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Warriors for a Nation:
The American Indian Movement, Indigenous Men, and Nation Building at the Takeover of Wounded Knee in 1973

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Between February 27 and May 8, 1973, Indigenous nationalists of the American Indian Movement (AIM) and local Lakota reservation residents occupied the tiny hamlet of Wounded Knee, South Dakota. They took hostages at gunpoint, set up a defense perimeter, and flew the American flag upside down. What had originally begun as a symbolic takeover to draw attention to pressing local and national concerns ultimately turned into a prolonged standoff between the roughly three hundred men, women, and children on one side, and numerous tribal, state, and federal law enforcement agents on the other. The intent behind the armed takeover was to highlight intratribal conflict over tribal governance on the local Pine Ridge reservation, South Dakota, and to demand a return to the treaty-making era. The sustained takeover is widely considered the climax of Indigenous activism during the Red Power era (circa 1969–1978).

The armed confrontation at Wounded Knee can be understood as a highly gendered nation building project. Halfway through the prolonged siege, Indigenous nationalists declared the Independent Oglala Nation (ION) a nation separate from the United States government and proclaimed the setup of a modern-day warrior society. These parallel and intertwined actions suggest a close connection between

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manhood and nationhood in which nationalist warriors rallied in defense of a newly proclaimed nation.

As noted scholar Vine Deloria (Lakota) pointed out in his *Behind the Trail of Broken Treaties: An American Indian Declaration of Independence,* during the 1970s Indigenous nationalists made a compelling argument for reassessing the treaty-making era and for fundamentally restructuring Indigenous–settler colonial relations.[1] Less recognized or explored, however, is the interplay between masculinity and nation building at the takeover at Wounded Knee. In the public perception of its time, "the male gender was the 'power gender,'" as historian Troy Johnson puts it.[2] News reports have focused attention on male activists, now figures epitomized in hypermasculine imagery of modern warriors. Paradoxically, scholars have failed to explore Indigenous male perspectives.[3] Indigenous women, who at the time carried out much of their grassroots-level activism behind the scenes and were largely hidden from the media limelight, have drawn more scholarly attention.[4]

The main purpose of this paper is to describe and analyze the gendered nation building project at the Wounded Knee siege. More particularly, I seek to trace the parallel and intertwined declaration of the ION and the setup of the AIM warrior society. In combination, these events speak of the masculine nature of the nation building endeavor. This article seeks to make new sense of these warriors for a nation and the intricate nature of masculinity and nationalism. It sheds new light on the role of marginalized masculinities in processes of nation building, a significant yet largely overlooked field of research. I ground this essay's theoretical foundations in the fields of masculinity and nationalism, postcolonialism, and performance studies, among others. Methodologically, this article draws upon oral voices, archival collections, and activist newspapers to better capture the gendered dynamics within the Wounded Knee community during the standoff.

In arguing that the Wounded Knee standoff can be understood as a masculinist enterprise, I do not seek to reduce the complexity of the takeover, but draw attention to one significant singular aspect of this multifaceted and complex watershed event. Nor do I intend to ignore the highly significant contributions of women at the takeover. Rather, my goal is to provide fresh perspective on the close linkage between masculinity and nationalism at the Wounded Knee occupation, particularly the role of marginalized masculinities in nation building projects.

Historiography: Red Power, the American Indian Movement, and Wounded Knee

The Wounded Knee occupation is closely tied to the Red Power era, a pivotal time for Indigenous people in the twentieth century. Red Power activism fundamentally altered Indigenous peoples' perceptions of self and society, leading to a profound cultural renewal across Indian country. Indigenous activism also transformed Indigenous–settler colonial relations, heralding a turning away from policies of forced assimilation towards those of limited self-rule and tribal self-determination.[5] An early generation of scholars—historians such as Troy Johnson and sociologists Joane Nagel and Duane Champagne—have

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conceptualized this nine-year period of protest within a coherent framework, identifying the occupation of Alcatraz Island (1969–1971) as the starting point, the Wounded Knee takeover (1973) as the climax, and the Longest Walk (1978) as the culmination of that period of activism.[6] These scholars have broadly contextualized the entire Red Power Movement within a long line of Indigenous resistance movements to settler-colonial encroachment.[7] The defining characteristics of this activism were its emphasis on pan-Indianism, a supratribal identity, and property takeover as a tactic.[8] These scholars have firmly established the Alcatraz occupation as a focal point of Indigenous activism and for precipitating, perpetuating, and concluding the Red Power era.[9]

More lately, a number of scholars have begun to attach new meanings to the term *Red Power* and also have started to push beyond the initial periodization. Historians Lucie Kýrová and György Ferenc Tóth have relied on a more general definition of the term *social movement*." They have rightly pointed out that "Red Power can be considered a part of a larger movement for Native American rights and, at the same time, a movement in itself."[10] Historians Brad Shreve and Paul McKenzie Jones have argued that the Red Power Movement began in the 1960s with the National Indian Youth Council (NIYC) and the fish-in movement in the Pacific Northwest.[11] Subsequently, the Red Power Movement has been divided into three waves: an initial phase from World War II through the late 1960s, when Indigenous activism increasingly became concerned with decolonization and sovereignty; a second phase of pan-Indigenous protest, ca. 1969–1978; and a final phase from the mid-to-late 1970s and 1980s, when protesters became concerned with multiple issues, such as religious rights, environmentalism, decolonizing museums, and repatriation.[12]

Despite these recent scholarly insights, the meaning of the term *Red Power* has remained outright elusive and fuzzy. This is due to the numerous associations with various aspects with nation building, as historian Bradley Shreve has pointed out.[13] Dependent upon context, the words *Red Power* can either refer to *self-determination* (which depends on a complementary relationship between independence and interdependence), *nationalism* (requiring statehood and nationhood and focused entirely on independence), *sovereignty* (encompassing a people's right to self-government independent from outside influence), or *decolonization* (a far-reaching attempt to reclaim epistemologies and social structures).[14] The concept of "peoplehood," common to all Indigenous tribes in America, is another culturally based model that transcends notions of nationalism, gender, and ethnicity.[15] To better conceptualize Indigenous worldviews, realities, and ways of thinking and doing, historian Donald Fixico has utilized what he calls "the medicine way" of understanding, a holistic worldview encompassing physical and metaphysical realities.[16] In building upon these considerations, peoplehood can be understood as self-contained and self-governing. During the Red Power era, Indigenous nationalists drew from both their own epistemologies and Western concepts of nationalism, frequently merging these concepts of self-governance.

The American Indian Movement, founded in the Twin Cities of Minneapolis/St. Paul in 1968, was a key player in Red Power protest. Although the organization was not involved in the initial occupation of Alcatraz Island, AIM played a significant role in spreading supratribal protest and in shaping the Red Power agenda, tactics, and

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strategies for airing Indigenous grievances. AIM participated in almost every major protest between 1968/69 and 1978 and received the most media attention, and thus became synonymous with radical protest activism for uninformed onlookers.[17]

AIM's members came from the urban Indigenous population. They had firsthand experience with racial discrimination and socioeconomic disparities in the cities and sought to confront those oppressive conditions. Many AIM members had lost their cultural grounding—their tribal language, traditional practices, rituals and ceremonies, and their tribal values and beliefs. They sought to bridge their cultural disconnect and rebuild positive Indigenous identities by reconnecting with their tribal heritage.[18] By early 1970, the young urban activists from the Twin Cities began to reach out to tribal communities in South Dakota and build a cultural alliance with reservation elders.[19] Soon, the cultural bond between traditionalists and neo-traditionalists turned political. AIM became increasingly involved with border town racism, reservation politics, and treaty rights.[20]

The intergenerational alliance ultimately led to a profound transformation within AIM: Indigenous activists' attempts to re-traditionalize went hand-in-hand with an increasing radicalization in protest politics. Within a timespan of a few years, Indigenous men within AIM transformed from civil rights advocates (seeking integration) into aggressive warriors for a nation (seeking separatism). This transformation in Indigenous men and the formation of a nationalist warrior masculinity were closely

Figure 1. *Photograph of activists erecting a tipi at Wounded Knee, SD. In the background is the hilltop church (center). To the left is the cemetery of the victims of the 1890 massacre. In front of the church are fortifications and bunkers. All photographs courtesy of the Richard Erdoes Papers, Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.*

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intertwined with claims of cultural renewal, moral regeneration, spiritual/bodily healing, political empowerment, national reclamation, and decolonization.[21]

