Saturday afternoon broadcast over station KTGM [a Navajo radio station] was present at our program. He intends to invite us to give this program on one of the Saturday afternoon broadcasts in order that our families and friends on the reservation will know that we are in school trying to learn to be good citizens when we return to our homes.²⁵¹

The boys immediately spread their information on soil erosion with family and friends on the radio. Wilfred's comments indicate the kind of processes that he underwent to become a "good citizen," such as teaching what he learned at school and endorsing the U.S. governmental agenda. Steffes asserts that during the interwar era, "Americans invested in schooling to develop good democratic citizens, prepare them to succeed in the rapidly changing economic and social context, and keep the gates of opportunity propped open." She stresses the ramifications of these purposes, "Yet this turn to schooling to address the risks of capitalism . . . obscured and reinforced structural inequalities and constraints to opportunity under a powerful language of merit and individualism."²⁵² Wilfred followed the school script "to develop good democratic citizens," but Diné communities and experiences clashed with such intentions.

Navajo society did not necessarily value a "good [American] citizen" during the "Indian New Deal." The lesson on soil erosion conflicted with Diné ancestral

²⁵¹ Wilfred Martino, "Home One Assembly Program."

²⁵² Steffes, 14.

understandings of their responsibility and relationship with the land. Jensen points out, “Ironically, the visionary Collier had become a villain on the Navajo Reservation. Stock reduction, soil conservation, and day schools were all vilified as parts of his programs, and in complaints they were listed in that order.”²⁵³ Stock reduction devastated Navajos, and so they distrusted other reforms such as schooling that supported Collier’s enforced policies. As the students attempted to influence their communities through education, their status as bearers of new knowledge, culture, and modernization sometimes distanced them from their community because of school affiliations with Collier and stock reduction.²⁵⁴

Collier lectured during the Program for Returned Navajo Students at Fort Wingate on July 7, 1933, admonishing Diné youth that “even as the white man must be faithful to his own, so must you be.”²⁵⁵ How could Navajos balance between two distinct ways of life, as Collier hoped, staying true to their Diné heritage and acquired values of modernity? Navajo boarding school students returned to their homes on the reservation with these kinds of questions to face. The Phelps-Stokes Inquiry of 1939 identified the essence of “The Navajo Problem” as “a most perplexing combination of Indian heritage, Indian customs, and Indian ways of life in conflict with modern scientific programs of soil conservation and in opposition to present-day methods of social reform at any cost.”²⁵⁶ Educated Navajos embodied “The Navajo Problem,” since their schooling

²⁵³ Jensen, 60.

²⁵⁴ Jensen, 61.

²⁵⁵ John Collier cited in Woerner, 134.

²⁵⁶ *The Navajo Indian Problem*, 1.

sought to modernize the reservation through “scientific programs” and “social reform” at the expense of Navajo traditions and culture.

Diné children learned to modernize the Navajo reservation according to white mainstream standards inculcated in boarding schools through the 1940s. Their experiences in boarding school altered their sense of home by teaching them to view their land and community in a way that correlated with U.S. governmental objectives such as soil conservation. Non-Navajo teachers attempted to teach Navajo children about their culture, but they often failed to apply appropriate and contextualized Navajo content in schools. Instead, they used Navajo cultural content to reinforce their non-Navajo values and designs for Diné society. Schooling compelled Navajos to adapt their culture to modern American conventions, which sacrificed more Diné ways of life. Despite efforts to strengthen students’ ties to home, American Indian education continued to disorient and to distance some students from home as they became agents of transition on the reservation for an American agenda.

Nevertheless, many of the Diné found their way back home and revitalized their traditional relationships with their family and land. I remember when my uncle explained to a group of college students his participation in WWII:

People asked, ‘Why fight in the white man’s war? They put your family in prison, tortured them. They treated you as the second class citizen without the right to vote.’ It is my freedom too, my happiness and family too. I stand up for Mother Earth. She stands for my freedom. I can play, dance, sing, and stand for life. If I’m overburdened, I can cry, that’s my privilege. I went to war, because a foreign country wanted to take my Mother Earth, my freedom.²⁵⁷

²⁵⁷ Albert Smith, lecture at symposium, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, March 25, 2005.

His ancestors suffered during the Long Walk. His family lived through the devastation of stock reduction. He attended the Crownpoint Boarding School that discouraged Navajo culture. Uncle Albert understood, however, his responsibility to defend his homeland, “Mother Earth,” and heritage as Diné. His people have sacrificed much in the process of receiving an education and adapting to new life circumstances, but such sacrifices and hardships teach their own invaluable lessons that strengthen and empower the Diné.

Intergenerational perspectives of the Crownpoint Boarding School demonstrate the mixed meanings of the student experiences and memories, which allow some Navajos to reconcile and embrace the school as their own. The “metaphor of the boarding school” conveys layers of significance to Navajo families and communities that the school affected in both positive and negative ways.²⁵⁸ In my own family, generations after my uncle Albert went to the Crownpoint Boarding School, my cousins Gene and Lucinda Pat attended between the late 1960s and 1974. Lucinda Pat felt safe at the school and trusted her mother who told her “it was good for [her].”²⁵⁹ She found some continuity between the school and her home life: “It was the same thing as being at school. For me, it was not that much of a challenge to change to transition to home life.... What my mom was teaching me was about the same, but just a different setting. Here [at home], I was herding sheep and still had to do my chores and keep my clothes clean.”²⁶⁰ Lucinda stresses how both school and home taught her responsibilities and work in her youth,

²⁵⁸ Child, “The Boarding School as Metaphor,” 271, 275, 279. Child claims, “For many important reasons, some that historians might find to agree or disagree, the boarding school era continues to hold great meaning for Indian people today” (282).

²⁵⁹ Lucinda Pat, interview by Farina King, Breadsprings, New Mexico, June 28, 2015.

²⁶⁰ Lucinda Pat, interview.

although she preferred being home with her family, language, and culture surrounding her.

Another cousin, Laura Tommy, attended Crownpoint Boarding School in 1963 after her mother went there in the 1930s. Her mother, Minnie Arviso, would “tell [Laura and her siblings] stories about the boarding school.” The other girls had called Arviso a “tattletale,” because she would report on them when they tried to “sneak out at nights. . . . They would go to squaw dances and visit with the guys.”²⁶¹ When the older girls “picked on” Arviso, she would threaten to tell on them. Tommy went to the Crownpoint Boarding School decades later, after it had been renovated. However, Tommy faced similar dynamics of balancing adolescence. Instead of being the “tattletale,” Tommy participated in some clandestine behavior at the school. She recalls how some of the girls used Skoal, dipping tobacco, and a few students offered it to her. She tried it once, and she became sick for a couple days.²⁶² Fellow students also “picked on” Tommy at times.

As students, Tommy and her mother both had to navigate the challenges of growing up away from home. Tommy’s son later went to a boarding school in Tohatchi, New Mexico, and she recalls telling him, “At least, you experienced the boarding school.”²⁶³ Although she stressed to him that her boarding school imposed more restrictions, her son continued a legacy of connections to boarding schools on the reservation. Navajo generations shared experiences of the Crownpoint Boarding School,

²⁶¹ Laura Tommy, interview by Farina King, Rehoboth, New Mexico, June 30, 2015.

²⁶² Tommy, interview.

²⁶³ Tommy, interview.

and they developed intergenerational perspectives of it that interlaced with family stories and connections to the institution and its staff.

Lucinda named Mrs. Ance as one of her favorite teachers. She remembers her first grade teacher, “We used to pick on her, and we called her Mrs. Ants.”²⁶⁴ Ina Mae Ance of Winnebago and Laguna Pueblo descent started teaching at Crownpoint Boarding School the same year that she graduated from Haskell Indian School in 1927.²⁶⁵ She created a legacy in Crownpoint, touching different generations of students from the interwar period until her retirement fifty-one years later in 1978.²⁶⁶ By the time that she retired, Ance “was teaching descendants of her first students.” The *Crownpoint Baahane*’ reported, “In her last year, she was honored by the Eastern Navajo Agency with ‘Ina Mae Ance Day’ and a stone monument in front of her beloved Crownpoint Boarding School was dedicated to her. At that ceremony, the principal said she had taught more Navajo children than any other teacher on the reservation. Over a thousand students had passed through her hands.”²⁶⁷ The Crownpoint community honored Ance; they did not see her as an agent of the state but as someone who genuinely cared for them.

One of her former Navajo students, Lynda Arviso Becenti Whyte, became a teacher at Crownpoint Boarding School with Ance in 1971, who recalls, “With her kindness, patience, and understanding, she helped us begin building our foundation for

²⁶⁴ Lucinda Pat, interview.

²⁶⁵ Leonard Perry, “Inside look at early Crownpoint Boarding School,” p. 4.

²⁶⁶ She taught some Navajo Code Talkers as children, which could have included Albert Smith. See Dorothy Ance, “Always a Teacher: Ina Mae Ance,” *Crownpoint Baahane*, 1, no. 5 (May 22, 2009): 6, in “Crownpoint New Mexico: Past and Present as viewed through the *Crownpoint Baahane*’ Newsletter” (Volume 1), ed. Leonard Perry, self-published.

²⁶⁷ Dorothy Ance, “Always a Teacher,” 6-7.

today's world."²⁶⁸ Another former student who went to Crownpoint Boarding School in the 1950s, Pauleen Billie, stresses her gratitude for her schooling; she also supported Navajo education as an adult.²⁶⁹ She explains that her parents prepared her to be a "good learner," because they "taught [her] how to listen."²⁷⁰ Her kindergarten teacher, Mrs. Ance, would play the piano to teach her class English, "She would sing for us. She would act it out and play it at the same time . . . There was no real fear."²⁷¹ Ance was known for her abilities on the piano.²⁷² Some Navajos credit the school and noteworthy staff such as Ance for their personal and community ability to face the world and thrive.

Similar to Lucinda Pat, Billie relates her education from home and school. During the summers, she would bring her books home and read during her breaks from sheep herding. Her mother taught her "not to waste time," giving her various tasks such as wool carding. When her mother wanted to burn her book pages as fire starter, Billie buried her books in different spots where she could find them while sheep herding.²⁷³ As a student, she found ways to balance learning from both school and home.

Jimmie Largo, who was both a student and employee of the Crownpoint Boarding School, points to the teachings of his grandparents of prayer and temperance as guides in his life that he follows and shares with students to this day.²⁷⁴ The pursuit of *hózhó*, or

²⁶⁸ Lynda Arviso Becenti Whyte cited in Ance, "Always a Teacher," 7.

²⁶⁹ Pauleen Billie, interview by Farina King, Crownpoint, New Mexico, June 29, 2015.

²⁷⁰ Billie, interview.

²⁷¹ Billie, interview.

²⁷² Ance, 7.

²⁷³ Billie, interview.

²⁷⁴ Jimmie Largo, interview by Farina King, Crownpoint, New Mexico, June 30, 2015.

balance, brings long life. Largo credits his adherence to these teachings for his health and old age.

Navajos renamed Crownpoint in their own language, *T'iists'oozi Ndeeshgizh* or “the gap where thin trees grew.” According to stories of the elders “sometime in the early 1900s, a wagon traveling up the canyon near the site southeast of Crownpoint dropped a willow seed and from the seed trees began to grow in the gap.”²⁷⁵ In 2010, the Crownpoint community celebrated its centennial, which included the boarding school reunion where former students and staff gathered to share their memories.²⁷⁶ The Crownpoint Historical and Cultural Heritage Council formed in 2008 to “advocate an appreciation for the history of Crownpoint and its surrounding communities, to educate the public on this history and the culture.”²⁷⁷ One of the council’s founders, Leonard Perry, hopes to dedicate a museum to the historical Navajo experiences at the boarding school. He stresses the importance of understanding the Crownpoint Boarding School in context as a central part of the community and its heritage.

Similar to how they renamed the town in *Diné bizaad*, Navajos claimed the Crownpoint Boarding School as their space and history on their own terms. Pauleen Billie defines education from her eclectic and mobile experiences, which centered on home as her parents’ examples anchored her:

²⁷⁵ Leonard Perry, “Crownpoint to celebrate 100 years,” *Navajo Times*, July 23, 2010, accessed September 10, 2015, <http://www.navajotimes.com/entertainment/culture/0710/072310crownpoint.php#.VfG2-2RViko>.

²⁷⁶ Leonard Perry, “Crownpoint Pueblo Bonito/Boarding School Reunion: 100 Year Celebration,” *Crownpoint Baahane* 2, no. 6 (September 24, 2010): 1-2, in “Crownpoint New Mexico: Past and Present as viewed through the *Crownpoint Baahane*’ Newsletter” (Volume 1), ed. Leonard Perry, self-published.

²⁷⁷ Perry, “Crownpoint to celebrate 100 years.”

[In terms of the boarding school experiences] It didn't hurt me. It made me who I am. I love who I am. I can understand people of yesterday. I understand people today. I will understand people tomorrow. I know what it is like to be in every kind of emotional situation. I know how to handle it. Anything can happen to you. I can handle this. Nothing can ever depress me or put me down. I will find a way. I will be nice to my enemy, because I know that I will get over it. I do not ever have to see them again. I have my life in my hands. That is what education is. Education should not just be reading and writing. Education is learning yourself. My parents were the best educators.²⁷⁸

Navajos still base their cultural identity on their sense of home through the four sacred directions. During my visit, Uncle Albert took me to Bread Springs, an area a few miles south of Gallup, New Mexico, to show me our ancestral lands. He told me of *Tsoodzil*, the sacred mountain of the South, that we would see on our way to Albuquerque. *Tsoodzil*, the Turquoise Mountain, radiates varying hues of blue, reminding us to plan, learn, and work.

The physical ability to see the landscape triggers mental mapping of Navajo relationships with the earth, which embeds a Diné self-understanding through an earth memory compass. "Once deciphered, a landscape or a monument refers us back to a creative capacity and to a signifying process," sociologist Henri Lefebvre argues, ". . . the creative capacity in question here is invariably that of a community or collectivity."²⁷⁹ Lefebvre emphasizes how space simultaneously consists of mental, physical, and social facets through perception. Not only the perception of space centers in Navajo worldviews of the four directions and earth memory compass but also all life and non-life

²⁷⁸ Billie, interview.

²⁷⁹ Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishers, 1991), 115.

surrounding them.²⁸⁰ The landscape defined my uncle's identity as Diné, and he desired to pass on these teachings of the earth memory compass to future Navajo generations.

Gene Pat, another of Albert's nieces, also went to the Crownpoint Boarding School and makes a concerted effort to teach her children Navajo language and culture. She explains, "Our Navajo language is going away, but if we have it, it makes us 'us.' Navajos being Navajo rather than us talking English. English is a second language for us. That is the way I see it. The traditional teachings should be there even if it is going away."²⁸¹ Attempts to alter the relationship between the Diné and their lands, their sense of community and tribe, through government intervention and boarding school lessons on home did not completely succeed.

Diné Bikéyah remains in the guardianship of the Diné as their haven and compass. However, challenges to Navajo epistemologies continued in the following phase of Diné educational history, the West or *Dook'o'ooshtid*, which represents a time of maturity when Navajos confronted the intensification of schooling on the reservation. As Gene Pat emphasizes, the struggles to maintain the Navajo language and other essential mediums of the earth memory compass have persisted through the journey of Diné education, while Navajos have learned to survive, heal, and seek *hózhó*.

²⁸⁰ Donald Fixico inspires this connection to Henri Lefebvre's *The Production of Space* through his emphasis on "Natural Democracy" among Indigenous peoples. See Donald Fixico, *Call for Change*, x. "Natural Democracy is the inclusion of all things to be mutually recognized based on reciprocal respect among all within a totality that the Muscogee Creeks and Seminoles call *Ibofanga*" (x). Navajos would call this "reciprocal respect" *hózhó*.

²⁸¹ Gene Pat, interview by Farina King, Breadsprings, New Mexico, June 28, 2015.

CHAPTER 3

E'E'AAH (WEST): INTESTIFICATION OF DISTANT EDUCATION

Ceremonies work at multiple levels, but primarily they heal the mind, which helps to heal the body. Chant, song, prayer, and guided imagery are used, in an elaborate form of mind-body medicine. Subsistence living and environmental sustainability principles are also found in ceremony teachings, and are examples of how interconnection can promote sustainability theory and teach humans a way of living that honors and protects our natural world.

—Lori Arviso Alvord, Diné, MD

On Thursday evening, October 24, 1957, thirty Navajo girls were preparing for bed in their dormitory at the Leupp Boarding School as the dormitory attendant, Helen McCabe, checked their temperatures. Most of the girls had already been lying in bed all day, since they contracted the flu. Their bodies ached, and their heads throbbed. When they vomited, they used small paper bags by their bedsides. McCabe noticed that all of the sick girls exhibited typical symptoms of the flu such as lethargy, except that five-year-old Doris Sunshine had “swollen lips.”²⁸² When McCabe “asked her what had happened to her lips . . . she said nothing.” The other girls then told McCabe that Doris “fell off the bed.”²⁸³

The next morning, the other dormitory aide, Violet R. Wilson, also inquired about Doris’s “cut and swollen” lips, and the girls offered the same response. Doris remained silent. Like McCabe, Wilson believed the other girls. She did not recognize anything strange until a few hours later when she caught two girls, Cindy Tom and Mary King,

²⁸² I use pseudonyms for the minors that I did not interview, since they may be still living and sensitive to this material. I will only use their proper names if I receive permission directly from them or an authorized representative.

²⁸³ Helen McCabe, Statement, written October 30, 1957, in “Leupp Community School, Leupp, Arizona,” November 2, 1957, Tuba City, Arizona, Western Navajo Agency, School Program Files, 1961, Box 5, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75, National Archives and Records Administration—Rocky Mountain Region (Denver, Colorado). I refer to the Leupp Community School as the Leupp Boarding School, since the students boarded at the school.

walking towards the nearby church. After Wilson stopped and questioned the girls, one of them stuttered over the words, “‘It’s Doris Sunshine. There’s something wrong with her.’” Wilson then ran to the dormitory to find Doris “lying on the floor face up and her breath wasn’t normal.” Her knees and abdomen were covered in bruises. Wilson called for help, and she and the school principal, Charles Sonntag, took Doris to the hospital.²⁸⁴ The school staff referred to Doris as an “attractive little girl.”²⁸⁵ She passed away by Saturday (the following day).²⁸⁶

It is difficult to ask Navajos about their boarding school experiences; it is worse to ask them about a child’s cause of death at the boarding school. In Leupp, Arizona, I was audacious enough to commit this faux pas. I never meant to cross such boundaries. Eulynda Toledo-Benalli, a Navajo activist, advocates understanding boarding school experiences, which sometimes calls for breaking silences. “‘People in Indian country are still becoming aware of the effects of boarding school trauma . . . This is something about our history that is not being talked about in a way that encourages healing from its intergenerational trauma.’”²⁸⁷

²⁸⁴ Violet R. Wilson, Statement, in “Leupp Community School, Leupp, Arizona,” November 2, 1957, Tuba City, Arizona, Western Navajo Agency, School Program Files, 1961, Box 5, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75, National Archives and Records Administration—Rocky Mountain Region (Denver, Colorado).

²⁸⁵ Bessie Franc Brown, Statement, October 30, 1957, Tuba City, Arizona, Western Navajo Agency, School Program Files, 1961, Box 5, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75, National Archives and Records Administration—Rocky Mountain Region (Denver, Colorado).

²⁸⁶ Brown, Statement. None of the archival records reports the exact time and date of her death, but they indicate that Doris died sometime between that Friday and Saturday.

²⁸⁷ Karen Lynch, “Working to heal wounds of boarding school: United Nations panel hopes to undo the damage caused by U.S. government’s Indian boarding school policies,” *The Native Press.com*, 2004, accessed August 21, 2015, <http://thenativepress.com/education/index.php>.

I turn to the mountain, *Dook'oo'sliid*, of the West, *E'e'aah*, and the region surrounding it to understand the *'iiná* or Life stage of Navajo schooling. In this early postwar period, Navajo institutionalized schooling seemed to reach its harvest, as Navajo youth went to schools more than ever. *E'e'aah* embodies *'iiná*, autumn, and maturity. In some ways, Navajo schooling had matured, reaching Diné youth and operating local schools throughout the reservation to degrees that drastically superseded previous educational systems. Archival files such as that of the “Leupp Incident” and testimonies of former boarding school students attest, however, to continuities and contradictions that persisted to deter the fruition of Navajo education. The constant directives of federal officials spread despite the locality of the schools and programs in the midst of Diné communities.

When people think about American Indian boarding school history, they often envision schools far away from Native American communities such as Carlisle, Haskell, and Sherman. They consider the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. This chapter focuses on the boarding schools in the midst of Navajo communities during the late twentieth century, and the early postwar era from the 1940s to 1960. Tuba City and Leupp Boarding Schools were some of the major on-reservation boarding schools that hosted Navajos from various parts of the western region and throughout the reservation. Yet, even within these schools among Navajo communities, Diné students faced many of the same challenges present in the off-reservation boarding schools.

The Diné youth in boarding schools received a “distant education” meaning an education that separated them from knowing their communities and learning their Indigenous ways of life. While the Navajo communities could intervene with the federal

schools in their areas, they faced difficulties to influence the education and even the well-being of their children into the latter half of the twentieth century. Although Navajos confronted such continuities in their efforts to educate their youth, students, families, and communities enhanced their maneuverability in this mature stage of Diné educational experiences as represented by *'E'e'aah* and *'Iná*, the West and Life.

In the mixture of the continuities of colonialism is the “survivance” of the earth memory compass and Diné education as conceived and renewed constantly in the *Ha'a'aah*, East. “Survivance,” as Anishinaabe writer Gerald Vizenor defines, “in the sense of native survivance, is more than survival, more than endurance or mere response; the stories of survivance are an active presence.”²⁸⁸ Stories of the earth memory compass are present in the struggles of Diné youth in on-reservation boarding schools, which the health, well-being, and everyday student issues of two Western Agency Schools—Tuba City and Leupp—reveal. Both areas, *Tsiizizii* and *Tónaneesdizí* (Leupp and Tuba City), represent the western region of Navajo land, near the third sacred mountain known as *Dook'o'oosliíd*.

I would have never known of Doris Sunshine, a Leupp boarding school student who died, and I would not have gone to Leupp if it were not for the trail that the archives preserved. The archives sometimes keep dirty laundry of peoples' lives, which also serve as passwords to various stories and ideas that would be privy only to the insiders of certain communities. “Colonial archives,” according to historian Ann Laura Stoler, “are

²⁸⁸ Gerald Vizenor, *Fugitive Poses: Native American Indian Scenes of Absence and Presence* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000), 15. See also cited in Helmbrecht Breinig, “Native Survivance in the Americas: Resistance and Remembrance in Narratives by Asturias, Tapahonso, and Vizenor,” in *Survivance: Narratives of Native Presence*, ed. Gerald Vizenor (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008), 39.

products of state machines—we are now seeing them as technologies that reproduced those states themselves.”²⁸⁹ I consider the national archives of the Bureau of Indian Affairs on Navajo education as “colonial archives” because of the relationship of Native American tribes as “domestic dependent nations” with the United States.²⁹⁰ The “colonial archives” follow a colonial “‘common sense’ [that] was subject to revision and actively changed.”²⁹¹ The BIA files maintain an order and address issues that the state deemed significant, but “reading against the grain” of the archives also reveals the colonized, in this case, the Navajo peoples’ values, perspectives, and experiences.

While the Tuba City and Leupp boarding schools are featured in this study, Navajo historic episodes and community experiences also underscore the challenges of Diné students in the postwar era. Issues facing Navajos in the postwar period included the pressure to increase the presence and influence of institutionalized schooling. In 1946, Navajo Vice Chairman Sam Ahkeah scrutinized the closures of boarding schools: “We got used to the boarding schools just about the time they took them away from us.”²⁹² During the same congressional hearing about Diné education, Navajo council delegate Scott Preston also explained how World War II altered Navajo perspectives on institutionalized schooling: “If we were educated we would be doing the things the other

²⁸⁹ Ann Laura Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 28.

²⁹⁰ See, for example, the discussion of the “‘domestication’ of federal Indian policy,” N. Bruce Duthu, *Shadow Nations: Tribal Sovereignty and the Limits of Legal Pluralism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 20.

²⁹¹ Stoler, 9-10.

²⁹² U.S., 79th Congress, 2nd session, Senate, Committee on Indian Affairs, *Hearings on Navajo Indian Education*, March 14, 1946, cited in Peter Iverson, *The Navajo Nation* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1983), 62.

people were doing to win this war.”²⁹³ Navajos enlisted voluntarily in the war effort, either as soldiers, factory workers, ammunition packers, or other kinds of laborers. The war connected them to a capitalistic world, which upheld schools for education.²⁹⁴

“The war almost wrecked the Navajo school system,” however, BIA Director of Navajo Education Hildegard Thompson explains.²⁹⁵ Many schools closed for lack of funds, resources, faculty, and staff, which the war consumed.²⁹⁶ Although tribal leaders sought to establish more schools with federal and state government support after the war, Navajo community members had mixed feelings. Increasingly more Diné communities recognized the importance of institutionalized education, but they were also sensitive to how their children would receive their education. By the 1950s, many Navajos, especially members of the Navajo Tribal Council, demanded schooling systems.

Navajos sensed various forces pushing them to send their children to schools more than any other time during the 1950s. They recognized the need to provide an education that allowed their children to navigate a changing world, which centered on postcolonial structures and standards of the U.S. government and the predominantly white privileged American society that it represented. World War II, as historian Peter Iverson argues, was a major turning point in Navajo history that marked the modern Diné

²⁹³ Iverson, *The Navajo Nation*, 62.

²⁹⁴ Norman K. Eck, *Contemporary Navajo Affairs* (Rough Rock, Ariz.: Navajo Curriculum Center, 1982), 8. See also Keats Begay and Broderick H. Johnson, *Navajos and World War II* (Tsaile, Ariz.: Navajo Community College Press, 1977).

²⁹⁵ Hildegard Thompson, *The Navajos' Long Walk for Education: A History of Navajo Education = Diné Nizaagóó Iná bihoo 'aah yikánaaskai: Diné óhoot 'aahii baa hane'* (Tsaile, Ariz.: Navajo Community College Press, 1975), 75.

²⁹⁶ Robert A. Roessel, *Navajo Education, 1948-1978, Its Progress and Its Problems* (Rough Rock, Ariz.: Navajo Curriculum Center, Rough Rock Demonstration School, 1979), 15.

era and nationhood—the “birth of the Navajo Nation.”²⁹⁷ During the war, many Navajos transitioned to wage-earning employment, connected to mainstream consumerism and media, left the reservation, and traveled throughout the world.²⁹⁸

Postwar federal Indian policies further aimed to transform Native American life by breaching Indigenous ties to their ancestral homelands. In 1953, the House Concurrent Resolution 108 launched the Termination Era, calling for the immediate dissolution of sovereign tribal recognition, reservations, and federal-Indian tribal relationships.²⁹⁹ The Indian Relocation Act of 1956 established a system to remove Native Americans from tribal lands to urban settings, where they would receive vocational training and assimilate into mainstream American society as wage-earners, tax-payers, and citizens of only one nation—the United States.³⁰⁰ While national termination policies towards Native American sovereignty and relocation programs jeopardized Indigenous and some Diné communities in the 1950s, Navajos unified in efforts to solidify their tribal and local governments.³⁰¹ Unlike any previous time, they expanded their experiences and perspectives beyond the refuge of the four sacred mountains and *Diné Bikéyah* after the war period. More Navajos started professional careers, as industrial, educational, and various job opportunities boomed. The war took attention, particularly in terms of funds,

²⁹⁷ Peter Iverson, *The Navajo Nation* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1981), 82.

²⁹⁸ Peter Iverson, *Diné: A History of the Navajos* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2002), 181, 188.

²⁹⁹ *House Concurrent Resolution 108*, 67 Stat. B122 (1953).

³⁰⁰ Donald Fixico, *Termination and Relocation: Federal Indian Policy, 1945-1960* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1986), 67, 93-94, 143. See also the discussion of Public Law 280, which extends state power over Indian lands and issues (112). The Indian Relocation Act is also known as Public Law 959. *Indian Vocational Training Act of 1956*, Public Law 84-959, 25 U.S.C. 309, 70 Stat. 986 (1956).

³⁰¹ See Iverson, “‘We have an Opportunity’: 1941-1962,” in *Diné*, 188-190.

from Navajo needs such as their community schools, but it also set the stage for future efforts and intensification in education.³⁰²

By the interwar period, the federal government had developed many on-reservation institutions and schools. Community and day schools existed throughout the reservation by the postwar time. Bureau of Indian Affairs officials, such as Commissioner of Indian Affairs John Collier and Director of Indian Education Willard Walcott Beatty, emphasized the day school plan along with other reforms such as introducing bilingual teaching materials and hiring Native American staff during the Indian New Deal era. Scholars accredit them for spreading ideas of Indigenous self-determination in education.³⁰³ However, Navajos did not sustain the day schools as Collier imagined, particularly because of the other controversial policies associated with him such as the livestock reduction. World War II also stripped day schools along with boarding schools of financial support.

After World War II, the U.S. government increased its efforts to enforce and assure standardized and institutionalized education for Navajo youth to abate a “precipitated economic crisis.” The postwar Diné economy crumbled, while Navajos lost war-related employment and faced hardships such as the blizzard of 1947-1948.³⁰⁴ The

³⁰² Iverson, *Diné*, 191. See also Roessel, *Navajo Education, 1948-1978*, 16-17.

³⁰³ See, for examples, Iverson, *The Navajo Nation*, 40-41, and Teresa McCarty, “American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian Bilingual Education,” in *Encyclopedia of Language and Education: Bilingual Education*, eds. Jim Cummins and David Corson (Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Springer Science & Business Media, 1999), 46. For more about “John Collier and Willard Walcott Beatty: New Deal Architects of Education,” see Margaret Connell-Szasz, *Education and the American Indian: The Road to Self-Determination Since 1928* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1999), 37-49.

³⁰⁴ Iverson, *The Navajo Nation*, 56; see also Doug Brugge, Timothy Benally, and Esther Yazzie-Lewis, *The Navajo People and Uranium Mining* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2007), 5. They argue, “The war brought Navajo people into the war industry, and the postwar energy boom forced them into the modern wage economy” (5).

Navajo-Hopi Long-Range Rehabilitation Act of 1950 reinvigorated federal commitments to Navajo education among other areas for “a self-supporting economy.”³⁰⁵ Yet, assimilationist policies such as relocation and termination accompanied school programs. Day schools and public schools opened on the reservation, but Navajos still relied on boarding schools to train their youth because of isolation caused by living in distant rural communities, that prevented the possibility of having a school in their area. Some Navajos continued to go to distant off-reservation boarding schools.³⁰⁶

Some of the largest American Indian off-reservation boarding school programs in U.S. history opened between the 1940s and 1950s specifically to address “a crisis in [Navajo] education.” This “crisis” refers to how the U.S. government recognized that the majority of Navajo youth were not receiving an institutionalized education after World War II.³⁰⁷ Navajo families sought schooling for their children, as BIA Director of Navajo Education George A. Boyce recalls, “When Navajo schools opened in September [1945], crowds of children appeared, as never before. All over the reservation, the schools had many more applications for enrollment than could possibly be accommodated.” He describes that some students attempted several times to register in school, but the BIA could not enroll many of them.³⁰⁸ Former Navajo Nation President Peterson Zah, one of

³⁰⁵ Lorraine Turner Ruffing, “Navajo Economic Development: A Dual Perspective,” in *American Indian Economic Development*, ed. Sam Stanley (Chicago: Mouton Publishers, 1978), 18.

³⁰⁶ Teresa L. McCarty, *A Place To Be Navajo: Rough Rock and the Struggle for Self-Determination in Indigenous Schooling* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 61-62.

³⁰⁷ Jon S. Blackman, “A History of Intermountain, a Federal Indian Boarding School” (Master’s thesis, Brigham Young University, 1998), 46-7.

³⁰⁸ George Arthur Boyce, *When Navajos Had Too Many Sheep: The 1940’s* (San Francisco: The Indian Historian Press, 1974), 158, cited in Blackman, 46-7.

the former school-aged children in the early postwar era, remembers being “left out.” Zah, who eventually went to the Tuba City Boarding School and later became a renowned Navajo leader, describes that the Keams Canyon Boarding School “was too small for the community.”³⁰⁹

The federal government responded with the Navajo Special Education Program, designating the Sherman Institute in Riverside, California as the pilot site in 1946. By 1950, the program provided five years of intensive training in vocational skills and English literacy at off-reservation schools including Sherman, Chilocco, Phoenix, Carson (or Stewart), Albuquerque, Chemawa, Cheyenne-Arapaho, and Intermountain.³¹⁰ Federal officials initiated various efforts to matriculate more school-aged Navajos, funding more on-reservation and off-reservation educational programs. They established the Intermountain Boarding School in Brigham City, Utah for Navajos to address what they viewed as a debacle in education. In 1946, for example, “seventy-five per cent of Navajo school age children (18,000) were not in school.”³¹¹ The “Five Year Program” embodied the government solution to educate Navajos, but only 1,650 students attended the affiliated off-reservation schools in 1949.³¹²

Although Navajos continued to attend off-reservation boarding schools, the largest population of Diné students went to on-reservation boarding schools. In the early

³⁰⁹ Peterson Zah and Peter Iverson, *We Will Secure Our Future: Empowering the Navajo Nation* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2012), 24.

