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AUTHOR White, Carolyne; Martin, Joe; Hays, Pat; Senese, Guy; Foley, Jean Ann; Nuvayouma, Diane; Riley-Taylor, Elaine

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ABSTRACT

This conference "performance session" addresses the tensions encountered by indigenous educators in colleges and universities as they collaborate with tribal offices of education to create culturally responsive educational practices. Colonial schooling has left a legacy of institutionalized racism and sexism, sustained by postsecondary institutions grounded in Western epistemology and cosmology. Debate and dialogue among scholars of all races is needed to address this situation. There is mounting energy supporting a new worldview that acknowledges the human relationship with Nature as mutually sustaining. Indigenous worldviews have much to contribute, as they emphasize an eco-centered perspective and more integrative ways of understanding human/earth relations. Place-based education contextualizes curriculum within an awareness of the balance of life systems. Because the indigenous worldview does not separate health, education, and spirituality, the Dine wellness center was placed within the Little Singer Elementary School, where a bicultural learning program nurtures students' abilities to function in Dine and non-Indian worlds. The overlay of Navajo and Anglo concepts of healing provides both the Center's greatest resource and some of its most pressing problems. In addition to the usually recognized leadership qualities, American Indian school leadership requires the ability to listen, work in teams, be a peacemaker, bring disparate people into cooperation, utilize the collective wisdom of organizations, and work through unexpected problems positively and productively. It is important to know when to take an Indian or a Western approach, or both, to address a problem. (TD)

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by Carolyne White, Joe Martin, Pat Hays, Guy Senese, Jean Ann Foley, Diane Nuvayouma, and Elaine Riley-Taylor

Presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association (AERA)
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Carolyne:

This performance session addresses the tensions encountered as we work toward the much needed transformation of higher education, work toward culturally responsive educational practices. Consistent with the theme of this year's conference, this session addresses our efforts toward enhancing both the validity and value of educational research and practice in indigenous education.

At a time when postsecondary institutions face unprecedented challenges and threats to the intellectual life of our community, enmeshment in corporate-style management (see Readings, 1996; Martin, 1998, what has been termed "moral bankruptcy" (see Nelson, 1997), and persuasive arguments from some indigenous scholars that we should abandon western forms of institutionalized education altogether (see Prakash and Esteva, 1998), we remain within the walls of the academy. We teach and write from within spaces that we acknowledge as deeply troubled—politically, economically, ideologically, morally, and ethically—and we continue to journey toward what we view as the morally-rich landscape of collaboration with tribal offices of education to create culturally responsive forms of educational practice.

Elaine:

Bundled up warm in fleece and mittens against the morning's cold, I watch the day's first light move its way down Elden's craggy face. It pools at the mountain's base and spreads across the rolling land of ponderosa pine and shaggy bark juniper. The small town of Flagstaff is nestled up against these mountains. The world's just waking up.

These San Francisco Peaks are home to the ancient Kachina gods who visit Hopi Mesa villages in the spring of the year. Through ceremonial dance for rain or good relations or long life, these spirits--both supernatural and also appearing in human-like form--guide Hopi people toward harmony with the earth's balance. The spirit of the Hopi people, as that of the Navajo, Yavapai, Havasupai, and others, lives and moves across this Northern Arizona land from the Colorado River border to the Northeast region of the Four Corners reservations. It lives in peoples who have been indigenous to this Plateau for thousands of years. I consider the term indigenous and I wonder about my own origins as a human being upon this planet. What can I learn from traditions of native peoples recognizing the vital connection between humans and the earth? How am I a part of the breathing-out-and-breathing-in of the cycles of life that surround me? What does my relation with this land offer that nothing else can come near? I *am* this land that I inhabit.

Do you consider yourself an "indigenous" person? William McDonough (2001) asks this question and it brings me to think of the relations marking me as who I am, as indigenous to this place as any creature threading the web of the ecological balance. *Indigenous or native* refers to one who belongs to or is "connected with a specific place ...by virtue of birth or origin...intrinsic (*American Heritage Dictionary*, 1996, p. 1203). When does one come to think of the self as indigenous to the planet, because "the minute you start to think of yourself and your children as native to a place, your sense of ...responsibility start[s] to shift" (p.1). You realize that decisions you make will affect you and those who come after you, for "seven generations" as Iroquois wisdom attests (p. 3). McDonough is a world-class designer whose community and corporate designs recently won him the Presidential Award for Sustainable Development. If one considers the meaning of "design," we are thinking in terms of *intentions.* Design is intentionality. Design is thinking about what it is that we want to create and from there making a conscious choice to carry that creation to fruition. And design typically brings with it a choice.

I'd like to touch on a story exploring the idea of strategic intentions and also instances where such conscious choices are lacking; remembering that *not* choosing is also a choice. *Ishmael* is Daniel Quinn's (1992) erudite gorilla who recounts a tale of two cultural archetypes, each holding contradictory perspectives on living: one he calls a "Taker" perspective, the other, "Leaver," for their somewhat neutral connotations. Yet, they reflect more loaded cultural terms—Takers to mean those cultures that Westerners often label as "civilized" and Leavers those considered by many to be "primitive." Takers see the earth as a resource for their own use, operating from a principle that "the world was made for man [sic] and man was made to conquer and rule it" (p. 72). Taker cultures exercise a "power-over" means for taking or doing those things they can rationalize as correct from a view that assumes theirs to be the "right" way to live. This position is thought to give them the right, also, to judge how others should live. A Leaver culture is more in keeping with a relational point of view, recognizing the rights that other life forms have to survive, taking what is needed and leaving the rest. Leavers are less inclined to believe one can own property, but would rather live with the earth, than to possess it. A Leaver view is commonly attributed to beliefs within many tribal value-systems, a perspective sometimes termed "indigenous mind" (LaDuke, 1996).

By using the term indigenous mind, I don't mean to assume that there is one unitary perspective held across cultures or even within one native culture. Or that there are not instances where a power-over model has driven the actions of native peoples for whatever reasons. People are unique and shaped by their own contexts and particularities. Rather, when I generalize the notion of "indigenous mind" in this way, I am proposing it more as an ideal, a set of worldviews worth aspiring toward, a "way of knowing" that is a more life-sustaining model than the one based in separation from which much of Western thinking arises. From my view, it is a relational perspective that is important to explore and to understand—not only for its relevance in maintaining and preserving Native cultures—but also for the wisdom it offers Western mainstream society toward supporting and sustaining a healthy life on the planet.