The Wounded Knee takeover is probably one of the most researched events in the Red Power era. The 1973 event has invited connections to the 1890 massacre that occurred at the same location.[22] Indigenous perspectives come from Paul Chaat Smith (Comanche) and Robert Allen Warrior (Osage).[23] Wounded Knee is often characterized as an armed standoff between AIM and the tribal government, yet it was one incident within the long history of political infighting on the Pine Ridge reservation.[24]

Scholars have examined news media coverage of what has been the longest domestic insurrection in US history.[25] Their findings indicate that AIM became synonymous with militancy for three reasons: First, news media coverage focused on militant themes and stereotypical images.[26] Second, Indigenous nationalists skillfully reappropriated stereotypical imagery through the staged performance and spectacular embodiment of warriorhood in order to draw media attention to their cause.[27] Finally, as much as Indigenous activists sought to play into media bias, they also considered themselves real warriors in the nationalist struggle against colonial domination.[28] At Wounded Knee, the performance and embodiment of warriorhood became inherently hybridized, occurring through biased news media reporting, the occupiers' skillful utilization and reappropriation of martial stereotypes, and the occupants' genuine efforts to remake their Indigenous identities in relation to real or imagined understandings of what it meant to be a warrior. The concept of warriorhood also supported their overall attempt to gain political sovereignty and instigate cultural renewal.[29] AIM's leaders gained a lot of media attention—in large part due to their leadership style, demeanor and their media tactics. It is for this reason that famed literary scholar and contemporary Gerald Vizenor (Ojibwe) stated that "[AIM leaders] Russel Means [Lakota], Clyde Bellecourt [Ojibwe], [Dennis] Banks [Ojibwe], and others were established media warriors at Wounded Knee."[30]

The staunchest support for the Wounded Knee takeover came from Indigenous women.[31] Yet media coverage at Wounded Knee almost completely ignored Indigenous women, partly due to a widespread gender and racial bias, and partly due to the hypervisibility of Indigenous men.[32] Indigenous women are credited with pushing their male counterparts into occupying the tiny hamlet by directly appealing to their manhood (or lack thereof).[33] The takeover would have been impossible without the tremendous support of women. Throughout the siege, women did the housekeeping, laundry, cooking, and cared for the sick and injured. They hiked in and out of the occupied hamlet, brought in much needed food, ammunition, and people in order to keep the takeover going, and provided the occupiers with crucial information. Women also took an active part in the defense of the hamlet, occupying bunkers, participating in patrols, and engaging in shootouts; some received gunshot wounds.[34]

The gender dynamics within AIM largely have obscured Indigenous women's contributions in the occupation. Indigenous women within AIM frequently complained about the toxic or negative masculine behavior of their male counterparts and their sexism, chauvinism, and patriarchal privilege.[35] For example, AIM's male leaders were known for their misogyny and had a reputation for verbally and physically

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abusing women.[36] Indigenous scholars Robert Alexander Innes (Plains Cree) and Kim Anderson (Cree/Métis) have pointed out that many Indigenous men have internalized hegemonic ideals of patriarchal masculinity and male privilege—ironically, the same norms and beliefs they struggled against in the anticolonial project—which, in turn, has encouraged them to assert power and control over Indigenous women and those who do not adhere to heteronormative identity. In so doing, Indigenous men have contributed to the subordination of Indigenous women and helped to undermine their traditionally strong position within tribal communities.[37]

Masculinity and Nationalism

The connection between manhood and nationalism requires some theoretical context. Nationalism can be defined as "both a goal—to achieve statehood, and a belief—in collective commonality," according to sociologist Joane Nagel.[38] Accordingly, nationalist movements have the express purpose of forming a nation (nationhood) and building a state (statehood). Within this gendered project, nationalism and militarism are closely intertwined.[39] The process of nation building involves various elements that Nagel describes as "'imagining' a national past and present, inventing traditions, and symbolically constructing community."[40] Nationalist ethnocentrism, the notion of a cultural and national identity, reinforces notions of "unity" among community members while simultaneously stressing "otherness" towards outsiders.[41] Conceptions of civic nationalism and ethnic nationhood continue to shape nations. Civic nationalism derives its political legitimacy from the active participation of its citizens in the legal-political community within a certain territory. Ethnic nationalism in turn is tied to notions of ancestry and kinship; a community that is linked through history, culture, language, customs, and traditions. In some nations such as the United States, both forms exist side by side.[42] Within the United States, civic nationalism predominates the American settler nation, whereas ethnic nationalism mobilizes the anticolonial Red Power Movement.

Various scholars have demonstrated that the building of nations and their undoing are gendered processes in which particular notions of masculinity and femininity are involved.[43] Nationalist projects, whether colonial or anticolonial, reconfigure gender orders and designate men and women gendered places. Women are frequently seen as the biological, cultural, and symbolical reproducers of nations. As embodiments of family and national honor, women are in need of protection; militarized men, in turn, frequently take on a role as defenders of freedom and honor or as protectors of their homeland, people, and women.[44] The intersections between masculinity and the nation have been variously underlined.[45]

Within nation building endeavors, the domination of masculine interests and ideology has frequently overshadowed the active social and political participation of women. Women have frequently been included in rhetorical discourse, yet they largely have been excluded from political decision making.[46] Feminist studies have pioneered an understanding of the connection between gender and nation building processes.[47] The scholarly focus on men's dominance and women's subjugation in

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nationalist struggles has reinforced an understanding of the gendered nature of nationalist struggles.[48] Nagel points out that "nationalist politics is a masculinist enterprise" and that "masculinity and nationalism articulate well with one another."[49] Nationalist constructions of gender tend to reinforce patriarchal systems—with men serving as gendered agents who are closely bound to the history of the nation-state and with women serving as keepers of family. Nationalist and anticolonial movements encourage the participation of women, but they tend to relegate women to "traditional roles" and ignore their demands for gender equality.[50]

Historian Thembisa Waetjen argues that there is a need to look beyond the reality of men's shared dominance over women in nationalism. Instead, she proposes to focus on the tensions and interrelations between men in nationalism. A focus on the differences in and between men may shed new light on hegemonic ideals of manliness and competing concepts and may help to better understand nationalism itself.[51] Historians Simon Wendt and Pablo Dominguez Andersen have called for a need to examine "the agency of marginalized masculinities as well as the role of transnational dynamics in processes of gendered nation-building" to better understand how hegemonic masculinities are perpetuated and reproduced.[52] This shift in focus falls within a larger historiographical trend to move away from the study of hegemonic white heteropatriarchal masculinity that has asserted its power by subordinating women (both white women and women of color) and "other" or alternative masculinities (such as homosexual or ethnic masculinities). Gender scholars Ronald L. Jackson and Murali Buraji have pointed out that masculinity studies have been largely dominated by "the pervasiveness of a Western-centric concept of men and masculinities."[53] This trend has relegated "other" masculinities to little more than negative referents of dominant notions of what men should be and how they should act.[54]

Cultural imagery has depicted the colonized "other" as "the antithesis to how men and masculinity" should be, as Jackson and Balaji put it.[55] Colonialists tended to portray the cultures that they had conquered in racialized and gendered terms. Indigenous men were portrayed as either too unmanly, or too manly as compared to Western standards of masculinity. White masculinity was conveniently situated in the middle, allowing white men to masculinize themselves through analogy.[56] These cultural strategies of "othering" have left a lasting mark on colonized men and masculinities and informed their nationalist struggles. In anticolonial struggles such as India, Egypt, and Ireland, colonized men constructed oppositional forms of masculinity in order to contest their own marginalization. Their anticolonial resistance was influenced by a nationalist ideology that frequently incorporated Western models of hegemonic masculinity and nationalism.[57] Gender scholar Tedd Reeser writes that "resistance to a colonizing power may include attempts to reconstruct the colonized as masculine, or as more masculine than the colonizer."[58] In the context of the 1960s and 1970s, Indigenous people resisted dominant images of childish, effeminate, feminized Indigenous manhood by putting forth strong counter-analogies. Thus, in conscious attempts to remake colonized Indigenous men, Indigenous men remasculinized and re-traditionalized by selectively tapping into their rich cultural heritage and/or reappropriating popular imagery of male Indigeneity in what can be considered a hybrid space.[59]