³¹⁰ Diana Meyers Bahr, *The Students of Sherman Indian School: Education and Native Identity Since 1892* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2014), 49-50.

³¹¹ Blackman, 49.

³¹² Bahr, 50.

postwar period, about 7,000 Navajos registered in on-reservation boarding schools. By the 1960s, about 10,000 students went to on-reservation boarding schools. More Navajo students were going to public schools according to the records of student attendance in 1960, but a vast number still attended on-reservation boarding schools, including the Tuba City and Leupp Schools.³¹³

The histories of the Tuba City Boarding School and Leupp Community School lack overarching narratives. The Tuba City Boarding School once had a small museum on campus that provided some history of the school, but its collections were lost in a fire reportedly in 2004.³¹⁴ Betty Reid, a journalist for the *Arizona Republic*, noted in 2000, “Tuba City Boarding School campus is more than 100 years old. It has a museum on campus where photos adorn the walls and yearbooks sit on bookshelves. It also displays college degrees of former students.”³¹⁵ When I returned to the Tuba City Boarding School campus in 2015, I found only the remains of a charred and collapsed building surrounded by fences to restrict access after the fire.

No historian has yet explored these schools’ past and the experiences of the students in detail, which admittedly leaves certain challenges for this study. I do not attempt to trace the long and complicated history of Tuba City or the school, but I refer to Tuba City in order to connect the experiences of Navajo boarding school students in the

³¹³ Iverson, *The Navajo Nation*, 57-61; see chart on p. 64.

³¹⁴ Informal conversations with Tuba City community members related to the fire that consumed the small museum. The school had developed the site on campus in one of the older school buildings. According to informants, the school held a centennial celebration in 2001 that featured former boarding school students’ stories. The Tuba City Boarding School staff reported that the fire happened in 2004. Farina King phone conversation with Tuba City Boarding School staff, September 25, 2015.

³¹⁵ Betty Reid, “Homesick Students Walked both Worlds: Natives Look Back at being sent off to Indian Schools,” *Arizona Republic*, November 19, 2000.

western region of the reservation. They were often mobile and moved between different schools such as Tuba City and Leupp. The Leupp Incident and student oral histories reveal significant continuities from previous phases of Navajo educational experiences. However, Navajos were also more prepared to address the challenges of schooling and seek to affect the future of their posterity.

As I interacted with the Navajo chapters of Crownpoint, Tuba City, Leupp, and Oljato, members of the communities stressed to me that they were weary of being depicted as powerless victims. They also did not appreciate the single-sided emphasis on the negative experiences at boarding school. A number of community members expressed how they valued their education, and some Navajos reconciled their hardships in school. Vizenor highlights these concerns, “True, natives have endured centuries of separation, proscription, removal by treaties, and *disappearance*, but the tragic wisdom of their survivance has been converted by many academics to an aesthetic victimry.”³¹⁶ In many ways, victims exist in these memories and narratives, but we overlook the survivance by focusing on the “victimry.” Understanding these struggles through the lens of survivance illuminates Navajos as innovators who wielded power in the most unlikely situations by passing on forms of the earth memory compass—in the margins of power but within the four mountains that marked their land and teachings.

Concepts of Balance in Community Schools: Navajo Ancestral Teachings and Well-Being

Robert Begay epitomizes a Navajo learner and innovator who orients himself through the Diné earth memory compass. He was born north of Tuba City and grew up in Coppermine, Arizona. Begay was one of the few Navajos to attend boarding school

³¹⁶ Gerald Vizenor, “Introduction,” in *Fugitive Poses*, 21.

through World War II. In 1940, he was nine years old when his parents placed him in the Tuba City Boarding School. Navajos call Tuba City by another name, which Begay explains, “They call it Tónaneesdízí, because it means there are streams in all directions. If you dig a seven-foot deep well, it hits water, streaming water in all directions.”

As he started school, Begay first noticed the difference in the structure of his environment. Circles represent Diné worldviews and the teachings of the earth memory compass, while the square model of the school embodied the linear thinking of Western institutions.³¹⁷ “That was the first time I ever entered a house,” Begay remembers, “I grew up in a hogan. It’s round, not squared like a house.”³¹⁸

The hogan, or *hooghan*, represents the circular way of thinking and Diné teachings, which Navajo scholar Kathryn Manuelito expands as a “metaphor” of processes that constitute “basic elements of self-determination” in education.³¹⁹ She identifies four processes: “community-based planning, maintaining an awareness of self, being proactive, and persevering.” Like Begay, Manuelito recognized a medium of the earth memory compass—the *hooghan*— and adds to its meaning to understand the efforts of the Ramah Navajo community to shape education. In her study, the four posts of the *hooghan* represent each of the key processes.³²⁰ Begay noticed the difference in building

³¹⁷ Donald Fixico, *The American Indian Mind in a Linear World: American Indian Studies and Traditional Knowledge* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 1.

³¹⁸ Robert L. Begay, interview by Farina King, Tuba City, Arizona, July 9, 2015.

³¹⁹ Kathryn Manuelito, “The Role of Education in American Indian Self-Determination: Lessons from the Ramah Navajo Community,” *Anthropology & Education Quarterly* 36, no. 1 (March 2005): 79.

³²⁰ Manuelito, 80.

structures, which demarcated one of several affronts on Diné ways of life and epistemology in the boarding school.

Begay lived in a militaristic style at the boarding school. “We would march everywhere. We were under strict order like the military,” he remembers. As a Korean War veteran, he could easily compare the boarding school to his military service. The staff required students to attend church, and they did not offer alternatives such as Diné ceremonies. “When we were at church,” Begay explains, “you don’t look around. If they caught you looking around, they would punish you. If they caught you, you had to stand and have your arms up. Your back would go in pain for hours.”³²¹ Students constantly had to be on their guard, as the boarding school discipline extended to the church and other sites such as the dormitories and dining hall.

Punishments involved psychological strategies that emphasized gender differences as well. Girls “scared” Begay and other boys at the school. The girls and boys ate separately, and so the staff would mingle them as punishment. The supervisor forced “naughty” boys to eat with the girls in the dining hall. Begay remembers, “You ate with the older girls, and they would be mean to you.” They ate around a table “like [in] a family dining room.” Everyone had to follow proper etiquette by passing the food to one another, but the girls would “give [the boy] the empty bowl.” Begay stresses that he never “[wanted] to go back” to the girls’ table. If the girls misbehaved, the school staff would place them with the boys.

Many former Navajo boarding school students relate to imbibing soap as punishment for speaking Navajo. His parents did not speak English, and so Begay did not

³²¹ Robert L. Begay, interview.

have any preparation before school. He recalls, “They put [the soap] in your mouth until it all dissolves, by that time it would burn. You had to wash out ‘that dirty language.’” Despite being forced to speak only English at school, Begay admits, “I did not learn very much English. I could not carry a conversation with a non-Navajo. I had broken English.” He retained Navajo as his primary language throughout his life. He even expresses sympathy for one of his teachers who suffered, because she could not speak Navajo:

It was hard for the teachers. The teacher did not understand Navajo. We did not understand English well enough to communicate. We had a Cherokee teacher. She did not speak Navajo. She tried to teach us different things. But we did not get it, and she would cry at her desk. She got a man from the dormitory to try to interpret, but it still was hard. He did not speak English well.³²²

In this instance, students like Begay could pity the school staff for their lack of understanding the Navajo language. The efforts to erase his connections to the Navajo language also failed, as he continued to use it in his everyday life.

Toward the end of the war, Begay witnessed military trucks coming to the school, “covered with canvas,” that would transport Navajo young men for military service. He notes, “They would line up the boys that were over sixteen years old and haul them out to the training camp. They did not notify their parents. Some came back, and others did not come back with the war.” In Begay’s experience, the school represented another direct overlap with the military and separation from family, as the military recruited and deported students for war. Begay’s family contributed to the war by working at the ammunition factory in Flagstaff, Arizona. His brother, father, aunts, and grandmother worked there. “That was how they contributed their support to the war,” he explains.³²³

³²² Robert Begay, interview.

³²³ Begay, interview.

Some Navajos continued to find ways to evade schooling into the postwar period, demonstrating the family's choice of their children's upbringing. Begay's family eventually decided that they needed him more at home to help with hauling wood and water, and so he left the boarding school and did not return.³²⁴ Other students discuss leaving school and never finishing, which emphasizes the ongoing debates among Navajo families and communities about the values and forms of education. Ultimately, Navajo parents often could choose which kind of education they wanted for their children. For Begay, his family needed him to tend to demands in the dry farming and ranching life style that they supported. Geraldine Dickson, a former Leupp Boarding School student, left school to help tend to her younger siblings when her mother became ill and busy traveling with another sick sibling.³²⁵

Begay and Dickson continued to receive a Diné education at home, which centered on caring for family and livestock. Dickson, for example, herded sheep with her younger siblings. Dickson claims, "I feel that you do not have to go to school or graduate from high school to do something." She recognized the teachings and experiences that sustained her, which the earth memory compass entrenches for Diné survivance. With the compass stressing home and family life, Dickson personally mastered her skills in sewing and started her own business on the reservation and in nearby towns like Winslow that features her Navajo clothing designs and handmade merchandise.³²⁶

³²⁴ Robert Begay, interview.

³²⁵ Geraldine Dickson, interview by Farina King, Leupp, Arizona, July 11, 2015.

³²⁶ Geraldine Dickson, interview.

Begay emphasized several teachings specifically from his father and mother. His father “was a medicine man of many ceremonies,” which he learned. He also taught Begay how to care for livestock and dry farming crops such as corn, beans, melon, oats, and barley. His mother showed him “how to be a respectable person and the things that I am not supposed to do.” His parents told him, “You have to develop some kind of moral standard.” Begay refers to this moral fiber when he points out, “Compared to normal society, I grew up dirt poor. How many kids would put up with it? They might start stealing. . . . I did not because my parents taught against that.” The moral teachings that Begay highlights from his upbringing connect to the earth and landmarks such as mountains. The sacred directions and their affiliated mountains delineated epistemology and societal principles, which Begay and other Navajos absorbed.

Of the many teachings that Begay received from his parents, they ingrained the earth memory compass that he surmises as follows:

The East is where the Holy Mother is. The White Corn mother, and everything that comes from her is the Beauty Blessing Way. That is where the twelve morning gods come from. If you can keep your house clean, your hogan clean, if you behave yourself and get up early, these twelve morning gods will give you their blessing. If you sleep late, you’re lazy, and your hogan is dirty, those sacred people will not visit your hogan.

White Shell Lady lives in the East. *Sis Naajini* mountain is there and white precious stone makes the mountain.
Then, you go to the South and that is where *Tsodzil* and Mount Taylor is and you get the blessing from the turquoise.
The West is the abalone.
The North is *Dibé Nitsaa*, the Blanca Peak. That is where you get the obsidian stone.

Inside the reservation, there are two more mountains. One is the warehouse of the wealth. The other is between Shiprock and Albuquerque. That one is all the precious stones.³²⁷

³²⁷ Robert Begay, interview.

When asked how he remembered these teachings after his many travels and education in boarding and public schools, he responded, “They preach to you every day these things.” He explained that the “best way” to learn “is not written,” and so he “would draw to remember [it] like a *Yéii’ bicheii* picture.”³²⁸ He later started to record the teachings. The earth memory compass sustains Diné epistemology through the hybridization processes of active performance such as orality. Begay highlights this process: “The Navajo education is unwritten. I do not know how much of that teaching is original. I think a lot of it is lost. It is all by memories. As far as ceremonies go, I do not think that is original anymore. I think that people just implement their own ideas.” Although the knowledge may not be “original,” the epistemology and process of hybridization continues, upholding the foundations of the earth memory compass—its purpose to orient Navajos in relation to each other.

Begay expresses ambiguous feelings, similar to other Navajos as they reflect on their boarding school experiences. He features the process of survivance, which aligns with hybridization: “The way the school officials treated the Navajo. We thought that was rude. We think that it was inhuman. But I think it was a benefit to the Navajo people. I think that when you have the uneducated, you have to subdue them somehow. Like training a wild horse to have a rider.”³²⁹ He relates his experiences in boarding school to what he learned from his family and Navajo background of raising livestock. Many

³²⁸ *Yéii’ bicheii* is a Navajo ceremonial dance.

³²⁹ Robert Begay, interview.

Navajos have also sought, like Begay, to make sense of their education and its value, and make sense of their schooling. Another former boarding school student, Lola Begay, stressed that she did not want her children to receive the same boarding school education. She struggled with schooling, but she hopes that her posterity seeks an institutional education and takes advantage of opportunities to graduate with degrees.³³⁰ In a way, Begay and Bahe both see their schooling experiences as a transitional phase for Navajos as they adjust to, and arguably change institutionalized education.

As indicated previously, many students transferred from one school to the next, hybridizing their schooling and creating eclectic experiences. Lola Bahe from Grand Falls, Arizona started in the Leupp Boarding School around 1957, and then she went to Tuba City Boarding School. She also attended the newer Leupp School that opened in the 1960s, and she eventually went to the Chilocco Indian School in Oklahoma. She initially described herself as a troublemaker in school. “I did not want people to tell me what to do,” she recalls, “I wanted to do things on my own.” Yet, her experiences and attitudes towards school shifted with her relocations beginning with her home life.

She was “raised in a Christian home,” but her parents adhered to “traditional culture.” Her father was a medicine man, and her mother assisted him.³³¹ Her family taught her how “to be a woman,” which included waking early, keeping her home clean, and “things . . . about being a woman” in reference to *Kinaaldá* teachings or Navajo female puberty rites. From her educational experiences, Bahe claims, “I learned to be

³³⁰ Lola Bahe, interview by Farina King, Leupp, Arizona, May 29, 2015.

³³¹ Lola Bahe, interview.

what I needed to be.” Bahe values her family teachings to clean the home, be kind to others, and care for livestock such as sheep that she continues to maintain.

“Traditionally, I was not really taught, because my sister said, ‘You are going to live a Christian life.’ That is how it was,” Bahe explains, “But for myself, I never really took that Christian religion. They just told me to do this and that, and that is how I lived.” Her sister was a devout follower of the local Nazarene Church, which hosted services for the boarding school children in Leupp. However, Bahe “never stayed in to listen” and would “always play outside,” while other students attended the services.³³² Her experience exemplifies how Diné boarding school students sometimes escaped the expectations of an institution that supported Euro-American culture and religion. Her schooling and family affiliations with the Nazarene Church took away from her training in Diné ancestral teachings, but key mechanisms of the earth memory compass remained intact, although changed, with Bahe’s commitment to home community, kinship, and livestock. The purpose of the earth memory compass stays constant, orienting Navajos towards home and a sense of shared identity through family ties, while the ways and forms of the teachings alter.

³³² Lola Bahe, interview.



15. Sidewalk to the Nazarene Church in Old Leupp, photo by author

Bahe differentiated her schooling experiences. She “caused a lot of trouble” in on-reservation boarding schools, but she became more involved in the off-reservation school of Chilocco. She explains, “I wanted to do something for myself. I started to improve at the other school [Chilocco].” She served as a youth leader in the Girl Scouts at Chilocco and she started to excel in her classes. She remembers a mean instructor in the on-reservation boarding school that would yell at her and pull her hair. She stresses, “I thought I was stupid. They told me I was stupid. I took that name. ‘I’m stupid, and I cannot do anything.’” Her “life turned around” at Chilocco, and she “learned that [she] can do a lot of things if [she wanted].” Like many of the students, she did not see her family often during the school year. Bahe and other students mention holidays such as Christmas break as a time when they could visit family. They referred to the difficulty of travel and how families had to share vehicles, and for Bahe, her family used wagons, not

cars.³³³ Bahe notes, while she was in Leupp, “They were not that far away, but they never came to see us.” Although students attended on-reservation boarding schools, they still felt far from home, because they rarely saw their family.

Like Bahe, Eunice Kelly also grew up in a Christian home, which in her words “shunned” Navajo traditions. Yet, her studies of the Navajo Bible and hymnals laid the foundations of her Navajo literacy. She would later become a Navajo language instructor at the current Leupp Boarding School. Kelly articulates how she has remained oriented as a Diné with her Christian upbringing: “But as you begin to . . . be more mature in your traditional ways, that [shunning] wasn’t the case. We had begun to . . . bring those traditional values back into our home.”³³⁴ Her family, for example, celebrated the first laugh of their children, and she stayed tied to the culture and teachings of the earth memory compass through *Diné bizaad*— the language. Kelly received no exposure to Navajo culture and teachings in school other than what could be identified as the hybridities of Navajo literacy and song. However, she described a personal desire to learn as she became older, and she explains, “You did your own research.”³³⁵

Geraldine Dickson transferred from Leupp Boarding School to Tuba City Boarding School in the mid-1950s. The Leupp Boarding School in the old community, constructed in the early 1900s, then provided schooling for students to the second grade. Navajo boarding school students share several memories of the Tuba City School. They

³³³ See Lola Bahe, interview, and Donald Nez, interview by Farina King, Tuba City, Arizona, July 9, 2015 among others for examples.

³³⁴ Eunice B. Kelly, interview by Farina King, Leupp, Arizona, May 29, 2015.

³³⁵ Eunice B. Kelly, interview.

remember being punished for speaking Navajo. They also emphasize their need to guard their clothing and personal belongings.³³⁶

Donald Nez recounts the everyday struggles that he faced in the Tuba City Boarding School, especially those outside of the classroom, during the 1960s:

If I bring clothes back, I have to take care of it. If someone steals it, then it is gone. You even have to take care of your shoes. If someone steals it, then that is it. My pants were stolen. I only had two pants. I had to wash one and then the other. I tried to keep it clean. If they take it, that is it. Everyone wore Wranglers. You cannot tell the difference. You are lucky if you find your pants . . . if you put a mark on it somewhere. Then when you see it, you can recognize your pants. A fight breaks out when they get caught. They will beat you up or gang up on you. You have to be tough and stand your ground. They beat you up, and you have to go to school like that with a busted lip or bruised eye. The adults never really did anything.

“Fear” defined Nez’s experiences at the boarding school, but he emphasized his abilities to maneuver and survive the daily realities. He learned how to “stand” for himself, and he understood how to protect his belongings and personal body. However, these lessons came with costs that could result in physical harm.

Compared to the dynamics such as bullying that occurred among students, Nez and other students sometimes considered the classroom as a haven. He stresses, “It seems like I did not learn anything. I was in fear all the time. ‘What is going to happen when I get back to the dorm?’ In the classroom, you can be safe. But some teachers were mean. When they are mean, you don’t want to learn. There’s all that fear.” The Tuba City Boarding School remains largely intact, and new parts of the building are still operating. Nez thinks of his schooling experiences every time that he passes the campus, reliving

³³⁶ Dickson interview.

the pain and frustration that he felt as a child there. The school has developed layers of meanings to Navajos, which include the dark and light memories.

“It still makes me hurt,” says Mary Lou Goldtooth describing her memories of the Tuba City Boarding School.³³⁷ When she went to the school in the early 1960s, they continued to punish Navajos for speaking their language. Goldtooth often stood in the corner of the classroom because she did not understand English and tried to communicate in Navajo. The trauma that she faced as a child seeps into her recall of what she termed “dark memories” of boarding school: “I think the memory that I really don’t care to remember is some of the dark memories that we had.” In those “dark memories,” Goldtooth explains how she learned “what being mistreated is.” Like Nez, Goldtooth emphasizes the transgenerational connections of the dark memories that persist to hurt her and her family. Goldtooth relates the attack on her language in school to how her children “don’t know their own language.”³³⁸

The light memories evoke positive emotions of joy, pride, and empowerment, while the dark memories stir negative feelings of sorrow, fear, and anger. Navajos address light and dark in terms of ceremonial teachings of the Blessing Way and Protection Way respectively. *Naayée’EEK’ehgo Nanitin*, Protection Way Teachings, guard against harmful forces such as the dark experiences, while *Hózhqjìk’ehgo Nanitin*, Blessing Way Teachings, maintain “peace, harmony, and order” affiliated with positive experiences.³³⁹ These teachings and their corresponding ceremony affect how Navajos

³³⁷ Mary Lou Goldtooth, interview by Farina King, Tuba City, Arizona, May 9, 2015.

³³⁸ Mary Lou Goldtooth, interview.

³³⁹ See Maureen Trudelle Schwarz, *Navajo Lifeways: Contemporary Issues, Ancient Knowledge* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2001), 33.

cope with their memories to reconcile and heal from negative experiences. According to *Si'ah Naaghái Bik'eh Hózhó*, the Diné philosophy of “Walk in Beauty,” Navajos must address the dark memories of boarding school to restore harmony and health through Protection Way Teachings such as the following:

<i>Doo hání jizh'áq da</i>	Never be easily hurt
<i>Doo ák'e' jidlíi da</i>	Never be overly emotional
<i>Ázhdílt'is</i>	Have self-discipline and be prepared for challenges
<i>Doo njichxó'da</i>	Do not get mad
<i>Doo ách'ì' ni'jódlii da</i> ³⁴⁰	Do not carry around expectations of negative circumstances

Naayée'eeke'ehgo Naniti, Protection Way Teachings, counter negativity and dark forces.

Following *Naayée'eeke'ehgo Nanitin* and *Hózhóqjik'ehgo Nanitin*, the Diné learn *doo hqá tx'ęę da* or resiliency.³⁴¹ Navajos can also apply these teachings towards their relation to place, which holds forces of light and dark depending on the experiences and memories made there.³⁴²

³⁴⁰ “Empowering Values of the Diné Individual,” *Diné Cultural Content Standards for Students*, “*T'áá Shá Bik'ehgo Diné Bì Ná nitin dóó íhoo'aah*” (Window Rock, Arizona: Office of Diné Culture, Language, & Community Service, Division of Diné Education, 1998), 80.

³⁴¹ Leland Leonard, “The Relationship Between Navajo Adolescents’ Knowledge and Attitude of Navajo Culture and Their Self-Esteem and Resiliency,” (Ed.D. dissertation, Arizona State University, 2008), 9.

³⁴² See Ronald Schenk, “Beauty as Healer,” in *Dark Light: The Appearance of Death in Everyday Life* (Albany, New York: SUNY Press, 2001), 10. He relates how Navajos “know” and connect to place through personal experiences, “tribal history,” and oral tradition. See also Vine Deloria, Jr., “Power and Place Equal Personality,” in *Power and Place: Indian Education in America*, Vine Deloria, Jr. and Daniel Wildcat (Golden, Colorado: Fulcrum Publishing, 2001), 21-28. Deloria identifies “the particular... as the ultimate reference point of Indian knowledge,” and then introduces the “dominant concepts” of “power and place”: “power being the living energy that inhabits and/or compose the universe, and place being the relationship of things to each other.” These two concepts “produce personality,” which explains why Indians must address the living universe “in a personal manner” (22-23).

Navajos embedded history in place through names and oral traditions similar to how Basso describes in *Wisdom Sits in Places*, which focuses on the Apache.³⁴³ While the boarding school grounds became a place of many stories, the dynamics between Navajo community and the schools also affected understanding other parts of Navajo land. Robert Begay recalls two stories, originating with Navajo boarding school experiences, which he learned because of the oral traditions and naming of places. The first story centered on a joke of how a prestigious Navajo legal advocate, Richard George, “was caught” and sent to school as a child.³⁴⁴ Begay recounts,

The first school they did was here in the Moenkopi Wash. . . . We had Richard George, a Navajo lawyer. He was living with his grandmother. Every day, the government car would come. One day, they were playing in the hogan village. They saw the truck coming, and it drove where they were playing. All the kids went in the different directions. He made the mistake and ran into the road. The truck caught him. Three days later, his grandmother was looking for him. He was at the school. It was 1930 or sometime. He is old now. . . . That is how he went to school. . . . All these places had names, and this is how you would remember these stories. We would talk about it.³⁴⁵

Humor became a way to overcome the trauma of boarding school. While George “was caught,” and his family did not know where he went, Navajos can consider the incident in retrospect and laugh that he was the one to run in the direction of the road. Begay and other Navajos have recognized the contributions that George would provide

³⁴³ Keith Basso, *Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language among the Western Apache* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996), 134. Basso claims, “The knowledge on which wisdom depends is gained from observing different places (thus to recall them quickly and clearly), learning their Apache names (thus to identify them in spoken discourse and in song), and reflecting on traditional narratives that underscore the virtues of wisdom by showing what can happen when its facilitating conditions are absent.” I argue that Navajos have a similar approach of relating wisdom through sense of place.

³⁴⁴ To learn about Richard George and his contributions, see Tyler Tawahongva, “Tonalea community celebrates service of Richard George,” *Navajo-Hopi Observer*, April 28, 2015, accessed August 27, 2015, <http://nhonews.com/main.asp?SectionID=74&SubSectionID=114&ArticleID=16863>.

³⁴⁵ Robert Begay, interview.

his people as a legal advocate and tribal councilman, for which they partly credit his education.

The second story relates to a place known as “Dirty Words,” or *Ha’saad doo’ ba’i’igii*. Begay tells how the place received its name from the affairs of Taditin, or *Tádidíin* (“Corn Powder”), a Navajo warrior from Inscription House. The Navajo warriors “were fighting to protect” sacred land, which Begay identified by the rivers and mountains nearby such as the San Juan River and Black Mesa. Begay shares the story:

When they first built the school here, they were recruiting children. They had the compulsory law that every child had to go to school. They took his daughter. . . . [Then] he took his daughter [back] home. It was winter. The school called the marshal, and they came and went after him. He was at Inscription House. It was early morning. He had a pistol and sheep cloth. So, he pulled out his gun and the sheep cloth got between the gun and the trigger, and the gun did not go off. The marshal shot him, and they took the girl. They took her back.

Most Navajos passed the word around that we are at war with the whites. They spoke of Taditin. Between here and Page, there is a place called *Ha’saad doo’ ba’i’igii*. It means, “Dirty Words.” The warriors were mad and cussing, and they were speaking dirty. It is close to where I was raised. They started a training camp, training all these young Navajos for war. But the United States never went to war. This was done about 1930.³⁴⁶

The story of “Dirty Words” and Taditin’s demise illustrate forms of resistance and the ongoing processes of the earth memory compass. Navajos include the boarding school experiences and trauma in their sense of place and as a part of their peoplehood. The people rallied with the cause of Taditin, speaking “dirty words” in their rage. The war did not come in the form that Navajo warriors then envisioned; the war came in the form of struggles in modern institutions such as schools where students such as Begay continued to remember his ancestral teachings and language at great costs.

³⁴⁶ Robert Begay, interview.

The Leupp Incident

To highlight continuities of “distant education” and community efforts of self-determination through the early postwar period, this study turns to the national archival file on the “Leupp Incident,” which features one of the boarding schools on the reservation. Like Tuba City, Leupp lies in the western region of the reservation near Flagstaff, Arizona. The Leupp Incident and continuities of the boarding school experiences reveal the transitions of Diné educational journeys in this *‘E’e’aaah* phase. Simultaneous intensification of schooling and community unity characterize this period, as Navajos maintained but hybridized their earth memory compass.

The Leupp Incident, although never clearly defined, can be understood from the file as a controversy that arose in Leupp, Arizona after the outbreak of an influenza epidemic in 1957. The “incident” involved the death of at least one Navajo student at the Leupp Community School, which stirred the community and supported many of its members’ accusations against the school principal for negligence and mistreatment of the children.³⁴⁷ The key questions of this study include: What did the archival file reveal about the Leupp Incident? Why does the incident matter, and what does it convey about Navajo student experiences and their relationships with their people, earth, and Navajo teachings? Navajo teachings emphasize that disease comes because of the lack of

³⁴⁷ Lee Payton, Subagency Superintendent of Schools, “Report on Investigation of Administration and Operation of Leupp Community School,” Navajo Agency, Tuba City Subagency, Tuba City, Arizona, November 7, 1957, pp. 1-2, Tuba City, Arizona, Western Navajo Agency, School Program Files, 1961, Box 5, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75, National Archives and Records Administration—Rocky Mountain Region (Denver, Colorado).

balance.³⁴⁸ Did the influenza and tragic death come because of imbalance? Although the school was supposed to be a “community school,” it was still unrepresentative of the Navajo community that surrounded it, demarcating some imbalance. However, the surrounding communities of Leupp and Bird Springs, Arizona, for examples, sought balance through new institutionalized systems of local government and representation.

Another part of this historical probing is the perspectives and memories of the former students who went to school during the Leupp Incident. Rumors and gossip also have their place in history, as scholars such as Luise White have demonstrated. Navajos in the Leupp area do not know the term, “Leupp Incident,” as the BIA and government profiled the case, but they know of tragic events surrounding the school and families affected by events there. The naming and archival records of these historical events may have been considered “secret” or “private” information, as historian Ann Laura Stoler explains, “what were secret in such documents were not their specific subject matters but their timing and the interpretive uncertainties about an appropriate government response that gathered around them.”³⁴⁹ The BIA created an order and sense of the events, while Navajos in the school and community developed their own that excluded the term “incident.” Some stories have lingered through the voices of former Navajo boarding school students in Leupp.

This historical narrative of Leupp derives from parts in the few academic manuscripts, news articles, and public exhibits of Leupp’s history in the community

³⁴⁸ See Jerrold E. Levy, “Traditional Navajo Health Beliefs and Practices” in *Disease Change and the Role of Medicine: The Navajo Experience*, ed. Stephen J. Kunitz (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 119.

³⁴⁹ Ann Laura Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 27-28.

chapter house. The stories and memories come from five interviewees who met with me during the summer of 2015 in Leupp. In 2000, the *Navajo Times* published an article about the efforts of a third grade class in Leupp to conduct oral histories and projects about the community history. The article relays some information of Leupp's rich history.³⁵⁰ Sara Begay, an instructor at the boarding school who led the efforts to preserve local history, has served as an informant to this study. She is currently working on a publication based on the student and school involvement with Leupp history.

The Leupp chapter house also displays framed photos and plaques featuring the community history on its inner walls. A Navajo anthropologist, Davina TwoBears, is currently a doctoral student at the University of Indiana-Bloomington and is researching her home communities of Leupp and Bird Springs. Her studies have focused on the Japanese internment isolation center established in Leupp, and the interconnections between Navajos and the Japanese internees. Her current doctoral study examines the Old Leupp Boarding School before World War II.³⁵¹

On the other hand, the oral histories are aplenty. Leupp residents learn of their homeland through stories and experiences of place, as one informant Nelson Cody reveals by emphasizing how his father and relatives taught him the names of places. He recalls that every four miles, there is a name for places in the Leupp region. The schools did not teach these place names; Cody learned them outside of the school, while traveling with family throughout the reservation or just to the trading post. Oral tradition and

³⁵⁰ Nathan J. Tohtsoni, "'Keeping the Past': Leupp Students bring history to life," *Navajo Times*, December 21, 2000, A7.

³⁵¹ Other than these studies, I am unaware of major academic histories of the Leupp area.

stories served as primary forms of Navajo education, which enabled Navajos to know the land and places enforcing family efforts to teach their youth. Cody works with Leupp School instructor, Sara L. Begay, on student projects to learn and write about the local history and stories of place in the region, passing on the earth memory compass and values of Navajo education.³⁵² In 1974, the “Leupp BIA School gained local autonomy as Leupp Schools Inc.,” and it embraced the motto that encapsulates the formation of the earth memory compass: ““Building the future, keeping the past.””³⁵³ Understanding the teachings of the past, especially those that came from the earth, direct Navajos towards innovation and prosperity.

The community known as “Leupp” came into existence because of the foundation of a federal agency, a boarding school, and governmental auxiliaries in the region. According to oral histories and reports that Leupp students developed with Sara Begay and instructors, “Tolchacho was the site of the first post office, church, trading post, and the first school in the region.” Begay and other Navajos call the Tolchacho mission school the first bilingual school, since its instructors taught both English and Navajo. The mission site “burned in 1918 and the community was relocated in Old Leupp 10 miles south.”³⁵⁴ The new auxiliaries would eventually include a hospital and law enforcement.

The Old Leupp Boarding School had already opened in 1912, and the school and its community were named after the Indian Affairs Commissioner of the time, Francis E.

³⁵² Nelson Cody, interview by Farina King, Leupp, Arizona, July 10, 2015. See also Sara L. Begay, Mary Jimmie, and Louise Lockard, “Oral History Shares the Wealth of a Navajo Community,” in *Nurturing Native Languages*, eds. J. Reyhner, O. Trujillo, R.L. Carrasco, and L. Lockard (Flagstaff, Arizona: Northern Arizona University Press, 2003), 149-154.

³⁵³ Begay, Jimmie, and Lockard, 153.