We stand at a crossroads facing an imminent question: How will we live with the earth in this new millenium? (Hogan, 1996). The evidence is alarming that "environmental degradation stemming from the exponential growth in resource consumption and human population...pose[s] very real threats to the earth's biological support systems" (Eckersley, 1992, p. 12). Personal and

social alienation continue to pervade the world in forms such as "decaying inner cities, insensate violence, various addictions, rising public debt, and the destruction of nature all around us" (Orr, 1994, p. 51). Education has a vital role to play in reversing the trend from one of destruction to one of renewal. With David Orr, I propose that the root of these imminent problems lies in the way we think, calling for a re-vitalization of the "institutions that purport to shape and refine the capacity to think" (p. 2). Many of the world's crises begin with an education that

> alienates us from life in the name of human domination, fragments instead of unifies, overemphasizes success and careers, separates feeling from intellect and the practical from the theoretical, and unleashes on the world, minds that are ignorant of their own ignorance. (p. 17)

While our politicians suggest that corporate globalization will re-create a one-world-one-people civilization and provide a better life for all, we must consider the underlying "design" in determining the path we will walk. What are our *intentions*? Do we consciously consider the choices we make within an ethical context that is larger than our own self-interest? If actions are motivated by "reductionist knowledge, mechanistic technologies and the commodification of resources" (Shiva, 2000, p. 8), it is possible that we walk a path based on profit and greed. It is possible that our basic design is rooted in the Cartesian "severance [of] human knowing and being from any sense of earthly embodiment, obligation, necessity, or ecological consequence" (Jardine, 2000, p. 89). McDonough (2001) takes us back to the "first industrial revolution as a design assignment:"

> I'd like you to be involved in a system that produces billions of pounds of highly toxic hazardous material...and puts it into your soil, air and water every year... Measure prosperity by how much natural capital you can cut down, dig up, bury, burn or otherwise destroy. Measure productivity by how few people are working. Require thousands of complex regulations to keep you from killing each other too quickly. [And d]estroy cultural and biological diversity at every turn seeking one-size-fits-all solutions...Can you do that for me? (pp. 10-11)

I agree that "it is time for a new design" (p. 7). We have lost sight of our intrinsic connection to the planet, a connection long honored by many people within native cultures.

Relational Knowing

> The earth does not belong to man, man belongs to the earth. All things are connected like the blood that unites us all. Man did not weave the web of life, he is merely a strand in it. Whatever he does to the web, he does to himself.
>
> --Chief Seattle

From my perspective, indigenous ways of knowing suggest a shift from an ego-centered perspective to an eco-centered one, and toward more integrative ways of understanding and experiencing human/earth relations. John P. Miller (2000) maintains that if "we can see ourselves as part of the web, there is less chance that we will tear the web apart" (p. 5). Helping young

people grasp their fundamental connection within a larger system of relationships, encourages within them a cultivation of "their ties to others and the forms of obligation, responsibility, and support associated with those relationships" (Smith & Williams, 1999, p. 9). As relational beings, one of the most vital qualities that a human may have is an ability to respond—to others and to the surrounding environment. The word respond comes from the Latin *spondere*, meaning to make a solemn promise, pledge, betroth; from the Greek it means "offering," (*American Heritage Dictionary*, 1996, p. 1537) and it suggests a relation that is deeply felt, an interaction conducive to coming into partnership within relations can be a beginning road toward helping them see that they have response-ability within a world community that is much larger than themselves.

At this time in earth history, Thomas Berry (1988) says, there is a mounting energy toward a new way of looking at life as interrelational, an emerging ecological sensibility. It is a perspective that acknowledges the human relation within the environment as mutually sustaining. I am this place I inhabit. I live each day in relation with the landscape the surrounds me, knowing "that the deepest sources of personal and cultural identity are the ecological and geological landscapes that shape and sustain" me (Cheney, 1999, p. 156).

Place-Based Awareness

> The old people came...to love the soil and they sat or reclined on the ground with a feeling of being close to a mothering power. It was good for the skin to touch the earth. Their tipis were built upon the earth and their altars were made of the earth. The birds that flew into the air came to rest upon the earth and it was the final abiding place of all things that lived and grew. The soil was soothing, strengthening, cleansing, and healing.
>
> --Chief Luther Standing Bear

The importance of place is an awareness we see within many indigenous traditions. It is a way of knowing or viewing the world that honors the importance of "past practices, folkways, and traditions...in the creation of new knowledge" (Orr, 1992, p. 31). Indigenous peoples of Australia whose knowing is tied to the land, "sing the earth back into existence" (Abram, 1996). They capture the experiences of their lives through an oral retelling, situating their story in place as they move, relating the events to the landscape they pass as they speak. Each place they describe has significance, power, and is always acknowledged at the outset of the telling for the power that place can lend to the tale. Theirs is an embodied knowing of place.

Acquainting young people with the contexts within which they live—their geographical situatedness within a particular area or region—helps them to understand the value of both diversity and interrelations. Immersing students in an outdoor setting for a span of time, David Orr (1994) says, contextualizes education in the surrounding environment and helps them see that "[n]atural objects have a concrete reality that the abstractions of textbooks and lectures do not and cannot have" (p. 96). I agree with Orr "that nature has something to teach us" (p. 95). "Living" a course in the out-of-doors, along a river for example, provides for an experience wherein the pace of life and learning slows, creating a space conducive for "a deeper kind of knowing to occur" (p. 96).

A recognition of "place" contextualizes curriculum within an awareness of the "balance of life systems, the imaginative flexibility and adaptability of nature, and the integrity and creative harmony of the ecosystems" (Lydon, 1995, p. 77). Orr (1992) says that

> Places are laboratories of diversity and complexity, mixing social functions and natural processes... If the place also includes natural areas, forests, streams, and agricultural lands, the opportunities for environmental learning multiply accordingly. (p. 129)

Grounding curriculum in a sense of place would "center educational inquiry upon the Universe as a whole and humanity as a part of this entirety" (Lydon, 1995, p. 74). Awakening within children a conscious awareness of place implies possibilities for the "awe-filled knowing" of their "place in the universe"—moving curriculum beyond a static, institutionalized "form of knowledge of how the world is" (Bohm, 1983, pp. 3-4; as cited in Lydon, 1995). And it could be used to demonstrate how ties to community are embedded within a context of place, but how living things also exist within multiple communities which sometimes overlap, combine, or transcend place in a variety of ways.

Don:

Within the particulars of our local place, our university educates more American Indian students than any other institution in the United States. Rhetoric about commitment to American Indian communities abounds. Serious resource commitment to indigenous education is scarce. Western epistemology and cosmology rein supreme. The programs touted as successfully serving Native American constituencies typically reinscribe western epistemology and cosmology. Troubled relationships exist with the primary tribal governments in the area and with the local tribal college. A recent survey of faculty climate indicates that faculty morale is at an all time low. It is within this environment that we hold close and carefully—and collaboratively—cultivate a vision of culturally responsive teacher and administrator preparation.