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Indigenous masculinity studies constitute a new, yet largely overlooked field of study.[60] Gender scholar Sam McKegney has pointed out that Indigenous masculinities have been complicated through "the layering of racialized, patriarchal gender systems over preexisting, tribally specific cosmologies of gender."[61] The manipulation of Indigenous gender systems constituted a key element of settler-colonial policies to alienate Indigenous men from their culture.[62] McKegney has stressed the necessity to balance between "the need to name and affirm Indigenous maleness, on the one hand, and recognition of contingency, indeterminacy, and gender fluidity, on the other."[63] Various scholars have equally cautioned against recovering an "authentic" Indigenous masculinity, but stressed the need instead to highlight Indigenous agency.[64] Native Hawaiian anthropologist Ty Tengan has pointed out that "the study of Indigenous masculinity offers an untapped rubric for theorizing decolonization."[65] Indigenous masculinity studies foreground the dynamics of race-, gender-, and class-based oppression and domination within particular colonial and nationalist contexts; more generally, they also work to undermine cultural hegemony and white male privilege through alternative gender practices.[66]

The Multilayered Symbolism of Wounded Knee

Feminist scholar Cynthia Enloe has observed that nationalist movements spring from men's experiences, which are rooted in masculine memory, humiliation, and hope.[67] The locality of Wounded Knee, site of the 1890 massacre, contains a powerful, multilayered symbolism that directly related to the gendered nation building attempt in 1973.[68] To the Lakota, Wounded Knee is a deeply ingrained event in their cultural history that relates to gendered notions of victimhood, cultural memory, and hope.

The massacre site epitomizes the victimization of the Lakota people through military conquest, political oppression, and cultural exploitation. On December 29, 1890, nearly three hundred Lakota men, women, and children were massacred by members of the Seventh Cavalry Regiment on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. The chain of events leading up the tragedy are closely tied to the Ghost Dance, the killing of Chief Sitting Bull on December 15, 1890, and the violent suppression of the spiritual revitalization movement. In what can be read as an ongoing injustice to the Lakota people, to the present day various attempts to obtain a government apology, a Wounded Knee memorial, compensation to the heirs and descendants of the massacre victims, and revocation of medals of honor for US soldiers committing that atrocity all have been met with continual refusal to consider the Wounded Knee incident a massacre.[69] The tragic event became well known to the American public through Dee Brown's *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* (1970), a history of the conquest of the American West that evoked contested parallels to the Vietnam War.[70]

The Wounded Knee massacre site directly related to cultural memory. The Wounded Knee Trading Post represented another, no less humiliating and victimizing layer of symbolism. A business monopoly in the impoverished reservation community, it was closely tied to the exploitation of Lakota culture and history. The business enterprise capitalized on the cultural memory of the dead and lived off the economic

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exploitation of local reservation residents, causing deep resentment in an atmosphere of increased political sensitivity and cultural awareness.[71]

The meaningful location of Wounded Knee tapped into gendered hopes also. In 1973, Indigenous activists quite consciously selected the historic site in order to establish a continuum between past and present injustices, suffering, and hardship.[72] Wounded Knee represented a place where "a dream of revitalization had been anchored," as anthropologist Maureen Trudelle Schwarz puts it.[73] The very place that represented the destruction of a people's way of life was also a site where political sovereignty and cultural identity could be restored and reaffirmed and where the US government could be compelled to reexamine the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty—or so Indigenous nationalists believed.

All in all, the site of Wounded Knee entailed a multilayered symbolism that related to notions of wounded nation- and peoplehood; it referred to ongoing colonial oppression, domination, and exploitation; and it was closely related to renewed calls for national reclamation, cultural revitalization, and moral regeneration. These calls resonated with Indigenous men and their renewed calls for warriorhood and nationhood. This gendered enterprise was part of a larger project that tied nationalist and warrior masculinities to the reclamation of traditional male roles and practices, with parallels to Indigenous experiences elsewhere.[74]

The Takeover: Causes and Characteristics

The 1973 conflict at Wounded Knee was rooted in long-standing sociopolitical conflict within the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation.[75] Tribal governance was a form of indirect colonial rule set up under the provisions of the 1934 Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) and supported by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). Intratribal conflict was compounded by the growth of the multiracial Indigenous population, which exacerbated sociocultural divisions, and the IRA form of tribal governance, which deepened political rifts. The new form of governance itself was a foreign imposition on Oglala culture. Assimilationists—many of whom were mixed-blood—dominated the new government over the full-blood population.[76] The IRA style of governance is directly linked to the takeover and seizure of Wounded Knee.[77] According to historian Clara Sue Kidwell, tribal politics were characterized by three key factors that directly translated into tribal conflict: first, close alignment of Indigenous identity with blood and politics; second, internal conflict over forms of tribal governance (the IRA form of tribal rule versus traditional concepts, which stressed kinship ties with mutual obligations and responsibilities); and third, BIA dependency and an oppressive colonial regime. These translated into fierce antagonism and infighting among the Lakota.[78]

The 1973 conflict at Wounded Knee stemmed from the severe disenchantment of local Oglala Lakota with tribal chairman Richard Wilson and tribal politics on Pine Ridge. Shortly after taking office in early 1972, political tensions heightened over Wilson's adversarial leadership and AIM's direct challenge to his political regime.[79] Critics charged Wilson with mismanagement; failure to call the tribal council into session; a tribal resolution granting him broad powers; the prohibition

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of public gatherings and due process; and unreasonable searches and seizures.[80] Soon, Wilson formed a militia called Guardians of the Oglala Nation (GOON).[81] Together, these moves gave Wilson sweeping political powers. The strongest intratribal opposition came from the Oglala Sioux Civil Rights Organization (OSCRO), a grassroots organization.[82] After impeachment proceedings failed, OSCRO ultimately turned to AIM for help.[83] The request provided the activist organization with some legitimacy upon the reservation.[84] The express purpose of the Wounded Knee takeover was to draw attention to the intratribal conflict on Pine Ridge, to jeopardize the existent form of tribal governance, and to reinstall the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty as legally binding.[85]

The government's response to the February 27, 1973 takeover came with a massive buildup of military hardware and personnel to suppress the Indigenous nationalist movement. Tribal police and federal law enforcement officers—BIA police, FBI agents, US Marshals (USM) and others—quickly set up roadblocks. The US government utilized the latest Vietnam era technology such as Armored Personnel Carriers (APCs), helicopters, Phantom jets, M-16 rifles, nighttime illumination flares, gas, helmets, C-rations, flak vests and other equipment in order to contain the takeover.[86] Opposing the powerful force of these law enforcement agents, equipped with the latest Vietnam-era military hardware, was a poorly armed and outnumbered group of roughly three hundred occupiers—men, women, and children—elements that made for a highly politicized confrontation, replete with symbolism.[87] The Wounded

Figure 2. *Fortification/bunker at Wounded Knee. Rifle barrels point out of the loopholes. AIM frequently utilized the upside-down flag (internationally known as a distress signal) as an expression of its defiant nationalism.*

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Knee takeover brought up gendered analogies of yet another "Indian War," refought in the twentieth century, this time between modern-day warriors and Vietnam-era US troops; these notions overlapped and intersected with notions of other countercultural protest events of the 1960s.[88]

The prolonged standoff was characterized by bunkers, roadblocks, negotiations, visiting delegations, and the firefights that punctuated the occupation. The siege bore a striking resemblance to the Vietnam experience, as was widely observed. Black activist Angela Davis, who visited Wounded Knee but was not allowed into the hamlet, summed up her impression with, "it's just like a Vietnam battlefield out there!"[89] Bill Means (Lakota), a paratrooper who had fought at Khe Sangh, recalled, "Man, I survived Vietnam, and now I'm gonna get killed on my own land, my own reservation."[90] Jim Roubideau (Spirit Lake Nation) remembered, "They were shooting machine-gun fire at us, tracers coming at us at nighttime just like a war zone. We had some Vietnam vets with us, and they said, 'Man, this is just like Vietnam.'"[91] Halfway through the siege, the occupiers declared the ION and swore in citizens as members of their new nation.[92]