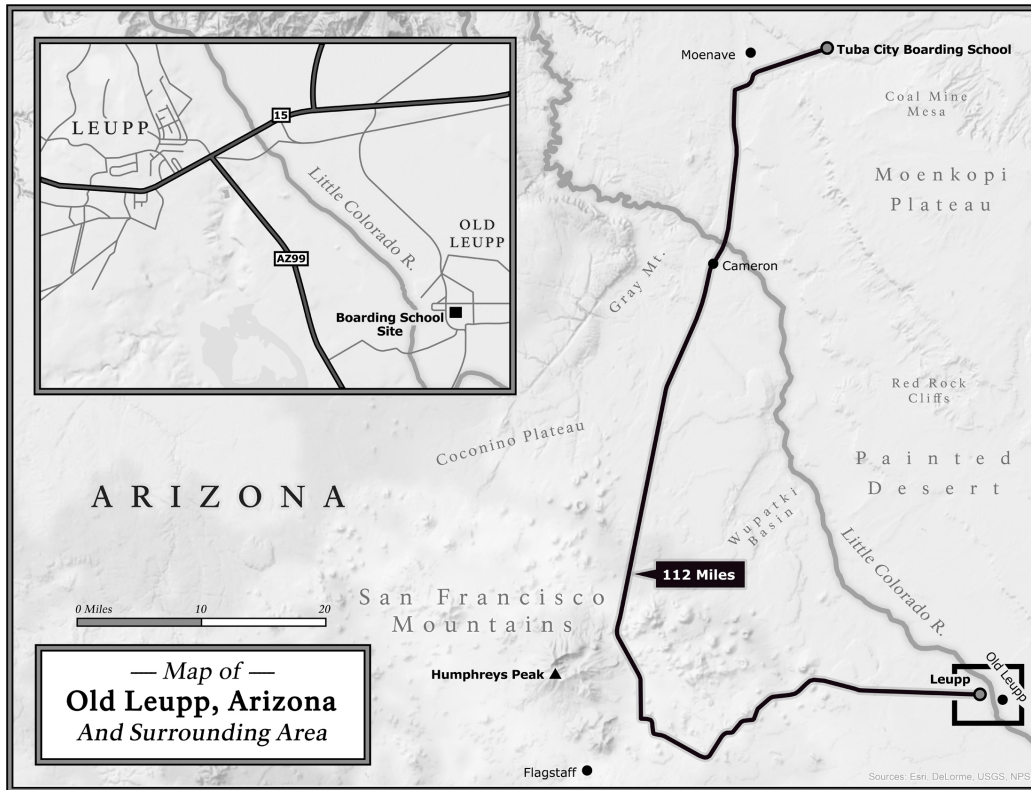
³⁵⁴ Begay, Jimmie, and Lockard, 151-2.

Leupp.³⁵⁵ Historians note Leupp as the first community on the reservation to start a chapter house in 1927, which set the precedent for local government throughout the Navajo reservation.³⁵⁶ Floods from the Little Colorado River plagued the community especially in 1927 and 1938, which eventually forced the community to relocate to what became known as the “New Leupp” a few miles away from the “Old Leupp.” In 1943, the U.S. government built a Japanese internee isolation center for “resistant” internees on the grounds of the old boarding school. About 1,000 guards were stationed to the detention facility. The center closed after only one year.³⁵⁷ The Leupp Incident occurred in 1957, only a few years before the Indian Self-Determination and Education Act of 1960 that would alter Native American and federal government relations especially in regards to education by bestowing greater power in the Navajo Nation.

³⁵⁵ Tohtsoni.

³⁵⁶ Iverson, *The Navajo Nation*, 18.

³⁵⁷ Tohtsoni. Davina TwoBears examines this history in her research (yet to be published).



16. Map of Old Leupp, Arizona

Oral histories with former boarding school students emphasize most similarities between BIA schools during the 1950s. Geraldine Dickson first went to school in Old Leupp. When her family was dropping her sister and her off at the school from the wagon, she remembers, “We pretended we were sleeping. We did not want to go there. They tried to wake us up. We would cry and cry.”³⁵⁸ The school was not far from her home. Her mother used to live there with her older brother and sister sometime that overlapped with the Japanese detention, since the Japanese “used to call [her mother] while she was walking to the store. They wanted stuff from her.” Dickson’s father and

³⁵⁸ Geraldine Dickson, interview.

grandmother had attended the Old Leupp Boarding School as children too. However, the school was an unfamiliar place that separated Dickson and other students from home, and family connections to the school were weak. The students stayed in dorms, but the cafeteria and kitchen were in a different locale to which the students walked every day. Dickson noted, “There was a Presbyterian church. We all got baptized there, the kids who went to school there.”³⁵⁹ Students and their parents or guardians often did not consent to the baptism, but such baptisms and pressures to participate in Christian denominations were common in BIA boarding schools throughout the reservation.

Eunice Kelly, who went to the Old Leupp Boarding School around 1958 before the newer site was developed, gave Sara Begay and me a tour of the campus remains. A brick archway once stood at the entrance of the dormitory grounds where Kelly stayed. The main dorms and signs of them no longer exist. Only foundations and construction materials remain of the kitchen and dining hall. Separate dorm houses next to the abandoned Protestant church are beginning to collapse. Kelly pointed to one of them and said, “That is where the student died, they say.” We walked along the broken sidewalk that led from the dorms to the deserted Nazarene church. The students used to walk from one site to the next, dormitories to the classrooms, to the dining hall, and to church on Sundays. Kelly remembers, “At lunch time, we had to go all the way to the school area . . . towards the south, there’s a dining room. We had to line up, and that is where we ate for breakfast as well as lunch. Every meal, we had to get back in line and head to the east side where the dorm was.”³⁶⁰

³⁵⁹ Geraldine Dickson, interview.

³⁶⁰ Eunice Kelly, interview.

Along the path, Kelly noticed a number of bushes overgrowing the sidewalk. She showed us how the staff would take a branch from the bush, strip it of its leaves, and use it as a whip to punish children. Donald Nez mentioned that students in Tuba City could receive “whippings thirty minutes over sleeping,” or they would throw the mattress on the hard floor with the child on it. The boarding school left its mark on the land and place, which Navajos have incorporated into their histories and hybridizations of the earth memory compass. Historians Clifford Trafzer, Jean A. Keller, and Lorene Sisquoc explain such processes by relating them to stories of “monster slayers”—challenges that empowered the survivor and hero. They recognize, “For the students, the boarding schools, the English language, a foreign curriculum, and white officials represented monsters.”³⁶¹ The boarding school students then “became heroes of their people” if they did not fall from the confrontation with the monsters.

Navajo Eulynda Toledo-Benalli describes, “Our Diné cultural behaviors are embodied in our language, thought, and prayers, which have always been passed down by our grandmothers and mothers.”³⁶² Diné women were the key bearers of the earth memory compass, which consisted of “language, thought, and prayers.” Geraldine Dickson, who went to the Leupp Boarding School when she was six or seven years old sometime between 1954 and 1955, “never learned how to weave, how to do a lot of stuff

³⁶¹ Clifford Trafzer, Jean A. Keller, and Lorene Sisquoc, eds., “Preface,” in *Boarding School Blues: Revisiting American Indian Educational Experiences* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006), xii.

³⁶² Eulynda Toledo-Benalli, “Facing the Legacy of the Boarding Schools: Eulynda Toledo-Benalli Has Devoted Her Life to Saving Diné Knowledge,” in *Women the World Must Hear* 28, no. 4 (Winter 2004), available online at *Cultural Survival*, accessed August 21, 2015, <http://www.culturalsurvival.org/publications/cultural-survival-quarterly/united-states/facing-legacy-boarding-schools>.

or [was] taught in traditional ways.” Her mother was unable to pass on many traditional teachings to her, which relates to how women played that primary role. Illness often afflicted her mother and brother, who occasionally needed medical treatment at the Albuquerque or Tuba City hospital.³⁶³ However, Dickson emphasizes her most important lesson from home as “taking care of family,” which has been a significant value of Diné society since times immemorial, embedded in an intricate clan system and kinship.

Kelly once questioned her experiences at the boarding school, feeling abandoned and longing for her family. Yet, she came to understand the decisions that her mother and family made for her as a child. Her mother stressed how their family needed to send the children to boarding schools. Kelly remembers, “Since I was a little older, I knew things and was aware of my surroundings. I accepted that.”³⁶⁴ As an adult, she asked her mother why she had to go to school, and she again received confirmation that the experience was necessary. She then realized that her mother came to visit her more often than other parents, since she did not live far from the school. Her mother eventually resided in Old Leupp with the Protestant mission, and she would bring Kelly treats from the nearby trading post.

Other students did not see their families as much, and it was difficult to communicate with them from afar. Nelson Cody’s parents could not read, so they would keep the letters that they received from the school and stick them in their wall until he came home to read it to them. Like Kelly, he accepted his situation at the school. He

³⁶³ Geraldine Dickson, interview.

³⁶⁴ Eunice Kelly, interview.

describes the first years as “hard,” but then he “learned” and “liked it.”³⁶⁵ Some Navajo students found ways to learn from the challenges, and they were not necessarily cut off from Diné teachings with the disruptions and continual affronts of boarding school education.

The investigation report of the Leupp Incident provided a brief history of the school, which described how the community, including Navajos and non-Navajos such as traders and missionaries, requested a boarding school after World War II.³⁶⁶ The former boarding school was closed due to the Little Colorado River floods in Old Leupp. About 500 students used to attend the original boarding school, but the newer community school only had thirty girls and thirty boys. The first postwar boarding school had only one room. It later expanded to a two-room building with two dormitories. The students still boarded at the community school with one cottage for the boys and a duplex for the girls. The boys slept in two rooms, while the girls had six rooms for “sleeping quarters.” The community school staffed ten adults including the Principal-Teacher, one elementary teacher, three dormitory attendants, two cooks, one janitor, and one truck driver.³⁶⁷

In the Tuba City Subagency Superintendent’s “Report on Investigation of Administration and Operation of Leupp Community School” dated November 7, 1957, the following “two-fold purpose” of an investigation was stated:

³⁶⁵ Nelson Cody, interview.

³⁶⁶ Lee Payton, Subagency Superintendent of Schools, “Report on Investigation of Administration and Operation of Leupp Community School,” Navajo Agency, Tuba City Subagency, Tuba City, Arizona, November 7, 1957, p. 1, Tuba City, Arizona, Western Navajo Agency, School Program Files, 1961, Box 5, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75, National Archives and Records Administration—Rocky Mountain Region (Denver, Colorado).

³⁶⁷ Lee Payton, “Report on Investigation of Administration and Operation of Leupp Community School.”

1. To check into the validity of the statements or accusations appearing in the petition of October 11, 1957, which requested Mr. Sonntag's removal from his position of Principal-Teacher
2. To check the circumstances resulting in the death of Doris Sunshine to determine whether or not negligence of duty or maladministration was evident.

Navajos in the Leupp and surrounding communities, specifically the home region of the Sunshine family in Bird Springs, Arizona, submitted a petition through the Navajo Tribe on October 11, 1957, demanding "the removal [of Charles Sonntag] from his position at the Leupp Community School" as the Principal-Teacher.³⁶⁸ The petition presented various allegations against Sonntag, primarily emphasizing his negligence of the students' well-being and poor administration.³⁶⁹ Then, on October 26, 1957, Sonntag received word that one of the first-year students, Doris, had died. Sonntag had sent a notice to the School Superintendent Lee Payton on the day that he learned the news, describing the circumstances.

Sonntag presented Doris's background as many school officials did before the 1960s, detailing her parents, their community, date of school enrollment, birthday, census information, and "religious preference:"

Doris Sunshine, daughter of Jimmy and Flora Sunshine, Bird Springs, Leupp Area, District #5, enrolled in Leupp Community School on October 10, 1957. Her birthday is December 24, 1951. She has no census number. Her religious preference is Presbyterian.³⁷⁰

³⁶⁸ Memorandum from Henry Amber, Director of Schools, to Lee Payton, Tuba City Subagency Superintendent, "Subject: Petition from Bird Springs District #5," United State Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Navajo Agency, Window Rock, Arizona, October 21, 1957, Tuba City, Arizona, Western Navajo Agency, School Program Files, 1961, Box 5, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75, National Archives and Records Administration—Rocky Mountain Region (Denver, Colorado). The memorandum reports, "The Navajo Tribe has received a petition stating a complaint against Mr. Sonntag, Principal of the Leupp Boarding School."

³⁶⁹ Memorandum from Henry Amber to Lee Payton.

³⁷⁰ Charles Sonntag, Principal-Teacher, Leupp Community School, Leupp, Arizona, to Lee Payton, Tuba City Subagency Superintendent, October 26, 1957, Tuba City, Arizona, Western Navajo

Soon after enrolling, Doris “complained of a headache” on October 16, 1957. During that time, most of the schoolchildren “were coming down with the flu.” On October 21, Dr. Simmons, U.S.P.H., and Mrs. Royer, U.S.P.H.N., arrived to “hold clinic” to check on the students.³⁷¹ Mrs. Royer returned the next day to provide “medication prescribed by the doctor.” Sonntag continues to report, “On Wednesday, October 23, 1957, we had 26 out of 30 girls sick with the flu.”³⁷² The investigation report clarified that “the number of boys confined to quarters [because of illness] was comparable.”

When the students were being examined on October 23, Dr. Segó, U.S.P.H., noticed a mysterious “bump on [Doris’s] lip” but “saw no cause for alarm or worry.” The children had told the dormitory attendants, “that Doris had slipped and fallen as she was returning from the bathroom and bumped her lip on the bed.”³⁷³ At 10:55am on Friday morning of October 25, Mrs. Wilson, another attendant, “was notified that something was wrong with Doris. Mrs. Wilson found Doris lying on the floor, apparently as a result of a convulsion.”³⁷⁴ Sonntag and Mrs. Wilson soon hurried to transfer Doris to the U.S.P.H. Winslow hospital. The doctors, Dr. Segó and Dr. S.G. Alexander, found “marks on her body. They said she was bleeding internally and pretty bad.” Sonntag and Wilson repeated the girls’ story about Doris’s fall. “The doctors thought she might have an

Agency, School Program Files, 1961, Box 5, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75, National Archives and Records Administration—Rocky Mountain Region (Denver, Colorado). The names of Doris’s parents and her birthdate are changed to protect her identity.

³⁷¹ The acronyms represent the United States Public Health and United States Public Health Nurse.

³⁷² Sonntag to Payton, October 26, 1957.

³⁷³ Sonntag to Payton.

³⁷⁴ Sonntag to Payton.

internal bleeding disease,” Sonntag claimed. Doris’s parents were notified Friday afternoon that their daughter was “taken to the hospital and then taken to Albuquerque to the hospital.”

On Saturday, October 26, Sonntag notified Doris’s parents “of the very sad news about their daughter. . . . The parents were shocked at the news but they did not seem to have any hard feelings toward the school.” Sonntag explains that the parents planned to meet him the next day at the Winslow hospital to provide permission for an autopsy. He also notes that the mother “withdrew the other daughter, Esther, from school and took her home with her.”³⁷⁵

Several girls were associated with Doris’s case, and Lee Payton, the Tuba City Subagency Superintendent, noted the decision to monitor and relocate them to different schools. He framed the surveillance as an effort to help them psychologically.³⁷⁶ Three girls were named: Natalie Young, Mary King, and Jane Madison. Each girl was sent to a separate school outside of Leupp. Natalie went to the Tuba City Boarding School; Mary transferred to the Kayenta Boarding School; and Jane was sent to the Kaibeto School by December 1957.³⁷⁷

According to other files, the community protested how the girls were placed in different schools, claiming that such transfers lacked proper parental consent.

³⁷⁵ Sonntag to Payton.

³⁷⁶ Lee Payton, “Report on Investigation of Administration and Operation of Leupp Community School.”

³⁷⁷ Memorandum from Elmer Nix, Director of Schools, to Lee Payton, Tuba City Subagency School Superintendent, “Subject: School reports on former Leupp school students,” United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Navajo Agency, Window Rock, Arizona, December 13, 1957, Tuba City, Arizona, Western Navajo Agency, School Program Files, 1961, Box 5, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75, National Archives and Records Administration—Rocky Mountain Region (Denver, Colorado).

Superintendent Lee Payton began his memorandum dated January 16, 1958, “It is my understanding that, during a meeting of the Tribal Education Committee, it was indicated that the three girls, implicated in the Leupp tragedy, were picked up from the Leupp Community School and placed in other schools of the Tuba City Subagency without parental consent.” He rebuffed that they received willing consent before they transferred the students.³⁷⁸ However, the copies of the consent forms show that only a sister had signed one of the girls’ consent forms. What remains unclear is how the other consent forms were arranged and signed by someone else, rather than the parents. Payton includes copies of the signed consent forms, but he admits that one of the copies is “none too clear.”

Oral histories reveal that some Navajo students in the Leupp area during the 1950s were moved to different schools outside of their home region without parental consent and communication. Nelson Cody of Grand Falls, a few miles from Leupp, remembers being picked up at gunpoint by BIA agents while he was herding sheep. In his words, “The BIA got me.” They took him to the Leupp Boarding School to shower, and then he had to board a bus to the Tuba City Boarding School. He did not have a chance to speak with his family. When I asked him how his family would have found what happened to him, he told me that they would have seen the car tracks on the ground.³⁷⁹ Cody was transferred again without prior notification to the Intermountain Boarding

³⁷⁸ Memorandum from Lee Payton, Subagency Superintendent of Schools, to Henry A. Wall, Director of Schools, “Subject: Applications to Enter School,” January 16, 1958, Tuba City, Arizona, Western Navajo Agency, School Program Files, 1961, Box 5, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75, National Archives and Records Administration—Rocky Mountain Region (Denver, Colorado).

³⁷⁹ Informal conversation with Nelson Cody, Leupp, Arizona, May 2015. I also interviewed Cody formally.

School in Brigham City, Utah. He remembers, “I thought I was going back to Tuba, but I woke up in northern Utah.”³⁸⁰

In informal conversations, another Navajo friend retold how her mother was relocated from the Leupp Boarding School to the Tuba City Boarding School. Her mother, as a child, was so worried that her parents did not know where she went that she cried incessantly demanding to speak with her parents. The school finally contacted her parents and she was eventually allowed to leave the boarding school.³⁸¹ BIA school officials would transfer and move students without parental notification beforehand.

Well-known Navajo leaders such as Annie Wauneka and Tribal Council Vice-President Scott Preston became involved in the debates regarding the Leupp Incident, as the local communities rallied to petition the BIA officials to remove Sonntag from the school and region. Despite the community outcries, the BIA investigation concluded that the allegations were false, and they placed certain recommendations that recognized major issues particularly with student adjustments to boarding school conditions.³⁸² The BIA report on the investigation describes a gathering on November 2, 1957, during which “it was the consensus of opinion of community and council members that this incident was unavoidable and that the Bureau of Indian Affairs would make a thorough

³⁸⁰ Nelson Cody, interview.

³⁸¹ Informal conversation with Davina Two Bears from the Leupp region, Leupp, Arizona, July 2015.

³⁸² Memorandum from Lee Payton, Subagency Superintendent of Schools, to Heads of Schools-Boarding School Operations, “Subject: Dormitory Operations,” Navajo Agency, Tuba City Subagency, Tuba City, Arizona, November 7, 1957. See also Lee Payton, “Report on Investigations of Administration and Operation of Leupp Community School,” November 7, 1957, Tuba City, Arizona, Western Navajo Agency, School Program Files, 1961, Box 5, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75, National Archives and Records Administration—Rocky Mountain Region (Denver, Colorado).

investigation to further assure them that there was no evidence of negligence of duty or maladministration.”

The following individuals were present at this meeting “to discuss the Doris Sunshine incident at the Leupp Community School”: Elmer Nix, Education Specialist, Ray Scheinost, Principal of the Tuba City Boarding School, Lee Payton, Subagency Superintendent of Schools, Leupp community members, Scott Preston, Vice-Chairman of the Tribal Council, Annie Wauneka, member of the Tribal Council, and Bob Curley, local Councilman.³⁸³ Although Payton records “the consensus,” the occurrence and attendance of the meeting testifies to the Diné community efforts to exercise self-determination in the affairs and education of their youth. The community and Navajo tribal government held the BIA and the local school accountable for the tragedy, which incited the investigation and efforts of Payton and other officials to prove their innocence.

Other files include the reports on the transferred girls and how they “adjusted” after the incident. The report memorandum does not specify how these girls were exactly “involved with the Leupp incident.”³⁸⁴ They describe the girls as “implicated in the Leupp tragedy.”³⁸⁵ The notes on their relocation generally state that they were normal and doing well in their new environments, but some parts admit that they were unhappy and

³⁸³ Payton, “Report on Investigations,” p. 2.

³⁸⁴ Memorandum from Elmer Nix, Director of Schools, to Lee Payton, Tuba City Subagency School Superintendent, “Subject: School Reports on Former Leupp school students,” United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Navajo Agency, Window Rock, Arizona, December 13, 1957, Tuba City, Arizona, Western Navajo Agency, School Program Files, 1961, Box 5, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75, National Archives and Records Administration—Rocky Mountain Region (Denver, Colorado).

³⁸⁵ Memorandum from Lee Payton, Subagency Superintendent of Schools, to Henry A. Wall, Director of Schools, “Subject: Applications to Enter School,” January 16, 1958, Tuba City, Arizona, Western Navajo Agency, School Program Files, 1961, Box 5, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75, National Archives and Records Administration—Rocky Mountain Region (Denver, Colorado).

homesick. Superintendent Lee Payton, for example, stresses, “All three girls are making good progress in their new locations. They are well adjusted and, as far as we can tell at this early stage, they are just three normal Navajo girls.”³⁸⁶ These notes sustain a certain authoritative tone, assuming that the girls would soon acclimate.

The reports on the transferred students also illuminate everyday boarding school experiences for Navajo children during the *‘E’e’aa*h stage of Diné education. Jane Madison had one of the most detailed accounts on her activities, which derived primarily from interviews with the “teacher-adviser,” Mr. Oscar Derrick, and her first-grade instructor, Mr. W. Burleson. The report reflects the values and expectations of the school staff, but it also reconstructs part of what students such as Jane experienced. She was seven years old when she moved to the Kaibeto School in November 1957. In a section on “progress in the classroom,” the report reveals that students were separated by their abilities into groups. Jane was “in the lower half of group 2, which indicates she [is] a little below average for that class.” The school staff emphasized that Jane had “three or four special friends,” but “she is on the shy and reticent side.” The staff expected their students to be sociable and open.

Another section describes “adjustment to dormitory life at Kaibeto,” and it notes how Jane “does what is asked of her without any visible resentment.” Students often had details and duties to upkeep a hygienic dormitory lifestyle. From what the interviewees said, they could face punishment and discipline if they did not perform their chores satisfactorily. The staff indicates that Jane “does not care to volunteer for any special activities,” which implies that some students possibly did volunteer. The account

³⁸⁶ Memorandum from Lee Payton to Henry A. Wall.

highlights, “She can dress herself, keeps herself clean and neat, and remains quiet while others are speaking.” She prefers to play inside rather than outside. “Quite often she will go to the library corner to look at books or magazines by herself. At times like this large groups seem to bother her and [she] seeks to be alone.” The school maintained few spaces for students to find some alone time such as the “library corner.”

The school staff also directed students to participate in many social events such as dancing. One of Jane’s favorite activities was square dancing, although she “[had] to be coaxed and encouraged to take part” like most children did. The report concluded, “In summary, for the present, the child may be considered to be contented, but not necessarily happy. The latter may come in time. To all appearances she seems to be an average Navajo child with nothing particularly outstanding either negative or positive.”³⁸⁷

How common were Jane’s experiences in boarding school? How did the staff evaluate the students?

Jane’s report offers a window into the daily activities and assessments of students. The school staff wanted students to adapt to social environments as much as excel in scholastic and vocational terms. They traced the attitude and behaviors of the students, especially those considered susceptible to divergent character development such as “the girls involved with the Leupp incident.” Jane and other students navigated classroom expectations, made new friends, demonstrated independence through their personal upkeep and cleanliness, found solace in library corners, and learned how to square dance.

³⁸⁷ Elmer Nix, Director of Schools, to Lee Payton, Tuba City Subagency School Superintendent, “Subject: School reports on former Leupp school students,” December 13, 1957; Report from Trinidad J. DuPree, Principal, Kaibeto School, to Lee Payton, Superintendent, December 9, 1957, Tuba City, Arizona, Western Navajo Agency, School Program Files, 1961, Box 5, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75, National Archives and Records Administration—Rocky Mountain Region (Denver, Colorado).

They faced daily challenges of early childhood and schooling under the constant eye of unrelated school staff who supervised and judged them.

When I asked several former boarding school students what they knew of the incident, they hesitated to respond at first. A few of them then began to discuss how a girl died at the boarding school, and other female students were accused of being involved in the affair. Some remember that a girl pushed a sick student out of her bed, leading to her death. Separate interviewees repeated the rumor. Nelson Cody's brother went to the Old Leupp boarding school during the late 1950s, and he remembers the death of a student. He claims that "some kid beat him up . . . and that is how he died."³⁸⁸ He confuses the gender. The rumors of the oral histories illuminate the mystery left in the archives, which underscore intergenerational trauma in boarding schools.

When I asked community members about the student death, they told me that they had heard of how some school girls pushed a sickly child out of bed and dragged her around leading to her untimely death.³⁸⁹ The informant recalls, "All of them were sick. They were left in the dorm. They threw the girl off the bunk bed and dragged her around. There were two or three of them." She named another community member involved in this affair, claiming that it could have possibly been her sister who was accused of hurting the girl. She added that she had spoken with this person about the trauma of their father who once tried to kill them while intoxicated, which she believes may have led to the later incident. In view of the sensitivity of these issues and the forms of the rumors, I

³⁸⁸ Nelson Cody, interview.

³⁸⁹ Farina King, informal conversations with Leupp community members, three individuals that I cannot identify due to the information that was relayed.

will not name the individuals that shared these stories. However, these rumors reveal certain points relating to Doris's death and how the community understood it. The archival record indicates that the community associated Sonntag with the death and poor management of the school. The nearby communities such as Bird Springs became involved as well, as the Bird Springs community petitioned against Sonntag with claims that he was "a drinking man" who brought alcohol to the reservation.³⁹⁰

The rumors shed light on a couple of records that shift the narrative of the Leupp Incident, showing struggles among fellow Navajos in boarding schools. They also point to family and community trauma as the cause for such internal violence. As discussed previously concerning bullying and the tensions amongst Navajos, Donald Nez stresses the violence that Navajo adults could inflict on the children through boarding school: "Ten years ago, I saw some of my dorm aides. I felt like going over and punching them. They are from here. They were mostly Navajos. They could be from Tuba or other parts." He explains that dorm aides, sometimes Navajos from the community, would punish the students. In his interview with the Leupp agricultural agent, C.A. Griffin, Director of Schools Elmer Nix noted, "it has been rumored that these children over in the girls' dormitory are accustomed to playing in the dormitory and making a great lot of noise at times when they are in the dormitory, probably at nights, and sometimes in the day

³⁹⁰ C.A. Griffin, Agricultural Agent, interview by Elmer Nix, Leupp, Arizona, transcript in "Report on Investigations of Administration and Operation of Leupp Community School," Lee Payton, November 7, 1957, Tuba City, Arizona, Western Navajo Agency, School Program Files, 1961, Box 5, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75, National Archives and Records Administration—Rocky Mountain Region (Denver, Colorado).

time.”³⁹¹ Rumor was a part of the process documenting the history. Orality such as the interviews became a key source.

Professor of African History Luise White explains the significance of including rumors in historical inquiry and research as a lens to understand the “world” of the gossipers. She considers the intricacies of memory and silences to reconstruct the past, or rather historical experiences. She defines silence— “the things one declines to say, or is forbidden to name, the discretion that is required between different speakers”— and then re-interprets it as “an element that functions alongside the things said with them and in relation to them within overall strategies.”³⁹² Silences and rumors provide alternative sources to contextualize past experiences that trauma and violence affected.³⁹³ White argues “for an expansion of historical epistemologies . . . to include rumor and gossip, to embrace the fantastic and the scandalous . . . to find the very stuff of history, the categories and constructs with which people make their worlds and articulate and debate their understandings of those worlds.”³⁹⁴

These same purposes of using rumor and gossip to understand colonial Africa apply in this study of Navajo boarding school experiences. As indicated previously, Navajos had strict taboos that set the silences concerning issues of death and illness. Navajos were forbidden to speak of the dead.³⁹⁵ In cases where Navajos speak of the

³⁹¹ Griffin interview.

³⁹² Luise White, *Speaking with Vampires: Rumor and History in Colonial Africa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 74.

³⁹³ White, 5.

³⁹⁴ White, 5.

dead, they refer to them in the past tense. For example, “Shizhé’é yêè” translates as “my father who once existed.” *Diné bizaad* separates the living from those who have passed.

The possible murder and death of a sickly boarding school student then was not a topic to discuss. However, certain ways and forums of speaking about such events developed, and they leave behind a trail to understand the student experiences. Children were silenced as well in history, and Navajos often excluded them from certain conversations and knowledge. Adults tended to believe that children would not understand some levels of knowledge, or they would not follow the proper protocols of certain information.

My aunt explained these concepts to me in her stories about my father’s childhood during the 1950s. My aunt, Phyllis King, remembered that she and my father did not understand many Navajo “traditions” as children. In one story, my aunt and father went to a ceremony with my grandfather. She recalls, “We used to go in there [the ceremony] just to observe and whatnot. When we got older, my dad told us, ‘Don’t come in there because you don’t believe in it.’” During the ceremony, the participants passed around a medicine to drink. After everyone drank from the dish, my father took the bowl outside. He noticed four arrowheads at the bottom of the bowl, and he did not know what to do with them. “Instead of bringing it back in,” Phyllis recounts, “he thought, ‘The medicine man throws things four different directions.’ He threw one of the arrowheads to the east, one to the south, one to the west, and one to the north.” When he discovered the missing arrowheads, the medicine man chided my father, ““You’re not supposed to throw

³⁹⁵ Lori Arviso Alvord and Elizabeth Cohen Van Pelt, *The Scalpel and the Silver Bear: The First Navajo Woman Surgeon Combines Western Medicine and Traditional Healing* (New York: Bantam Books, 2000), 41.

those arrowheads. You're supposed to bring it back in with the dish.'" Phyllis concludes, "So that's when Phillip lost four arrowheads. But these were when we were young. They didn't really explain to us different things."³⁹⁶ Ceremonies and knowledge had layers of meaning among Navajos, and the children like my father may have not fully connected with them but were exposed to them. Stories, including in forms of rumor and gossip, encapsulate worlds as children perceived and experienced them.

Geraldine Dickson, who went to the Leupp School sometime between 1954 and 1955, remembered:

I had a friend. Her name was Mary King. She used to get sick during the night. I used to hold her and comfort her. She used to throw up. She was possessed or something. After the new school was built, my little sister went over there [referring to Leupp]. When she turned seven, she passed all of a sudden. She was okay. Then, after the weekend on Monday, she came to school. On Thursday, she passed. We tried everything to find out what happened to her. But she passed. Over here, I heard about that.³⁹⁷

In this interview, Dickson recalled the name of her friend without any reference to it. Yet, her memory does not align with many components of the archival records. Mary King, according to the incident file, was a witness to Doris's "fall" and was transferred to the Kayenta Boarding School. In an official report, Mary started school in Kayenta on November 18, 1957, and "she was extremely shy and appeared very frightened."³⁹⁸

³⁹⁶ Phyllis King, interview by Farina King, Iyanbito, New Mexico, December 8, 2007, p. 7, Latter-day Saint Native American Oral History Project, Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. Phyllis King is the author's aunt, and Phillip Smith is the author's father.

³⁹⁷ Geraldine Dickson, interview.

³⁹⁸ Memorandum from Elmer Nix, Director of Schools, to Lee Payton, Tuba City Subagency School Superintendent, "Subject: School reports on former Leupp school students," United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Navajo Agency, Window Rock, Arizona, December 13, 1957; Report from L.W. Capps, Principal, Kayenta Boarding School, to Lee Payton, Superintendent, "Subject: Adjustment of Mary King, student at Kayenta Boarding School," December 4, 1957, Tuba City, Arizona, Western Navajo Agency, School Program Files, 1961, Box 5, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75, National Archives and Records Administration—Rocky Mountain Region (Denver, Colorado).

However, Mary could have been sick as well, since most of the children were affected by the influenza outbreak. Mary could have suddenly passed away at another school, but the records do not provide such information, since they stop tracing the three girls after several reports.

Dickson admits that she only knows of her friend's fate from what others told her. The stories could have been confused, meaning to refer to Doris's death rather than Mary's. Dickson's memory and retelling of the rumors reveal several components to the events that the archival records could not support. Dickson offers a Diné perspective of the death affiliated with the school and sickness. She considered her friend as "possessed." Why does she use this term to describe her friend's illness in school? She also explains how she sought to comfort her friend like a sister. This point provides insight to how fellow students supported each other away from home in illness and hardships. Clan ties continue in the school for the youth. While friends were separated for their schooling, they also sought news and updates about each other. Dickson "tried everything" to learn about her friend when they went to different schools.

Eunice Kelly went to the Leupp Boarding School about the same time as Dickson and the Leupp Incident, around 1958. She became ill during her time at the boarding school. "I was sick one time," she recalls. "We had to have a small paper bag by our beds where we put our tissues, vomit, or whatever. I did not feel good. I was longing for my mother at that time." Because her mother lived close, she was able to come to Kelly.

After explaining her friend's fate, Dickson refers to her own personal health issues while attending the Old Leupp School. She would have constant nose bleeding

until she received treatment at the hospital. Dickson relates the boarding school to inexplicable and perpetual ailments. Her friend was often sick, and she had regular nose bleeding. Dickson did not directly connect Navajo worldviews on health and healing with her boarding school experiences, but her choice to include these impressions and relate other major Navajo concepts underscore the connections.

Dickson admitted that she did not learn much of the “traditional ways” since her mother was often sick or traveling. She learned, however, about caring for family, and she taught her children, “You have to do it for yourself. Don’t be lazy.” These ideas all pertain to ancestral teachings of kinship and responsibilities. *T’áá hó ’ajít’éego t’éiyá* is a traditional Navajo phrase, which several interviewees reference by ideas of personal responsibility, work ethics, and efforts.³⁹⁹ Many Navajos translate the phrase, “It is up to you if you want to succeed.”⁴⁰⁰ Dickson evokes these concepts, indicating that mechanisms of the earth memory compass passed on to her—the teachings and practices inseparably tied to the land and earth.