We honor David Beaulieu's (White Earth Chippewa) (2000) concern that "Indian parents, communities, and tribes must define their purposes and goals to guide education with clear directions and...they must also assert the criteria for evaluating the success from a tribal and community perspective" (p. 38).

Joe:

Through dialogue and consultation between tribes and the Arizona Government including the Arizona State Legislature, tribal leaders and others in Arizona identified the following as priorities for tribes in their pursuit of self-determination:

Self Sufficient/Self Contained Tribal Communities – Education, economic development and employment need to be coordinated in a manner that fosters self sufficient and self contained tribal communities. Education and training of tribal members needs to be better correlated to reduce the "brain drain." Economic development must include business opportunities for individuals as well as for tribes, infrastructure development, availability of capital, effective utilization of natural resources, and land use planning.

Healthy and Safe Communities – Negative influences on the physical and mental health of tribal members need to be eliminated. These influences are communicated primarily through television, and combined with the cycle of dependency in these communities, create unhealthy environments, a general decline in the mental health of the community, and increases in substance abuse and violence. These combined with the absence of economic development and employment create unsafe and insecure environments.

Culture and Education – Preservation of native language and culture is a role of education. Language and culture are being rapidly lost, and there is a fear that once lost, the community will lose its tribal identity. Language and culture are barometers of tribal survival that must be integrated into the total educational experience of tribal members.

Empowerment versus Dependence – Leaders discussed self-sufficiency, self-determination, and sovereignty while making recommendations and comments that reinforce a reactive rather than proactive approach to their respective conditions. There is little or no faith in the institutions they depend on, and rightfully, they advocate taking control over them, but at the same time, they seem reluctant to create change. There is also a significant amount of apathy and a lack of self-responsibility, and an attitude of a lack of tribal ownership.

Diane:

Prior to Contact, American Indian communities effectively engaged culturally responsive practices and educated young people into their tribal history, language, literature, values, science, art, and all other forms of learning necessary to maintain their way of life. After Contact, everything changed. American schooling for American Indian students became a process of deculturalization (see Lomawaima, 2000; Spring, 1994; Swisher & Tippeconnic 1999; Yazzie, 2000), a process of using schools to colonize the minds of conquered people by erasing their language, denigrating their culture, and teaching exclusive acceptance of the dominating white male Eurocentric culture. This legacy of colonial schooling (see Adams, 1995; Deyhle & Swisher, 1997; Szasz, 1988; Senese, 1991) is a legacy of institutionalized racism and sexism that has been sustained by postsecondary institutions grounded in western epistemology and cosmology. John Stanfield (1994) identifies the particular ways social scientists institutionalize this oppression through our acceptance of "hegemonic racialized ethnic social organizations and forms of knowing and interpreting life worlds" (p. 177).

Carolyne:

Within the past decade increased attention to this crucial issue has emerged within the scholarly research literature. Scheurich & Young (1998) illuminate the issue as follows: "in education, where the destructive effects are so obvious and so persistent, we are avoiding White racism in both our souls and our sciences, and one of the principal ways we researchers in education avoid White racism is by believing or presuming that somehow it does not infect our research assumptions, questions, epistemologies, and methodologies... even though education and education research continue to be replete with racist concepts like the deficit model" (p. 27). These scholars argue that "debate/dialogue among scholars of all races" is the most important effort needed to address this situation (p. 27).

Guy:

Mixing Medicines and Making Peace in Cultural Complexity:
The Case of the Dine' Wellness Center, Little Singer Community School

This writing is drawn from two seasons of research with the Dine' Wellness Center and my effort to work in harmony with the community and cultural values of the Little Singer school and Birdsprings area of the Dine' (Navajo) Nation. It is my attempt at culturally responsive evaluation. I engage this work as a professional but also, and unapologetically, as a friend of the community. Twenty-three years of study and friendship with tribal communities, first in Alaska, then in Navajoland, helped prepare me to illuminate the issues important to people in this community. However, my viewpoint is constricted by ideas that were not developed in the heart of this community, but in the world of Eurocentric "study" of Native peoples. I interviewed project staff, director, administrators, health workers, teachers, counselors and aides in an attempt to explore how the wellness concept framed connections with traditional Navajo community spirituality.

The Dine' Wellness Center began in 1996 with a tobacco tax planning grant. This is ironic and also central to the cross-cultural complexity of the Center. Ironic in that the ills which plague the Little Singer community arise in part from the non-ceremonial misuses of drugs like tobacco or alcohol, whose extensive abuse in the dominating culture generates a form of taxation now used to treat the results of that abuse. The initial planning for the creation of the Wellness Center involved surveying the community and conducting focus groups to determine the most significant health concerns within the area. The top concerns were diabetes, alcohol abuse, and domestic violence. Because so much of the treatment and prevention of these health problems revolve around community awareness and education, the establishment of the community-based primary care clinic at the community school was an obvious choice.

The Center works in concert with the school whose basic mission is to work in harmony and cooperation with the home and the parents to strengthen Dine' culture and language. The bilingual/bicultural life-long learning program nurtures students' abilities to walk in confidence in the Dine' and non-Indian world. Elders past and present believed, and community members today reaffirm the ideal that the children belong at home, and the family is the basis for all education.

The philosophy of Little Singer school is developed in the observation of medicine man Little Singer (Hatahlii Yazhi) who commented on the "unnatural silence" of the community, bereft of its children in the previous generation. Yet there was no true silence. In the boarding schools, children were weeping, and hearing the cries of their neighbors and siblings, and internalizing a lesson of oppression that any future attempt at psychic wellness would need to address.

Little Singer saw the only way to restore the community's spirit was to return the children from these boarding schools and establish a school where the young could learn their Native heritage. Built on the concepts of traditional Navajo healing and philosophy, the Wellness Center is housed in the large circular dome that has become a community landmark, it emulates in both form and function, the teaching and nurture of the Hogan, the original Navajo dwelling.

Ms. Lucinda Godinez, Navajo principal of the elementary school, spoke of the power of the emphasis on K'e or clan responsibility. "Clanship is not a game, it is a way of life," she said. "It is

an ethical life and a religious life." "It is the blend of relationship, love and responsibility that is the center of the harmonious life in the Navajo way." There is no firm boundary between education and wellness. They are inseparable. I ask her what makes a successful educator in this way. She replies that "only those who love" are capable of growing in the "role" of teacher. It is "respect for the role" that students learn. The "ego is left out of it." "The role has its own life." She uses the example of a young Anglo teacher from Nebraska, Mr. Thomas, whose combination of hard work, respect for the people, and personal sacrifice in dedication has won him over among the community and parents.