On May 8, 1973, the seventy-one-day standoff—the longest domestic disturbance in US history—ended with a negotiated settlement. The remaining occupiers laid down their arms and were arrested.[93] The siege resulted in two activist deaths—Frank Clearwater and Lawrence "Buddy" Lamont—and a severely injured US Marshal, Lloyd Grimm.[94] During the takeover, 500,000 of rounds of ammunition were fired into the hamlet and the Wounded Knee Trading Post was seriously damaged.[95] The US government promised to investigate charges made against the Wilson administration and complete a review into the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty.[96] The Wounded Knee takeover was inconclusive in terms of upsetting the balance of power in the tribal council and it did not create a sovereign nation.[97] The Wounded Knee siege left the local reservation community and Indian country divided over the American Indian Movement. After the siege, returning residents found the Trading Post and Post Office gone, wrecked churches, and ransacked and looted homes.[98] The reservation subsequently turned into a battleground between AIM and Wilson sympathizers.[99] Between 1973 and the mid-1970s, there were a number of Wounded Knee-like occupations on reservations between competing tribal factions.[100]

The Wounded Knee takeover marked the confluence of two main currents in the formation of the nationalist and warrior masculinity. The first current stemmed from protest and identity politics in the American Indian Movement. Since 1972, Indigenous men in AIM had engaged in a series of increasingly violent confrontations with police officers, government officials, and border town rednecks. As such, they came to consider themselves the vanguard of the Indigenous anticolonial struggle.[101] The second current stemmed from Indigenous military veterans. They had been fundamentally shaped by military service, frequently a combat tour in Vietnam, which had evoked severe doubts about the nature of the war. As they joined the nationalist struggle against domestic colonialism, they became the second current of warrior masculinity.[102] The Wounded Knee takeover saw the meeting of these two distinct, yet also partially overlapping, currents of nationalist and warrior masculinity.[103]

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The American Indian Movement as a Warrior Society for the Independent Oglala Nation at Wounded Knee, 1973

The Independent Oglala Nation and AIM as a Warrior Society

On March 11, 1973, the siege of Wounded Knee saw two closely interrelated events: the declaration of the Independent Oglala Nation and the setting up of a warrior society by the defenders of the village. The ION was a nation forged under siege. It was no coincidence that the declaration of the ION went hand in hand with the setup of a self-proclaimed "warrior society."[104] The overwhelming forces of US colonial dominance led to the grounding of a tribal nation that was coded as highly masculine, as evidenced by the highly salient images of warrior-veterans. Two veterans—Carter Camp (Ponca), a US Army veteran with a two-year tour in Germany, and Stan Holder (Wichita), a Green Beret and combat veteran with two tours in Vietnam—organized the defense of Wounded Knee and the military forces of the occupiers. Soon, the defenders of Wounded Knee began to regard themselves as a warrior society for the ION.

Historically, warrior societies played a pivotal role within nineteenth-century Plains Indian social and cultural life. Men's sodalities carried out a wide range of overlapping social, legal, religious, economic, and military functions. This included preserving

Figure 3. *Two activists watching their surrounding through binoculars; one is armed with a rifle. Both stand behind some fortification. In the background is the Wounded Knee church tower with a flag, an expression of AIM's nationalism. The signpost to the left relates to the 1890 massacre and indicates the spot where the Battery Hotchkiss Guns were placed.*

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the order on the move, regulating the communal buffalo hunts, policing the camp, and preparing ceremonies including the Sun Dance, the highest religious ceremony. Military solidarities also maintained individual and public welfare by distributing property, providing charity for the needy and sponsoring feasts to the larger community. Warrior societies created a significant bond between society members, which, in turn, promoted social stability and tribal solidarity. Warrior societies also fostered and promoted a shared martial ideology and ethos. They sponsored social gatherings that involved the recounting of coups and military achievements and the public validation of accomplishments together with the redistribution or giving away of property to the larger community. In that sense, military societies cultivated among its members and others a military spirit that apparently aimed to assure the longevity of the tribe.[105] Warriors in "no-flight" societies (commonly referred to as "Dog Soldiers") carried the martial ethos to the extreme and often took a vow before battle not to retreat.[106]

Just as there were men's sodalities, there were also women's sodalities within Lakota society. Their actions ranged from artisan activities to the performing of rituals to celebrate war, hunting, and religion. Membership in warrior societies was restricted to men, but women were allowed to participate, often as singers for some of the sodalities.[107] Apparently, there was no established tradition of warrior women among the Lakota.[108] Anthropologist William Meadows writes that most importantly, "Plains men's military societies visibly promote[d] the common central theme of a warrior tradition."[109] He contends that a "shared martial ideology (and at times ethos) . . . has remained an important part of ethnic identity."[110] Despite change over time, "the traditional roles, symbols, and warrior ethos of these [pre-reservation] military society systems continue via [contemporary] military societies."[111]

AIM's leaders and members were heavily influenced by real and imagined warrior society ideals. However, as historian Al Carroll points out, men in AIM understood the warrior ethos somewhat differently from traditional views and concepts regarding warriors, and were ironically influenced by other social movements of their time—the black civil rights struggle, student protest, and the antiwar movement. As he puts it, "the most accurate way to describe AIM in the 1970s is that it was an outlet for Natives who wanted to be a part of the warrior tradition but could not in the newly 'conventional' way of becoming a veteran."[112] AIM's leaders frequently claimed that they modelled AIM after the Black Panther Party and they utilized low-scale violence to draw media attention to their cause.

In an interview, AIM leader Carter Camp (Ponca) described the deeper meaning of the AIM warrior society.[113]

> A warrior society . . . means the men and women—both really—of the nation who have dedicated themselves to give everything that they have to their people. They think that a warrior should be the last one to eat. He should be the first one to give away his moccasins and the last one to buy new ones. That type of feeling amongst Indian people is what a warrior society is all about. He of course is also ready to defend his family in time of war. He is ready to hold off any enemy and probably

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willing to sacrifice himself for the good of his tribe and his people. That's what a warrior society is to Indian people, and that's how we tried to envision ourselves.[114]

According to Camp, the newly established warrior society, just like warrior societies of old, was first and foremost about protecting and defending the tribal nation. Camp imagined the warrior society as a selfless guardian and protector of the ION. In his understanding, warriorhood was closely tied to notions of selflessness to the point of self-sacrifice to ensure the survival of the community. To him, the ION was "a community of warriors empowered by stories held in the land since 1890, warriors of many nations united in their selfless actions of their comrades-in-arms fighting by their side."[115] Altogether, the AIM warrior society drew from various cross-cultural understandings of warriorhood that pointed to a new direction for warrior societies and the right way to be a warrior.[116]

Camp, himself a veteran and Indigenous rights activist, apparently sought to emulate warrior traditions and the spirit behind them through his own actions. He was among the first to seize the Trading Post, remained a primary organizer in the Wounded Knee defenses, and acted as a spokesperson throughout the siege. He was also among those who signed the final agreement and remained inside the hamlet when the other defenders were gone. Camp's sister, Casey Hornik-Camp (Ponca) claimed that "he was the only person in [a] leadership position in Wounded Knee who never left Wounded Knee, not to go out and do press junkets, not to go and sit in a hotel for a while, none of that. He was a war leader there. He stayed inside with his warriors."[117]

Stan Holder (Wichita) added yet another dimension to the notion of the AIM warrior society. He claimed that the warrior society was "more of a brotherhood, than an army with a chain of command."[118] He voiced an Indigenous understanding of warriorhood as a reciprocal relation between individual warrior and tribal community, rather than a Western understanding of soldiering as a role.[119] What banded the AIM warrior society together was "to defend the . . . women and children" of the newly declared tribal nation and "to defend the sacred land."[120] Unlike Western armies with a military chain of command and discipline, the warrior society was built upon informal structures, mutual trust, and leadership based on experience and ongoing success.[121] This approach to things military was partially confirmed by participant-observer Carol Talbert, who wrote that "the Indian military was loosely organized yet efficient, cooperative yet individualistic."[122]

However, at times ideals and realities were far apart. Indeed, it seems that the AIM idealized warrior society was more of a ragtag army made up of those with extensive military experience as well as those who had none. The occupiers had to ensure that its armed members possessed sufficient discipline to maintain a state of order and obedience in order not to cause any involuntary harm to those within the community and those besieging them. At some point during the occupation, Stan Holder left to retrieve supplies for the besieged, but was captured by law enforcement officers; this led to a breakdown of discipline in Wounded Knee and prolonged firefights.[123] On the strength of his pledge that he would restore order and discipline and then turn himself

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in, Holder was picked up from a Rapid City jail by helicopter and returned to the village.[124] According to Stan Pottinger, assistant attorney general of the Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department and government negotiator,

> Holder went in, cease fire immediately, no more fighting, no more shooting. . . . He appeared at RB1 [Road Block 1] with his hands on his head, exactly as requested and Colburn and all of us were so pleased with what was going on that we said: "Would you go back and stay there? Back into the village?" He said: "Terrific." So, we sent him back. It was on the condition that at the end we would say: "Would you resubmit to arrest?" And he said: "Yes I will."