Although stories of illness bear much tragedy, Donald Nez emphasized how he found moments of kindness when he was sick at the Tuba City Boarding School. He remembers:

I got sick one time. I was in isolation for a week. . . . One of the dorm aides, a supervisor came over and she kind of comforted me. She was a nice lady. She asked me all kinds of questions. She told the dorm aide to ‘have this guy sent back to hospital and checked good.’ The doctor looked at me and saw what was wrong and gave me medication, and I went back.

³⁹⁹ See Avyleni Greyeyes Nez, interview by Farina King, Tuba City, Arizona, May 6, 2015; Mary Lou Goldtooth, interview.

⁴⁰⁰ Evangeline Parsons Yazzie and Margaret Speas, *Diné Bizaad Bíná’hoo’aaah: Rediscovering the Navajo Language* (Flagstaff: Salina Bookshelf, 2007), 48.

Sometimes, they might forget about you. You can be in the isolation room, a small room with the door closed, and they leave you enough room for one bed and a restroom. It was small. If you're really sick, they take you to the clinic but after that they take you back and you are on your own.

Nez refers to the isolation and feelings of loneliness in his sickness, but he mentions the kindness of the supervisor who tried to console and care for him. School personnel and physicians exerted efforts to treat and support the children's health even though they could not provide the intimate connections as family and kinship during such hard times for the youth.

Epidemics were not new to Navajo experiences in boarding school. Navajos throughout the reservation suffered sickness and outbreaks, as did other Native Americans on reservations. Unfortunately, history repeats itself to the detriment of Native American lives and communities, especially through the cycles of illness that strike Indigenous families through schools. The smallpox, chicken pox, and measles epidemics, for example, broke out in the Old Leupp school between November and December 1914.⁴⁰¹ Dr. Bacil A. Warren, a physician for the Public Health Service (PHS) who worked at the Leupp Boarding School, presents the Western perspective concerning these health issues. He reports how PHS needed more support, and evokes the language of the “white man's burden” to solicit aid to American Indians through health-care services. However, his perspective looks over some basic causes of the epidemics—the structure and formation of the school systems, especially the boarding school design that Euro-Americans introduced and the foreign origins of the illnesses.

⁴⁰¹ Bacil A. Warren, “Report of Epidemic of United States Indian School, Leupp, Arizona, 1914,” Leupp Indian School correspondence, 1911-1922, MS 1247, Arizona Historical Society Archives, Tucson, Arizona.

The students were placed in tight, sometimes crowded living spaces. Dr. Warren stressed the problems, citing needs for more space and how he struggled to isolate the infected children.⁴⁰² Children were also the most vulnerable to diseases, and the way that boarding schools arranged their living conditions set them as targets for the infectious diseases and epidemics.

The Leupp community was not unfamiliar with epidemics. The Influenza Epidemic of 1918 to 1919 struck Navajos throughout the reservation, arguably more intensely than non-Navajo groups in the global health crisis.⁴⁰³ Robert McPherson depicts the schools as a benefit to the Navajo communities, because they often had nearby doctors and hospitals. He explains that the “living conditions and access to medical attention were far more different from those residing in the rough canyon country” of the reservation, and mortality rates could have been lower at the schools.⁴⁰⁴ However, he also points to some investigations of the schools and suspicions that the staff neglected the health needs of the children such as in the case of the Toadalena School.⁴⁰⁵ The Leupp community later in the 1950s sought to oust Sonntag before the school epidemic hit, and Doris’s mysterious and tragic death worsened his relations with the people as the investigation report indicates.

⁴⁰² Warren, “Report.”

⁴⁰³ For more background and insights on this epidemic, see Benjamin R. Brady and Howard M. Bahr, “The Influenza Epidemic of 1918-1920 among the Navajos: Marginality, Mortality, and the Implications of Some Neglected Eyewitness Accounts,” *American Indian Quarterly* 38, no. 4 (Fall 2014): 459-491.

⁴⁰⁴ Robert S. McPherson, *Dinéjí Na’nitin: Navajo Traditional Teachings and History* (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2012), 66.

⁴⁰⁵ McPherson, *Dinéjí Na’nitin*, 66.

A few records in the Leupp Incident file intersect with the oral histories and rumors of the attack on Doris, portraying the different forms of imbalances that Navajo communities and their children faced with local boarding schools. Bessie Franc Brown, an elementary school teacher, submitted her account of the incident signed on October 30, 1957.⁴⁰⁶ Eunice Kelly remembers Mrs. Brown. “She would play the piano for us. She was affiliated with the church. She would play the piano there for the church gathering.”⁴⁰⁷ Kelly later asked her mother about Mrs. Brown. Her mother told her that Mrs. Brown left “maybe within a year [after working at the school]. . . . She had to go back East.”

Geraldine Dickson also referred to Mrs. Brown as her teacher: “She was a big lady. . . . I liked her. She was good with kids.”⁴⁰⁸ In her letter, Mrs. Brown relates how Doris started school before turning six years old in December, and she often “clung to her older sister,” Esther, who was seven years old. During class, the girls would “sit together at the table nearest” Mrs. Brown’s desk.

Mrs. Brown provides the most insight on Doris’s attitude towards the school:

At recess time, I gave all the children cookies, when I distributed the paper drinking cups, and as usual, required them to say ‘Thank you.’ At first Doris was mute, but with the encouragement of all the other children and especially Esther’s cooperation, she finally gained courage to say ‘Thank you,’ and of course I praised her lavishly and gave her the cookies. From then on, she seemed to like school very much.⁴⁰⁹

⁴⁰⁶ Bessie Franc Brown, Statement, October 30, 1957, Tuba City, Arizona, Western Navajo Agency, School Program Files, 1961, Box 5, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75, National Archives and Records Administration—Rocky Mountain Region (Denver, Colorado).

⁴⁰⁷ Eunice Kelly, interview.

⁴⁰⁸ Geraldine Dickson, interview.

⁴⁰⁹ Brown statement.

Mrs. Brown contradicts numerous portrayals of boarding school instructors, since she offered treats to the children and praised them in such an account. Some of her former students also asserted that she treated them well. According to her letter, Doris could have enjoyed school and had an older sister to accompany her.

However, Mrs. Brown continues to present several shocking questions after retelling a series of events that followed Doris's death. "Esther contracted [the] flu" before Doris by October 15, and "relatives (not the parents) from Bird Springs" visited with Doris on October 17 indicating then that the family became aware of the flu outbreak. Brown repeats the general account of Sonntag concerning Doris's sickness and death at the hospital. She recounts how Doris's "mother had come in a wagon to see the girls on Saturday (a drive of 18 miles)." Brown tried to "hire transportation to Bird Springs to see the parents" the next day.

On Monday, Sonntag updated her on new circumstances:

The autopsy at Albuquerque revealed that the black spots on Doris's body did not indicate internal bleeding, but that she had been beaten. And the girls in the dormitory had at last confessed who did it! He told me the police and the F.B.I. had conducted long questioning at the girls dorm, and three of the older girls were implicated. Of course the term 'older girls' is relative, since all our youngsters are of primary grade.

Brown questioned how "such a thing could possibly happen without the dormitory attendant in charge being aware of it," and she could not understand how any of the students would "beat an innocent little girl like Doris" who had a nearby older sister too.

The students named Natalie as the culprit who "went about the dormitory slapping every girl who had told on her." Brown claims, "At school, they always come to me at

once to report any sickness, accident or injury,” which intensified her bewilderment at the situation. In her conclusion, Brown expresses her greatest concerns, “But somehow I feel that the depths of this tragedy have not been plumbed, or the motives uncovered. But I would respectfully urge that the matter be patiently ferreted out, not dropped, covered up or smoothed over; or the offenders, (if the children are found guilty) allowed to remain in the study body of Leupp School.”

The file does not provide any conclusion or report on such “motives,” and most of the records discuss the three girls “involved with the Leupp incident” in vague terms except for accounts from Sonntag dated on November 3, 1957, a day after the community meeting on November 2, 1957. One cannot be sure that the meeting discussed such information based on the given records. On Monday, October 28, 1957, Sonntag met Harper Freedenburg, Special Investigator for the F.B.I., who informed him of the autopsy results and beating of Doris.

The agent interrogated several girls from Doris’s dormitory and adult aides, including Wilson and McCabe. Sonntag recounted the findings:

On two different occasions, Natalie Young, Jane Madison, and Mary King had fought with Doris Sunshine, pulled her hair and jumped on her with their feet, the last time leaving her in the condition as we found her. Also, they had threatened to do the same to the other girls if anyone told on them. . . . And so that is the reason why they told us the story about Doris falling and bumping herself on the bed. The girls gave no reasons as to why they did this awful thing.⁴¹⁰

⁴¹⁰ Charles Sonntag, Leupp Community School, Leupp, Arizona, “Report on Investigation by Harper Freedenburg, Special Investigator, Ft. Defiance and Investigation by Herman Freedenburg, Special Investigator, Tuba City in cooperation with Toby Bright, F.B.I. Agent and Mr. Frank Brown, F.B.I. Agent, Flagstaff,” November 3, 1957, Tuba City, Arizona, Western Navajo Agency, School Program Files, 1961, Box 5, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75, National Archives and Records Administration—Rocky Mountain Region (Denver, Colorado).

The U.S. District attorney at Phoenix would receive the findings the next day, and “the girls would not be held responsible for what they had done.”⁴¹¹

In a previous account, dated October 30, 1957, Natalie admits to slapping all the girls that implicated her on the Monday night after the F.B.I. interrogation. Sonntag claims, “This incident was reported to Mr. Lee Payton, School Superintendent, Tuba City Subagency, on Wednesday morning by way of telephone conversation. At this time, it was recommended that these girls be taken out of the Leupp School and put in some other school as soon as possible.”⁴¹² It is unclear how much the community understood these circumstances. Many startling questions remain regarding the students’ motives, how the abuse occurred with dormitory supervision, even after perceived threats, and the level of community awareness to these issues. Silences and rumors characterize both the oral histories and records. However, as evidence of Navajo petitions and gatherings to address the incident and Sonntag reveal, Diné communities sought to overcome the ruptures of “distant education” that continued to affect students in on-reservation boarding schools.

The trail of the “Leupp Incident” ends in 1958 with the few school reports on the three transferred girls. While the school officials related the tragedy to psychological maladjustments to boarding school life, Navajos may have regarded the affair in terms of holistic well-being and the balance of *hózhó*. How did Navajos view diseases and epidemics among their children in boarding schools? How did they perceive what the

⁴¹¹ Charles Sonntag, “Report on Investigation by Harper Freedenburg.”

⁴¹² Charles Sonntag, Principal-Teacher, Leupp Community School, Leupp, Arizona, “Natalie Young—Making good on her threat to girls—Slapping of girls on Monday night, October 28, 1957,” October 30, 1957, Tuba City, Arizona, Western Navajo Agency, School Program Files, 1961, Box 5, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75, National Archives and Records Administration—Rocky Mountain Region (Denver, Colorado).

school reports termed as “psychiatric help” and “maladjusted students”?⁴¹³ How did those views relate to the Navajo earth memory compass of *Si’qh Naaghái Bik’eh Hózhó’*? The ceremonies restore *hózhó*, addressing the imbalances that come as illness of mind, body, and spirit.⁴¹⁴ Wade Davies claims, “Navajo healing is holistic; the focus is on restoring harmony to the patient rather than on curing specific symptoms.”⁴¹⁵

The society centers on this holistic view of healing. Robert A. Roessel Jr. elaborates, “The cornerstone of Navajo religion is the belief in the unity of the person—his mind and his body and the need to keep these in balance and harmony.” Healing comes through the constant restoration of “beauty and harmony”—*hózhó*. Roessel explains that *hózhó* also derives from balance in relationships and community ties: “Beauty and harmony are vital concerns to a Navajo, not only in his daily personal life but also, and equally important, in his daily relationship with the world around him (nature).”⁴¹⁶

In his examination of the 1918-1919 influenza epidemic among Navajos, McPherson illuminates, “To them, much of life and its accompanying problems carries supernatural significance that must be dealt with in both the spiritual and physical realms of this world.”⁴¹⁷ Although Navajo tradition dictated this sense of healing and

⁴¹³ Payton, “Report on Investigation.”

⁴¹⁴ See Wade Davies, *Healing Ways: Navajo Health Care in the Twentieth Century* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 2001), 4. To understand transitions in Navajo healing practices and conceptualizations of illness, see also Robert A. Trennert, *White Man’s Medicine: Government Doctors and the Navajo, 1863-1955* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1998).

⁴¹⁵ Davies, 4.

⁴¹⁶ Roessel, *Navajo Education, 1948-1978*, 9.

⁴¹⁷ McPherson, *Dinéjí Na’nitin*, 53.

understanding illness, boarding school students often did not know these teachings to confront such issues. This study features the students' schooling experiences from their perspectives. They could not understand why or what was happening to them, as they were removed from family who could have explained their struggles in terms of such ancestral teachings. They were children who did not comprehend the medical approach to their treatments and ailments. As Eunice Kelly expresses, "Right at the beginning, we did not have anything. We did not know our culture, our traditional ways."⁴¹⁸

The records only offer glimpses of how Diné communities responded to the illnesses and violence that their children faced in the postwar Old Leupp School. The Bird Spring and Leupp communities demanded an investigation of Sonntag's connection to Doris's sickness and death. They sought to hold the BIA and its employees accountable. Did Navajos relate the disconnects and imbalances between what they valued, the schools, and the well-being of their children and community?⁴¹⁹

Donald Nez relates how many former boarding school students did not live long. He notices, "They're gone. Most of them left, I think, because of that. They had a hard life in boarding school. Some of them are still around. They had their parents pray and talk to them, try to comfort them."⁴²⁰ Part of Navajo philosophy is the ideal of living

⁴¹⁸ Kelly, interview.

⁴¹⁹ See Lori Arviso Alvord and Elizabeth Cohen Van Pelt, *The Scalpel and the Silver Bear: The First Navajo Woman Surgeon Combines Western Medicine and Traditional Healing* (New York: Bantam Books, 1999), 187. Navajo surgeon, Dr. Lori Arviso Alvord, explains, "If the [Navajo] concept of balance is extended to the community level, then communities out of balance will have problems such as gang violence, elder neglect, child abuse, and drug use" (187).

⁴²⁰ Nez, interview.

long, identifying 102 years old as a desirable life span.⁴²¹ Nez connects the trauma of boarding school experience as a factor that disrupted Diné ways of life and spirituality as well as physical well-being, which Navajos view as intertwined according to ancestral teachings. He acknowledged prayers and talking with family as forms of healing, which represent applying the earth memory compass towards re-orientation and reconciliation.

The Old Leupp Boarding School was permanently closed by the time another boarding school opened on the new Leupp site in the 1960s. Lola Bahe was one of the first students to attend the new school. She remembers being the “fifteenth” student there. The community continued to demonstrate an effort to influence the school and education of their youth. According to a chapter meeting agenda in 1962, the community expressed their hopes to include a high school education in the Leupp Boarding School, since the families wanted their teenagers closer to home. One hundred adults were present, and Jim McCabe presided. The agenda noted: “Several people have had sent their children to other State to school. It will be very best to have our children going to high school here.”⁴²²

Another set of chapter meeting notes from 1964 addressed family concerns of two Leupp students, Kate Benally and John Daniels, who were involved in an unwelcome “friendship” because they shared the same clan. Navajos view intimate relations between fellow clan members as incest.⁴²³ The parents met with the chapter officers to discuss the

⁴²¹ Gary Witherspoon, *Language and Art in the Navajo Universe* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1977), 20.

⁴²² Chapter Meeting Report, Leupp, Arizona, December 8, 1962, Leupp, Meeting Reports, 1962-63, Navajo Nation Special Collections, Navajo Nation Museum and Library, Window Rock, Arizona.

⁴²³ Raymond Friday Locke, *The Book of the Navajo* (New York: Holloway House Publishing, 2001), 20.

matter. They also considered another issue regarding Kate and her girlfriends who “tried [to] outsmart with other girls.” The notes emphasized the community effort to intervene and advise the female students to excel in school and prepare for their roles as women in families.⁴²⁴

The chapter council met with the girls and admonished them. “School is very important for their future living,” the council said. “They can’t be going to school years after years. They will complete their school course. Many of them will get married and become mothers.” They told them “to stop the foolish notion” of disrespecting fellow Navajos and kinship. These comments “[were] being read to them. Resolution of the Navajo Tribal Council Curfew Ordinance.” The council created a resolution to enforce a curfew for the boarding school students in response to such issues. Such exchanges and sentiments reveal how Navajos embraced certain aspects of schooling as a form to educate and shape their youth, while they also maintained central tenets of immemorial teachings such as kinship, clan relations, and respect. Families and community increasingly became involved in the affairs of the local school, tending to new struggles of raising children such as the deterioration of clan relationships.

Continuities and changes characterized the tense relationships between Diné communities and schools, which center in this study of the four-directions perspectives of Navajo student experiences in the twentieth century. Intergenerational trauma affects Navajos through boarding school experiences and memories. Dickson did not finish schooling, since she had pressing obligations at home helping with her siblings. “The

⁴²⁴ Leupp Chapter House Meeting Notes, 1964, Leupp, Meeting Reports, 1964-65, Navajo Nation Special Collections, Navajo Nation Museum and Library, Window Rock, Arizona.

little time I went to boarding school,” she admits, “I did not want my children to go through the same thing.” She drove her children to school and tried to arrange having them stay home during their schooling.⁴²⁵

One of the council members of the Tuba City chapter testified with tears how she did not learn Navajo and was ridiculed for her inability to speak the language because of her parents’ decision to not teach it to her. Her parents’ boarding school experiences influenced their commitment to not teach their children Navajo. Begay, for example, chose to not teach his children Navajo until they finished their schooling. Toledo-Benalli claims, “For healing must come from our own people, from ourselves as Native people and perhaps through organizing a day of remembrance. It was just 130 years ago that my people came back from the Long Walk. Now it is possible that we as Native people have better answers.”⁴²⁶

This discussion of topics that have been silenced such as boarding school traumas including death and intrigue does not seek to expose the actual causes of these events but to understand Diné experiences that shape their sense of home and peoplehood embodied by the earth memory compass. Anthropologist Peter Gold claims “Navajos see themselves as crystallizations of the substance and energy of their places on earth... With such deep physical roots comes an even deeper conceptual connection with place; their material and spiritual works all reflect this connection.”⁴²⁷ Trauma often marred Navajo

⁴²⁵ Dickson, interview.

⁴²⁶ Lynch.

⁴²⁷ Peter Gold, *Navajo and Tibetan Sacred Wisdom: The Circle of the Spirit* (Rochester, Vermont: Inner Traditions, 1994), 17. See also Stephen C. Jett, “The Navajo Homeland,” in *Homelands: A Geography of Culture and Place across America*, eds. Richard L. Nostrand and Lawrence E. Estaville (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), 173.

experiences, but they did not necessarily define them. Instead, some former students used them to fortify their connections to places such as boarding schools that they claimed for themselves for better or worst of their times there.

Daniel Tallsalt, a former Navajo boarding school student, explains, ““Nope, I’m not a Bilágaána [white person], I’m Navajo. Some of us had too strong of a culture back home, which the government tried to rub out of us, but we never got away from our faith and lifestyle. If you are born speaking Navajo, thinking Navajo, living Navajo, it never leaves you. I think that’s where many Navajos won.””⁴²⁸ The earth memory compass continues through the Navajo speech, thinking, and living.



17. Eunice Kelly on the remains of the Old Leupp Boarding School, photo by author

⁴²⁸ Daniel Tallsalt cited in Reid.

When Eunice Kelly toured the Old Leupp boarding school site with Sara Begay and me, I paused to view *Dook'o'oosliid*, the deep yellow and green skyline stretch of the San Francisco Peaks, from the grounds. “No, I did not notice the mountain then,” Kelly told me when I asked if she ever looked at the round tops of the mountain during her schooling there. In the postwar Old Leupp boarding school, victims became victimizers, and family presence and teachings seemed distant. Doris lost the opportunities of *'Iná*, Life, and experiences of *'E'e'aah*, the West, particularly motherhood as *Dook'o'oosliid* symbolizes. Yet, the school walls have fallen, and only rubble and shredded wood remain to embody the memories, both fond and abhorrent ones, of past Diné students there. Kelly, Begay, and I looked at the mountain on that day in 2015; a warm yellow glow enveloped it in the sunlight. *Dook'o'oosliid* continues to stand as majestically as it did in the 1950s and times immemorial. In Old Leupp, the view of the mountain is clear again along with its teachings of kinship and societal harmony, to which the Diné return for guidance.

Balance is a sense of harmonious order within the context of the Diné earth memory compass. While Navajos embed ancestral teachings in their posterity, knowledge from school based on the outside world becomes a part of the whole Diné knowledge and experience including its contradictions. The first female Navajo surgeon, Lori Arviso Alvord, exemplifies how to uphold Diné ancestral teachings, while connecting knowledge and methodologies from her schooling in medicine. Alvord, born for the *Tsinaajinii* (Black-streaked Woods People Clan) and raised in Crownpoint, New Mexico, explains, “Incorporating Navajo philosophies of balance and symmetry, respect and

connectedness into my practice, benefited my patients and allowed everything in my two worlds to make sense.”⁴²⁹ Navajos conceive balance as an ongoing effort to maintain it.

Navajo society and experience has emphasized confronting imbalances in the world since times immemorial. The Diné have existed, survived, and thrived by restoring balance. This process encapsulates the overarching journey for which the earth memory compass serves as a guide—*Si’ah Naaghái Bik’eh Hózhó*—to restore balance and pursue happiness to old age, until the completion of a full cycle in life and its renewal.

Navajos prosper by adjusting to the contradictions, and restoring balance through them. Kelly restored balance in that moment; she returned to the school site as a woman, and sensed that she had not gone to the boarding school in vain. She teaches Navajo language, *Diné bizaad*, oral traditions, and history to the youth. She remains Diné and connected to the land and intact community. Other boarding school students did not survive these periods of imbalances, such as little Doris Sunshine in the Leupp Incident. We remember them and their sacrifices. Family, kinship, peoplehood, and relationships with all things and beings constitute a key realm of balance for Navajos; they find balance when they are strong as families and kin. When Navajos would hurt fellow Navajos, major imbalances would have disrupted the peace and ideal of community and

⁴²⁹ Lori Arviso Alvord and Elizabeth Cohen Van Pelt, *The Scalpel and the Silver Bear*, 14. See also “Biography: Dr. Lori Arviso Alvord,” *Changing the Face of Medicine: Celebrating America’s Women Physicians*, National Library of Medicine, last reviewed December 5, 2013, accessed November 30, 2015, https://www.nlm.nih.gov/changingthefaceofmedicine/physicians/biography_7.html. According to the biography, Alvord emphasizes how she “went back to the healers of [her] tribe to learn what a surgical residency could not teach [her].” She came to understand: “Everything in life is connected. Learn to understand the bonds between humans, spirit, and nature. Realize that our illness and our healing alike come from maintaining strong and healthy relationships in every aspect of our lives.”

society—*hózhó*—and must be rectified.⁴³⁰ Recognition, memory, and remembrance support such rectification.

⁴³⁰ Navajos traditionally rectified such imbalances through ceremonies such as the Protection Way and Beauty Way.

CHAPTER 4

NÁHOOKQS (NORTH): SELF-DETERMINATION FOR DINÉ STUDENTS

TO BE A NAVAJO

I am who I am,
and shall never deny it.
Some ideals and thoughts may come and go
like the passing tide.
Yet seated into the deep recesses of my soul
are the values
that I treasure deeply.
Here,
they, like a mighty fortress
guard,
support,
and protect
my pride and my dignity;
and quickly healing superficial wounds to them.
They repair damage
and
push me ever forward
untiringly.

I am who I am
and shall never deny it.

For denying it would be
declaring the end of my own
identity
and
existence.

—Regina H. Lynch, *A History of Navajo Clans*, 1987

The fourth sacred direction aligns with *Sih Hasin* and *Dibé Nitsaa*, Hope and Mount Hesperus or Black Jet Mountain of the North, the interim before a new cycle begins in the four-directions paradigm of Diné historical narratives and intellectual processes. For the *Náhookqs* period of Diné education, I concentrate on student experiences from the northern region of the reservation in Monument Valley, Utah between 1965 and 1990. Monument Valley and Oljato feature predominately in this narrative, but other communities in southern Utah also contributed to Indigenous

initiatives in self-determined education such as those of Navajo Mountain, Halchita, Mexican Hat, Bluff, White Mesa, Montezuma Creek, and Aneth.⁴³¹ In the journey of Diné education, a common theme is the mobile experiences of Navajo students who uprooted from one schooling system to the next, whether it included boarding schools, public schools, or denominational programs. Navajo students from different communities intermingled because of these relocations, and they often shared common experiences. Diné communities sought, however, to root their youth again through localized education.⁴³² The students' struggles with distant education led to the development of local Navajo schools in Monument Valley with a more Diné self-determined and culturally-related curriculum and schooling environment.

Before the Monument Valley High School (MVHS) opened in 1984, some Navajo youth typically spent three hours a day on buses to travel to Blanding, Utah, for their education. If students missed the bus, they sometimes tried to hitchhike home or slept outside as they walked home approximately ninety miles one-way. Other youth lived away from home in the Latter-day Saint Indian Student Placement Program (ISPP), at boarding schools, or with relatives outside the Monument Valley region.⁴³³ The busing that integrated Navajos with the public schools of the San Juan County School District

⁴³¹ Patrick M. Macy, "The Development of High School Education Among Utah Navajos: Case Study at Monument Valley Utah" (Ph.D. dissertation, Northern Arizona University, 1996), 76.

⁴³² "Local control of education" or "localization of education" has been in academic discourse since the 1970s. See Ian Housego, Doris Dyke, and C.A. Bowers, "Symposium on Education and Social Policy: Local Control of Education" (symposium, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, 1967). Scholars have continued to discuss its meanings and applications. See Cheong Cheng Yin, *New Paradigm for Re-engineering Education: Globalization, Localization, and Individualization* (New York: Springer Science & Business Media, 2006), 85.

⁴³³ I discuss the sources for this information later in the chapter, which derive primarily from oral histories.

weighed upon the Navajo youth of Monument Valley and their community. The Monument Valley community, represented by the Oljato chapter, became determined to claim their own school so that their children could live at home without the strain of long-distance busing and education. The students' experiences constituted a major part of the efforts to bring education closer to home, representing a prime stage in Diné educational history—*Náhookos*, or the North. Legal documents and oral histories of former students and their guardians, some of whom served as plaintiffs in the *Sinajini* case of 1974, reveal a grassroots struggle and culmination to redirect Diné education to uphold Navajo ways of life and values.

In 1974, Navajo students and their guardians filed a lawsuit against the San Juan County School District, which resulted in the decision of *Jimmy Sinajini, et. al. v. Board of Education of the San Juan School District*. The grounds of the case follow:

This is an action brought by Native American students and their parents or guardians who reside in San Juan County, Utah, on behalf of Native American students for declaratory and injunctive relief against officials of the San Juan School District, San Juan County, and the State of Utah. These defendants have pursued a longstanding pattern of deep-rooted racial discrimination which results in unequal educational opportunities for Native American children attending the San Juan public schools.⁴³⁴

Eric Swenson, the lawyer representing the Navajo plaintiffs in the *Sinajini* case, explained that he and his wife recruited Navajos to become involved because of the overt racial discrimination in southern Utah that engulfed the community in all areas of life. He was living in Mexican Hat, Utah at the time and had married Mary Ann Williams, a

⁴³⁴ "Introduction, Motion for appointment of person to serve process," In the United States District Court for the District of Utah, Central Division, *Sinajini, et. al.*, Plaintiffs, v. *Board of Education of the San Juan District, et. al.*, Defendants, Civil No. C-74-346, November 5, 1974, Box 1, Utah District Court files, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Navajo from Jeddito, Arizona. He recognized inequalities especially in housing, education, and health. “Segregation was everywhere,” he described. He even referred to violence based on racial tensions in the region. Laws prohibited interracial intimacies and marriage. Native Americans struggled to own property off the reservation in border towns such as Blanding, Utah, since the community refused to sell to them. The public schools were legally segregated into the 1960s.⁴³⁵ Various groups united to support Navajos of southern Utah in the *Sinajini* case, including the Dinébeina Nahiilna Be Agaditahe (DNA legal services), Native American Rights Fund, Navajo Nation, and others.

The *Sinajini* case and pertaining student experiences represent the *Náhookos* phase, the turning point, of Diné education in the twentieth century. After many struggles with schooling through most of the twentieth century, the Diné have come to control and shape their own educational systems through programs such as the Rough Rock Demonstration School that developed a Diné language and cultural learning approach. The Diné were the first American Indian tribe to open and operate their own school in 1966 and tribal college, the Navajo Community College now known as Diné College, in 1968, spearheading the American Indian self-determination movement in education. Navajos reaffirmed and appropriated early lessons of ancestral Diné knowledge in cultural hybrid models of Navajo-determined school systems in this *Náhookos* period. The story of Monument Valley youth, their families, and their stand against busing and

⁴³⁵ Eric Swenson, interview by Farina King, Salt Lake City, Utah, June 16, 2015.

distant education demonstrates the survivance of a Navajo earth memory compass that demarcates Diné collective identity.⁴³⁶

After World War II, George A. Boyce, the Director of Navajo Education, and other officials decried a Navajo “education crisis.” In 1946, Boyce proposed that Navajos “take advantage of public schools near the reservation” rather than building more boarding schools and day schools on the reservation. Children under twelve years old would attend on-reservation schools, while the older students “would be located in these off-reservation dormitories and joint federal-community public schools.”⁴³⁷ Federal agents such as Boyce used and emphasized public schooling, which perpetuated distant education and different challenges for Navajo students, such as busing and bordertown racial tensions.

While most American communities already relied on local public schools in the postwar era, most Navajos could not access public schools from their homes. “Public education in the United States was founded on the principle of local control,” whereas American Indian institutionalized schooling began as an apparatus of the federal government.⁴³⁸ Public schools did not initially mean local schools to Navajos; thus, they continued to demand more local schools through the twentieth century. The BIA and

⁴³⁶ See Gerald Vizenor, *Fugitive Poses: Native American Indian Scenes of Absence and Presence* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000), 15.

⁴³⁷ Robert W. Young, *The Navajo Yearbook* (Window Rock: Navajo Agency, 1961), 15 cited in Jon S. Blackman, “A History of Intermountain, A Federal Indian Boarding School” (master’s thesis, Brigham Young University, 1998), 47-8.

⁴³⁸ K. Tsianina Lomawaima and Teresa L. McCarty, “When Tribal Sovereignty Challenges Democracy: American Indian Education and the Democratic Ideal,” *American Educational Research Journal* 39, no. 2 (Summer 2002): 280. Lomawaima and McCarty claim, “The Native struggle for sovereignty and self-education is a powerful model for all U.S. citizens because public education in the United States was founded on the principle of local control” (280).

Navajo Nation later made a dual commitment in 1961, involving “five policy objectives” that centered on schooling so that “‘all children may be near their parents,’ developing public schools for Navajo children at all grade levels, [and] using existing off-reservation schools for Navajos as long as needed.” Officials stressed that Navajos should only send their children to boarding schools if they were “unable to attend a public or bureau day school.”⁴³⁹ However, public schools did not offer much better alternatives to many Navajo families that still had to place their children in off-reservation dormitories, homes, or long bus rides.

As educator Teresa McCarty argues, Navajos could not “make school a ‘place for Navajo to be Navajo’” until 1966 when Diné Bi’ólta’, The People’s School, opened in Rough Rock, Arizona.⁴⁴⁰ Even then, she claims, “At the heart of the struggle are fundamental contradictions in the Federal-tribal relationship which, on the one hand, recognizes and protects tribal sovereignty, and, on the other, breeds bureaucratic arrangements that stifle and suppress sovereignty in myriad ways.”⁴⁴¹ Navajos constantly faced distant education as the only means of their schooling. Whether in BIA or public schools, the “education state” of the federal or local state governments excluded their communities.⁴⁴² Like other Native Americans, they have sought to build schools as

⁴³⁹ Peter Iverson, *The Navajo Nation* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1981), 65.

⁴⁴⁰ Teresa L. McCarty, *A Place to be Navajo: Rough Rock and the Struggle for Self-Determination in Indigenous Schooling* (New York: Routledge, 2002), xvi.

⁴⁴¹ McCarty, 196.

⁴⁴² Douglas S. Reed, *Building the Federal Schoolhouse: Localism and the American Education State* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 5. Reed refers to the “education state” in his analysis of the dynamics between federal, state, and local control of public schools. He uses the American “education state” as “the aspiration of building of a federal schoolhouse—the creation of a truly equal and national system of education” that “is sharply constrained and shaped by the ongoing commitments of those who have historically funded, designed, and operated schools in the United States: local school districts, shaped

“‘places of difference,’ those spaces and moments where Native peoples have fought to preserve and express their heritage languages and cultural practices.”⁴⁴³ The Civil Rights Era marked a watershed of such efforts.

Drastic changes to distant education came in the 1970s, following gradual and persistent action of Diné communities. Navajos exemplified what became known as “Indian self-determination in education,” as “Rough Rock stood as a solitary example of an active experiment” before other tribal community schools started.⁴⁴⁴ Various factors aligned to support Diné self-determined education including the funding of the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) and the passing of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act, or Public Law 93-638, in 1975.⁴⁴⁵ The act allowed Native American tribes more control and leeway with the use of funds.