Peacemaking, Curriculum, Hozho, and Health

The introduction of traditional Navajo peacemaking connects with the combined influences of Hozho (harmony) and K'e (interrelatedness). This philosophic/spiritual center forms the difference between the cultural responsiveness of Little Singer school/Wellness Center policy and standard American school policies. From the dominant cultural perspective, at least reflected in how society has chosen to deal with the issue of student discipline in the schools, peace is the absence of disturbance. Peace is gained by excluding from our presence those who disturb our peace. From a Navajo cultural perspective, indeed from the perspective of many indigenous cultures, peace is the balancing of two poles, male and female, when all elements are in harmony. From this perspective, peace can be regained by finding a way to re-integrate in to the group those that disturb the peace. This person, who has disturbed our peace is not different from us; s/he is part of us. When that person is integrated into the group, we also feel more whole. The goal of Navajo Peacemaking in student discipline is to show the student how s/he is imbedded in relationships—clan relatives, close relatives, and friends. The peacemaker's goal is to show the student that s/he is not known except through "your relations" and to get the student to see that your "relations are your medicine."

One challenge is to recognize the importance of spirituality in this process. This depends on the mutual cooperation of family and student in acknowledging the place of reflection, and prayer. Prayer is a difficult subject in a public institution. Its appropriateness is centered on the degree of community self-determination that underscores the meaning of "public" for American Indian community schools. Participants are asked to pray in their own way, but the prayer focus is a reflection of the power of universal relation that is at the heart of Navajo philosophy.

Mr. Thomas Walker, School Board Chair, and Dr. Mark Sorensen, Wellness Center Director, articulate the following reasons for the use of prayer in Peacemaking: 1) Prayer articulates the problem. 2) Prayer focuses not on casting blame but rather on seeking a humble solution. 3) Asking for spiritual intervention recognizes that the solution is bigger than any one person. 4) Prayer reminds us that we all have the gift of life from the Creator. 5) Prayer reminds us that we are all related through our Creator. 6) Prayer creates a serious atmosphere. 7) Prayer creates an expectation that good will be the outcome. 8) Prayer recognizes that each person has a gift to share in the solution. 9) Prayer establishes parameters within which all things to be discussed can be placed.

After the initial prayer, the Peacemaker should have a good understanding of the situation and the issues involved. The Peacemaker restates the problem and begins to negotiate with parties toward a resolution.

Interviewed Linda Willie, an educator for the Center. She reflected on her Mohawk and Italian American background. We shared the importance of family in both traditions. One of her concerns regards the interpolation of Navajo traditional practice, i.e., Sweat lodges, with issues of family violence. Some in the community are concerned that it is dangerous to "mix medicines." There is a danger in the possibility of romanticizing Navajo cultural teaching to a point of watering down the complexities of psychic and spiritual treatment. She also cites the complex and problematic legacy of the boarding school and christianizing patriarchy. How much of the abuse is the result of the abused having learned to abuse in turn and justify his behavior. How much healing could be accomplished not only by recovering the Beauty-way of Navajo spirituality, but also by working through new family roles that were learned in this era, and undermined the value of women in a community, as well as undermining the economic base of Navajo culture?

The overlay of Anglo and Navajo concepts of healing provides both the Center's greatest resource and some of its most pressing problems. For example, concepts of Native and European medical values have occasionally led to serious misunderstandings among the Center personnel. All staff are involved in the struggle to understand what the balance should be in regarding sometimes antithetical Navajo and Euro-American approaches to healing and wellness. The effort is to move forward in dialogue, not directive, with staff and community, to make the Wellness Center not only a source of health, but in the Navajo Way, a source of learning and wisdom as well. This process promises to build a unique and replicable model, of Indigenous and Euro-American educational values co-learning and growth in both medicine and schooling.

Carolyne:

We must consciously acknowledge the personal, political and moral commitments that inform our research and the relationship among the researcher, the research, and the researched (see Neumann, Pallas, & Peterson, 1999; Siddle Walker, 1999). And, within this context remains the critical need for educational research that informs educational practice and illuminates how to best serve children. Villenas, Deyhle, & Parker (1999) advocate for the inclusion of Critical Race Theory analysis that will "provide educational researchers with an interdisciplinary, race-based interpretive framework aimed toward social justice... (p. 32). This perspective is crucial for addressing racism and for informing our development of educational practices that can heal the damage done by the history of colonial education (see Deyhle, 1992; Deyhle & Swisher, 1997). Following Young (2001), "we must ask how our academic and cultural experiences, points of view, social commitments, traditional and nontraditional sources of knowledge improve learning and life chances for a diverse [American Indian] population" (p. 3).

Fundamental to this enterprise is the necessity that the researchers study themselves, as explained by Reuben Honhanie (Hopi): "We are under a microscope. A lot of people are interested in Indians, so they look at them and analyze them again and say, 'These people are good at this, but they are not very good at this.' The reason they say that is because they have looked at them so much, whereas they haven't looked at themselves so much" (Quoted in White, 1995).

Jean Ann:
Thirty spokes share the wheel's hub;
It is the center hole that makes it useful.
Shape clay into a vessel;
It is the space within that makes it useful.
Cut doors and windows for a room;
It is the holes which make it useful.
Therefore profit comes from what is there;
Usefulness from what is not there.
Lao Tsu, "Tao Te Ching"

The poem refers to the usefulness of 'empty' space. It is the space that makes the wheel, the vessel, and the room useful. Lumely (1998: 1) uses this poem to illustrate a contrast between the Euclidean flat space conceptualization of reality, which is "the mainstay of the west", and a 'curved space-time' conceptualization that comes from eastern, Celtic, and Native American cultures. Euclid of Alexandria was a Greek mathematician who wrote the 13 volume treatise on mathematics *The Elements*. These volumes represent the primary source of geometric reasoning. Euclidean geometry deals with deductive logic as a primary tool for understanding, which is a basic tool for modern mathematics and science. The Elements uses propositions, axioms, porisms, lemma, postulates and theorems to support the idea that nothing is known until it is proven.

I am not attempting to reduce modern science to Euclidean principles. In fact, modern science and mathematics have moved on in terms of curved space-time in physics, the theory of relativity, and non-Euclidean geometry. It is our current western (mainstream) culture that continues to base its perceptions and systems of inquiry on a cause and effect model. A linear perspective remains as an ancient foundation for western thought and as a lens for making meaning of the world. It is an objective view of reality. The nature of objective reality diminishes contextual relationship, ignores connection with place, and separates science from nature. In contrast, Paula Underwood (1990: 1) describes indigenous science as "based on a profound immersion in and awareness of the whole circumstance. Rather than mistrusting personal experience, indigenous science has learned to thrive on it..."

For my purposes here, the curved space represents the values, beliefs, and the spirit of who we are; the connections with community and family. The notion of usefulness for things we cannot see places value on character, personal essence and relationship. The western tradition of the 'flat-space' conceptualization is a lens that values material accumulation. What counts is that which is countable. We evaluate based on the number. How does American society value diversity when the standard rule of measure is flat? In order to acknowledge differences and be responsible to indigenous people we must look beyond the ruler and uncover meaning from within.