Pottinger described Holder as "probably . . . the coolest head at Wounded Knee . . . during the time I was there."[125] Bill Hall, director of the US Marshal Service, reflected on how his predecessor Wayne Colburn, director from 1970–1976, related to Holder. As he recalled,

> The AIM people had this position which they designated as Chief of Security. I know that Wayne [Colburn], really established an admiration, certainly a sense of respect for one of the people that had that position, Stan Holder. Wayne trusted him very much and got to the point where when he wanted to do anything, he would say well, "Do you give me Stan Holder's word on it, I will do it". . . . I suspect it was somewhat reciprocal.[126]

This example illustrates that for one, Stan Holder sought to live up to the proclaimed ideals of the ION warrior society. Apparently, Holder enjoyed a great level of credibility on both sides.[127] This went so far that after the Wounded Knee occupation, when Holder faced federal charges, Assistant Attorney General Stan Pottinger testified for Holder in court against Harvey Heard, another assistant attorney general.[128] Other AIM leaders such as Russell Means and Dennis Banks also commanded the respect of the US marshals. As Bill Hall reflected, "Well, I guess I was looking at them as a professional opponent. I thought they were brave people. I admired their courage, I did not agree with what they were doing or the way they were doing it."[129]

The modern-day AIM warrior society drew from a wide range of cross-cultural elements. These cross-cultural elements included Indigenous warrior/veteran traditions and 1970s countercultural elements from the New Left and black radicalism. Together, these various cross-cultural elements allowed for the creation of a reinvented and highly hybridized form of warriorhood at the height of Indigenous masculinized protest politics.[130] In contrast to traditional martial solidarities, which were largely tribally oriented, AIM's warrior society had both a blend of Indigenous (pan-Indian) and non-Indigenous elements. Paradoxically, AIM's warrior society ideals—while heavily influenced by traditional concepts of warrior societies—also were influenced by the antiwar movement.[131] AIM's performance of warriorhood to gain media attention drew on black civil rights, student, and antiwar protest strategies and tactics.

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The warrior society's main purpose was to serve the newly established Independent Oglala Nation. It comes as little surprise that members publicly pledged to defend the nation, even to death.[132] "It is different when you are on the frontlines fighting someone who you think is your enemy out somewhere else," as non-Indigenous Air Force veteran Bob Anderson reflected, "and then when you come home then you realize these struggles against your own government. And the struggle is of such a nature that you might have to give your life."[133] An unnamed Navajo Vietnam veteran claimed: "people stay here, because they believe; they have a cause. That's why we lost in Viet Nam, 'cause there was no cause. We were fighting a rich man's war . . . being used as cannon fodder. . . . At Wounded Knee, we're doing pretty damn good, morale-wise."[134] A Chicano Vietnam veteran stated: "I just came here because I'm against the thing . . . and the only way I can fight is to come out here and put my ass on the line. I ain't got a lot of money. The only thing I got to give whatever I can do—help 'em out physically."[135] The statement suggests that the self-proclaimed, modern-day warrior society saw itself as in line with an older tradition of martial manhood embodied by Indigenous warriors of the last century and claimed that its foremost concern was to take care of the people and ensure their well-being throughout the siege.

The warriors at Wounded Knee utilized what historian Al Carroll calls "traditional protective spiritual medicine" to reinvent their warrior masculinities.[136] At various times during the siege, medicine men Leonard Crow Dog (Lakota) and Wallace Black Elk (Lakota) conducted cultural practices that included prayers, blessings, chants, and war paint or ceremonies such as the sweat lodge.[137] Indigenous veterans carried special medicine pouches that they credited with protective powers.[138] Upon the conclusion of the siege, FBI agents noted that although Indigenous veterans calmly gave themselves up into custody, they got very angry if federal agents mishandled or damaged their medicine pouches, as this represented the desecration of a sacred item for them.[139] Some veterans also wore Ghost Dance or ribbon shirts, which they believed would make them bulletproof.[140] The two medicine men utilized traditional herbs to doctor flesh wounds of injured warriors.[141]

Vietnam veteran Milo Goings (Lakota), the first to become wounded in a firefight, was honored in a ceremony for his bravery.[142] According to Holder, the AIM warrior society assigned magpie feathers for "counting coup."[143] During pre-reservation times, the martial practice of counting coup—that is, touching an enemy warrior—had been the ultimate test of manhood. Coups were also recognized for other brave acts such as stealing horses. The coup constituted the basis of a graded war honors system that distinguished between four different kinds of coups. Those who counted coup were allowed to wear an eagle feather in a certain way that reflected a warrior's degree of bravery and daring.[144] At Wounded Knee, participant-observer Talbert recounted acts of individual bravery done "primarily for the sake of having outwitted the 'feds.'" In one such incident someone "crept up to an APC during a cease-fire, jumped on top of it, slammed the lid shut, and did a war dance in the moonlight, atop the tank. He said the troopers stayed inside, as they probably thought he would shoot them if they opened the lid."[145] Acts of bravery like this were replete with symbolism of the Plains Indian tradition of counting coup. In counting coup these warriors likewise

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Figure 4. *Armored Personnel Carrier (APC) in the forefront. In the background is the Wounded Knee Church.*

sought to demonstrate their bravery and daring, establishing a link that connected past and present.

The newly established warrior society was not just a reinvented replica of the past, but instead constituted a remasculinizing tool in the struggle for sovereignty and nationhood. In a 1973 interview, Carter Camp elaborated on the function of the AIM warrior society: "Indian warriors aren't paid and fed, clothed and housed. Indian warriors know they have to be husband, father, and a man of their tribe and a warrior. In fact, being a warrior has to be secondary," he stated in alluding to the inextricably close link between individual warrior and tribal community.[146] In addition, the

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warriors "will begin to teach revolutionary people who come to them that this is a big part of the total revolution."[147] Apparently, the AIM warrior society did not only fight in defense of the people within the ION and a return to the days of nation-to-nation treaty making. Rather, the self-proclaimed warriors for a nation considered themselves part of the larger revolutionary struggle underway in American society.

The setting up of the AIM warrior society and the declaration of the ION were closely intertwined events. The gendered analogy of a remasculinized Indigenous manhood and a hypervirile nation occurred in direct opposition to the overwhelming forces of US colonialism. The ION was a nation forged under siege and emerged in the midst of firefights between warriors and US law enforcement officers. From the occupiers' perspective, at virtually any point in time political negotiations could give way to the execution of a military battle plan that would end the occupation. For the time being, the presence of news media reporters ruled out the military option. In a sense, the new nation had to be built on warriors in order to face off the US agents—an element pointing to the inextricable link between nationalism, militarism, and masculinity.[148]

Nationalist Warrior Masculinity and Gendered Nation Building Processes at the Independent Oglala Nation

In nation building processes such as the one at the occupation of Wounded Knee, dimensions of masculinized nationalism and nationalized masculinities were closely intertwined.[149] Cultural associations with the gender of a nation—that is, the way the nation defines itself in relation to the racial and ethnic constructs that it also puts forward—are dependent upon a series of factors. My focus here is on the way gendered nation building is linked to cultural associations between masculinity and the nation—the leaders of the nation, the military, citizenship, and male bodies. The nation's leadership can influence how the nation is perceived and perceives itself. The nation's military, usually a male-dominated or an all-male institution, occupies a metonymical function, because war, peace, conquest, and defeat can render the nation either "vulnerable and feminine" or "strong and masculine." Whereas imperialist and colonialist endeavors or an attack on a nation may lead to a masculinization of the nation, military defeat and subjugation may lead to it being imaged as feminized or emasculated. In addition, patriotism is closely associated with "inherently manly" traits, such as courage and honor, which can be embraced by men and women.[150]

From the outset, the ION was coded as a highly masculine nationalist project forged in militarized conflict. From an outside perspective, it was gendered through the performance and emulation of modern-day warrior masculinity. Historically, the 1890 massacre at Wounded Knee stood as a symbol for a nation defeated, a nation victimized, a nation suffering and collective trauma. To the occupants, the historic site equally symbolized a place that entailed the potential for cultural and spiritual renewal.[151] Wounded Knee thus marked a symbolic site where past and present notions of nationhood and masculinity could be reinvented. The AIM warrior society served as a military force to defend and protect the community. In so doing, it evoked

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Figure 5. *Dennis Banks (Ojibwe, left) and Russell Means (Lakota, right), the most prominent leaders of the American Indian Movement during the occupation.*

gendered meanings of the remasculinization of a nation. Russell Means and Dennis Banks featured prominently as the faces of the ION, providing a point of identification for both the occupiers and the media.