Scholars such as Teresa McCarty and Tiffany Lee apply the term “Indigenous education sovereignty,” which expands the meaning of the movement. They emphasize that “issues of tribal sovereignty” interlock with those of Native American schooling.⁴⁴⁶ By shaping the structure and experiences of community schools, Native Americans

by state regulations” (5). He “explains how the education state is constructed through local regimes’ accommodation, resistance to, and reconfiguration of, federal educational policy mandates, and, similarly, how that education state reconfigures local politics in the United States” (5). I expand the meaning of “education state” to include local, state, and federal governments in relation to the Navajo Nation.

⁴⁴³ Lomawaima and McCarty, “When Tribal Sovereignty Challenges Democracy,” 285.

⁴⁴⁴ Margaret Connell-Szasz, *Education and the American Indian: The Road to Self-Determination since 1928* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1999), 171.

⁴⁴⁵ *Economic Opportunity Act of 1964* (Public Law 88-452), 78 Stat. 508 (1964); *Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975* (Public Law 93-638), 25 U.S.C. 450 (1975); see also Connell-Szasz, *Education and the American Indian*, 170.

⁴⁴⁶ Teresa L. McCarty and Tiffany S. Lee, “Critical Culturally Sustaining/Revitalizing Pedagogy and Indigenous Education Sovereignty,” *Harvard Educational Review* 84, no. 1 (Spring 2014): 101.

“sustain” and “revitalize” their cultures to uphold their sovereignty as Indigenous peoples.⁴⁴⁷ Navajo community efforts of Indigenous education sovereignty ignited throughout the reservation, especially during the 1970s, from the Rough Rock Demonstration School in Arizona to the Ramah Navajo School in New Mexico to the Monument Valley High School in Utah.⁴⁴⁸

Kathryn Manuelito identifies the Rough Rock Demonstration School and the Navajo Community College as top-down initiatives coming from Navajo tribal leadership, although community members became deeply involved. In her study, Manuelito focuses on the history of what she considers to be the first Native American self-determined high school, the Ramah Navajo School, later named the Pine Hill School. She emphasizes how grassroots community efforts led to the development of the school.⁴⁴⁹

The Diné Ramah community petitioned for a school that would serve their youth and enable local control and influence, while referring to the broken promises of the Treaty of 1868 and later policies. Several legal cases against the McKinley-Gallup School District preceded the school establishment in 1970. Although those legal cases were unsuccessful, community petitions to Washington proved effective.⁴⁵⁰ The Ramah

⁴⁴⁷ McCarty and Lee, 102-103.

⁴⁴⁸ Concerning the significance of the Ramah Navajo School in such movements, see Kathryn Manuelito, “The Role of Education in American Indian Self-Determination: Lessons from the Ramah Navajo Community School,” *Anthropology and Education Quarterly* 36, no. 1 (2005): 73-87.

⁴⁴⁹ Manuelito, 75. See also Kathryn D. Manuelito, “Self-Determination in an Indian Community Controlled School” (Ph.D. dissertation, Arizona State University, 2001).

⁴⁵⁰ Manuelito, “The Role of Education in American Indian Self-Determination,” 77. Manuelito refers to other legal cases of the school community beginning in 1982 that upheld the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act such as the following: *Ramah Navajo School Board, Inc. v.*

Navajo School came before the Monument Valley community efforts to build their own high school in the 1970s, demonstrating how Navajos throughout *Diné Bikéyah*, Navajo land, faced similar challenges in protecting their sovereignty, community and family cohesiveness, and the education of their youth.

Monument Valley Navajos, similar to Ramah Navajos, used busing to send their children away from their home community for school. Both communities rallied in a grassroots movement that involved legal services and political representation to build a school of secondary education in their midst. The Monument Valley initiatives won in the courtroom beginning with the *Sinajini* case of 1974, which this chapter later addresses.

Most Navajos did not regularly attend schools until after World War II. Navajos of Monument Valley followed this trend. As more Navajos began to receive institutionalized education in the postwar period, Navajo youth of Monument Valley tended to leave home and travel far away for their education. The closer federal schools included the Kayenta Boarding School and Tuba City Boarding School. They could also go to local denominational schools such as the Seventh-day Adventist Mission School in Monument Valley. The Seventh-day Adventists started a mission there in the late 1940s with particular efforts to provide healthcare and education to Navajos. Dr. J. Lloyd and Alice Mason directed the development of a hospital, church, and school beginning in 1958. The Seventh-day Adventist Elementary School continues to educate Navajo children in the Monument Valley region.⁴⁵¹

Bureau of Revenue (1982), *Ramah Navajo School Board, Inc. v. Babbitt* (1996), and *Ramah Navajo Chapter v. Lujan* (1999) (78).

⁴⁵¹ “Our History,” *Monument Valley Mission*, accessed May 25, 2015, <http://www.monumentvalleymission.com/our-history.html>.

While Navajos from Monument Valley participated in programs such as the Mormon Indian Student Placement Program (ISPP) and the Navajo Five-Year Plan that boarding schools such as the Sherman Institute, Phoenix Boarding School, and Intermountain Boarding School, a local day school existed in Oljato as early as the 1950s. The BIA established several trailer schools to provide daily instruction to Navajo students in small communities while enabling them to stay home with family. Navajos in the Monument Valley area, however, avoided sending their children to this school.

In 1954, an exchange between the “principal-teacher,” Charles Krumtum, of the Oljato trailer day school with the superintendent of Navajo schools in the Tuba City area, Mr. Hobart Johnson, indicates that student attendance was low. The principal explained to the superintendent that many Navajo youth on the rosters did not come to the school, even though they may be there “in spirit, but their bodies didn’t occupy the seat.”⁴⁵² The superintendent responded with annoyance that he did not want to hear such “superstitious” talk: “Do not count children unless they are present in body. Spirits or ghosts do not count.”⁴⁵³ In 1955, Johnson reported to the Assistant General Superintendent, Mr. Charles E. Morelock, about his visit to the “Oljato Trailer School” when “the enrollment was ten, with a remote possibility of two more.”⁴⁵⁴ He advised,

⁴⁵² Charles Krumtum, Principal-Teacher of Oljato Trailer School, to Mr. Hobart A. Johnson, Superintendent of Tuba City Area, November 16, 1954, Tuba City, Arizona, Western Navajo Agency, School Program Files, 1961, Box 3, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75, National Archives and Records Administration—Rocky Mountain Region (Denver, Colorado).

⁴⁵³ Hobart A. Johnson, School Superintendent, to Mr. Charles M. Krumtum, Principal-Teacher, Oljato Trailer School, Oljato, Utah, November 23, 1954, Tuba City, Arizona, Western Navajo Agency, School Program Files, 1961, Box 3, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75, National Archives and Records Administration—Rocky Mountain Region (Denver, Colorado).

⁴⁵⁴ Hobart A. Johnson, Acting School Superintendent of Tuba City Subagency Schools, to Mr. Charles E. Morelock, Assistant General Superintendent Community Services, Navajo Agency, Window Rock, Arizona, October 27, 1955, Tuba City, Arizona, Western Navajo Agency, School Program Files,

“Because of this very expensive operation, and because of very poor road conditions, it is recommended that this school be closed and these children be placed in the Kayenta Boarding School.”⁴⁵⁵ The file emphasized that the community did not support the trailer day school, which led to its closing by 1958. Such conditions were common on the reservation, especially in southern Utah, and most Navajo students had to relocate to distant schools.

A memorandum reveals that the Oljato Trailer School closed at the end of the 1957-1958 school year. Government officials expected students to attend boarding or public schools. The assistant general superintendent, Mr. Ashton, states, “I doubt that transportation will become available to the proposed new public school site, however, should this be the case, these youngsters of course would attend the public school on a day basis.”⁴⁵⁶ Another memorandum from Ashton reports that a “community meeting” occurred at the trailer school on April 9, 1958, but only two Navajos were present, including “Mr. Maxwell Yazzie of the Education Committee and Gladys Blackwater, a cook, who lives in the community.” Ashton also notes that “the few families in the community had been notified of the meeting but none were interested enough to attend.” The officials decided to spend the funds used to operate the day school elsewhere.⁴⁵⁷

1961, Box 3, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75, National Archives and Records Administration—Rocky Mountain Region (Denver, Colorado).

⁴⁵⁵ Johnson to Morelock.

⁴⁵⁶ Mr. Ashton, Assistant General Superintendent (Community Services), memorandum to Subagency Superintendent, Tuba City Subagency, “Subject: Closing of Oljetoh Trailer School,” May 1, 1958, Tuba City, Arizona, Western Navajo Agency, School Program Files, 1961, Box 3, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75, National Archives and Records Administration—Rocky Mountain Region (Denver, Colorado).

⁴⁵⁷ Assistant General Superintendent (Community Services), Agency Educationist, “Closing Oljato Trailer School,” April 24, 1958, Tuba City, Arizona, Western Navajo Agency, School Program

It is ironic how the Monument Valley and Oljato community would later become embattled in a struggle to develop their own school, but they did not see this little day school in Oljato as their own. This short-lived history of the early Oljato trailer school demonstrates how the physical location of a school is not what makes it a part of a local community; rather, their involvement and control of the school connects it to the people. From the 1950s until 1984, Navajo youth from Oljato and Monument Valley often experienced an eclectic array of schooling systems that sent them far from their communities and home.

The names of Kee Holiday and Jesse Holiday were on the roster of absent students at the Oljato trailer school.⁴⁵⁸ As boys at the time, Kee and Jesse lived in the Monument Valley region with their families, but they each traveled far from home for their schooling and never benefited from the local schools including the trailer school. Kee Holiday was born in Monument Valley, Utah by the Goulding station. In the early 1960s, he first attended the public school in Kayenta, which required him to wake up at four a.m. to catch the bus. His family lived on top of a mesa, and the bus would stop about two or three miles away from their *hooghan*. Efforts to use the bus exhausted Kee and his parents. “After doing that for two years, my parents could not handle it, so they put us in boarding school,” Kee recalls, “It was like handing your kids over to the government.”⁴⁵⁹ He resented his parents’ decision to send him to the boarding school, and he struggled to adjust to the strict command of the staff.

Files, 1961, Box 3, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75, National Archives and Records Administration—Rocky Mountain Region (Denver, Colorado).

⁴⁵⁸ Krumtum to Johnson.

⁴⁵⁹ Kee Holiday, interview by Farina King, Kayenta, Arizona, July 4, 2015.

While the boarding school demarcated a drastic separation from his family and Navajo ways of life, Kee emphasizes the students' resistance and reaffirmation of their ties to home. Kee "got in trouble so many times" that his name was noted in a "little black book." The school staff kept a record of misbehaving children in this book, which they used to identify the students who could not go to a movie or receive other incentives. The punishments for his rebellious conduct included kneeling on concrete, scrubbing floors, or getting hit on the head with a rock or marble in the dorm attendant's hand. Students would often "run away from the harshness of boarding school." Kee would later joke about the time that his friend ran away from the school. His friend decided to run away in the afternoon, after "one of the dorm attendants did something to him that he did not like, and he struck back." "He took off," Kee remembers with a smile, "We cheered him on. We said, 'Run! Run!' We saw him run up the mountain."⁴⁶⁰ In that moment, the students united in resistance by supporting their peer.

While some Navajo students escaped the walls of the boarding school to return to their families, some Diné family members breached the walls to retrieve their children, especially on the reservation. Navajos like Kee did not see their family much while in boarding school, but families were not completely unaware of what happened to their children within the schools. Some family members would visit or pick up their children from the boarding school. Kee recalls a peculiar incident when his father came to check him out of the school. The school staff decided to punish him for not finishing his chores properly by forcing him to hold two books on each hand while standing without reprieve.

⁴⁶⁰ Kee Holiday, interview.

If Kee lowered the books, the dorm attendant would hit him in the head. His father walked in and was confused to see him standing with the books. He later asked Kee, “What happened, and why were you holding the books that way?”⁴⁶¹ Such incidents exposed Navajo parents to the treatment that their children received in boarding schools and distant education. However, many families had little choice but to entrust their youth to government and other agency schools.

Jesse Holiday, who also grew up in the Monument Valley area of Oljato, went to Tuba City Boarding School and later Intermountain Boarding School before participating in the LDS Indian Student Placement Program. His education removed him far from home. He remembers the day that a government employee came to his *hooghan* while his family was eating dinner, and warned Jesse that he had to go to school or jail.⁴⁶² He went to the Intermountain Boarding School, because “there was no high school” in Monument Valley before 1984.⁴⁶³

As an image from the “Minimum Essential Goals” of the “Special Five Year Adolescent Navajo Program” shows in 1952, education was in the distant horizon and youth had to leave the *hooghan* and use the bus to reach it. The bus was the vehicle that took the children away from family, home, and their teachings to the light, as represented

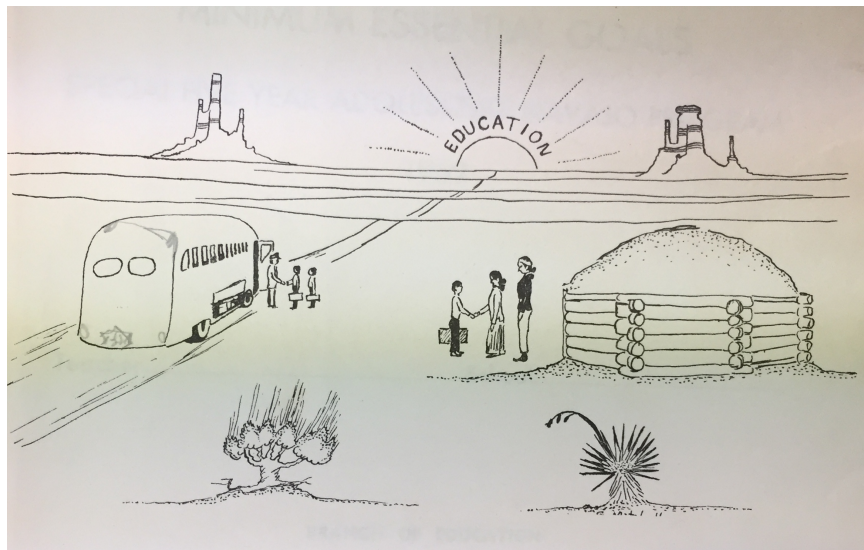
⁴⁶¹ Kee Holiday, interview.

⁴⁶² Jesse Holiday, interview by Farina King, Monument Valley, Utah, May 7, 2015.

⁴⁶³ Jesse Holiday, interview.

by the sun, of education.⁴⁶⁴ During the self-determination era, Navajos asserted that the light of education could come from home rather than the distant horizon.

Reflecting on his experiences with his father who would use his medicine to bring the rain and sometimes sing through the night, Jesse claims, “I learned a lot from him. That’s where all my learning comes from.” He knows several properties of the plants that can heal and clean the body “so if you get lost you know what to do.” Jesse listens to recordings of his father’s singing to this day.⁴⁶⁵ Although he did not attend school in Monument Valley, he applied his teachings from home as an instructor and school board member there later on in his life.



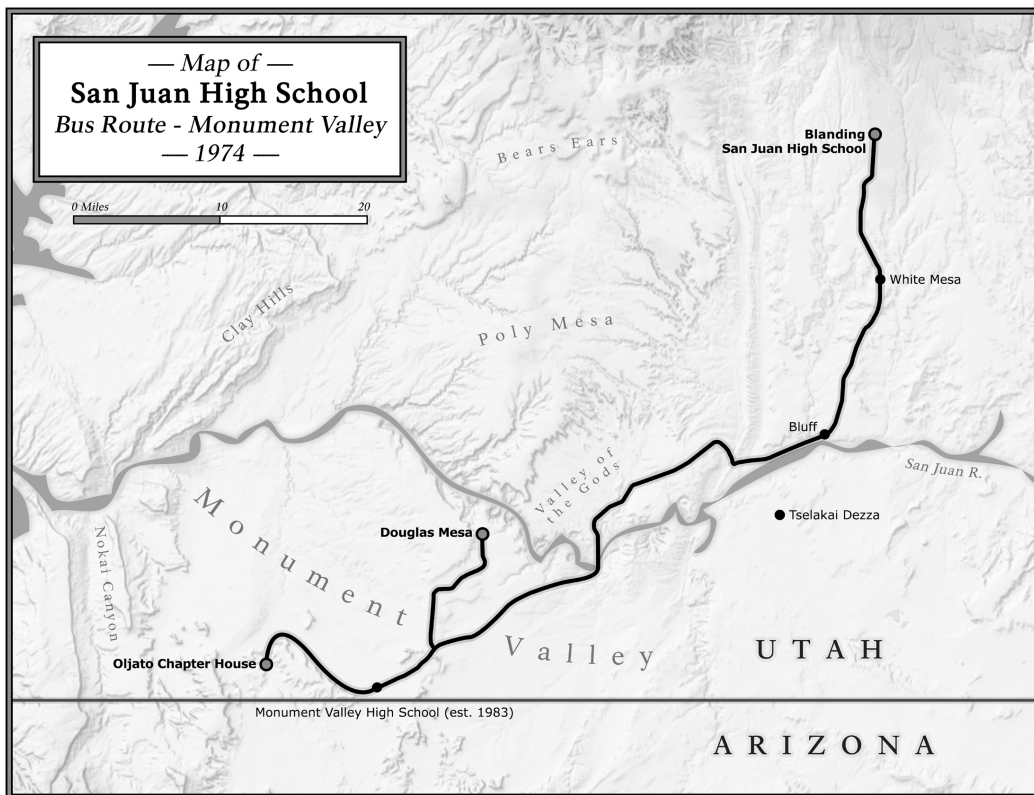
18. Education on the Horizon, *Minimum Essential Goals*, 1952

Although families could choose among various sites for schooling, their children would inevitably receive some distant education. Before the *Sinajini* case (1974), the only

⁴⁶⁴ *Minimum Essential Goals: Special Five Year Adolescent Navajo Program*, Part One, Second Edition (Branch of Education, Department of the Interior—Bureau of Indian Affairs, 1952), p. i, Sherman Indian Museum and Archives, Riverside, California.

⁴⁶⁵ Jesse Holiday, interview.

two high schools in the San Juan district mostly served non-Navajos in the northern part, which excluded the predominately Diné communities in the southern region, representing over half of the district population.⁴⁶⁶ Interviewees did not speak of pressures to participate in the busing to the San Juan High School (SJHS), one of the two public schools in the district. However, parents often sought the best option for their children's education, which public schools represented. Some students decided to endure the bus ride to attend SJHS in Blanding, Utah for their secondary schooling.



19. Map of the San Juan High School Bus Route in Monument Valley, 1974

⁴⁶⁶ Donna Deyhle, "Journey toward Social Justice: Curriculum Change and Educational Equity in a Navajo Community," in *Narrative and Experience in Multicultural Education*, eds. JoAnn Phillion, Ming Fang He, F. Michael Connelly, 116-140 (Thousand Oaks, Cali.: SAGE Publications, 2005), 120.

The buses to SJHS would pick up most Monument Valley teenagers between four and five a.m. The bus ride took from one to three hours one-way, depending on the location of the bus stops and weather. During the 1973-74 school year, forty Navajo students rode the bus from Oljato to Blanding, a total round-trip distance of 166 miles per day.⁴⁶⁷ Some students traveled extra miles to reach the bus stop. One such student was Roy Black who lived twenty-five miles from the stop.⁴⁶⁸ Students could board the bus at Douglas Mesa, the Oljato store (also known as the trading post), or the main junction in the Monument Valley region.⁴⁶⁹ Educator Donna Deyhle stresses the distances that students bore, “Each year, on average, Navajo students traveled more than 15,000 miles, spending the equivalent of 120 school days physically sitting on a bus just to attend school. For the students at the end of the longest bus routes, the figures rose to 30,000 miles each year and 240 school days on a bus. These miles for the most part were on rutted, eroded, unpaved roads that frequently washed out during rains.”⁴⁷⁰

The ride and distance exhausted students. Delphine Atene remembers her “difficult” experience during the school year: “it was hard and sometimes it was cold” when Delphine walked on the dirt roads between the bus stop and her home. She rode the

⁴⁶⁷ “Agreement of Parties,” In the United States District Court, for the District of Utah, Central Division, *Jimmy Sinajini, et. al.*, Plaintiffs, vs. *Board of Education of the San Juan School District, et. al.*, Defendants, Civil No. C-74-346, Asset No. AAC1-828450563, September 5, 1975, Box 1, p. 8, Utah District Court files, Salt Lake City, Utah.

⁴⁶⁸ Roy Black, interview by Farina King, Monument Valley, Utah, July 12, 2015.

⁴⁶⁹ “Question Number 35, Bus Route, Answers and Objections to Plaintiffs’ Second Set of Interrogatories to Defendants San Juan Board of Education and Superintendent Kenneth B. Maughan,” In the United States District Court for the District of Utah, Central Division, *Sinajini, et. al.*, Plaintiffs, v. *Board of Education of the San Juan District, et. al.*, Defendants, Civil No. C-74-346, March 7, 1975, Box 1, Utah District Court files, Salt Lake City, Utah.

⁴⁷⁰ Donna Deyhle, “Journey toward Social Justice,” 120.

bus every school day for about three hours, as she recalls. “It was very tiring for me. We still had to do our chores at home.”⁴⁷¹ Ilene Livingston also shared the negative response to the long bus ride: “When you get to the school, you cannot really concentrate on anything. . . . I would get behind, they [the school staff] would use a paddle on us.”⁴⁷² Ilene stresses how the school staff punished and misunderstood her for struggling with her schoolwork when she blames her difficult schedule and long bus rides.

The bus driver was Navajo, but he did not interact much with the students. They mostly slept on the bus, although students interacted more on the ride home from school.⁴⁷³ Delphine would try to do homework during the bus ride, but she would fall asleep. Roy Black would get headaches and feel sick when he attempted to finish his homework on the bus.⁴⁷⁴ Students fought in a few instances on the bus, but they mostly remember sleeping or just sitting on the bus.⁴⁷⁵ The bus offered two departures after school. One bus left after classes finished, and the other bus waited for extracurricular activities to end for the day, so that students could participate in programs such as sports.⁴⁷⁶

Students adjusted their living arrangements to avoid the long bus rides to the San Juan Public High School. They lived in Blanding, Utah, for example, with peer

⁴⁷¹ Delphine Atene, interview by Farina King, Monument Valley, Utah, July 12, 2015.

⁴⁷² Ilene Livingston, interview by Farina King, Monument Valley, Utah, July 2, 2015.

⁴⁷³ Ilene Livingston and Sherril Collins, interview by Farina King, Monument Valley, Utah, July 2, 2015.

⁴⁷⁴ Roy Black, interview.

⁴⁷⁵ The following interviews confirm: Roy Black, Delphine Atene, Ilene Livingston, and Sherril Collins.

⁴⁷⁶ Rena Atene, interview by Farina King, Monument Valley Tribal Park, Arizona, May 9, 2015.

roommates or Latter-day Saint families. Delphine Atene lived in a “foster home in Blanding for about a year and a half,” while she attended SJHS.⁴⁷⁷ She enjoyed “staying over there in a group home with other girls. Three other students made it four. The second year, [she] stayed with nine to ten girls.”⁴⁷⁸ Some of her cousins helped her find the home, “since they did not want to ride the bus.” They arranged living with a family through social services. The girls came from various Navajo communities in southern Utah such as Montezuma Creek, Mexican Water, Bluff, Mexican Hat, and Monument Valley.

“It was required to go to the LDS Church,” Delphine remembers, referring to the LDS Placement Program or ISPP. Some students resided with their extended family in areas closer to Blanding to attend the public schools. Delphine’s sister, Rena Atene, “would get on the bus from Halchita.” She stayed with an uncle in order to catch the bus from that region.⁴⁷⁹ Sherril Collins lived with an aunt across from the high school in Blanding, but she remembers that she “worked like a slave” for her.⁴⁸⁰ A system eventually developed by which the youth were bused on Monday to Blanding, Utah, where they would stay with mostly non-Navajo families for the week. They then returned home to the reservation on a bus for the weekend.⁴⁸¹

⁴⁷⁷ Delphine Atene, interview.

⁴⁷⁸ Delphine Atene, interview.

⁴⁷⁹ Rena Atene, interview.

⁴⁸⁰ Sherril Collins, interview by Farina King, Monument Valley, Utah, July 2, 2015.

⁴⁸¹ Garry Holiday, interview by Farina King, Monument Valley, Utah, May 7, 2015.

In an informal interview, a former student explained how some of her peers had to walk home if they missed the bus in Blanding. They would try to hitch hike, or they would sleep outside on the way.⁴⁸² Delphine Atene did not hear of such cases, and she always caught the bus going home. She sometimes missed the bus in the mornings, however, as she recalls, “They just leave you. You cannot run after the bus.” Her parents and family could not drop her off at school, since they had livestock, other obligations, and restricted transportation. The bus provided her only way to attend school, and she would “get an unexcused” absence when she missed it.⁴⁸³

Students felt anxiety about catching the bus. Lucy Valentine, for example, would have nightmares as a student about missing the bus.⁴⁸⁴ Ilene Livingston was one of the students who missed the bus returning to her home in Monument Valley. One time when the bus left without her, she had to find somewhere to sleep in Blanding, and she stayed in a stranger’s backyard. She did not know anyone in the area that she felt comfortable to ask for a place to stay.⁴⁸⁵ Ilene and her sister, Sherril Collins, claim that they did not finish school and dropped out because of the strain of the long bus rides.⁴⁸⁶ Their mother and grandmother checked that they washed their hair in the early mornings before “standing at the junction in the winter” to catch the bus. “We would have ice in our hair,” Sherril remembers. Because she rode the bus, she did not have “enough to eat or enough

⁴⁸² Informal conversations with Farina King, Monument Valley, Utah, 2015.

⁴⁸³ Delphine Atene, interview.

⁴⁸⁴ Lucy Valentine, interview by Farina King, Monument Valley, Utah, July 13, 2015.

⁴⁸⁵ Ilene Livingston, interview.

⁴⁸⁶ Ilene Livingston and Sherril Collins, interview by Farina King, Monument Valley, Utah, July 2, 2015.

sleep” as a student. “The long bus ride was one of my main stresses,” she laments, which led her to quit school.⁴⁸⁷

Yet, despite the struggles of riding the bus to Blanding, some students, including Lucy Valentine, cherish their memories of that time. Valentine describes her schooling in Blanding as “a good experience.” She enjoyed the company of a white horse that escorted her regularly to and from the bus. The horse became familiar to her, although she did not know his owner. He would follow and wait with her by the bus stop in the mornings. Lucy pointed out the main junction in Monument Valley where she found the horse grazing when the bus returned her there. She recounts, “I would get off the bus and then he would follow me home.”⁴⁸⁸ The horse signified to Lucy that she could come home every day while she went to school, unlike many other Navajos who lived away for months. For Roy Black, the sports such as cross-country and basketball helped him to endure going to a distant school. He and other students connected to the SJHS community through athletics. Black recalls that not only were male adolescents involved in the sports but also some Navajo young women played for the SJHS basketball team and other athletic programs.⁴⁸⁹

Many of the former students who rode the bus to SJHS also had attended boarding schools, on-reservation public schools, and the ISPP, constituting eclectic and mobile educational experiences. Rena Atene expresses the importance of maintaining schools close to home and hopes for a better educational system to support Navajo youth. She

⁴⁸⁷ Sherril Collins, interview.

⁴⁸⁸ Lucy Valentine, interview.

⁴⁸⁹ Roy Black, interview.

envies the youth who can attend the Monument Valley High School (MVHS), since they can drive to the school or “get dropped off” by their family. She wishes, “I could have stayed in school and gone to school a little ways.” Her children struggled to justify their excuses for missing school, because “the school’s just right there.” She reminds them of what she went through to receive an education, “going on that bus and driving back and forth.”⁴⁹⁰

Although former bus riders had regrets, some of their children later benefited from the local school in Monument Valley. Delphine Atene’s two sons, for example, graduated from MVHS.⁴⁹¹ She drove her sons to school everyday, and she also participated in the Parent-Teacher Association and other school activities. Delphine hopes the students of MVHS “take their schooling seriously.” Lucy Valentine also expects more of Navajo youth, since “everything is going to be there, just a footstep away” for them. She compares her schooling to their opportunities to attend MVHS in terms of suffering. Her children, for example, “did not even toughen it out” to attend school. The long bus ride tainted her student experiences, since she endured sleep deprivation and sometimes blizzards to catch the bus.⁴⁹²

Merril Smith, who attended one of the first classes at MVHS, enjoyed schooling closer to home. He had attended the Kayenta Boarding School for four to five years before moving to MVHS. His family would check him out for the harvest of their cornfield, which represented a strong Navajo family tradition. Yet, school employees

⁴⁹⁰ Rena Atene, interview.

⁴⁹¹ Delphine Atene, interview.

⁴⁹² Lucy Valentine, interview.

would sometimes find him at the harvest and return him to school because he was not sick.

Smith participated in the ISPP and attended schools in Richfield, Utah and Phoenix, Arizona. During his time off the reservation, he “felt isolated,” especially because he could not communicate in Navajo. “It is like your head is turning around 360 everyday going to school, and because you look different they want to fight you,” he remembers, “You have to learn to adapt to it.”⁴⁹³ When Smith went to MVHS, he knew his fellow classmates and the environment as family and home.⁴⁹⁴ However, he continued to face some physical discipline at MVHS. “They used corporal punishment,” he recalls, “They would get out the two-by-four. They called it the ‘educator’ or something. I had a run-in with it a couple times.”

In retrospect, he admits that he respects the discipline that taught him proper behavior. Although the corporal punishment represents some continuation of distant education practices such as those of the boarding school, Smith stressed the “experience knowing my culture here [in Monument Valley].” He claims, “It brought me back to it, the teachings that the elderly taught me.”⁴⁹⁵

His grandmother, for example, told him that “you can be a doctor and have a doctor’s degree, but you may not know what is in yourself until you experience it.” She learned the herbs of the land and how to care for herself with them. His grandmother and other elders exemplified to Smith that Navajo ancestral teachings provide an education as

⁴⁹³ Merrill Smith, interview by Farina King, Monument Valley, Utah, May 8, 2015.

⁴⁹⁴ Merrill Smith, interview.

⁴⁹⁵ Smith, interview.

valuable as any Western training. They taught him through stories, how to “raise livestock,” and the meanings of the *hooghan*.

From his journey of learning in the *hooghan*, to distant schools, and back to Monument Valley, Smith encourages Navajo youth, “Just to be yourself. Learn from [your] experience and go with it whatever comes at you, just go with it.”⁴⁹⁶ Smith often had to learn to understand his settings, but he remembered the teachings of his elders to guide him home to serve his community in Monument Valley. He currently teaches welding and other workshop classes at MVHS.

The testimonies and difficult experiences of Navajo youth in communities of southern Utah such as Monument Valley ignited the efforts to build local and self-determined Diné schools including MVHS. Their stories spread, received attention, and eventually became the foundation of a series of legal cases spearheaded by the *Sinajini* case in 1974. The main issues surrounding the case were that Navajos faced unequal opportunities to an education, and they suffered from segregation and racial discrimination in southern Utah. In 1972, 250 high school students had to seek their education away from their community in Monument Valley.⁴⁹⁷

The San Juan School District attempted to uphold the statute that the county held no responsibility for Native Americans in their boundaries. The county claimed the federal government was the sole party accountable to Native Americans. However, the county benefited directly from the wealth and resources on the Navajo reservation such as oil and mining. Non-Navajo families worked on and lived near the reservation, and

⁴⁹⁶ Smith, interview.

⁴⁹⁷ Macy, 28.

their children went to better schools with greater opportunities, while Navajos were pushed to poor options for education such as BIA boarding schools that took children far from home.

The plaintiffs of the *Sinajini* case stressed busing as a central issue, highlighting terms of civil rights violations. They presented “illegal busing” as their first claim:

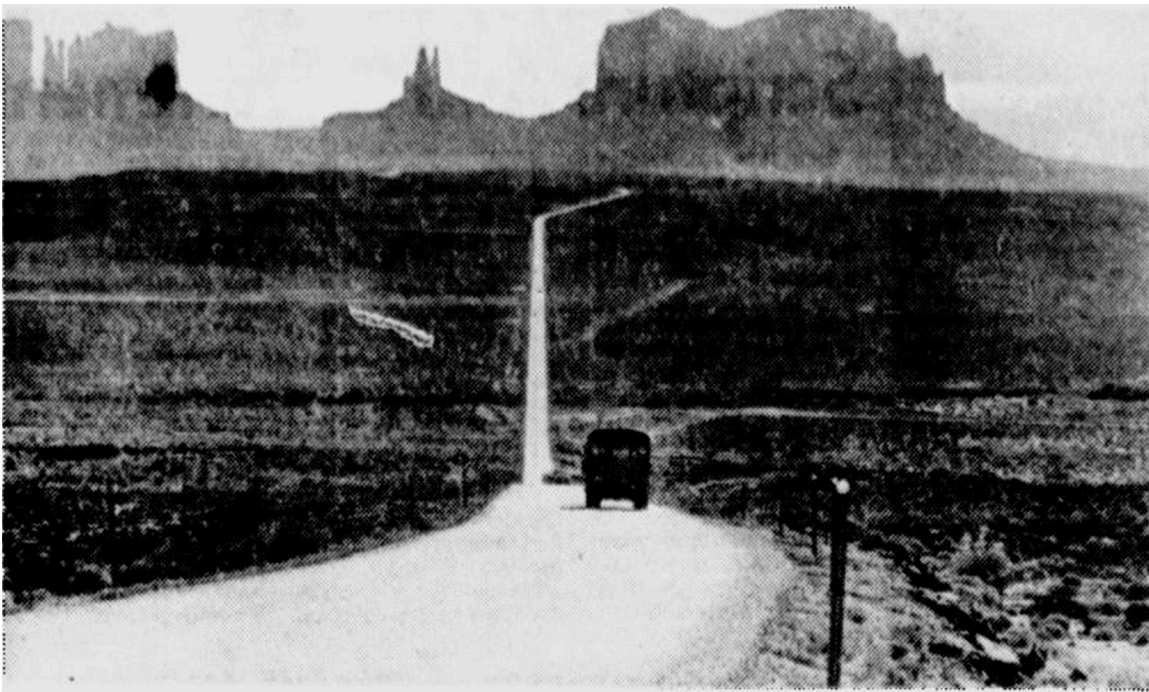
Defendants, their officers and agents, by their failure to provide schools in the southern portion of the District, have illegally discriminated against plaintiffs and their class on the basis of race because plaintiffs and their class must ride busses far greater distances than those students in the northern portion of the District. As a result defendants have denied plaintiffs and their class equal protection of the laws and have illegally and unconstitutionally discriminated against plaintiffs and their class in violation of the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution.⁴⁹⁸

Using busing to integrate schools and offer equal educational opportunities created the opposite effects for Navajos in southern Utah. Negative repercussions of long-distance busing on Navajo students included higher dropout rates and barriers to excellence in school. As another form of distant education, busing to public schools in border towns also attacked Navajo sovereignty by jeopardizing the connections between children and their home communities and ancestral teachings.