My interest in a curved space reality springs from an upbringing of a pre-fabricated mold in a small town in Northeastern Oklahoma. The environment was a lock step march to the tune of conformity. White privilege was the norm. It was never acknowledged and certainly never challenged by those in the privileged group. From my historical context, the concept of one was not about unity nor the beautiful concept expressed by Chief Seattle, "All things are connected." From the Eurocentric, Christian point of view, one was a separatist concept of discrimination. One was

not a number. It was an anthem: one church, one God, one class, one race, one gender, one way to salvation.

I found my liberation from this insulated shrink-wrap of small town prejudice through the arts. Dance, music, and theater provided an outlet for expressing some of the injustices that I witnessed growing up. Drama and speech education became my chosen field. The human condition and our need for dignity, respect, and validation were brought to life in theatrical forms from Greek tragedy to modern theater. I learned that the one note, one way melody was not only harmful to the audience who was excluded from the play but also detrimental to the privileged performer. Everybody loses when our reality becomes flat, inflexible, and objectified.

Through my work as a teacher educator, I teach towards a critical consciousness and an ethic of caring. I believe that it is through building connection with colleagues, students, communities, and our areas of content that we build strong systems for learning. I believe we are doing our students a disservice when we impose curriculum on them. My mission as a teacher/educator is to continue to push the boundaries of good teaching practice to challenge students to become engaged learners who are sensitive to issues of diversity and diligent to uproot seeds of oppression.

In February, I went to Sinagua High School, a public high school in Flagstaff, to inquire about how my college students could partner with the high school students and address some of the educational needs. I spoke with Anna Begay, who is Navajo and the counselor at the high school for Native American students. I was interested in learning how she would describe the educational issues for the Native American Students at this school. She told me the major problem was that the teachers at the school taught with a "one size fits all" methodology. She explained that many of the teachers complained to her about how the Native American students lacked organization and motivation. Predominately, the Native American students and, of course, many other students who did not fit were struggling with the "pace" of instruction. She explained that she had referred most of the Native American students to programs such as New Start, or PLATO (computer software program). These programs allowed for self-paced individualized study.

Out of a student population of approximately 1,000 students, 150 are Native American. Half of those students take the school bus from the reservation. This means that they are on the bus at approximately 5:30 a.m. and are returned home at 4:30 p.m. unless they are in the PLATO program, which is held after school. These students arrive home at approximately 7:00 p.m. At least they arrive at the bus stop at this time and then some of the students must arrange for transportation to their homes, which could be up to 30 to 45 minutes from the bus drop.

This bus trip and the contrast between their homes and those of their peers is part of the curved space that needs to be acknowledged. "This geometry, in which 'empty' space is an active participant, exemplifies the circle of life, a forward-pulsing ontogeny whose purpose is to respond to its own natural need." I believe Lumely (1998) is talking about the space of one's culture, circumstances, and being is a force that interacts with and shapes our choices as we develop. If this space is in rigid conflict with societal, educational expectations, growth may be stunted, fractured, or even reversed.

I teach a diversity class at Northern Arizona University for pre-service teachers preparing to teach secondary students. One of the goals of this class is to instill in the students awareness and an appreciation for diverse ways of learning, knowing, and being. It is a challenge to teach a class on diversity to a predominately white privileged group of students. Most of us have been conditioned to enjoy our privilege and diligently work to stay in the mainstream. We don't necessarily want to examine the curved space when the flat objective reality serves us well. Lumely (1998: 1) says that "Our flat-space perceptual skills blind us to the curved space story, and we perpetuate this 'mastery of the wrong problem' by blinding our children as we have been blinded. While the aesthetic saddle-and-lobe spiral of an ammonite may touch us, we seem unable to grasp its curved space message that we must become our own ontogeny."

The ammonite or cephalopod with those spiral shells is a wonderful visual of a perfect geometric figure. Yet the symmetrical formation is the product of the creature's natural development. I am interested in my students becoming aware of their own natural development, their own ontogeny. It seems fundamental, that in order for these students to become responsive to differences they must first become aware of themselves. They must develop a consciousness of their curved space. Taiaiake (1999: 71) explains that "The most fundamental right of a people is the one that empowers them to determine their own identity."

At the beginning of each class period we devote 5 minutes for a class member to present a personal essence. The only boundaries for the presentation are that it last only five minutes and that some form of art is used. For some, the results are a show and tell displaying books, pictures, and music that represent their values and life experiences. For others, it is a celebration of curved space with poetry, song, visualizations, and symbolism.

I believe the Personal Essence presentations are a channel for connection. They set up a relational context for constructing understanding. They interrupt the linear educational march and invite unity with what lies beneath.

If we can agree that usefulness can be found in the curved space of our existence, then the next step is to operationalize this paradigm through instructional strategies, programs, and educational methodologies. However, we must keep a vigilant awareness of the threat of reductionist, mechanistic solutions that may flatten our wholistic intent into an imposed Euclidean postulate that only looks good on paper.

How do we preserve, encourage, and celebrate education that is relational and meaningful? I believe the key to unlocking the curved space in education, is to first identify it within ourselves and integrate our beliefs, values, and social consciousness with our work. We must create a place where we, as educators and researchers, can develop our own ontogeny: Departments of education that allow and encourage innovative ideas in curriculum; an academy of scholars that values qualitative research, narrative, and action research; a professional ethos where colleagues, chairs, and deans mitigate the fear, vulnerability, and isolation associated with trying out new methodologies; or an action network as we have here. We need to craft places where the voice of reason is free to resonate within a curved space with a resounding boom or to vibrate with a whisper; places where nature-based, relational perspective is always welcome at the table of

discourse and recognized as a valuable member of the family rather than a long lost relative who is destined to remain missing, estranged, and ignored.

Diane:

For American Indians, student achievement levels tend to be the lowest, and drop-out rates, substance abuse and suicide numbers the highest, of all minority groups in America. As a result, of 30 ninth-grade American Indian students, 19 graduate, eleven pursue some form of higher education, and only one student emerges with a four year degree. Navajo and Hopi student attrition ratios closely approximate these figures (Arizona Department of Education Annual Report of Student Achievement 1999; Annual Report Card, 1999; Bureau of Indian Affairs Education Report, 1999; Deyhle & Swisher, 1997; USDE, 1992, 1991). Though the reasons for students' academic failure are complex, teacher educators, administrators, and some researchers believe that teachers and administrators can be a key variable in a child's academic success (Irvine, 1990). To address the concerns of student achievement, culturally responsive practices have been seen as one vehicle for helping teachers and administrators become more effective with all their students. This type of teaching strives to "maximize students' learning by using students' cultures as the basis for helping students [to] understand themselves and others, [to] structure social interactions, and [to] conceptualize knowledge" (Ladson-Billings, 1992, p. 314). In addition, Gay (2000) suggests that such teaching liberates students from mainstream cultural pervasiveness, it fosters critical thinking among children, and validates them as knowledgeable. Research indicates that when we use multiple lenses to measure achievement that culturally relevant or "socio-culturally centered teaching" increases achievement (Gay, 2000).