The setup of the ION constituted an effort to return to negotiate with the United States government on a nation-to-nation basis, as prior to 1871.[152] The idea for declaring the independent nation came from reservation traditionalists, as AIM cofounder Eddie Benton-Banai (Ojibwa) claims.[153] Plans for the newly declared nation called for a return to a reinvented form of the traditional *tiospaye* (extended family unit).[154] The ION was to consist of a three-layered form of government. This consisted, from the bottom to the top, of communities (*tiospaye cikala*), districts (*tiospaye*), and people's councils (*tiospaye cikala*). According to *Akwesasne Notes*,

> Each community would decide on its own governmental structure. The seven districts within the nation would select their own chairman or headman. These seven headmen would form the governing body for the nation, and the leadership of the council might rotate among the seven members. The executive departments (such as housing, social services, etc.) would function under the people's council. The present judicial system would be abandoned, and a new code of offenses would be adopted. Headquarters would be moved from Pine Ridge to some central location, and Pine Ridge might be left to its own municipal government.[155]

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The plans for a new tribal government called for local self-government under traditional chiefs, headmen, and spiritual leaders, selected instead of elected by local people in what was envisioned as a fundamental restructuring of Indigenous-settler colonial relations. The envisioned tribal governance—supposedly in tune with an "Indian way"—constituted an attempt to abolish the IRA-style government and replace it with an Indigenized version. Historian Akim Reinhardt has described the envisioned form of governance as "a decentralized, community-based system in line with Oglala Lakota values and political culture," a system that stressed grassroots empowerment through self-governance.[156] The Department of the Interior speedily rejected the petition on legal grounds, thus effectively dodging the question of tribal sovereignty.[157] An attempt to circumvent the US government and gain recognition from the United Nations failed.[158]

From its inception, the ION set up a makeshift bureaucracy to deal with everyday pressing concerns. This bureaucracy worked towards the goal of statehood, yet stood in striking contrast to a cultural understanding of a traditional *tiospaye*. A number of committees dealt with pressing day-to-day concerns such as housing, medical care, food supply, security, the influx of new arrivals, information, and defense.[159] The Wounded Knee Trading Post became a meeting hall to house the daily evening assemblies of the newly established nation. Just like a modern nation, the ION issued citizenship cards to its members. On March 16, the ION granted citizenship rights to 182 Oglalas, 160 other Indigenous people, and seven whites.[160] According to some accounts, new residents of the ION received a medicine bundle on arrival.[161] To traditional Indigenous people, medicine bags are closely connected to their identity and thus carry special religious and spiritual significance, and they are also believed to wield some protective power over their owner.[162]

The inclusive character of the "imagined nation" showed in its diverse membership that incorporated Lakotas, other Indigenous people, as well as non-Indigenous people. Apparently, the membership was not based on racial or inherited attributes. What qualified activists—Indigenous and non-Indigenous—to join the "imagined nation" was their willingness to embrace "the cause" and to put their bodies on the line. It can only be speculated about whether ION's willingness to incorporate non-Lakotas was representative of its "imagined character" as a nation. It is equally uncertain whether the ION represented older Lakota values that based Lakota-ness and membership not on racial and inherited attributes, but on a willingness to be Lakota. Among AIM's most prominent leaders, only Russell Means was Lakota.[163] The formation of the Independent Oglala Nation rested upon the combining of two distinct concepts of governance, one Indigenous, the other Western. The setup of the ION highlighted the concept of *tiospaye* and its close alignment with peoplehood (or, for that matter, a sense of Lakota-ness as established through a communal connection to sacred history, land, ceremony, and language). Likewise, the anti-colonial endeavor stressed Western concepts of nationalism such as sovereignty, decolonization, and nationhood/statehood. The Independent Oglala Nation thus combined Indigenous epistemologies and Western concepts. The concepts of peoplehood/nationhood were layered through the forces of modernity and US colonial domination. The setup of the Independent Oglala

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Nation points to the complexities and ambiguities of Indigenous nation-building endeavors in larger encompassing society.

Russell Means's brother Bill Means (Lakota), a Vietnam veteran, recalled how the siege influenced the daily activities of the ION,

> It almost is taking me back a year or two to Vietnam, because you're around people that you put your life on the line every day. And just like Vietnam, the daytime was kind of like the resting time, and you stay awake all night, because if there's any action, it usually happens at night, including people coming in that were bringing supplies that we were sending patrols out to escort them in the best we could.[164]

Some occupiers developed lasting friendships while pulling duty in the bunkers and experiencing intense gunfights. According to Lenny Foster (Navajo), the son of a Navajo code talker who had participated in numerous AIM protests, "we were all in that bunker. . . . So we developed some rapport and we became real comrades in the struggle."[165] Support for the new nation came from the Six Nations Iroquois Confederacy delegation from upstate New York whose Chief Oren Lyons (Iroquois) stated, "we support the Oglala Sioux Nation or any Indian nation that will fight for its sovereignty . . . [and] their right to conduct their own affairs."[166] The very makeup of the new nation testified to its imagined character. Essentially, everyone could join if accepted by the Wounded Knee community, regardless of race or religious faith. Benton-Benai characterized the ION as "a community of brotherhood." As he put it, "it's people whom we generally call the Third World Movement, the long-hairs, anti-war people, peace people, these kinds of people whom we really welcome."[167]

Many aspects of the ION were imagined and centered on community building efforts. According to activist Lorelei DeCora (Winnebago), "we were surrounded by the military might of the United States, but we were a community that had no police, no monetary system, no laws other than what we wanted to make. We were a community that was given a taste of freedom."[168] Key elements of a nation are existent, while other significant elements are imagined. For example, the military can function as an embodiment of the nation, or certain physical aspects or qualities (bravery, courage, military prowess) can take on representational functions to signify the nation at large. Gender-coded images like these influence the public perception of a nation.[169]

Indigenous Warriorhood, Bodily Practices, and Remasculinizing for the Independent Oglala Nation

Gender scholar Raewyn Connell has theorized that male bodies are "both objects and agents of practice, the practice itself forming the structures within which bodies are appropriated and defined," a pattern Connell calls body-reflexive practice.[170] The male body is not only a physical, but also a cultural construct, serving as an inscriptive surface for masculinity and cultural meaning.[171] The body is thus an inscriptive surface where ideas about nation are inscribed and reinscribed. Cultural discourse constructs ideas of the male body and cultural practices transform the male body and its physical aspects. In turn, cultural inscriptions create subjectivities. Similarly, bodily practices

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can reinscribe power, and, depending on the context, can be viewed as normative or resistant to hegemonic cultural constructs. As a cultural construct, the male body is perception-based and at certain moments can be alternatively viewed as demasculinized, masculinized, or remasculinized.[172]

Throughout the occupation, the occupiers sought to generate media coverage through the staged performance of warrior masculinity.[173] Yet at the same time, the occupiers also sought to remake their male subjectivities through bodily and body-reflexive practices.[174] Frequently, these dual efforts became inherently hybridized and undistinguishable from one another. Historiography has viewed the gendered performance of Indigenous men solely within the context of creating media attention. Rather, I intend to illustrate how cultural practices are related to the male body and serve as a locus where ideas of the nation are constructed.[175]

A few days into the armed standoff, *Time Magazine* reported on the display of traditional Lakota masculine culture, male bodies, and warrior masculinity:

> Seven Indian leaders stripped, some naked, others to their shorts, and entered an Indian sweat lodge—a wooden framework covered by an orange carpet and a purple blanket—to receive clarity of mind and body. The warriors, perhaps 150 of them, seemed perfectly willing to die. With the sun setting behind their backs and the chill wind whipping up puffs of dust, they formed a semicircle and watched as the tribal fathers emerged from the steaming lodge.
>
> A Sioux spiritual leader named Leonard Crow Dog struck up a chant in the Lakota language. As each warrior passed by, he blessed him and painted a slash or a circle of red powder under the left eye. Each warrior then stepped into a white tepee, making a holy sign over the bleached skull of a buffalo.[176]

The cultural practices employed by the warriors at Wounded Knee involved sweats, songs, war paints, and ceremony in what can be understood as an attempt to renew, revitalize, and remasculinize and give new cultural meaning to their masculinities and bodies. Significantly, these cultural practices corresponded with the declaration of the ION later that same day.