In 1968, Gary Shumway, an interviewer for the Doris Duke Project of American Indian Oral History, was talking with Roy Sampson in the Bluff, Utah area about the issues with schooling and busing when he met a twelve-year-old student, Irene Shorty. Navajo students throughout southern Utah faced similar issues as those of Monument Valley. Shorty, for example, who lived closer to Bluff, rode the bus a long way to school

⁴⁹⁸ “First claim for relief: Illegal Bussing, Motion for appointment of person to serve process,” In the United States District Court for the District of Utah, Central Division, *Sinajini, et. al.*, Plaintiffs, v. *Board of Education of the San Juan District, et. al.*, Defendants, Civil No. C-74-346, pp. 9-10, November 5, 1974, Box 1, Utah District Court files, Salt Lake City, Utah.

in Blanding, since she did not want to attend a boarding school. She had previously attended a boarding school in Aneth, which she did not like. She preferred going to a public school, but she had to walk about seven miles to catch the bus from the St. Christopher's Episcopal Mission in Bluff. Shorty stresses the hardship to walk to the bus stop in the winter when the cold and snow afflicted her. She would "have to cross over the footbridge," where "sometimes there [was] ice." The walk to the bus stop could pose dangers, which young students such as Shorty in the seventh grade faced.⁴⁹⁹ Awareness of such issues and concerns increased, as well as the facilities and network to address them through legal services.



20. *The New York Times* photo of Monument Valley Bus, 1975

⁴⁹⁹ Irene Shorty, interview by Gary Shumway, Bluff, Utah, 1968, no. 473, Utah Navajos, Duke Oral History Project, Marriott Special Collections, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Newspaper articles and media focused on the students' struggles for schooling in Monument Valley and other parts of southern Utah, especially after the *Sinajini* case. Some Monument Valley residents remember the stories of students who rode the bus being featured on local news spotlights such as KLS Utah.⁵⁰⁰ In 1975, *The New York Times* published an article which featured an image of the bus moving towards the famous landscape of Monument Valley. Grace Lichtenstein wrote, "While cities such as Boston and Louisville, Ky., are grappling with court-ordered busing to achieve integration, the San Juan County School District has decided to do the reverse. Here, long-distance integrated busing has created geographic problems so great that the procedure is about to be overhauled."⁵⁰¹ Navajos of Monument Valley entered the discourse of civil rights and questions of racial integration and segregation in their fight for self-determined education. Interviewed in the article, Victoria Blackhorse, who lived "thirteen miles from the bus stop" as an eleven-year-old, explained, "I'm here to get an education, and I'll get it any way I can, even if it means two hours on the bus each day."⁵⁰² Blackhorse epitomized the Navajo resolve to pursue and enrich their education, but Navajos who united under the efforts of the *Sinajini* case and its succeeding cases redirected that commitment towards local educational sovereignty.

Some community members couched the conflicts of the region in terms of religion as well as those of race. In her article on the *Sinajini* case and its context, Lichtenstein depicted Mormons as a threat to Navajo traditions and self-determined

⁵⁰⁰ Informal conversations with Farina King, Monument Valley, July 2015.

⁵⁰¹ Grace Lichtenstein, "In Utah School District, Busing Means a 2 ½-Hour Ride," *The New York Times* (New York City, New York), September 24, 1975.

⁵⁰² Lichtenstein.

education in southern Utah. She explains how many of the students lived with Latter-day Saint families who “often encourage Mormon religious training.” Herbert Yazzie, one of the Navajo lawyers affiliated with the case, identified Mormonism as “‘just one more thing contributing to the breaking down of the tribe.’ When the reservation parents get more control over schools in the San Juan district, he predicted, ‘we’ll be trying to get back what we lost.’”⁵⁰³

As she recalled her experiences of attending school in Monticello, Utah, Lorinda Swenson described imbalances in the school between Mormons and Native Americans. The Mormons received more assistance and attention in the classes.⁵⁰⁴ She wondered why some Navajos converted to Mormonism, and she went to a LDS seminary class for a few days to try to understand “what divides us [Navajos and Mormons].”⁵⁰⁵ Lucy Valentine reflects on questions that she faced as a student in Blanding, Utah while living with a Mormon family, “To me, LDS, Seventh Day Adventists . . . they are both the same. We pray to the same God. But the main thing is that I still believe in our [Diné] culture.”⁵⁰⁶ Valentine sought harmony and coexistence in her environment, upholding central tenets of Diné ways of life.

Swenson’s step-children, including Elaine and Lorinda Williams, and his wife were plaintiffs in the case. Swenson went to chapter house meetings all over the southern strip of Utah on Navajo territory, persuading Navajos to sustain the case. In Montezuma

⁵⁰³ Lichtenstein.

⁵⁰⁴ Lorinda Swenson, interview by Farina King, Tempe, Arizona, June 24, 2015.

⁵⁰⁵ Lorinda Swenson, interview.

⁵⁰⁶ Lucy Valentine, interview.

Creek, a grandmother pushed forward a small five-year-old named Jimmy Sinajini and told the lawyer, “Sign him up.” The lawsuit was named after this little boy. The case became multi-generational. Different branches of the case formed over such issues as payment of legal fees and election districts. Swenson interviewed hundreds of community members for the lawsuit.⁵⁰⁷

Donna Deyhle, a University of Utah professor in education, is currently working on a history of Navajo education in southern Utah as commissioned for legal purposes. She has served as an informant in various parts of the case, based on her extensive research in the San Juan School District since 1984 when she “began a dropout study of Indian students from San Juan High School and Whitehorse High School.”⁵⁰⁸ The plaintiffs’ attorneys prepared depositions for the case, which featured the stories of Navajo parents and their families, including those of Martha Collins and her son Vernal.⁵⁰⁹ The depositions were not placed in the *Sinajini* case files, making them inaccessible. They provided, however, a basis for the legal claims and community efforts to develop local self-determined Navajo schools in Monument Valley.

All southern Utah Navajos faced similar challenges with establishing local schools. From communities in Montezuma Creek to Navajo Mountain, Navajos

⁵⁰⁷ Eric Swenson, interview.

⁵⁰⁸ Her research includes hundreds of interviews and interactions with Navajo students. See “Affidavit of Donna Deyhle, Judge Aldon J. Anderson,” Case No. 74-C-346 A, In the United States District Court, District of Utah, Central Division, *Jimmy Sinajini, et. al.*, Plaintiffs, And, *The Navajo Nation, et. al.*, Plaintiffs-Intervenors, v. *Board of Education of the San Juan School District, et. al.*, Defendants, October 22, 1993, p. 3, Box 3, Utah Central District Court files, Salt Lake City, Utah.

⁵⁰⁹ Eric Swenson, and “Depositions,” Civil Action No. C-74346, In the United States District Court, District of Utah, Central Division, *Jimmy Sinajini, et. al.*, Plaintiffs, And, *The Navajo Nation, et. al.*, Plaintiffs-Intervenors, v. *Board of Education of the San Juan School District, et. al.*, Defendants, Box 1, Utah Central District Court files, Salt Lake City, Utah.

petitioned to develop schools, and the *Sinajini* case and issues affected them as well. In 1993, Jamie R. Holgate, a resident of Navajo Mountain, Utah, provided an affidavit related to the *Sinajini* and subsequent cases, stating the following grievances:

Once Navajo Mountain school children leave the 8th grade, they have no local school to attend. I am familiar with the educational opportunities that these children have once they leave the Navajo Mountain school. These children often attend a variety of BIA and public schools during their high school years. I am personally aware, both from the experience of my children, and from my work with other Navajo Mountain children and their parents, that many children from our area who must leave home for the first time to attend high school have significant academic and emotional problems.

Many attend BIA boarding schools in Tuba City, Arizona or Richfield, Utah. The Tuba City school closed its dormitory on weekends as a cost saving measure. The school has not always provided a bus or other means for the children to come home to Navajo Mountain, which is 98 miles from the school. Sometimes a BIA bus takes the children only as far as Inscription House, Arizona, which is 40 miles from Navajo Mountain. The children whose parents cannot afford the weekly trips must hitch hike home, sometimes in bad weather. Other children attend Kayenta, Arizona, Page, Arizona, Tuba City, Arizona, or other public high schools and board nearby with friends or relatives at their expense.⁵¹⁰

Holgate stresses that Navajo youth still must leave home, at great cost, for their education. They face harm on various levels, including the physical risks in their attempts to return home.

From the 1930s to the 1990s, Navajo youth from throughout the reservation have shared the challenges of distant education in their search for an education that complements and supports their ties to home and the epistemologies of the earth memory compass. These histories uncover the interconnections between Navajos in place and community. The four directions are living. They represent *Diné Bikéyah* and the ties

⁵¹⁰ “Affidavit of Jamie R. Holgate to Judge Aldon J. Anderson,” In the United States District Court, District of Utah, Central Division, *Jimmy Sinajini, et. al.*, Plaintiffs, v. *San Juan School District, et. al.*, Defendants, Case No. 74-C-346 A, April 6, 1993, p. 4, Box 3, Salt Lake City, Utah.

between the land and people. They interlock and flow together. Navajos move and crisscross through them. The story of Monument Valley community Navajos cannot be understood isolated from those of Navajo Mountain, Montezuma Creek, Kayenta, and Tuba City to name a few other major communities and kinship ties that have empowered student experiences and movements in Diné education.

The agreement of the *Sinajini* case concluded in 1974, “The busing of some secondary students in the District is burdensome and negatively affects the quality of education received by these children and, in some instances, disrupts their family life.” The court recognized, for example, how students moved away from home to live closer to public schools. The agreement mandated the district to build two high schools “in the Oljato-Monument Valley-Mexican Hat area and in the Montezuma-Aneth-Red Mesa area,” which would offer an “educational program (consisting of facilities, curriculum and extra curricular activities)” comparable to other schools in the district. The court decision also required that the schools “accommodate” and open for the student population “at the earliest possible date.”⁵¹¹ Regular reports on the district and these projects would confirm their compliance.

The school in Montezuma Creek opened in 1978 as the Whitehorse High School, and the Monument Valley High School was dedicated in 1984 almost ten years later. San Juan School District Superintendent Donald Jack declared at the inauguration of the school: “The building of this school ends the era of long bus rides. . . . This is the real

⁵¹¹ “Agreement of Parties,” In the United States District Court, for the District of Utah, Central Division, *Jimmy Sinajini, et. al.*, Plaintiffs, vs. *Board of Education of the San Juan School District, et. al.*, Defendants, Civil No. C-74-346, September 5, 1975, pp. 9-10, Box 1, Utah District Court Files, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Monument Valley High School.”⁵¹² The court decision, however, was only the beginning of the struggle to construct and start a local school.

The San Juan School District Board of Education developed a School Community Group (SCG) for the two regions, Montezuma Creek and Monument Valley, which was comprised of community members and American Indian educational specialists. The SCG existed to ensure that the district met the terms of the agreement and prepared local schools and their “bilingual/bicultural programs.”⁵¹³ In Monument Valley, the SCG originally consisted of thirteen members, including eleven Navajos from the community.⁵¹⁴ Jim Dandy helped to “[organize] the SCG, composed of people from all different agencies to be representatives.” Dandy served as a liaison between the district and Diné communities, as they collaborated to create schools in Montezuma Creek, Monument Valley, and “much later at Navajo Mountain.”⁵¹⁵

The SCG represented community interests and efforts, which often conflicted with the district’s agenda. They argued over the location of the schools, for example, and the district would claim that it did not possess funds for construction. In terms of the

⁵¹² *San Juan Record*, 1991, cited in Macy, 40.

⁵¹³ Robert S. McPherson, Jim Dandy, and Sarah E. Burak, *Navajo Tradition, Mormon Life: The Autobiography and Teachings of Jim Dandy* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2012), 136-137. The Office of Civil Rights also monitored the district’s compliance to the agreement. See Macy, 33.

⁵¹⁴ “Plaintiffs’ Second Set of Interrogatories to Defendants Talbot and the Utah Board of Education,” In the United States District Court, for the District of Utah, Central Division, *Jimmy Sinajini, et. al.*, Plaintiffs, vs. *Board of Education of the San Juan School District, et. al.*, Defendants, Civil No. C-74-346, January 17, 1975, p. 4, Box 1, Utah District Court files, Salt Lake City, Utah. The SCG grew to include more diverse community members from various regions of the area such as Halchita, Mexican Hat, Oljato, Monument Valley, and Navajo Mountain. See Macy, “Table 1. School Community Group Members,” 35.

⁵¹⁵ McPherson, Dandy, and Burak, 136-7. Dandy not only supported the building of Navajo high schools but also elementary schools in the same regions.

Monument Valley school, the district preferred a site in Mexican Hat, Utah, instead of the valley itself, as Dandy criticizes, “They would rather build a facility where it would be cheaper because the electricity and water were already there. They did not seem to care about the children.”⁵¹⁶ The community also protested the Mexican Hat site, since they believed that their people would find better employment opportunities in a Monument Valley school. Garry Holiday, former Oljato Chapter President in 1976, repeats the response of the community members, “They said, ‘No, we don’t want the school there. We want our people employed in the school.’”⁵¹⁷

Other local interests clashed in the efforts to construct and develop MVHS. Schools competed over enrollment and funding, and Navajo families resisted relocating to provide a school site. The associates of the Kayenta public school, for example, worried that decreases in student enrollment would hurt their resources because of the new school.⁵¹⁸ Dandy witnessed one woman “hit her mother across the face and told her she was a crazy woman” for “giving away family land,” before she signed papers that would relocate her family and allow the school construction on her former home site.⁵¹⁹

Another community member, Martha Collins, led other Navajos to move in order to make room for the proposed school by her example. She has often been excluded in the credits for the Monument Valley High School. She and her two daughters, Sherril Collins and Ilene Livingston, shared their stories with me in Monument Valley. Martha

⁵¹⁶ McPherson, Dandy, and Burak, 138-9.

⁵¹⁷ Garry Holiday, interview.

⁵¹⁸ Garry Holiday, interview. McPherson, Dandy, and Burak, 139.

⁵¹⁹ McPherson, Dandy, and Burak, 140.

Collins was a single mother who sought the best education for her children. She considered the BIA schools as the worst option with low academic opportunities and possible fees, although they seemed an easier alternative for most Navajo families in the region. Because of such scant choices, Collins and her children decided to try the public school system in San Juan County. Her children ranged from elementary school ages to teenagers. They struggled to catch the bus in the mornings, and they were too exhausted to work on the long bus ride or fully participate in school. Collins remembers during the winter especially with possible snowfall, “The kids were scared, and they did not want to get onto the bus.”⁵²⁰

The Collins family represented Navajos on the front lines of the Monument Valley grassroots’ struggle for educational sovereignty. Martha Collins became a plaintiff with her children in the *Sinajini* case. She tried to educate parents about the politics and issues of schooling, explaining “that the kids have to go to school every day, and they have to be counted in to be counted for the money.”⁵²¹ She was the first one to offer her land for the new school site in Monument Valley. Other community members contested the proposed location near the main junction, claiming the land “was theirs.” “I decided to say that I can move so that the school can come,” Collins recalls. Her example helped facilitate the process to open MVHS, but she did not receive major recognition for her humble contributions.⁵²² Officials told her that they would transfer her belongings, but some of her things were left behind and never replaced. Collins did not gain full

⁵²⁰ Martha Collins, interview by Farina King, Monument Valley, Utah, July 3, 2015.

⁵²¹ Martha Collins, interview.

⁵²² Macy, 37.

compensation for her sacrifices. However, she has settled into the new homestead designated for her and does not complain.

Collins wanted her children and other Navajo youth “to have about everything to lead them to live a better life.” “It took a little while to get the community people to open up to what [the school] can do and how the kids are happy to go to school down there,” she remembers, “since their parents can be there for them with games, meetings, and holidays.” She would wake her children and later grandchildren on school days, telling them, “Get up, guys. I want all of you to graduate,” and then would see them off to school.⁵²³ Collins, like many Navajos of Monument Valley, sought to support the education of their youth with the ongoing hope for a better future, which centered on ideas of family and community cohesiveness.

From reports on the compliance of the *Sinajini* agreement, another paradoxical issue arose involving the tensions between Navajos and major energy companies. Oil fields on the reservation within San Juan County provided significant profits, which Navajos felt excluded them. Such sentiments culminated on March 30, 1978, when hundreds of Navajos from Aneth and Montezuma Creek forced one of the major oil producers of a Texaco pump station to close in Aneth, Utah. Navajo protestors developed a petition comprising thirteen main points, which included “termination and renegotiation of leases, more emphasis on the needs of local people by the tribe and more consideration for the well-being of local people by the oil companies, and generally more direct benefits to the area because of oil revenues.” Four major oil companies tried to negotiate

⁵²³ Martha Collins, interview.

the main Navajo stipulations, but tensions remained.⁵²⁴ These struggles over resources and finances affected the state of Utah and Navajos on local and tribal levels, which seeped into the issues of the *Sinajini* case.

Several legal documents such as plans and reports traced and evaluated how the San Juan County School Board upheld the agreement of the case from 1974 to 1983, which stipulated the building of local schools such as MVHS. In one such document, an irony presented a predicament in the late 1970s relating to the tensions between the state, Navajo, and oil companies. Gas companies “paid their 1978 taxes under protest” to place a hold on their payments to the state of Utah, since the Navajo Nation demanded that they pay taxes to them for the resources that they garnered on Diné lands. The state claimed to direct the funds that came from such taxes to “meet the bond issue payments” for Navajo school construction. The board and state officials were concerned about the progress of the school building because of this tax issue.⁵²⁵ The irony was that the Navajo Nation sought to uphold its sovereign rights by pushing to redirect the taxes of oil companies, but by doing so, the nation hindered an effort of localized Diné education, at least according to the state. The files do not explain how the issue was eventually resolved, but MVHS did open in 1983. The effort took more time than expected.

⁵²⁴ Peter Iverson, *The Navajo Nation*, 187-188.

⁵²⁵ “San Juan County Tax Situation, Progress Report on the construction of the two proposed high schools, San Juan County School District, November and December, 1978 and January 1979,” In the United States District Court, for the District of Utah, Central Division, *Jimmy Sinajini, et. al.*, Plaintiffs, vs. *Board of Education of the San Juan School District, et. al.*, Defendants, Civil No. C-74-346, January 31, 1979, p. 2, Box 1, File 2, Utah Central District Court files, Salt Lake City, Utah.

The reports indicated other complications such as finding a water source for the school on the designated site.⁵²⁶ Garry Holiday remembers when the district “started looking for water. They drilled down in Oljato thirty-five feet, and they told us there is no water.” The community contended, “We don’t want the school down there, we want it in this area [near the Monument Valley junction], and the water should come from over here and Arizona.” Once they drilled by the junction, “they hit water” and “found a channel over there.”⁵²⁷

Navajo community members such as Garry and Marie Holiday directly faced such challenges.⁵²⁸ Marie Holiday expresses with tears, “It was hard. That is how we got the school. We had to go through a lot of obstacles. This is never mentioned. And our people had to go through that . . . and you will not hear their voices.”⁵²⁹ As the Oljato Chapter President in 1976, her husband, Garry, worked directly with the community to follow through the initiatives to develop the local school. He would also communicate the legal proceedings to the Monument Valley chapter members, translating them in Navajo.⁵³⁰ The numerous barriers that they and other supporters of the school encountered included internal community disputes, the search for a site, and resources for the future school.

⁵²⁶ “San Juan County Tax Situation, Progress Report,” January 31, 1979.

⁵²⁷ Garry Holiday, interview.

⁵²⁸ The Holidays are a prominent family in the Monument Valley region.

⁵²⁹ Marie Holiday, interview by Farina King, Monument Valley, Utah, May 7, 2015.

⁵³⁰ “Affidavit of Eric Swenson,” In the United States District Court, for the District of Utah, Central Division, *Jimmy Sinajini, et. al., Plaintiffs, vs. Board of Education of the San Juan School District, et. al., Defendants*, Civil No. C-74-346, October 28, 1975, Box 1, Utah Central District Court files, Salt Lake City, Utah.

They recalled, for example, “a special bond election was held in 1976,” which “raised funds for the construction of the schools.”⁵³¹

Like most Navajo parents, Marie and Garry Holiday understood the difficulties that their children confronted to receive schooling. One of their daughters rode the bus to SJHS for some time. Marie remembers, “These people wanted their kids to have a school close by. They stressed that at the meetings.” Many elders participated in such efforts; Marie remembers Buck Navajo and Roy Black, Sr. who would attend all the meetings in his wheelchair.⁵³² While serving as the chapter president, Garry had to conduct numerous surveys to prove to the district the needs of the school and that enough students in the area would attend it.⁵³³ They reflected on the school and recognized it as a community center once completed. Marie sees “greatness in the people” through the community support of MVHS. Navajos of Monument Valley celebrated and “were just really happy that [the school] was going to be built,” as they envisioned “this high school for the generations to come.”⁵³⁴

Although the *Sinajini* case resulted in an agreement that allowed for the construction of schools, a series of related litigation has persisted. In 1992, the plaintiffs of the *Sinajini* case filed a “contempt” and “widespread violations” based on the agreement. The following outlined the issues:

⁵³¹ Marie and Garry Holiday, interview by Farina King, Monument Valley, Utah, May 7, 2015. See also Macy, 77.

⁵³² Marie Holiday, interview.

⁵³³ Garry Holiday, interview.

⁵³⁴ Marie Holiday, interview.

Failure to implement a bilingual education program, racial and religious discrimination in the bilingual program and other school activities, violation of the equalized per pupil expenditure requirements, failure to maintain comparable facilities, equipment, and curriculum for Navajo students, and a host of other problems . . .

This situation has resulted in substantial numbers of Indians students with deficient language and learning skills resulting in inadequate academic performance and achievement rates. Large numbers of Native American children drop out of school. Significant numbers of children have emotional and behavioral problems reflected in the drop out rate and school disciplinary problems.

At the time Plaintiffs filed their Verified motion, other parties sought to intervene in the case. Plaintiffs who were children at the time of the initial action in 1974 requested that their children be allowed to intervene in order to complain of discriminatory practices which were similar to those which prompted the suit eighteen years ago.⁵³⁵

Several studies in American Indian education focused on the issues of the San Juan County School District, confirming the claims. Donna Deyhle, for example, situates the struggles of Navajo schooling in the context of tense racial discrimination. In the border towns along the reservation in southern Utah, she relates student performance to “the larger process of racial conflict” that she witnessed “in this polarized community.”⁵³⁶ Within this community, she concludes, “These Navajo people are subject to racial

⁵³⁵ “Reply to Memorandum in opposition to motion to intervene parties plaintiff, addressed to Judge Aldon J. Anderson,” “Plaintiffs and the Aneth Chapter, through their attorney undersigned, submit this Reply to the Defendant School District’s Memorandum in Opposition to Motion to Intervene Parties Plaintiff,” “Statement of Facts,” In the United States District Court, for the District of Utah, Central Division, *Jimmy Sinajini, et. al., Plaintiffs, vs. Board of Education of the San Juan School District, et. al., Defendants, Agreement of Parties*, Civil No. C-74-346, March 24, 1993, Box 1, Utah District Court files, Salt Lake City, Utah.

⁵³⁶ See “Notes,” in Donna Deyhle, “Navajo Youth and Anglo Racism: Cultural Integrity and Resistance,” *Harvard Educational Review* 65, no. 3 (Fall 1995): 439. Deyhle refers to this “community” as a bordertown in southern Utah without identifying it.

discrimination in the workplace and at school.” She asserts that Navajo students responded “by withdrawing or resisting ‘education.’”⁵³⁷

The *Sinajini* agreement did not resolve the underlying challenges to sovereign Navajo education. The San Juan County District continued to maintain that its responsibilities did not include Navajo or American Indian education, and it would not support self-determined curriculum. The agreement stipulated a “cultural awareness program” for both Navajo and non-Navajo students. “In theory, this was to be a research-based-two-way bilingual plan,” Deyhle explains its failures, “But in practice it became a transitional Navajo-to-English program.”⁵³⁸ The school district stances reflected racial tensions that characterized the region.

Lynette Meyers, et. al. v. Board of Education of the San Juan School District, et. al. (1994) continued to address the issues set by the *Sinajini* case. The Navajo Mountain community members demanded equal educational opportunity by enabling their children to attend local schools. According to an article in 1996 from *Indian Country Today*, the *Meyers* case eventually provided for a high school at Navajo Mountain. The article cites “Sarah Krakoff of the Indian Law Clinic in Boulder, Colo., [who] characterized the settlement as a ‘significant victory’ for Navajo children who have been forced to move away from home for four years to attend boarding schools or seek placement with other families to attend high school in Tuba City, Flagstaff or Kayenta.”

Community members focused on racial discrimination as the cause for the legal battles. The district would point to the federal government as responsible for funding

⁵³⁷ Deyhle, “Navajo Youth and Anglo Racism,” 404.

⁵³⁸ Donna Deyhle, “Journey to Social Justice,” 121.

such schools, but “Utah derives revenues from oil and gas operations located on Navajo lands.” Mark Maryboy, Navajo Nation delegate and San Juan County commissioner, stated, “San Juan County is still very much divided over the issue of racial discrimination. . . . That mentality is still very strong around here.”⁵³⁹ Attending the local chapter meetings, such conversations continue, centering on questions of racial discrimination particularly through education and how the people must act.⁵⁴⁰

Of the consequential cases, the *Meyers* decision of 1994 arguably set the most significant mark in Indian education and advancement of equal opportunity. The agreement of the *Sinajini* case did not include “any legal opinion as to the rights of the plaintiffs,” whereas the *Meyers* decision became “the leading case on the civil rights of American Indians in education” or the “The *Brown v. Board of Indian Country*.” As Lawrence Baca asserts, “*Meyers* is the first federal case to declare that American Indians, because of their state citizenship, have a right to an educational opportunity equal to all other persons.” The states in which they live are responsible to provide equal educational opportunities for Navajos.⁵⁴¹

The court concurred, “All of the entities involved in this case—the District, the State, the United States, and the Navajo Nation—each has a duty to educate the children of Navajo Mountain. The duty of one does not relieve any other of its own obligation.”⁵⁴²

⁵³⁹ Valerie Taliman, “Settlement: Utah Navajo get school,” *Indian Country Today* (Verona, New York), December 23, 1996.

⁵⁴⁰ Farina King, personal observations, Olajto chapter, Monument Valley, Utah, 2015.

⁵⁴¹ Lawrence R. Baca, “*Meyers v. Board of Education: The Brown v. Board of Indian Country*,” *University of Illinois Law Review* 2004, no. 5 (October 2004): 1156-7.

⁵⁴² *Meyers v. Board of Education*, 905 cited in Baca, “*Meyers v. Board of Education*,” 1180.

Navajo communities have faced various systems in their efforts to educate their children, as listed by the court, and they finally could expect all of them to offer the best opportunities.

Lorinda Swenson, as a plaintiff and daughter to the lawyer representing the *Sinajini* case, “lived” the case inside as well as outside the home in Monticello, Utah. Her mother and stepfather actively advocated for Diné civil rights. She noticed the wall of the SJHS gym that displayed two separate rows of homecoming queens’ portraits, one with Anglos and the other with Native Americans. As she visualized the racial divisions, she sensed then the purpose of her parents’ fight and dedication. She grew up with the case, hearing about it at the dining table, and facing the prejudice and treatment of community members who did not agree with her family’s efforts.

Lorinda Swenson related the *Sinajini* case to the sacred mountain, *Sis Naajini*, because she saw it as the “twilight dawn,” the beginning and new opportunity for Navajo students. The *Sinajini* case was named after a child, a symbol of the “spiritual state,” innocence and purity, which the sacred mountain of *Ha’a’aaah* embodies.⁵⁴³ I compare this stage of Navajo educational history to *Dibé Nitsaa*, the age of maturity and hope, but both phases connect as the beginning and end of a cycle. The *Sinajini* case is a new beginning, and because of that, it symbolizes a full circle—*Náhookos*— in the long struggle and journey of Navajo learning experiences and educational history. The lawsuit remains open, as Eric Swenson and other representatives seek to uphold equal

⁵⁴³ Lorinda Swenson, interview.

representation in the San Juan County School District (SJCS D). The board still consists of a majority of white members, while half of the county residents are Navajos.⁵⁴⁴

The general sentiment from my interviews revealed how the people came together, despite the divisions and obstacles to build their own school. The school featured their culture and presence, unifying the community. Some people disputed the school, since it took away the homesteads of certain families. Other forms of resistance appeared, but MVHS and the elementary school now stand as centers of community. In 2015, I went to a round dance at MVHS where community members gathered and showed solidarity for their causes. They were fundraising for the school, enjoying each other's company, and supporting one another. I was honored to dance to the drum with them in the circle of their community.

In 2010, the Tse' bii' nidzisgai Elementary School opened as the first SJCS D elementary school in the area next to the Monument Valley High School. Eric Swenson, the lawyer for the *Sinajini* case, reflects after hearing of the school dedication: "The school district argued that it had no legal responsibility to educate Indian kids on the reservation. . . . The court affirmed the right of Indian children to an education."⁵⁴⁵ Regarding the new schools in the region, interviewees would often express mixed emotions of gratitude, regret, and hope. They were somewhat disappointed that they could not have benefited from the same opportunities as Navajo youth in the area today. They also articulate concerns for their youth and their educational opportunities, since

⁵⁴⁴ Eric Swenson, interview.

⁵⁴⁵ Cindy Yurth, "After 20 years of litigation, ground broken for new school," *Navajo Times* (Window Rock, Arizona), January 21, 2010.

hurdles remain. A central question is how the people can work together to prepare the corn pollen path for their children and future— one of prosperity and wealth in community—embedded in relationships with kin, people, plant and animal life, and earth.

Navajos in Monument Valley still face challenges to establish educational sovereignty. Bob Angle, a non-Navajo Native American and former member of SCG, remembered the potential of the group and laments its demise.⁵⁴⁶ Jim Dandy also claims, “I was very hurt when the SCG program ended and felt it was a mistake. Recently there have been efforts to start a parent involvement program the way it used to be, but the school district is still having a hard time.”⁵⁴⁷

From my personal experience discussing this research with the Oljato community, I noticed the ongoing struggles of Navajos in the San Juan County School District and efforts to separate from the district. One community member asked me why the students continued to perform poorly in school. He could not understand it. We discussed issues with intergenerational trauma from educational pasts. What are the solutions? The Oljato community recently proposed hosting a town meeting to address the issues of discouraging student rates.⁵⁴⁸

Ilene Livingston and Sherril Collins claim that MVHS did not offer the best education for their children, and so they decided to send their youth to schools far away from Monument Valley such as one in Richfield, Utah.⁵⁴⁹ The cycle of education

⁵⁴⁶ Bob Angle, interview by Farina King, Monument Valley, Utah, May 7, 2015.

⁵⁴⁷ McPherson, Dandy, and Burak, 141.

⁵⁴⁸ Farina King, personal observations, Oljato chapter, Monument Valley, Utah, 2015.

⁵⁴⁹ Sherril Collins and Ilene Livingston, interview.

journeys continues for Navajo students. After MVHS opened, some students and staff still travel major distances to the school. In 1996, Patrick Macy explains that the “Monument Valley High School attendance area consists of approximately a fifty-mile radius.”⁵⁵⁰ Merrill Smith, an instructor with children who attend the elementary school, described driving such distances to the school from his home, isolated within the tribal park boundaries.⁵⁵¹

Busing remains an issue that affects various other Native Americans in rural communities, including but not limited to Navajos in the Southwest. After sixth grade, many Goshute youth must ride 120 miles round-trip to reach their schools in Wendover, Utah, and their community is petitioning for local schools at the Deep Creek Reservation.⁵⁵² What are the effects of distant education on Indigenous youth? In one of the last chapters of Vine Deloria, Jr.’s classic *Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto*, he compares the struggles of Native Americans and African Americans. He notes how white Americans sought to “exclude” blacks, while they aimed to integrate Native Americans in order to deprive them of “lands and resources.”⁵⁵³ Busing and distant education add to these reverse effects, separating Native American youth from their homelands. While Native Americans seek distinction as sovereign, independent peoples, they also pursue equality and coexistence with diverse Americans. The delicate

⁵⁵⁰ Macy, 8.