Don:

It is not enough for teacher candidates to read about John Dewey or Paulo Freire. Unless they enter the profession with the conviction to "subvert" the status quo; with the respect to become an authentic change agent; and with the course to "walk the talk," the philosophies of Dewey and Friere will become forgotten rhetoric. What is needed is a different world view that underpins the teacher preparation curriculum, a world view that supports the ideals of democracy. Such a world view exists in the traditional First Nation's peoples. With this view and the associated approach to pedagogy, new teachers can truly make a difference.

In May of last year, I spoke at a conference in Jerusalem called "The First International Conference on Militarism in Education." Educators from around the world talked about the direct and indirect effort to be sure young people emerge from public schools "motivated" to become good soldiers. American Indians are all too familiar with similar colonizing forces within schools. Up until only the last two decades, Indian children were forced into western cultural school systems. Their hair was cut off and their mouths were washed out with soap if they spoke their native language. They were beat if they misbehaved. They were forced to wear uniforms. Under thread of punishment, they were not allowed to participate in their spiritual ceremonies and were forced to learn Christian orthodoxy.

Today the colonizing effect of the corporate/government powers are more subtle but equally powerful. It is found in the curriculum; the high-stakes standardized testing mandates; the neo-conservative character movement; the Bureau of Indian Affairs mentality; non-Indian teachers and their hidden curriculum; authoritarian pedagogy; and the encouragement of military service as a

way out. My assertion is that until educational systems modify their essential worldview with one more in harmony with that of traditional indigenous tribes, such as those of the Americas first nation peoples, schools will continue to erode, not sustain, democracy.

Carolyne:

Though researchers and practitioners agree that a culturally responsive approach to teaching would be most effective for all children, little research has been conducted on specifically how effective teachers of American Indian children, administrators, and preservice teachers acquire and maintain the skills, knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes to teach in such a fashion.

Pat:

A kindergarten teacher in Chinle, Arizona: "You know, there are two children in my classroom who just never talk. It had not concerned me because some kids are just that way. But when you came in, they wouldn't stop talking. That shows me that I could do something to make class more challenging for those two. What are you doing to make this happen? Where can I get these ideas you have?" The trained demonstration teacher in relating this story concluded by saying, "We talked for a long time, shared ideas, and the teacher left feeling she was really going to make a change. And I have kept an eye on those two students. It's now apparent that we have discovered two very gifted and highly creative kindergartners. They enjoy thinking and expressing themselves in original ways. We certainly would have missed the potential of these kids if we had not observed them in the right learning atmosphere."

The kindergarten classes had been studying and debating the construction and flight of rockets. In the final event for the experience, all of the kindergarten classes built and launched their rockets. There were sixteen rockets of different sizes, shapes, types, materials, and colors. As the rockets were being launched, the teacher noticed a few students in a small group watching intently as each rocket ran its course. Finally, the last rocket was fired. This rocket was the product of this small group of kindergartners. As they watched, their rocket reached about 100 feet and then came crashing to the ground. The chute did not ever open. The teacher listened as they talked. "Was that a malfunction?" one of them asked. "Ours was too big," another offered. "No, it wasn't. Big Bertha was bigger and she went higher and her chute opened." Yet another kindergartner chimed in, "Maybe we used too much paint. Maybe the glitter weighed it down too much." What the teacher was hearing delighted her. Kindergarten students using the problem solving process they had practiced in class in approaching a real life event, and they were doing it on their own. The teacher later said, "It's transfer! The kids were actually reapplying their process of thinking in a new situation."

From 1990-1992 I was co-director of a federal teacher training grant: Getting Gifted Javits Project, to enhance education of K-12 gifted students. The Getting Gifted grant focused on the training of practicing teachers from school districts with large ethnic minority populations. Schools who participated were located on Indian reservations in Arizona and California and in schools located near the Arizona-Mexico border. During the grant time period 32 teachers at 18 different sites on the Navajo Nation Reservation were involved in the teacher training. These sites included public and BIA schools with some schools located in towns on the reservation and other schools located in remote areas of the reservation (One school had no phone line and therefore no telephone access during the time of the grant.) I am now looking back to explore what these teachers are now

doing as a result of their extensive training. But now I am looking with different eyes, eyes more attuned to the complexities and tensions endemic to the project as well as the complexities and tensions endemic to my role as a white woman researcher trained in western ways of knowing. Today I am far less certain about my role and far less comfortable with how to even write about this project. The overall effort of the project involved three objectives. To: (1) change how the teachers teach; (2) ensure that the teachers, with the help of administration, develop and implement quality gifted programs; and (3) ultimately benefit the minority gifted students in the schools by, among other things, making them successful problem solvers.

When we began the initial recruiting for schools and teachers to become a part of the grant, we were often told that there are teachers here who are interested in being involved, but we have a problem. We have no gifted students. The schools were looking at giftedness in very traditional ways, they were looking for extremely high achievement scores on standardized tests. We had to convince the schools that we wanted to take a much wider scope in defining giftedness. We wanted each school to develop their own site plan to serve some portion of gifted students. While some schools concentrated on very traditional views of gifted, others focused on creativity, problem solving or leadership. It is important to note that in Dine' (Navajo) culture there is no word for giftedness. And, of course, for me the concept of giftedness is fraught with tension. I view all students as being gifted and the teacher's charge is to assist students in developing those gifts. These were issues we dealt with throughout the three year project.

As a long time teacher prior to my work at Northern Arizona University, the idea of teacher change has always interested me. I realize teacher change is a complex issue with many variables, public and person, as well as influences of place that affect the change process. I am especially interested in this topic of teacher change because for the fifteen years I have been at NAU I have watched grants and trainings come and go on the Navajo Nation. Grant projects are typically focused upon issues which plague reservation schools with low-income families and students with low achievement scores on standardized tests. Consequently, there are many grant projects funded on the Navajo reservation. I wonder how the teachers cope with all these new trainings and with each training asking for somewhat different changes. Do any of these projects make a difference for teachers and students? If teachers make changes, are they temporary for the life of the grant funding, or do the teachers find ways to sustain the change? Do teachers view them as valuable or simply an ongoing nuisance? What can be learned from a retrospective examination of one of these projects?