The warriors at Wounded Knee employed a wide range of bodily and body-reflexive practices, most of which were conducted by traditional medicine men Leonard Crow Dog (Lakota) and Wallace Black Elk (Lakota), These practices included the sweat lodge (*inípi*), the Ghost Dance, the *yuwipi* ceremony, and peyote meetings, as well as fasts and vision quests.[177] The *inípi*—a sweat bath in a small circular wooden framework covered with blankets, with boiling hot stones in the center of the hut—was intended to purify body and spirit. The *yuwipi* ceremony, a high ritual in Lakota culture, is a healing ceremony in which the healer makes contact with spirits.

Indigenous activists frequently drew connections between the 1890 Ghost Dance and their own presence at Wounded Knee in 1973.[178] Among the occupiers were some Ghost Dancers who wore ribbon and ghost shirts. Robert Anderson, a white participant in the occupation, observed several of these Ghost Dances. "I didn't think that the Ghost Dance shirts would stop bullets, but a lot of people did," he reflected. "And a lot of people thought they'd see visions and ghosts, people from the past, people from

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Figure 6. *Leonard Crow Dog (Lakota), medicine man and spiritual advisor to AIM, paints activists for war.*

the massacre there." For Indigenous participants, the Ghost Dances carried significant meaning and connected them to both their cultural heritage and their ancestors; as Anderson put it, they were "people defending their nation and their people like they had done in the past."[179] Further practices included singing, dancing, drumming, the smoking of the pipe, and the donning of war paint.

The occupiers' use of cultural and warrior practices can be read as both an act of cultural renewal and as an effort to remasculinize the warriors for a nation.

First, the occupiers' utilization of bodily and body-reflexive practices can be understood an effort on the part of the occupiers to remake their warrior and male subjectivities as well as become more masculine than the colonizer. Quite literally, this re-traditionalization (or return to cultural traditions) went hand in hand with a re-masculinization within Indigenous men and masculinities. The occupiers' use of these practices was equally an attempt to reconnect to a tribal heritage of warriorhood; these specific cultural and warrior practices traditionally were to purify, protect, and prepare warriors for combat. Traditionally, religious and spiritual ceremonies were intended only for specific purposes and were therefore utilized exclusively on meaningful occasions, quite consciously and sparingly. The Ghost Dance, for example, included prolonged dancing until a vision occurred. In striking contrast, the warriors at Wounded Knee excessively took sweats or participated in the Ghost Dance.[180] The overindulgence in sacred ceremonies was an apparent attempt of Indigenous nationalists to reinvent their male subjectivities, to prove themselves, and to measure up to and

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be more masculine than the colonizer. In that sense, cultural and warrior practices can be understood as an effort to remasculinize in an effort to shed domestic colonialism by declaring an independent nation and by opposing US hegemony.

Second, the use of cultural and warrior practices and male physicality can be read as an act of cultural renewal and as a defiant display of nationalist ethnocentrism that directly relates to the suppression of cultural and religious practices by the US government. By the late nineteenth century, following the forced subjugation of the Lakota people, a number of government policies—reservation confinement, assimilation, boarding school education, allotment—were intent on suppressing their traditional way of living. For example, the Indian Office banned cultural practices, rituals and ceremonies that seemed repugnant to assimilation, such as "giveaways," and songs and dances, among others the Sun Dance and Ghost Dance. The ban, however, did not mean a complete eradication of Lakota cultural and religious beliefs and expressions. Prior to the 1973 takeover, some traditional Lakotas continued to keep their cultural ways alive, yet they could only do so in hiding.[181] In actively engaging in their own cultural traditions through song, dance, and ceremony, Indigenous nationalists exhibited their cultural pride and reaffirmed their ethnic identity.[182]

The AIM Warriors as Cultural Warriors

Indian country has widely credited the takeover of Wounded Knee with a cultural renewal of songs, dances, traditional practices, ceremonies, rituals, and the revitalization of tribal languages. Indigenous nationalists frequently claimed that this turning towards cultural traditions was more significant than protest activism. While Indigenous activists actively sought to gain the media limelight to draw attention to their cause—often by media-savvy tactics and rhetoric—they also actively sought to draw attention to their need to reclaim their Indigeneity after decades of colonial abuse and whitewashing. In the words of AIM leader Dennis Banks, "you can yell and scream at the top of your lungs on the pulpit. But if you have no real spiritual purpose then all the rhetoric is just rhetoric. It has no meaning."[183]

A widely distributed mimeographed text entitled "What is the American Indian Movement" gives insight into the various elements defining Indigenous martial and cultural manliness within the self-proclaimed warrior society:

> They [the AIM warriors] are the catalyst for Indian Sovereignty. . . . AIM is first, a spiritual movement, a rebirth of our people, and then a rebirth of dignity and pride in a people. . . . The American Indian Movement is attempting to connect the realities of the past with the promise of tomorrow. . . . They know that the Indian way is not tolerated in White America, because it is not acknowledged as a decent way to be. Sovereignty, Land, and Culture cannot endure if a people is not left in peace. The American Indian Movement is then, the Warrior Class of this century, who are bound to the bond of the Drum, who vote with their bodies instead of their mouths. THEIR BUSINESS IS HOPE.[184]

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According to this statement, Indigenous nationalists linked their warrior masculinities to intertwined notions of nationalism, culture, and history. In so doing, they relied heavily on memory work and adaptation to contemporary realities. The linkage of masculinized nation building efforts and cultural traditions amounted to a political, cultural, and spiritual re-empowerment (often through the overindulgence in cultural practices, ceremonies, and rituals) in what constituted an overall effort to reinvent their gendered subjectivities.[185]

Carter Camp stressed the underlying causes that attributed to the nation building attempt and cultural renewal at Wounded Knee as follows:

> In Wounded Knee a Traditional Society of the Nations [*sic*] was born and lived. Guided by those ones who had been taught and kept the old ways of our people, and most especially the powerful ways of the Lakota Nation, we put ourselves in defiance of those who would crush our people. We decided to fight for survival and that fight is still joined to this day. In the minds of the world we were a "vanishing race" an entire race of people consigned to the annals of history. But at Wounded Knee we stood to tell the world they were wrong and we intended to survive as a people for another five hundred years. We chose to make our stand at Wounded Knee where *wasicu* [white] historians had said our red world had ended in 1890.[186]

According to Carter, it was the intergenerational alliance between reservation traditionalists and urban activists that instigated a cultural transformation and escalated the political struggle against the settler-colonial nation. Carter also alluded to mutually reinforcing dynamics of cultural renewal and political activism that ultimately brought about both a fundamental redefining of indigeneity and self-determination. Quite skillfully, Carter also put the Wounded Knee takeover in line with a long tradition of Indigenous resistance to settler-colonial encroachment.

From the outset, these warriors for a nation combined their resistance to US colonialism with a reinvention of cultural and religious practices. The rising militancy against US domination thus went hand in hand with a growing interest in Indigenous cultural practices and traditions. As Indigenous men and women within the American Indian Movement reinvented their subjectivities, they moved away from civil rights and integration towards separatism and nationalism. This shift was in large part paralleled by the reformulation of their gendered subjectivities.[187] Across Indian country, the takeover of Wounded Knee was an expression of cultural pride and dignity.[188] According to Oscar Bear Runner (Lakota), a World War II veteran and code talker who served in Europe, "People sacrificed their jobs and families and personal livelihoods to make a concerted change [so that our kids] will understand and be proud of who we are, be able to say I'm Lakota, or be able to say I'm culturally distinct and culturally different, and I have a right to be as such. These are the things that we were shooting for."[189]

Wounded Knee showed that a subaltern people could speak truth to power and confront past and present injustices. As Vietnam veteran Bill Means (Lakota) put it, "The idea that grassroots people could stand up against the most powerful military force in the world—and do it with dignity and pride—that still stands out because