⁵⁵¹ Merrill Smith, interview.

⁵⁵² “Language and Culture: Confederated Tribes of the Goshute Reservation,” *Utah American Indian Digital Archive*, copyrighted 2008, accessed September 5, 2015 <http://www.utahindians.org/archives/ctgr.html>.

⁵⁵³ Vine Deloria, *Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2014, originally published 1969), 171-174.

balance remains as to how to be Native American in a modern world often defined by a majority of dominant non-Native Americans.

What is the hope of the North stage of this historical narrative and journey of Navajo student experiences? The hope is ongoing resiliency and the effort to pass on the earth memory compass to even a few so that it continues to reorient Navajos to recognize each other, their shared worldviews, and ties to the land. Roy Black's father was a uranium miner and guide for Goulding's tours of Monument Valley. He became an activist in support of MVHS, especially as a member of SGC.⁵⁵⁴ Roy would follow his father during some of his tours and journeys through the valley, inheriting memories and knowledge of the land and waters.

After oscillating between the ISPP, bus rides to SJHS, and Monument Valley, Roy centers on earth knowledge in his own tour guide business, which he now teaches his children.⁵⁵⁵ Knowledge and guidance of the earth memory compass fulfill the livelihood and life of Diné family and community through the generations on mental, spiritual, and physical levels. Young and old fought to build the school, which represents how the Monument Valley High School stood for the Diné, the People. In the Old Age of Navajo educational history, the sense of hope and faith in the possibilities of the four-directions process empower Navajos, as they navigate and reclaim their future by seeking *hózhó* in a world of conflicting directions.

⁵⁵⁴ Marie Holiday, interview, and Macy, 35. Roy Black is named after his father, Roy Black. However, neither of them uses the terms Sr. or Jr.

⁵⁵⁵ Roy Black, interview.

In the four directions, Navajos have faced the intersection of two epistemologies—Diné embeddedness and Westernized schooling. This intersection embodies the tensions of centering education within colonial forms of schooling, as the Diné uphold educational sovereignty in the crevices of American institutional structures. The third space of hybridity, according to postcolonial theorist Homi Bhabha, is “in between” such power dynamics.⁵⁵⁶ Similar to how historian Donald Fixico describes Native Americans who relocated from reservations to urban sites in the postwar period, Diné students learned to navigate cultures and “different value systems,” hybridizing “in-between” but determining their identities.⁵⁵⁷ Many of them have continued to follow the earth memory compass, which has sustained their orientation as a people—the Diné. Self-determination for Diné students came through the earth memory compass, which leads to educational sovereignty as a Diné paradigm of knowledge.

⁵⁵⁶ Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 2. Bhabha argues, “These ‘in-between’ spaces provide the terrain for elaborating strategies of selfhood- singular or communal- that initiate new signs of identity, and innovative sites of collaboration, and contestation, in the act of defining the idea of society itself” (2).

⁵⁵⁷ Donald Fixico, *Indian Resilience and Rebuilding: Indigenous Nations in the Modern American West* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2013), 98. While my study emphasizes Navajo experiences as “cultural navigators,” some scholars focus on identifying the role of Euro-American officials and representatives of westernization. Historian James Merrell traces the “go-betweens,” Native Americans and Europeans who crossed various levels of boundaries to foster exchange between conflicting peoples in the colonial era. See James H. Merrell, *Into the Woods: Negotiators on the Pennsylvania Frontier* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1999), 19-20. The boarding school administrators, teachers, and staff served as the “go-betweens” in this narrative of Navajo student journeys; however, the exchanges, that they enabled, challenged Navajoness and Diné sovereignty. Historian Margaret Jacobs stresses such consequences of these “go between,” when white officials and educators (especially women) enforced surrogate familial structures to the detriment of Indigenous families and communities in North America and Australia. See, for example, Margaret D. Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race: Settler Colonialism, Maternalism, and the Removal of Indigenous Children in the American West and Australia, 1880-1940* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011), 88.

CONCLUSION: “WE ARE ALL DINÉ”

Go, get an education. Keep learning. Only you can achieve how you succeed, but share what you discover along the way. Walk in Beauty.

—A Navajo great-grandmother to her granddaughter, Donovan Begay

Diné education continues to center in significant trials of the twenty-first century as Navajos debate plans for a \$554 million trust mismanagement settlement, the disqualification of tribal presidential candidate Chris Deschene for lacking Navajo fluency, and the repercussions of the Gold King Mine Waste Water Spill.⁵⁵⁸ Every chapter community, including those of Leupp, Tuba City, Oljato, and Crownpoint, meet regularly to discuss such issues and to pass resolutions by consensus decision-making. My cousin, Travis King of the *Kinyaa’áanii* or Towering House clan, advocates such resolutions throughout the reservation. He serves in the Iyanbito, New Mexico chapter as Vice President of the Community Land Use Planning Committee (CLUPC), which has petitioned to “return Fort Wingate to the Navajo Nation.”

Two congressmen have presented a bill which would partition and confer the lands of the historic fort on the Zuni Pueblo and Navajo Nation. Representatives Stevan Pearce and Don Young set forth “bill HR 1028, ‘To provide for the implementation of the negotiated property division regarding Former Fort Wingate Depot Activity in McKinley

⁵⁵⁸ In 2014, the Navajo Nation won a historic lawsuit against the federal government, after accusing the government of mismanaging Diné natural resources and land investments. See Julie Turkewitz, “Navajos to Get \$554 Million to Settle Suit Against U.S.,” *The New York Times*, September 24, 2014, accessed October 5, 2015, http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/25/us/navajos-to-get-554-million-to-settle-suit-against-us.html?_r=0. See Donovan Quintero, “Deschene disqualified, has 10 days to appeal,” *Navajo Times* (Gallup, New Mexico), October 9, 2014, accessed December 1, 2015, <http://navajotimes.com/rezpolitics/election2014/deschene-disqualified-10-days-appeal/#.VI3eBGSrRdg>; see also Cindy Yurth, “EPA admin: Gold King Spill ‘Heartbreaking,’” *Navajo Times* (Durango, Colorado), August 13, 2015, accessed December 1, 2015, <http://navajotimes.com/reznews/epa-admin-gold-king-spill-heartbreaking/#.VI3fL2SrRdg>.

County, New Mexico, and for other purposes.”⁵⁵⁹ The Iyanbito CLUPC and other Navajo chapters in the eastern region of the reservation have embraced the bill, seeking support and consensus from the Navajo Nation. On September 19, 2015, King stood before the representatives of the Western Navajo Agency in Leupp, Arizona to request “a supporting resolution towards the return of Ft. Wingate lands back to Navajo.” Someone in the meeting questioned, “Why does a chapter in New Mexico want our support, from us (western Navajo)?” The President of the Western Navajo Agency responded, “Although they are from Eastern Navajo in New Mexico, they are Diné. And we as all Diné must work together.” The president emphasized, “We are all Diné.” Everyone applauded and voted to pass the resolution.⁵⁶⁰

King explained,

The old military army depot and the land holds a lot of sacred sites and that is also where homes, livestock, and people have either been killed or imprisoned due to the scorched earth campaign, which led to the Long Walk and the Treaty of 1868. Yet, in recent, it also holds the place where the first Navajo Code Talkers were enlisted. But bottom line, history, oral and written stated that all land will be returned to the Navajo after which the U.S. army concludes its use of the area.⁵⁶¹

King outlines the history of Fort Wingate to illustrate how the lands remained part of *Diné Bikéyah* despite these changes through time. He and other Navajos now seek to reclaim it through the institutional procedures and structures of U.S. law and land titles. They change and decide their path as a people, following the earth memory compass

⁵⁵⁹ Anne Minard, “Fort Wingate Back to Indian Country: Pueblo Say ‘Yes,’ Navajo Nation Says ‘Maybe,’” *Indian Country*, July 23, 2015, accessed online September 20, 2015, <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2015/07/23/fort-wingate-back-indian-country-pueblo-say-yes-navajo-nation-says-maybe-161166>.

⁵⁶⁰ Travis King’s *Facebook* page, accessed September 20, 2015, <https://www.facebook.com/travis.king.73307?fref=ts>.

⁵⁶¹ Facebook, Inc.

according to the embeddedness of the land in relation to their identity and nationhood. Thus, they know “We are all Diné.”

This study traces the historical developments and patterns of Diné collective identity through student oral histories and perspectives. This approach emphasizes how educational experiences from the past century shaped Navajo values and epistemologies that drive their decision-making. Although their life journeys may disorient them, Navajos return to the earth memory compass that they inherited from their people to form their own paths home. Hopi-Hopi’s journey epitomizes the earth memory compass. He knew the “direction that he came from” when he ran away as a boy from the Santa Fe Indian School in the early twentieth century. He looked to the skies and earth and said, “this is the way that . . . I know my way back to my home.”⁵⁶²

The four directions underlay the framework of this narrative, directing towards *Si’ah Naaghái Bik’eh Hózhó*. They also constitute the earth memory compass, which Navajos remembered to find their ways home from distant education that continued to affect their communities into the late twentieth century. The four main chapters focus on time periods and regions of student and educational history on the Navajo reservation, which correlate with the sacred directions, mountains, and the earth memory compass. Navajos internalize this earth memory compass in various forms, especially through song.

⁵⁶² Hopi-Hopi, interview by Tom Ration, January 1969, transcript, roll 1, tape 362, American Indian Oral History Collection [microfilm], Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico, accessed at Labriola National American Indian Data Center, Hayden Library, Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona.

In college, I started learning *Diné bizaad* and singing my own songs in Navajo with friends. I would learn the lyrics by memory and not fully understand the meaning of the words. I learned a modernized version of a theme repeated in many prayers, songs, and poetry about the sacred mountains. Navajo singer and musician Sharon Burch popularizes this song, “Sacred Mountains- Dził Dadiyinii” in her album *Yazzie Girl* (1993). I only recently identified the song as a medium of transferring the earth memory compass. My Diné family would hear me sing it and say, “That is what grandfather would sing.”⁵⁶³

The verses name all the mountains and their adornments—materials including white shell, turquoise, abalone, and black jet. It then repeats the central Diné philosophy of *Si’ah Naaghái Bik’eh Hózhó*, which translates as “to live a long life in beauty and happiness.” The word “naaghái” affiliates with “walking,” which bears the image of a life journey. Navajos are known for the philosophy of “Walk in Beauty.” If a Navajo abides by the laws and guides of the four directions, they may “walk in beauty” and towards *hózhó*. I did not recognize that I was also singing a rendition of my father’s “Honor Song,” which he learned from his father.

An accompanying verse and image of “Sacred Mountains- *Dził Dadiyinii*” presents each direction and mountain of the dissertation parts.

Ha’a’ah

East: Teachings Immemorial

Díí Sinaajini Yoolgai Dziłí
*Sa’ah naagháiyee’ bik’eh hózhóqgo.*⁵⁶⁴
 harmony.

Blanca Peak, White Shell Mountain
 Sacred symbol of everlasting

⁵⁶³ Personal family observations.

⁵⁶⁴ Sharon Burch, “Sacred Mountains- *Dził Dadiyinii*,” in *Yazzie Girl*, Canyon Records, 1993.



21. The East

East: Teachings Immemorial

- Ha'a'ach
- Sis Naalini
- White
- Dawn
- Thinking
- Infancy
- Spring
- Teachings
- Clans
- White Shell
- Father



22. East: Teachings Immemorial

The East is the beginning, the dawn, as the image of the sunrise on *Sis Naajini* shows.⁵⁶⁵ Navajos have aspired to teach their children the earth memory compass beginning in *Ha'a'aaah*, the East, which represents the thinking part of intellectual processes, *Nitsáhákees*, and early learning. Oral histories and traditions from various parts of the Navajo reservation reveal common values that constitute and advance the earth memory compass through mediums such as song, objects, and ceremony. Beginning with the East, Hasteen Nez's father blessed him as an infant towards each of the four directions. As a medium of the earth memory compass, he remembered the prayer throughout his life because of his ties to family and home.⁵⁶⁶ The earth memory compass teaches Navajos their way home and how to connect with their people and ways of life.



23. The South

Shádi'ááh

South: Interwar Crownpoint

*K'ad Tsoodzilí, Dootl'izhii Dzilí
Sa'qh naagháiyee' bik'eh hózhóqo.*

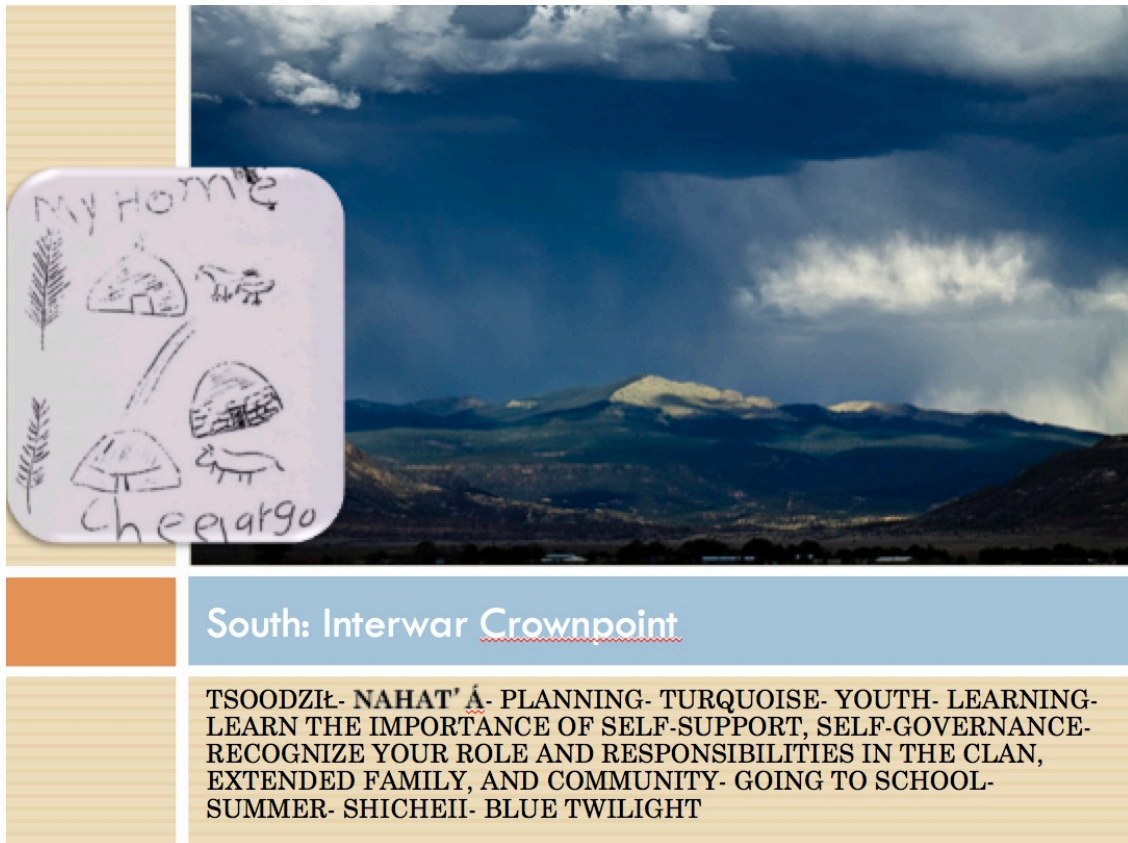
Mount Taylor, Turquoise Mountain
Sacred symbol of everlasting harmony.

⁵⁶⁵ These original paintings are on display at the Crownpoint Senior Citizen Center, hanging on the walls according to the proper directions. The only identification is the signature of "Bronco, '94."

⁵⁶⁶ Joe Joshie, interview by Tom Ration, February 1969, transcript, roll 2, tape 340, American Indian Oral History Collection [microfilm], Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico, accessed at Labriola National American Indian Data Center, Hayden Library, Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona.

The South, *Shádi'ááh*, represents the youthful and experimental stage of life, the planning or *Nahat'á*. The earliest schooling experiences of Navajos predate the twentieth century, but significant efforts to implement widespread Navajo institutionalized education did not begin until the Indian New Deal. Crownpoint has proximity to Mount Taylor, the sacred mountain of the South, and federal experiments with Navajo education, especially with day schools and on-reservation boarding schools such as the Crownpoint Boarding School, characterized the interwar period. The interwar experiences of Crownpoint boarding schoolchildren illuminate the adolescence of Diné schooling programs. Intergenerational perspectives of the school reveal meanings of the student experiences as a “metaphor,” which affects multiple generations for better or worse.⁵⁶⁷ In the *Shádi'ááh* phase of Navajo schooling, Navajos faced challenges to their earth memory compass, despite federal officials' claims to protect Native American heritage and culture.

⁵⁶⁷ Brenda J. Child, “The Boarding School as Metaphor,” in *Indian Subject: Hemispheric Perspectives on the History of Indigenous Education*, eds. Brenda J. Child and Brian Klopotek (Santa Fe: School for Advanced Research Press, 2014), 267.

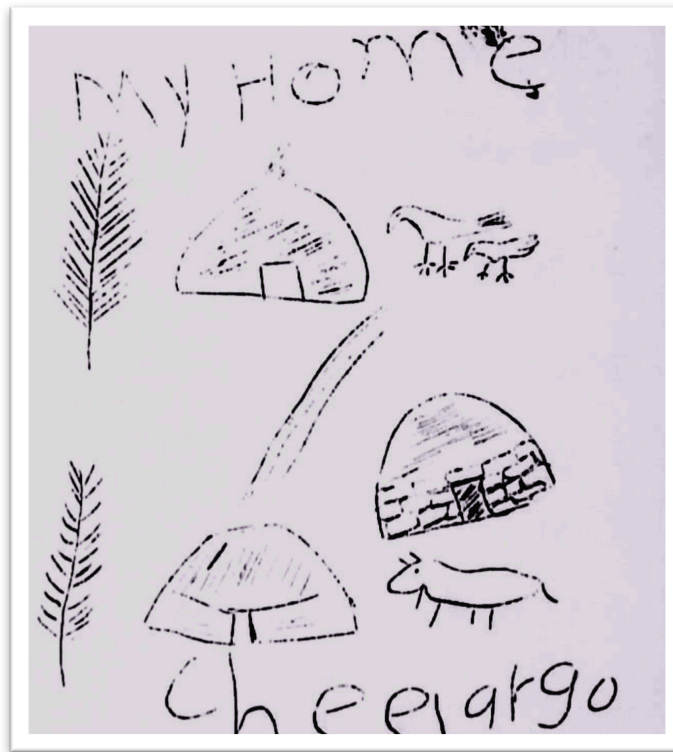


24. South: Interwar Crownpoint

During the interwar era, Indian education as directed by the federal government emphasized “teaching the Native to be Native,” but still prioritized certain agenda such as preparing “good citizens” of Indian youth that would contradict Navajo ways of life such as the teachings of soil erosion and livestock reduction. One young boy, Wilfred Martino, explained how he was learning to teach soil erosion to his Navajo community as part of “learning to be a good citizen.”⁵⁶⁸ Such contradictions marked the *Shádi’ááh* stage of Navajo student experiences. A drawing from a boarding school student at Crownpoint depicts his home. Chee Largo includes images of the *hooghan* and livestock, which

⁵⁶⁸ Wilfred Martino, “Home One Assembly Program,” *Crownpoint News*, April 1939, p. 13, ISC, UNM.

embodied the symbols of the sacred directions and mountains even if the child may not have fully understood them at the time.⁵⁶⁹ Nonetheless, the child remembered these emblems of the compass, illustrating the perseverance of the earth memories and ties to home.



25. Chee Largo, "My Home"



26. The West

⁵⁶⁹ Chee Largo, "My Home," Kindergarten, *Crownpoint News* no. 2, November 1938, image 47, box 1, ISC, UNM.

'E'e'aah

West: Postwar Tuba City and Leupp

Dook'o'oolídi, Diichilí Dzilí.
Sa'qh naagháiyee' bik'eh hózhóogo.

Francisco Peaks, Abalone Shell Mountain
Sacred symbol of everlasting harmony.

West: Postwar Tuba City & Leupp



27. West: Postwar Tuba City and Leupp

'E'e'aah, the West, represents a stage of maturity, adulthood, and living or *'íiná*. It is a time of implementation from the thoughts and plans of the previous phases. This part of the Navajo student historical narrative emphasizes the intensification of Navajo schooling in the postwar period, when Diné youth start to attend schools at rates never reached before that time. The Navajo program in education sends them to schools far away from home and opens some schools like the Intermountain Indian School specifically for Diné students in the 1950s, while other Indian boarding schools had been closed for a couple decades. In Tuba City and Leupp, the West of Navajo land, Diné

youth still struggled in boarding schools either far or near their home between the 1950s and 1960s, escalating with cases such as the “Leupp Incident.” Navajo communities and families sought to intervene and shape the schooling experiences of their children, which transitioned to Diné leadership in self-determination and tribal education. The Diné would redress the imbalances that consumed their children such as the innocent Doris Sunshine, by seeking *hózhó* and reclaiming their education.



28. The North

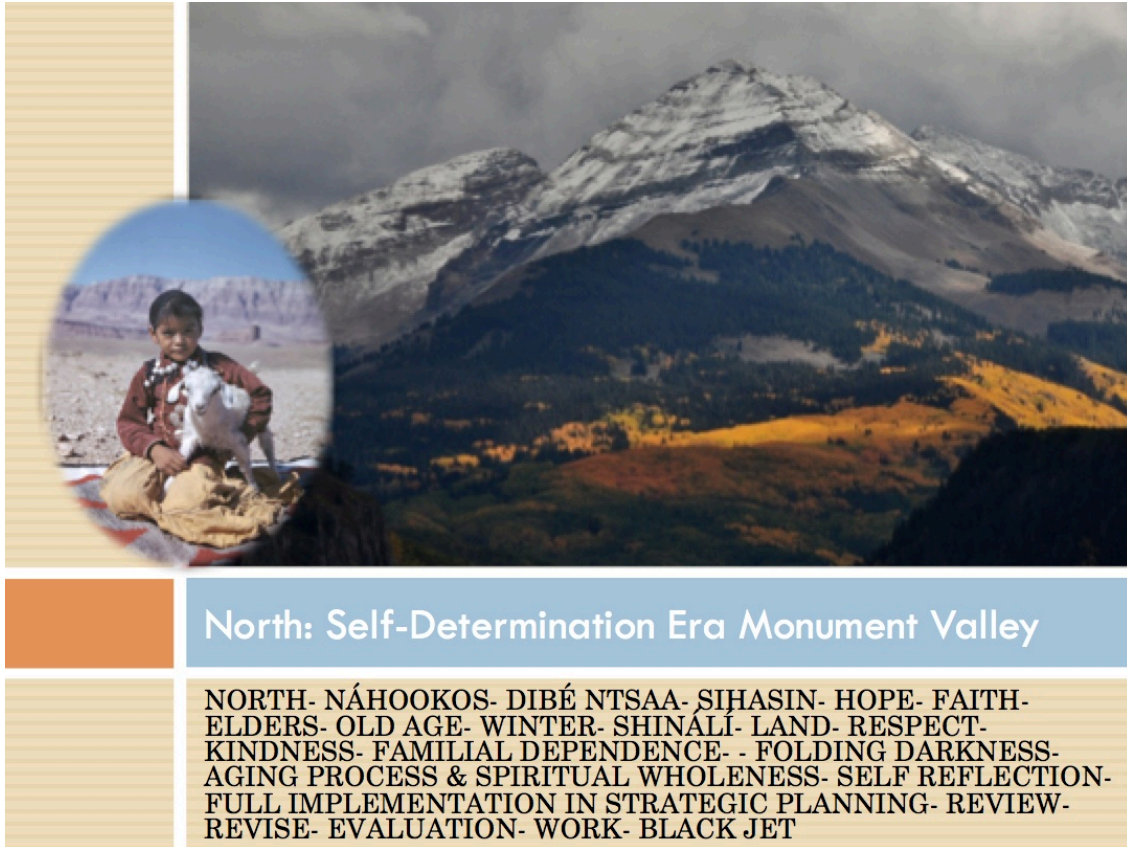
Náhookqos

North: Self-Determination Era Monument Valley

*Dibé Nitsaai yee', Bááshzhinii Dzili.
Sa'qh naagháiyee' bik'eh hózhóqgo.*

Mount Hesperus, Black Jet Mountain
Sacred symbol of everlasting harmony.⁵⁷⁰

⁵⁷⁰ “Sharon Burch- Yazzie Girl,” in “Learning & Perpetuating the Navajo Language,” *Navajo Now*, accessed October 5, 2015, <http://navajonow.com/links-2/lyrics/sharon-burch-yazzie-girl/>.



29. North: Self-Determination Era Monument Valley

The North, marked by the Hesperus Peak, *Dibé Nitsaa*, and its black jet, reaches the self-determination era of Navajo education and explores the student experiences in the northern region of the reservation in Monument Valley. Navajo youth from Monument Valley participated in various schooling programs. Many Navajo students were mobile, often uprooting from one schooling system to the next, whether it included boarding schools, public schools, or denominational programs. The local Navajo schools in Monument Valley were established through the students' trials with distant education, which contributed to the development of sovereign Diné education. Through *Sih Hasin*, the Old Age of Navajo educational history, and the sense of hope and faith in the possibilities of the process, Navajos navigated and redirected the education of their youth

in a changing world, penetrated by external influences. The cycle of the sacred directions comes full circle in the North, but it does not end.

I have heard the “call for change” and for Indigenous paradigms, and I answer them for myself, my people, and to bridge different peoples.⁵⁷¹ The Navajo intellectual tradition of the four directions guides this study and frames the narrative so that I write a Navajo history from their voices and perspectives. Following the compass of ancestral teachings, this study points to new directions in hybridizing academic and Diné histories. Some Navajos speak of seven sacred directions, which include going upwards, downwards, and inwards. There are sacred mountains within the four outlying ones including Huerfano Mountain and Gobernador Knob.

During a time of great chaos and uncertainty, First Man found Changing Woman, *Asdzáá Nádleehé*, as a baby on *Ch'óol'íí*, or Gobernador Knob. She was lying in a cradleboard with her feet towards the east and her head towards the west. “Four blankets covered the baby,” each representing the colors of the sacred directions and mountains, white, blue, yellow, and black.⁵⁷² She would become mother to all Navajos. First Man and First Woman raised her on *Dzilna'oodilii*, or Huerfano Mesa.⁵⁷³ *Asdzáá Nádleehé* personifies the earth memory compass, as “the earth and its life-giving, life sustaining,

⁵⁷¹ Donald Fixico, *Call for Change: The Medicine Way of American Indian History, Ethos, and Reality* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2013), ix.

⁵⁷² Van Valenburgh (1941, 66) cited in Laurance D. Linford, *Navajo Places: History, Legend, Landscape* (Salt Lake City, Utah: University of Utah Press, 2000), 215.

⁵⁷³ Robert A. Roessel, Jr., *Dinéah: Navajo History Vol. II* (Rough Rock, Arizona: Navajo Curriculum Center and Title IV-B Materials Development Project, Rough Rock Demonstration School, 1983), 3.

and life-producing qualities are associated with and derived from Changing Woman.⁵⁷⁴

The earth and oral traditions are the sources of memories and knowledge that orient Navajos as a people. The sacred directions all connect to guide Navajos towards *Si'ah Naaghái Bik'eh Hózhó* and to maintain certain relationships and their dynamics with all things considered metaphysical as well as physical.

Internal as well as external forces are constantly challenging Navajo identity such as the recent debates about the disqualification of Navajo presidential candidate Chris Deschene for not being a fluent Navajo speaker. In 2014, the Navajo Supreme Court made the following remarks, translated by the *Navajo Times* in the following:

Naat'áanii dajilínígííshíí baa txíísh dookahgo, niha'álchíní ínáhwíidool'áál dóó bizaad yaa'ákónízin, yidiits'a' dóó yee nihishjizh, nihił hahodiilaago biniinaa nihizaad nihił ch'aa siljí' dóó nihił nantł'á siljí'; éí biniinaa nihi beehaz'áanii, nihizaad dóó nihee'ó'ool'jí éí ak'i hahiiláago ándoolniil hwiidzin. Azhášhíí ákót'éigo t'ahdii ana'á k'ehgo nihił haz'áandi nihizaad éí doo nihił ch'aa dooleelá. Nee'niji' t'áá'áníit'é nihizaad bee Diné náániidłjí dooleel. Hózhó Náhodoodléel.

Because we were colonized through assimilation we have started losing our language and it has become difficult to speak; we want to keep our Navajo way of life, our language, our prayers and songs, alive. Even though it seems we have made enemies of one another, we will not lose our ways. Through our language, we will always be Diné. Everything will be beautiful again.⁵⁷⁵

Navajos continue to struggle defining themselves in changing times, but they understand the significance of the earth memory compass and its mediums such as *Diné bizaad* in upholding their nationhood.

⁵⁷⁴ Gary Witherspoon, *Language and Art in the Navajo Universe* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1977) 141.

⁵⁷⁵ “After deciding to postpone the election in a 2-1 vote, the Navajo Supreme Court has also written its ruling, a plea to the people of the Navajo Nation,” *Navajo Times*, October 23, 2014, accessed 23 October 2014, *Navajo Times* Facebook page.

One of my elders who has since passed on, Albert Smith, once referred to earthly disasters to describe the cycles of life journeys that apply to this rendering of the earth memory compass in the historical experiences of Diné students:

[There are disturbances in nature] . . . be careful . . . volcanoes, they might be waking up too . . . you know why it is happening. They say, some of us Americans and the rest of the world do not have any spiritual outlook. Some of them do not care about their next state. It is just one day at a time. So, those things are disturbing all the way up . . . all planets. . . . I don't want you to be scared. I want you to think about more than just tomorrow, to look beyond that. You are still scared of the child. That is your strength. So continue, your outlook and beyond. I talk like this because many of you call me 'grandpa' because of this one. . . . I pray for you. . . . I talk to my spiritual father.⁵⁷⁶

I continue to ponder the words of my elders such as Uncle Albert. I look beyond the past and “just tomorrow” with this work by focusing on the experiences of “the child.”

My father, Phillip Smith, told me that the Four Directions process “is like a whirlwind. It does not end but goes on and on.”⁵⁷⁷ Although this dissertation concludes, the Diné journey of education is an unfinished story with many storms ahead, while the earth memory compass is still intact. The compass begins East, *Ha'a'aah*, again towards *Si'ah Naaghái Bik'eh Hózhó*. We begin with a prayer, and we return to the last phrase of a prayer when Navajos repeat “Hózhó nahasdlii” four times, which “expresses a feeling of the restoration of hózhó, meaning something like ‘the world is hózhó again.’”⁵⁷⁸ We turn to the child again for harmony towards *Si'ah Naaghái Bik'eh Hózhó*.

Turning to the child is an act of remembering our beginnings. Remembering internalizes both knowledge and experiences. Repetitions and reinforcements of the earth

⁵⁷⁶ Albert Smith, Utah Valley University, Orem, Utah, November 11, 2011.

⁵⁷⁷ Personal conversation between author and Phillip Smith (author's father), October 2014.

⁵⁷⁸ Philmer Bluehouse and James W. Zion, “Hózhójí Naat'aanii: The Navajo Justice and Harmony Ceremony,” in *Navajo Nation Peacemaking: Living Traditional Justice*, eds. Marianne O. Nielsen and James W. Zion (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2005), 160.

memory compass enable Navajos to remember the ancestral teachings of the four directions and *hózhó. Hózhó nahasdlii. Hózhó nahasdlii. Hózhó nahasdlii. Hózhó nahasdlii.*

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

Archival Sources

American Indian Oral History Collection, 1967-1977. Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Indian Schools Collection, 1929-1945. Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Leupp Indian School Correspondence, 1911-1922. Arizona Historical Society Archives, Tucson, Arizona.

Utah Navajos, Duke Oral History Project, Marriott Special Collections, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Federal and State Agency Records

Albuquerque Indian School Student Case Files, School Folders, 1886-1954. Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75. National Archives and Records Administration—Rocky Mountain Region (Denver, Colorado).

Central Classified Files, 1907-39, Navajo. Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75. National Archives Building, Washington, DC.

Western Navajo Agency, School Program Files, 1961. Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75. National Archives and Records Administration—Rocky Mountain Region, Denver, Colorado.

U.S. and State Government Documents

Reports

Meriam, Lewis. *The Problem of Indian Administration: Report of a survey made at the request of Hubert Work, Secretary of the Interior, and submitted to him February 21, 1928*. Baltimore, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1928.

Minimum Essential Goals: Special Five Year Adolescent Navajo Program, Part One, Second Edition. Branch of Education, Department of the Interior—Bureau of Indian Affairs, 1952.

The Navajo Indian Problem, an Inquiry Sponsored by the Phelps-Stokes Fund. New York: Phelps-Stokes Fund, 1939.

Court files and reports, In the United States District Court for the District of Utah, Central Division, *Sinajini, et. al. v. Board of Education of the San Juan District, et. al.*, Civil No. C-74-346, 1974-1993, Box 1, Utah District Court files, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Laws, Bills, and Resolutions

Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, 78 Stat. 508 (1964).

House Concurrent Resolution 108, 67 Stat. B122 (1953).