For this Javits grant there was an extensive training period for the teachers involved. Each school site in the project was required to send at least two teachers for summer training who in turn could work as a team in developing program and instructional plans, and could depend on each other for support once back in their home school site. These teacher trainees (20-25 each of three summers) were provided with eight weeks of concentrated trainings and opportunities for practice in basic gifted education, lesson and unit planning, teaching practice with immediate feedback, and site-based program planning.

The site plan developed by the kindergarten/primary teachers in Chinle, Arizona included having the two trained teachers teach demonstration lessons emphasizing Navajo culture and divergent problem solving to all the kindergarten and first grade classrooms. The purposes here

were to locate potentially gifted children who might not be discovered using traditional tests, and to encourage the teachers to observe and try out new teaching strategies. In 1991 the project staff began to write case studies for each of the various school sites. One of the trained teachers who taught these demonstration lessons said, "Things are really different for me now. The training opened my eyes. It changed the way I look at kids, the way I think, feel, and teach. I now think about what I do in my classroom and why." Before the summer training this teacher was frustrated and thinking of leaving Chinle and the reservation to teach at a different location because she felt, "We were not doing enough to locate able students and to challenge them." After being a demonstration teacher for one year she said, "I plan to stay here as long as I can make a difference." I want to visit with her and learn about the kinds of differences she has made over the past ten years. I am hopeful that this "looking back" process will inform my future work in Native American education. I am hopeful that this "looking back" will inform our collective work in Native American education.

Don:

As John W. Tippeconnic III (Comanche-Cherokee) (2000) explains, "we need to ask the right research questions and answer them using a combination of methods that include non-western approaches to conducting research" (p. 46). The members of this community share a commitment to explore collectively what Stanfield (1994) terms "logics of inquiry grounded in the indigenous experiences of people of color" (p. 178); and a commitment to what Mary Hermes (Lakota, Chinese, White) (1999) terms "First Nations research methods." These are research methods that include the following: 1) they are situated responses specific to the culture, the problem, and the dynamics of the particular context; 2) the research question originates with the community; and 3) the researcher is in the community as a community member first and a researcher second; and 4) relationships of reciprocity replace relationships of exploitation (p. 97). This is activist research (see Fine, 1994).

Joe:

American Indian School Leadership

Having had years of experience as a school administrator working in schools serving Indian students, I am often asked if there is a difference between an "Indian-style" of leadership versus a "non-Indian" style of leadership. Recently, as a faculty member in the Educational Leadership Department at NAU, I have had new opportunities to test these notions through classroom discussions, action research, and from observing practicing administrators.

As I look back and thoughtfully observe some things I have learned about leadership, I have come to understand that there are particular leadership qualities one must have to be a true leader--one who has the respect of self, coworkers, superiors, family, and friends. These qualities must be a part of personal and professional life in order to be genuine. They are, in no particular order of importance, as follows: integrity, humor, respect, love, faith, hope, service, selflessness, determination, cooperation, understanding, wisdom, and concern for the advancement of others. As a leader seeks to bring these qualities into their life and persona, they will enhance their leadership capacity in all aspects of life. However, there are skills that must be developed as extensions of these qualities for a leader to be productive in a reservation school. These include: the ability to listen for understanding; the ability to work in teams; the ability to gather, distribute, and utilize the collective wisdom of an organization and its constituent parts and people; the ability to be a

peacemaker and a coordinator of compromise; the ability to bring disparate people and teams into cooperation and respectful settings for communication and work; the ability to work through unexpected problems positively and productively (Heywood, 2001). This is not a complete analysis of what I have gained from teaching and from my twenty plus years of experience as a school administrator, but it is a core sampling of the learned wisdom taken from text, teaching, and experience.

Philosophical Framework: Especially valuable for me in the way I try to explain my view of an Indian style of leadership versus a non-Indian style is the idea that, to achieve anything worthwhile and lasting, we must all struggle to develop a consensus-oriented organization no matter where we might be, Indian community or non-Indian community. Tom Allen (1993) quotes Vine Deloria, Jr. in his book *Manager As Warrior,* The translation of customs and values must be deliberate and specific. We must advocate strict establishment of some practices which we find are beneficial and have the discipline to carry them out in our own lives and community actions" (p.1). Which means to say, we must all come to some philosophical agreement, if not agreement at least an understanding, about the basic purpose and outcomes that we want our collective efforts to serve. To achieve this vital end, though, I think that it is important to have some understanding of leadership and upon whose ideas we base our thoughts.

Leadership Theories: First, let me offer my clarification about Burns' (1978, pg. 20) transactional and transformational leadership terminology. While this is pertinent to any discussion about leadership, it is critical for leaders to know the whys, the when and the how as they deal with leadership problems of Indian schools. (Bennis, 1989; Burns, p. 20)

Transactional leadership concerns those skills necessary for ensuring completed transactions within an institution, for settling disputes, and for storing up political credits and debits (Bass and Avoid, 1994). Kenneth Leithwood (1994) defines transactional leadership as opinion management, conflict resolution, crisis management, and bureaucratic bargaining (pp. 498-518). Transformative leadership (Speck, 1999; Leithwood, 1994; Burns, 1978), on the other hand, is defined as those leadership skills necessary for transforming received ways for doing things within an organization and for promoting intrinsic motivation within the organization's participants.

The author who coined these thoughts back in the 1960's, Douglas James MacGregor (1960) would take exception to the either/or, good guy/bad guy dichotomy in the way some might view leadership, e.g. Indian versus Anglo or using western thought processes versus Indian cultural values to resolve a conflict or to address a leadership problem. One reason for the dichotomy is that many Indian people (traditional and non-traditional) still view (rightly or wrongly) the western way of schooling as an indoctrination of western values and a negation of Indian ones. "Outsiders", whether Indian or not, who are credentialed by western institutions are seen as representatives of this perceived indoctrination.

Other leadership theories which blend well with Indian leadership issues is Ronald Heifetz's (1994) strategic principles of adaptive leadership. According to Heifetz, leaders engage people in facing challenges, adjust their values, change perspectives, and develop new habits of behavior in response to shifting environments. Steven Covey's Principle-Centered Learning (1999), Margaret Wheatley's Chaos Theory (2002), Warren Bennis's distinction between leaders and mangers

(2000), and Tony Wagner's concept of school change (1997) are also adaptable to reservation school leadership situations.

Personal Experiences: As for my own experiences, the terms represent two distinct sets of procedures for applying leadership; what some might refer to as Indian and/or western. The key here is *different*, not necessarily good or bad, as I think some might indicate (Martin, 2000; McLaughlin, 1996). All leaders, for example, Indian or non-Indian, will need to use both types of skills in their leadership roles, but will approach them in different ways. Indian school administrators will use different techniques, cultural background knowledge, and other attributes of power as leaders then non-Indians, for instance. While I appreciate the value of having a preferred style of leadership as much as anyone, I am struck by how important, what I will refer to as appropriate and relevant leadership, is to the success of an Indian school and its leader. It is certainly as easy and as common for good leaders to fail because of an inappropriate or irrelevant style of leadership.