Indian Adult Vocational Training Act of 1956, Public Law 84-959, 25 U.S.C. 309, 70 Stat. 986 (1956).

Indian Education Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1975, 25 U.S.C. 450 (1975).

Indian Reorganization Act, 25 U.S.C. 7 (1934).

Johnson-O'Malley Act, 25 U.S.C. 452-457 (1934).

Court Cases

Sinajini, et. al. v. Board of Education of the San Juan District, et. al., No. 74-346, 1975 U.S. District LEXIS 15526 (D. Utah October 31, 1975).

Meyers v. Board of Education, 905 F. Supp. 1544 (D. Utah 1995).

Navajo and other tribal documents

Diné Cultural Content Standards for Students, “*T’áá Shá Bik’ehgo Diné Bí Ná nitin dóó íhoo’ aah.*” Window Rock, Arizona: Office of Diné Culture, Language, & Community Service, Division of Diné Education, 1998.

Leupp, Meeting Reports, 1962-1965. Navajo Nation Special Collections, Navajo Nation Museum and Library, Window Rock, Arizona.

Treaty Between the United States of America and the Navajo Tribe of Indians, With a record of the discussions that led to its signing. Las Vegas: K.C. Publications, 1968.

Newspaper Articles

Lichtenstein, Grace. “In Utah School District, Busing Means a 2 ½-Hour Ride.” *The New York Times*, 24 September 1975.

Perry, Leonard, ed. "Crownpoint New Mexico: Past and Present as viewed through the *Crownpoint Baahane* 'Newsletter'" (Volume 1), self-published, 2009-2011.

Reid, Betty. "Homesick Students Walked both Worlds: Natives Look Back at being sent off to Indian Schools." *Arizona Republic*, 19 November 2000.

Taliman, Valerie. "Settlement: Utah Navajo get school." *Indian Country Today*, 23 December 1996.

Tohtsoni, Nathan J. "'Keeping the Past': Leupp Students bring history to life." *Navajo Times*, 21 December 2000.

Yurth, Cindy. "After 20 years of litigation, ground broken for new school." *Navajo Times*, 21 January 2010.

Oral History Interviews and Oral History Sources

Angle, Bob, interviewed by author, 7 May 2015, Monument Valley, Utah.

Atene, Delphine, interviewed by author, 12 July 2015, Monument Valley, Utah.

Atene, Rena, interviewed by author, 9 May 2015, Monument Valley Tribal Park, Arizona.

Begay, Robert L., interviewed by author, 9 July 2015, Tuba City, Arizona.

Bahe, Lola, interviewed by author, 29 May 2015, Leupp, Arizona.

Billie, Pauleen, interviewed by author, 29 June 2015, Crownpoint, New Mexico.

Black, Roy, interviewed by author, 12 July 2015, Monument Valley, Utah.

Cody, Nelson, interviewed by author, 10 July 2015, Leupp, Arizona.

Collins, Martha, interviewed by author, 3 July 2015, Monument Valley, Utah.

Collins, Sherril, interviewed by author, 2 July 2015, Monument Valley, Utah.

Dickson, Geraldine, interviewed by author, 11 July 2015, Leupp, Arizona.

Goldtooth, Mary Lou, interviewed by author, 9 May 2015, Tuba City, Arizona.

Holiday, Garry, interviewed by author, 7 May 2015, Monument Valley, Utah.

Holiday, Kee, interviewed by author, 4 July 2015, Kayenta, Arizona.

Holiday, Jesse, interviewed by author, 7 May 2015, Monument Valley, Utah.

Holiday, Marie, interviewed by author, 7 May 2015, Monument Valley, Utah.

Hopi-Hopi, interviewed by Tom Ration, January 1969, Manuelito, New Mexico, transcript, roll 1, tape 362, American Indian Oral History Collection, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Joshie, Joe, interviewed by Tom Ration, February 1969, transcript, roll 2, tape 340, American Indian Oral History Collection, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Kelly, Eunice B., interviewed by author, 29 May 2015, Leupp, Arizona.

King, Phyllis, interviewed by author, 8 December 2007, Iyanbito, New Mexico; Latter-day Saint Native American Oral History Project, Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

Largo, Jimmie, interviewed by author, 30 June 2015, Crownpoint, New Mexico.

Livingston, Ilene, interviewed by author, 2 July 2015, Monument Valley, Utah.

Livingston, Ilene and Sherril Collins, interviewed by author, 2 July 2015, Monument Valley, Utah.

Nez, Avyleni Greyeyes, interviewed by author, 6 May 2015, Tuba City, Arizona.

Nez, Donald, interviewed by author, 9 July 2015, Tuba City, Arizona.

Pat, Gene, interviewed by author, 28 June 2015, Breadsprings, New Mexico.

Pat, Lucinda, interviewed by author, 28 June 2015, Breadsprings, New Mexico.

Ration, Tom, interviewed by Terry Lee Carroll, 1969, transcript only, reel 1, tape 358A, American Indian Oral History Collection, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Shorty, Irene, interviewed by Gary Shumway, 1968, Bluff, Utah; no. 473, Utah Navajos, Duke Oral History Project, Marriott Special Collections, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Smith, Albert, interviewed by author, 5 March 2005, Gallup, New Mexico.

_____, interviewed by author, 11 November 2011, Orem, Utah.

Smith, George, interviewed by author, 10 June 2008, Rehoboth, New Mexico.

Smith, Merrill, interviewed by author, 8 May 2015, Monument Valley, Utah.

Swenson, Eric, interviewed by author, 16 June 2015, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Swenson, Lorinda, interviewed by author, 24 June 2015, Tempe, Arizona.

Tommy, Laura, interviewed by author, 30 June 2015, Rehoboth, New Mexico.

Valentine, Lucy, interviewed by author, 13 July 2015, Monument Valley, Utah.

Secondary Sources

Books

- Adams, David Wallace. *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1995.
- Alvord, Lori Arviso and Elizabeth Cohen Van Pelt. *The Scalpel and the Silver Bear: The First Navajo Woman Surgeon Combines Western Medicine and Traditional Healing*. New York: Bantam Books, 2000.
- Archuleta, Margaret L., Brenda Child, and K. Tsianina Lomawaima, eds., *Away from Home: American Indian Boarding School Experiences*. Phoenix: Heard Museum, 2004.
- Aronilth, Wilson. *Diné Bi Bee Ohoo'aah Ba'Sila: An Introduction to Navajo Philosophy*. Many Farms, Arizona: Diné Community College Press, 1994.
- Baars, Donald. *Navajo Country: A Geology and Natural History of the Four Corners Region*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995.
- Bahr, Diana Meyers. *The Students of Sherman Indian School: Education and Native Identity Since 1892*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2014.
- Basso, Keith. *Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language among the Western Apache*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996.
- _____ and Steven Feld, eds. *Senses of Place*. Santa Fe, New Mexico: School for Advanced Research Press, 1999.
- Bhabha, Homi. *The Location of Culture*. New York: Routledge, 1994.
- Bighorse, Tiana, Noël Bennett, and Barry Lopez. *Bighorse the Warrior*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1994.

- Bingham, Sam and Janet. *Navajo Farming*. Chinle, Arizona: Rock Point Community School, 1979.
- Boyce, George Arthur. *When Navajos Had Too Many Sheep: The 1940's*. San Francisco, California: The Indian Historian Press, 1974.
- Brugge, Doug, Timothy Benally, and Esther Yazzie-Lewis. *The Navajo People and Uranium Mining*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2007.
- Cahill, Cathleen D. *Federal Fathers and Mothers: A Social History of the United States Indian Service, 1869-1933*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2011.
- Cajete, Gregory. *Look to the Mountain: An Ecology of Indigenous Education*. Skyland, North Carolina: Kivaki Press, 1997.
- Chamberlain, Kathleen P. *Under Sacred Ground: A History of Navajo Oil, 1922-1982*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2000.
- Child, Brenda J. *Boarding School Seasons: American Indian Families, 1900-1940*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998.
- _____ and Brian Klopotek, eds. *Indian Subjects: Hemispheric Perspectives on the History of Indigenous Education*. Santa Fe: School for Advanced Research Press, 2014.
- Coleman, Michael C. *American Indian Children at School, 1850-1930*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1993.
- Comaroff, Jean. *Body of Power, Spirit of Resistance: The Culture and History of a South African People*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985.
- Cooper, Frederick. *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005.
- Davies, Wade. *Healing Ways: Navajo Health Care in the Twentieth Century*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2001.
- Davis, Julie L. *Survival Schools: The American Indian Movement and Community Education in the Twin Cities*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013.
- De Lange, Deborah E. *Power and Influence: The Embeddedness of Nations*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.
- Deloria, Vine. *Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2014 [originally published 1969].

- _____ and Daniel Wildcat. *Power and Place: Indian Education in America*. Golden, Colorado: Fulcrum Publishing, 2001.
- Denetdale, Jennifer Nez. *Reclaiming Diné History: The Legacies of Navajo Chief Manuelito and Juanita*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2007.
- Deyhle, Donna. *Reflections in Place: Connected Lives of Navajo Women*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2009.
- Duthu, N. Bruce. *Shadow Nations: Tribal Sovereignty and the Limits of Legal Pluralism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- Eck, Norman K. *Contemporary Navajo Affairs: Navajo History* [Volumes I, II, III]. Navajo Curriculum Center, Rough Rock School, Arizona, 1982.
- Ellis, Clyde. *To Change Them Forever: Indian Education at Rainy Mountain Boarding School, 1893-1920*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996.
- Farella, John R. *The Main Stalk: A Synthesis of Navajo Philosophy*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1984.
- Fixico, Donald. *The American Indian Mind in a Linear World: American Indian Studies and Traditional Knowledge*. New York: Routledge, 2003.
- _____. *Call for Change: The Medicine Way of American Indian History, Ethos, and Reality*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2013.
- _____. *Indian Resilience and Rebuilding: Indigenous Nations in the Modern American West*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2013.
- _____. *Termination and Relocation: Federal Indian Policy, 1945-1960*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1986.
- Frisch, Michael. *A Shared Authority: Essays on the Craft and Meaning of Oral and Public History*. Buffalo, New York: SUNY Press, 1990.
- Gold, Peter. *Navajo and Tibetan Sacred Wisdom: The Circle of the Spirit*. Rochester, Vermont: Inner Traditions, 1994.
- Geertz, Clifford. *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*. New York: Basic Books, 1973.
- Gilbert, Matthew Sakiestewa. *Education Beyond the Mesas: Hopi Studies at Sherman Institute, 1902-1929*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010.

- Gill, S.D. *Sacred Words: A Study of Navajo Religion and Prayer: Contributions in Intercultural and Comparative Studies*. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1981.
- Gulloy, Eva and Karen Fog Olwig. *Children's Places: Cross-cultural Perspectives*. New York: Routledge, 2003.
- Hadley, Linda and Roger Hathale, *Hózhó'jí hane: Blessingway*. Rough Rock, Arizona: Rough Rock Demonstration School, 1986.
- Halpern, Katherine Spencer and Susan Brown McGreevy. *Washington Matthews: Studies of Navajo Culture, 1880-1894*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1997.
- Hartog, Cocola. *Indian Mission Sketches: Descriptions and Views of Navajo Life in the Rehoboth Mission School and Stations, Tohatchi and Zuni*. Gallup, New Mexico: Self-published, 1910-1911.
- Hoare, Quintin and Geoffrey Newell Smith, eds. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. New York: International Publishers, 1971.
- Houk, Rose. *Navajo of Canyon de Chelly: In Home God's Fields*. Tucson: Southwest Parks and Monuments Association, 1995.
- House, Deborah. *Language Shift among the Navajos: Identity Politics and Cultural Continuity*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2002.
- Hoxie, Frederick E. *A Final Promise: The Campaign to Assimilate the Indians, 1880-1920*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984.
- Hyer, Sally. *One House, One Voice, One Heart: Native American Education at the Santa Fe Indian School*. Santa Fe: Museum of New Mexico Press, 1990.
- Iverson, Peter. *Diné: A History of the Navajos*. Albuquerque, New Mexico: University of New Mexico Press, 2002.
- _____, ed. *'For Our Navajo People': Diné Letters, Speeches, and Petitions, 1900-1960*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2002.
- _____. *The Navajo Nation*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1981.
- Jacobs, Margaret D. *White Mother to a Dark Race: Settler Colonialism, Maternalism, and the Removal of Indigenous Children in the American West and Australia, 1880-1940*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011.

- Katanski, Amelia V. *Learning to Write "Indian": The Boarding School Experience and American Indian Literature*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2007.
- Kelly, Lawrence C. *The Navajo Indians and Federal Indian Policy, 1900-1935*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1968.
- Lefebvre, Henri. *The Production of Space*. Translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith. Malden, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers, 1991.
- Lee, Lloyd L. *Dine Masculinities: Conceptualizations and Reflections*. North Charleston, South Carolina: Createspace Independent Publishing Platform, 2013.
- Lee, Lloyd L., ed. *Diné Perspectives: Revitalizing and Reclaiming Navajo Thought*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2014.
- Linford, Laurance D. *Navajo Places: History, Legend, Landscape*. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2000.
- Locke, Raymond Friday. *The Book of the Navajo*. New York: Holloway House Publishing, 2001.
- Lomawaima, K. Tsianina. *They Called it Prairie Light: The Story of Chilocco Indian School*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995.
- _____ and Teresa L. McCarty. *"To Remain Indian": Lessons in Democracy from a Century of Native American Education*. New York: Teachers College Press, 2006.
- Matthews, Washington. *Navaho Legends*. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1994.
- McCarty, Teresa L. *A Place to be Navajo: Rough Rock and the Struggle for Self-Determination in Indigenous Schooling*. New York: Routledge, 2002.
- McCloskey, Joanne. *Living Through the Generations: Continuity and Change in Navajo Women's Lives*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2007.
- McCullough-Brabson, Ellen. *We'll be in your Mountains, We'll be in Your Songs: A Navajo Woman Sings*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2001.
- McMillen, Christian W. *Making Indian Law: the Hualapai Land Case and the Birth of Ethnohistory*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007.
- McPherson, Robert S. *Dinéjí Na'Nitin: Navajo Traditional Teachings and History*. Boulder, Co.: University Press of Colorado, 2012.

- _____. *Navajo Land, Navajo Culture: The Utah Experience in the Twentieth Century*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2001.
- _____. *Sacred Land, Sacred View: Navajo Perceptions of the Four Corners Region*. Provo, Utah: Charles Redd Center for Western Studies, 1992.
- _____, Jim Dandy, and Sarah E. Burak. *Navajo Tradition, Mormon Life: The Autobiography and Teachings of Jim Dandy*. Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 2012.
- Morris, Irvin. *From the Glittering World: A Navajo Story*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2000.
- Parman, Donald L. *The Navajos and the New Deal*. New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1976.
- Peshkin, Alan. *Places of Memory: Whiteman's Schools and Native American Communities*. New York: Routledge, 1997.
- Prucha, Paul. *The Churches and the Indian Schools, 1888-1912*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1979.
- Reed, Douglas S. *Building the Federal Schoolhouse: Localism and the American Education State*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014.
- Reichard, Gladys Amanda. *Prayer: The Compulsive World*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1944.
- Roessel, Robert A. *Dinétah: Navajo History Vol. II*. Rough Rock, Arizona: Navajo Curriculum Center and Title IV-B Materials Development Project, Rough Rock Demonstration School, 1983.
- _____. *Navajo Education, 1948-1978, Its Progress and Its Problems*. Rough Rock, Arizona: Navajo Curriculum Center, Rough Rock Demonstration School, 1979.
- Said, Edward. *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage Books, 1978.
- Schenk, Ronald. *Dark Light: The Appearance of Death in Everyday Life*. Albany, New York: SUNY Press, 2001.
- Schubnell, Matthias, ed. *Conversations with N. Scott Momaday*. Oxford, Mississippi: University of Mississippi Press, 1997.
- Schwarz, Maureen Trudelle. *Blood and Voice: Navajo Women Ceremonial Practitioners*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2003.

- _____. *"I Choose Life": Contemporary Medical and Religious Practices in the Navajo World*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2008.
- _____. *Molded in the Image of Changing Woman: Navajo Views on the Human Body and Personhood*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1997.
- _____. *Navajo Lifeways: Contemporary Issues, Ancient Knowledge*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2001.
- Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. *Can the Subaltern Speak?* New York: Columbia University Press, 2010.
- Smith, Linda Tuhiwai. *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. London: Zed Books, 1999.
- Stoler, Ann Laura. *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010.
- Szasz, Margaret Connell. *Education and the American Indian: The Road to Self-Determination since 1928*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1999.
- _____. *Indian Education in the American Colonies, 1607-1783*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1988.
- Tapahonso, Luci. *A Radiant Curve*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2008.
- Thompson, Hildegard. *The Navajos' Long Walk for Education: A History of Navajo Education= Diné Nizaagóó Iná bihoo 'aah yikánaaskai: Diné óhoot 'aahii baa hane'*. Tsaile Lake, Arizona: Navajo Community College Press, 1975.
- Tohe, Laura. *Nihizaad bee nidasii'baa': Code Talker Stories*. Tucson: Rio Nuevo Publishers, 2012.
- _____. *No Parole Today*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1999.
- Trafzer, Clifford E., Matthew Sakiestewa Gilbert and Loren Sisquoc. *The Indian School on Magnolia Avenue: Voices and Images from Sherman Institute*. Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2012.
- _____, Jean A. Keller, and Lorene Sisquoc, eds. *Boarding School Blues: Revisiting American Indian Educational Experiences*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006.
- Trennert, Robert A. *The Phoenix Indian School: Forced Assimilation in Arizona, 1891-1935*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988.

- _____. *White Man's Medicine: Government Doctors and the Navajo, 1863-1955*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1998.
- Tuan, Yi-Fu. *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977.
- Vansina, Jan. *Oral Tradition as History*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985.
- Vizenor, Gerald. *Fugitive Poses: Native American Indian Scenes of Absence and Presence*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000.
- _____, ed. *Survivance: Narratives of Native Presence*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008.
- Vuckovic, Myriam. *Voices from Haskell: Indian Students Between Two Workers, 1884-1928*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2008.
- Weisiger, Marsha. *Dreaming of Sheep in Navajo Country*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2009.
- White, Luise. *Speaking with Vampires: Rumor and History in Colonial Africa*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000.
- White, Richard. *The Roots of Dependency: Subsistence, Environment, and Social Change among the Choctaws, Pawnees, and Navajos*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1988.
- Wilkinson, Charles F. *Blood Struggle: The Rise of Modern Indian Nations*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2005.
- Wilson, Waziyatawin Angela, Michael Yellow Bird, and Angela Cavender, eds. *For Indigenous Eyes Only: A Decolonization Handbook*. Santa Fe, New Mexico: Wilson School of American Research Press, 2007.
- Witherspoon, Gary. *Language and Art in the Navajo Universe*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1977.
- _____. *Navajo Kinship and Marriage*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975.
- Woolford, Andrew. *This Benevolent Experiment: Indigenous Boarding Schools, Genocide, and Redress in Canada and the United States*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2015.

Wyman, Leland Clifton and Bernard Haile, *Blessingway*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1970.

Yazzie, Evangeline Parsons and Margaret Speas, eds. *Diné Bizaad Bínáhoo 'aah: Rediscovering the Navajo Language*. Flagstaff, Arizona: Salina Bookshelf, 2007.

Young, Robert W. and William Morgan, eds. *Colloquial Navajo: A Dictionary*. New York: Hippocrene Books, 1951.

Zah, Peterson and Peter Iverson. *We Will Secure Our Future: Empowering the Navajo Nation*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2012.

Zolbrod, Paul. *Diné Bahane': The Navajo Creation Story*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1984.

Journal Articles and Book Chapters

Baca, Lawrence R. "Meyers v. Board of Education: The Brown v. Board of Indian Country." *University of Illinois Law Review* 2004, no. 5 (October 2004): 1155-1180.

Begay, R. Cruz. "Changes in Childbirth Knowledge." *American Indian Quarterly* 28, no. 3 (Summer 2004): 550-565.

_____. "Navajo Birth: A Bridge Between the Past and the Future." In *Childbirth Across Cultures: Ideas and Practices of Pregnancy, Childbirth, and the Postpartum*, eds. Helaine Selin and Pamela Kendall Stone, 245-253. London: Springer, 2009.

Begay, Sara L., Mary Jimmie, and Louise Lockard. "Oral History Shares the Wealth of a Navajo Community." In *Nurturing Native Languages*, eds. J. Reyhner, O. Trujillo, R.L. Carrasco, and L. Lockard, 149-154. Flagstaff: Northern Arizona University Press, 2003.

Benally, AnCita, Stephen Wallace, Regina Hadley Lynch, and T.L. McCarty. "Classroom Inquiry and Navajo Learning Styles: A Call for Reassessment," *Anthropology and Education Quarterly* 22, issue 1 (1991): 42-59.

_____. and Peter Iverson. "Finding History," *Western Historical Quarterly* 36, issue 3 (October 2005): 353-358.

Blueeyes, George. "Sacred Mountains." In *Home Places: Contemporary Native American Writing from Sun Tracks*, eds. Ofelia Zepeda and Larry Evers, 7. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1995.

- Bluehouse, Philmer and James W. Zion. "Hózhóǫ́jí Naat'aanii: The Navajo Justice and Harmony Ceremony." In *Navajo Nation Peacemaking: Living Traditional Justice*, eds. Marianne O. Nielsen and James W. Zion, 156-164. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2005.
- Brady, Benjamin R. and Howard M. Bahr. "The Influenza Epidemic of 1918-1920 among the Navajos: Marginality, Mortality, and the Implications of Some Neglected Eyewitness Accounts." *American Indian Quarterly* 38, no. 4 (Fall 2014): 459-491.
- Braithwaite, Charles A. "Sa'ah Naaghái Bik'eh Házhóón: An Ethnography of Navajo Educational Communication Practices." Taylor & Francis Group, *Communication Education* 46, no. 4 (1997): 219-233.
- Brayboy, Bryan McKinley Jones, Heather R. Gough, Beth Leonard, Roy F. Roehl II, Jessica A. Solyom. "Reclaiming Scholarship: Critical Indigenous Research Methodologies." In *Qualitative Research: An Introduction to Methods and Designs*, eds. Stephen D. Lapan, Mary Lynn T. Quartaroli, and Frances J. Riemer, 423-450. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2011.
- Deyhle, Donna. "Journey toward Social Justice: Curriculum Change and Educational Equity in a Navajo Community." In *Narrative and Experience in Multicultural Education*, eds. JoAnn Phillion, Ming Fang He, F. Michael Connelly, 116-140. Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications, 2005.
- _____. "Navajo Youth and Anglo Racism: Cultural Integrity and Resistance." *Harvard Educational Review* 65, no. 3 (Fall 1995): 403-444.
- Ellinghaus, Katherine. "Indigenous Assimilation and Absorption in the United States and Australia," *Pacific Historical Review* 75, no. 4 (2006): 563-585.
- Fast, Robin Riley. "The Land is Full of Stories: Navajo Histories in the Work of Luci Tapahonso." Taylor & Francis Group, *Women's Studies* 36, no. 3 (2007): 185-211.
- Gilbert, Matthew Sakiestewa. "A Second Wave of Hopi Migration," *History of Education Quarterly* 54, no. 3 (August 2014): 356-361.
- Hoskie, Anderson. "Hataal: Navajo Healing System." *Leading the Way: The Wisdom of the Navajo People* 11, no. 6 (June 2013): 2-4.
- James, Thomas. "Rhetoric and Resistance: Social Science and Community Schools for Navajos in the 1930s." *History of Education Quarterly* 28, no. 4 (1988): 606-900.
- Jensen, Katherine. "Teachers and Progressives: The Navajo Day-School Experiment, 1935-1945." *Arizona and the West* 25, no. 1 (1983): 51-70.

- Jett, Stephen C. "The Navajo Homeland." In *Homelands: A Geography of Culture and Place across America*, eds. Richard L. Nostrand and Lawrence E. Estaville, 173. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003.
- Jacobs, Margaret D. "A Battle for the Children: American Indian Child Removal in Arizona in the Era of Assimilation," *The Journal of Arizona History* 45, no. 1 (2004): 31-62.
- _____. "Maternal Colonialism: White Women and Indigenous Child Removal in the American West and Australia, 1880-1940." *Western Historical Quarterly* 36 (2005): 453-476.
- Levy, Jerrold E. "Traditional Navajo Health Beliefs and Practices." In *Disease Change and the Role of Medicine: The Navajo Experience*, ed. Stephen J. Kunitz, 119. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983.
- Lomawaima, K. Tsianina and Teresa L. McCarty. "When Tribal Sovereignty Challenges Democracy: American Indian Education and the Democratic Ideal." *American Educational Research Journal* 39, no. 2 (Summer 2002): 279-305.
- Manuelito, Kathryn. "The Role of Education in American Indian Self-Determination: Lessons from the Ramah Navajo Community." *Anthropology & Education Quarterly* 36, no. 1 (March 2005): 73-87.
- McCarty, Teresa L. and Tiffany S. Lee. "Critical Culturally Sustaining/Revitalizing Pedagogy and Indigenous Education Sovereignty." *Harvard Educational Review* 84, issue 1 (Spring 2014): 101-124.
- Raitt, Thomas M. "The Ritual Meaning of Corn Pollen among the Navajo Indians." *Religious Studies* 23, no. 4 (December 1987): 523-530.
- Roemer, Kenneth M. "It's Not a Poem. It's My Life: Navajo Singing Identities." *Studies in American Indian Literatures* 24 (2012): 84-103.
- Ruffing, Lorraine Turner. "Navajo Economic Development: A Dual Perspective." In *American Economic Development*, ed. Sam Stanley, 15-86. Chicago: Mouton Publishers, 1978.
- Washington, Elizabeth Yeager and Stephanie Van Hover. "Dine Bikeya: Teaching about Navajo Citizenship and Sovereignty." *Social Studies* 102, no. 2 (2011): 80-88.
- Webster, Anthony. "Imagining Navajo in the Boarding School: *No Parole Today* and the Intimacy of Language Ideologies." *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 20, issue 1 (2010): 39-62.

Published Proceedings

Hinton, Leanne. "The Death and Rebirth of Native American Languages." In *Endangered Languages and Linguistic Rights on the Margins of Nations: Proceedings of the Eighth FEL Conference, Barcelona, Spain, 1-3 October 2004*, edited by Joan A. Argenter and R. McKenna Brown, 19-25. Bath, England: The Foundation of Endangered Languages, 2004.

Dissertations and Theses

Blackman, Jon S. "A History of Intermountain, A Federal Indian Boarding School," M.A. Thesis, Brigham Young University, Dept. of History, 1998.

Boxer, Elise. "'To Become White and Delightful': American Indians and Mormon Identity." Ph.D. Dissertation, Arizona State University, 2009.

Capelin, Emily Fay. "The Source of the Sacred: Navajo Corn Pollen: *Hááne'* *Baadahoste'ígíí* (Very Sacred Story)." Senior thesis, The Colorado College, 2009.

Garrett, Matthew R. "Mormons, Indians, and Lamanites: The Indian Student Placement Program, 1947-2000." Ph.D. Dissertation, Arizona State University, 2010.

Lansing, Danielle R. "Landscapes of School Choice, Past and Present: A Qualitative Study of Navajo Parent School Placement Decisions." Ph.D. Dissertation, Arizona State University, 2011.

Leonard, Leland. "The Relationship Between Navajo Adolescents' Knowledge and Attitude of Navajo Culture and Their Self-Esteem and Resiliency." Ed.D. dissertation, Arizona State University, 2008.

Macy, Patrick M. "The Development of High School Education Among Utah Navajos: Case Study at Monument Valley Utah." Ph.D. dissertation, Northern Arizona University, 1996.

Manuelito, Kathryn D. "Self-Determination in an Indian Community Controlled School." Ph.D. dissertation, Arizona State University, 2001.

Nezzhoni, Dmitriy Zoxjkie. "Diné Education from a Hózhó Perspective." M.A. thesis, Arizona State University, 2010.

Repp, Dianna. "Inscribing the Raw Materials of History: An Analysis of the Doris Duke American Indian Oral History Program." Ph.D. dissertation, Arizona State University, 2009.

Todacheeny, Frank. "Navajo Nation in Crisis: Analysis on the Extreme Loss of Navajo Language Use Amongst Youth." Ph.D. diss., Arizona State University, 2014.

Woerner, Davida. "Education among the Navajo: An Historical Study." Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1941.

Online Sources

Online Newspaper Articles

Lynch, Karen. "Working to heal wounds of boarding school: United Nations panel hopes to undo the damage caused by U.S. government's Indian boarding school policies." *The Native Press.com*, 2004, accessed 21 August 2015, <http://thenativepress.com/education/index.php>.

Minard, Anne. "Fort Wingate Back to Indian Country: Pueblo Say 'Yes,' Navajo Nation Says 'Maybe.'" *Indian Country*, 23 July 2015, accessed 20 September 2015, <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2015/07/23/fort-wingate-back-indian-country-pueblo-say-yes-navajo-nation-says-maybe-161166>.

Norrell, Brenda. "Classic book still a useful guide to traditional Navajo farming." *Knight Ridder Tribune Business News* (Oneida, New York), 30 June 2004, accessed 17 November 2015, <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/docview/460485028?pq-origsite=summon>.

Perry, Leonard. "Crownpoint to celebrate 100 years." *Navajo Times*, 23 July 2010, accessed 10 September 2015, <http://www.navajotimes.com/entertainment/culture/0710/072310crownpoint.php#.VfG2-2RViko>.

Quintero, Donovan. "Deschene disqualified, has 10 days to appeal." *Navajo Times* (Gallup, New Mexico), 9 October 2014, accessed 1 December 2015, <http://navajotimes.com/rezpolitics/election2014/deschene-disqualified-10-days-appeal/#.Vl3eBGSrRdg>.

Tawahongva, Tyler. "Tonalea community celebrates service of Richard George." *Navajo-Hopi Observer*, 28 April 2015, accessed 27 August 2015, <http://nhonews.com/main.asp?SectionID=74&SubSectionID=114&ArticleID=16863>.

Turkewitz, Julie. "Navajos to Get \$554 Million to Settle Suit Against U.S." *The New York Times*, 24 September 2014, accessed 5 October 2015, http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/25/us/navajos-to-get-554-million-to-settle-suit-against-us.html?_r=0.

Yu, Ting. "A Generation Rising." *One Day Magazine*, Fall 2014, accessed 17 November 2015, <https://www.teachforamerica.org/top-stories/generation-rising>.

Yurth, Cindy. "EPA admin: Gold King Spill 'Heartbreaking.'" *Navajo Times* (Durango, Colorado), 13 August 2015, accessed 1 December 2015, <http://navajotimes.com/reznews/epa-admin-gold-king-spill-heartbreaking/#.Vl3fL2SrRdg>.

_____. "Manuelito's legacy: Several famous Navajos called Coyote Canyon home." *Navajo Times*, 14 February 2013, accessed 18 November 2015, <http://www.navajotimes.com/news/chapters/021413coy.php#.Vky2D2SrSCQ>.

Online Miscellaneous Primary Sources

Benally, Hoskie. "A Sacred Relationship." In *Circle of Stories*, Public Broadcasting Service, accessed 16 September 2015, http://www.pbs.org/circleofstories/storytellers/hoskie_benally.html.

King, Travis. *Facebook* page, accessed 20 September 2015, <https://www.facebook.com/travis.king.73307?fref=ts>.

Knoki-Wilson, Ursula. "Keeping the Sacred in Childbirth Practices: Integrating Navajo Cultural Aspects into Obstetric Care," accessed 17 October 2013, http://www.naho.ca/documents/naho/english/IG_Presentations2008/009KnokiWilsonUrsula.pdf.

Monument Valley Mission, "Our History," accessed 25 May 2015, <http://www.monumentvalleymission.com/our-history.html>.

Natonabah, Andrew. "By This Song I Walk," in Evers, Larry, et. al., eds., *Words and Place: Native Literature from the Southwest*, accessed 3 October 2013, http://parentseyes.arizona.edu/wordsandplace/natonabah_intro.html.

Teller, Terry. *Daybreakwarrior*. "Where Are You From?" Recording on *Youtube.com*, accessed on 16 September 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MYvRKHIE3VY>.

Online Secondary Sources

"Facing the Legacy of the Boarding Schools: Eulynda Toledo-Benalli Has Devoted Her Life to Saving Diné Knowledge." *Women the World Must Hear* 28, no. 4 (Winter 2004), online at *Cultural Survival*, accessed 21 August 2015, <http://www.culturalsurvival.org/publications/cultural-survival-quarterly/united-states/facing-legacy-boarding-schools>.

"History." *Official Site of Navajo Nation*, accessed 3 November 2015, <http://www.navajo-nsn.gov/history.htm>.

- “Language and Culture: Confederated Tribes of the Goshute Reservation.” *Utah American Indian Digital Archive*, 2008, accessed 5 September 2015, <http://www.utahindians.org/archives/ctgr.html>.
- “Navajo-Churro Sheep Association Breed Standard.” *Navajo-Churro Sheep Association*, accessed 20 November 2015, <http://www.navajo-churrosheep.com/sheep-standards.html>.
- “Navajo Culture.” *Discover Navajo*, accessed 29 August 2013, <http://discovernavajo.com/cradleboard.html>.
- “Sharon Burch- Yazzie Girl.” In “Learning & Perpetuating the Navajo Language,” *Navajo Now*, accessed 5 October 2015, <http://navajonow.com/links-2/lyrics/sharon-burch-yazzie-girl/>.