I have seen well-trained Indian leaders who are undone by weak leadership, e.g. chronic budget deficits, poor relations with their boards, staff and parents, unclear accountability, and/or lousy decision-making. Nothing undermines the creditability of a leader who lacks his/her own understanding of leadership beliefs or what there preferred style might be and why. It is therefore important for leaders of reservation schools to have a conceptual framework to work from. Otherwise they are a sitting duck for any new fad that comes along and/or canned approaches advocated in textbooks. Even after they have been discredited by other Indian leaders or by academia and can't validate its usefulness for leading a reservation school.

"Doing things right and Doing the right things": It is fascinating to consider how discourses such as an Indian style of leadership, versus using the western thought of leadership can appropriate the logic of MacGregor (1960). This type of leap-of-abstraction can paint the formula "Indian way of resolving conflict is good," "western thought is bad." Leadership that is necessary for addressing critical Indian school problems can be a complex phenomenon, particularly the context in which Indian schools operate and exist.

My experiences cause me to believe it demands both transactional and transformational sorts of skills, meaning Indian and western skill approaches. It takes place within a complex multi-cultural milieu that shapes, and is shaped by, all sorts of competing values, beliefs, and notions concerning what's best for "Indian situations" requiring resolutions through appropriate leadership. The Oglala Lakota College (2000) on the Pine Ridge reservation provides this explanation for the Graduate Program of an Educational Administration emphasis degree:

> *"Graduate program is committed to the belief that the leaders and managers who will take the Lakota into the 21st century must have a foundation in Lakota language, spirituality, belief, values, thought and philosophy. Delivery of the curriculum is guided by the principle that traditional Lakota beliefs recognize a leader as someone who works for, with, and among the people, rather than above them, someone who lives for the people and takes action that is for the people rather than for personal or material gain. (p. 3)*

The point being to attempt to reach a balance, not only for the sake of balance, but for effective leadership it is important to know when to take a Indian or western approach, or both, to adequately address a problem. In my observations of Indian and non-Indian school leaders, knowing the difference between *"doing things right"* and *"doing the right things"* is helpful in determining how much Indian or western values to emphasize. This is similar to what Bennis (2000) describes as knowing the difference when to be a leader and a manager (pg. 14-15). In my studies of Indian administrators, the effective ones would view doing things right as relying too much on textbook-logic, while doing the right things is using common sense and applying local Indian forms of knowledge. The latter is also more common to what some view as an Indian-style-of-learning, which is to observe first, think about the learning, and them take action to try or practice a new learning. In contrast non-Indian learners will typically want to try something new, then question, and then think about a learning (Martin, 1998). Another view is that Indian leaders will be more humanistic in their dealings with leadership problems while non-Indians are more task-centered. Thus suggesting that an Indian leader might pay more attention to the human elements of an organization and a non-Indian to the technical structures of an organization.

Attributes of Power: To do this, however, one must first ask, how does power work within an organization? What are the attributes of power that make for leadership possibilities especially in a situation where you have conflicting values? Below is a very short list of some key attributes that are known to exist in tribal communities wherein reservations schools operate. These attributes are based on my years of experiences with Indian schools as a superintendent and from working with other Indian administrators and non-Indian administrators. They include:

- what you know counts
- who you know counts
- knowledge of clan membership in professional interpersonal relations (i.e. what are the clans and how do they relate to each other—an outsider must be careful about drawing on the "cultural capital" of relationships with persons of one clan when dealing with persons of another clan)
- certificates and credentials count (i.e. knowledge of tribal values would count if you were dealing with an Indian-based conflict and knowledge of a typical conflict resolution would count if it were western-thought based and certainly degrees and certificates of training count)
- access to relevant information matters
- race counts
- gender counts
- age counts
- how well you express what you know matters
- principles for speaking clearly and politely matters
- speaking abilities in English and in the local tribal language matters
- reading and writing abilities in English matters
- what tools and resources you can draw upon count
- background knowledge of tribal values and of atypical conflict resolution skills counts
- background knowledge of the institution counts
- background knowledge of the community counts

By using this as a background to understand one view of leadership, then the question of transformational versus transactional leadership styles is not nearly as significant as is the need to understand how all of the above attributes of power are shaped culturally and ones that could cause conflict. Moreover, if we are to envision an organization that is meaningfully culturally compatible, we must ask ourselves, how can we proceed as subjects and objects of power, as individuals who strive to create powerful moments so as to achieve a common vision, in ways that do not keep Indians and others at arm's length as far as being able to get along and being able to work together as a team for a common cause.

Carolyne:

Committed to the fundamental necessity of honoring culturally relevant research practices, we created an ***intentional professional community of indigenous inquiry and practice*** *(see Wenger, 1998) named CIRCLE: Community of Indigenous Research and Culturally-Responsive Learning Environments. As our group expanded, we decided to change our name to highlight our focus upon political action: the American Indian Education Action Network. CIRCLE emerged from a number of research and training collaborations between university faculty members and the Dine' Division of Education and the Hopi Office of Education. CIRCLE is an ethnically, theoretically and methodologically rich community comprised of Native and non-Native members who honor different epistemologies, different "beliefs about what counts as knowledge in the field of education, what is evidence of a claim, and what counts as a warrant for that evidence" (Pallas, 2001, p. 6). We meet monthly to listen to each other, collectively explore and constructively critique our various teaching and research projects, and in the process learn to communicate across our differences.*

Diane:

But in this model of culturally relevant practice the goal is not merely to increase achievement, but rather to support the transformation of communities. In the case of Native American communities this means helping position American Indian schools as active players in notions of community development. Some school officials, school boards, and tribal leaders are concerned about making schools better by building on the strengths of their communities, teaching Indian children to love learning by rooting it in the place they come from and working on improving life on Indian reservations by engaging schools, and specifically the students, in their problems. Far too often schools have focused curriculum on individual success that sets up the expectation that leaving home is expected of them. As a result, too many of the talented Indian professionals leave the reservation and are employed off-reservation and only a few will ever realize the value of going home to help rebuild their home and communities (Martin, 2000).

Don:

The crucial need for such research communities is described by Pallas (2001), "If educational researchers cannot understand and engage with one another, both within and across at least some educational research communities, the enterprise is doomed to failure... [educational researchers must learn] to engage with multiple epistemological perspectives to the point that members of different communities of educational research practice can understand one another, despite, or perhaps through their differences" (p. 7).

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Name: Elaine Riley-Taylor Organization: Northern Arizona University

Address: PO Box 5774, Flagstaff, AZ 86011-5774

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