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Figure 7. *Armed activists at Wounded Knee.*

of all the things that came out of Wounded Knee. I think the revival of our culture, identity, of our pride was probably the most interesting thing."[190] Webster Poor Bear (Lakota), himself a veteran of the Vietnam War and the occupation, treasured his venture into protest and identity politics: "I would do it again. I would get shot at again, die, if necessary. When you live like that, it's an honorable way to live. [I'm] very proud of the people who have stayed with us at Wounded Knee and [I'm] very honored and privileged to have stood with them." [191]

Participation in the Red Power Movement constituted a larger effort of Indigenous men to regenerate positive masculinities through decolonization efforts.[192] Lenny Foster (Navajo) participated in the Alcatraz occupation and in numerous other demonstrations and takeovers. To him, Wounded Knee stood out because it significantly altered his Indigenous male subjectivity. As he put it, "Wounded Knee was such a beautiful experience for me because it matured me as an Indian person, developed my spirituality, because I had opportunities to use a sweat lodge every morning and use the prayers and learned about the pipe and the songs and what the Oglalas have with the sweat lodge ceremonies. I learned a lot about all of that."[193] To him, the standoff was both liberating and empowering in that it made him more aware of his Indigeneity. "It's liberation, liberation of our soul, our spirit to be proud and dignified. I think it's very empowering, if you feel good for yourself."[194]

Above all, the Red Power Movement and AIM were fueled by a moral righteousness and it was driven by the commitment of young people to stand up for what they believed in. More than anything, the struggle against colonial domination was powered

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Figure 8. *Holding an AK-47 rifle and smiling broadly, Robert Charles Onco (aka Bobby Onco), Kiowa from Oklahoma, was immortalized by this photo, which was taken at Wounded Knee on March 9, 1973 after a cease-fire agreement between Indigenous occupiers and federal officers. With the caption "*Remember Wounded Knee,*" it became an iconic poster.*

by a high idealism to make a change in the world and to better the lives of Indigenous people. In that sense, many Indigenous nationalists regarded themselves as warriors for *their* people, *their* homeland, and *their* rights. According to Lenny Foster,

> We were fighting for our treaty rights. We were fighting for our religious rights. We were fighting for our human rights.. . . Indian people were being beaten all the time. It was up to the young people . . . to stop those attacks on their people.. . . We were willing to stand up to the injustices.. . . [Wounded Knee] was a beautiful experience.. . . I was 24 years old. We were young. We are idealistic, adventurous, willing to take on federal marshals, the FBI. We believed in the power of our medicine.[195]

Wounded Knee, 1973: Confronting US Hegemony, Reclaiming Indigeneity and (Re)Asserting Political Sovereignty

The 1973 takeover added yet another layer of deeply symbolic meaning to existent notions of culture, place, gender, and nation to the historic site of Wounded Knee. In occupying Wounded Knee, Indigenous activists sought to replace gendered notions of powerlessness, defeat, and subalternity with those of cultural and political empowerment. To many, the declaration of the ION represented the most visible resurgence of Indigenous resistance and was part of a centuries-old struggle against US hegemony.

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Wounded Knee is considered as a key protest event with far-reaching consequences for reforged Indigenous–settler colonial relations, as well as Indigenous identity, culture, and tribal sovereignty.[196] The takeover of Wounded Knee overshadowed a prolonged struggle of the Lakotas to gain compensation for the Black Hills and an apology for the massacre.[197]

By taking over Wounded Knee, Indigenous activists linked their challenge to the present form of tribal governance to larger questions of tribal sovereignty and nationhood. When AIM took over Wounded Knee, it made three demands: first, a congressional investigation into treaty rights violations; second, an investigation into BIA affairs; and, finally, a plea for a Senate subcommittee to explore conditions on all Sioux reservations in South Dakota.[198] Throughout the takeover, a key demand remained the reinstatement of the treaty-making days. On a May 17, 1973 meeting between government representatives and traditionalist elders, government officials were pressed to acknowledge the substance of the demands.[199] However, they maintained that Congress had eliminated the president's right to negotiate treaties with tribal nations as sovereign bodies. By maintaining that the self-governing status of tribal nations could not be reinstated, the US government effectively dashed any hopes of sovereign nationhood.[200]

The issue of tribal sovereignty and its intricate relationship to Indigenous manhood was raised once again at a Senate hearing into the causes and aftermath of Wounded Knee, held on June 16 and 17, 1973 in Pine Ridge and Kyle, South Dakota. During the hearing, a number of speakers demanded a resurrection of tribal nationhood and a return to a nation-to-nation status similar to before 1871. They maintained that this form of national separatism was not a throwback to Indigenous–settler colonial relations into precolonial times. Rather, they envisioned a limited form of tribal nationhood. In the words of Russell Means, this would entail "the establishment of separate states under a protective status for all Indian nations" similar to the status of San Marino in Italy.[201] This proposal was highly ambiguous, as a return to the treaty-making era would entail a Bureau superintendent who controlled reservation affairs and the tribal council. The treaty-making era was nothing short of a form of direct colonial rule, rather than tribal self-governance and sovereignty.[202] Whatever their exact plans, Indigenous nationalists sought to end indirect colonial rule under the existent form of IRA-style governance and cast off government dependency and paternalism.

AIM attorney Ramon Roubideaux (Lakota) eloquently explained that when US Congress unilaterally ended treaty-making processes, it also severely impacted Indigenous manhood and sovereignty. Over time, he stated, "the U.S. government in its so-called paternalism and with the connivance of puppet tribal government have destroyed the manhood that we have always had or [it] attempted to destroy it."[203] The Wounded Knee takeover, then, was a complete rejection of the handling of Indigenous affairs under US colonial rule. In his mind, tribal governments did not represent the majority of Indigenous people on reservations.[204]

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Conclusion

The occupation of Wounded Knee was a highly gendered nation building attempt that emerged in direct resistance to US colonial forces intent on suppressing militant Indigenous nationalism. The ION was a highly masculinized nation, in large part due to the high number of Vietnam veterans fighting on either side. This raised the analogy of yet another Indian war of the nineteenth century being refought in the Vietnam War era. Both Indigenous veterans and AIM activists-turned-warriors joined forces in opposing US colonial rule and a complicit, colonized Indigenous elite. Indigenous men remasculinized through both the founding of the AIM warrior society and the declaration of the ION. This remasculinization went hand in hand with a return of Indigenous people to their cultural traditions—that is, a retraditionalization. The warriors for a nation practiced cultural traditions in the face of adversity in what must be understood as an expression of their defiant cultural resistance and ethnic pride. Indigenous men constructed and expressed their nationalist warrior masculinities by selectively drawing from Lakota cultural elements and by combining them with various other cultural elements of their specific cultural, historical, and geographical circumstances.

The newly imagined ION constituted part of a larger, yet unsuccessful attempt to return to the nation-to-nation era and restore tribal sovereignty as outlined under the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty; it constituted an effort, albeit unsuccessful, to shed imposed indirect colonial rule. The takeover also served as means to regain a sense of empowerment and regenerate positive identities. Carroll points out that the sustained occupation of Wounded Knee created new ways to be a warrior and new directions for warrior societies.[205] From the 1970s through the present day, Indigenous nationalists have reinvented warrior societies in contemporary struggles in Canada where tribal communities continue to resist continual settler-colonial encroachment.[206]

Notes

1. Vine Deloria, *Behind the Trail of Broken Treaties: An Indian Declaration of Independence* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1985).

2. Troy Johnson, *Red Power: The Native American Civil Rights Movement* (New York: Chelsea House, 2007), 69.

3. Timothy Baylor, *Modern Warriors: Mobilization and Decline of the American Indian Movement (AIM), 1968–1979*, PhD diss., University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 1994), 168–206; George Pierre Castile, *To Show Heart: Native American Self-Determination and Federal Indian Policy, 1960–1975* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1998), 117–46; Maureen Trudelle Schwarz, *Fighting Colonialism with Hegemonic Culture: Native American Appropriation of Indian Stereotypes* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2013), 15–43.

4. For general articles on Indigenous women in the Red Power Movement, see Devon Mihesuah, *Indigenous American Women: Decolonization, Empowerment, Activism* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2003); Donna Hightower Langston, "American Indian Women's Activism in the 1960s and 1970s," *Hypatia* 18, no. 2 (Spring 2003): 114–32; Elizabeth Castle, "Black and Native American Women's Activism in the Black Panther Party and the American Indian Movement," in

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Visions and Voices, American Indian Activism and the Civil Rights Movement, ed. Kurt Peters and Terry Straus (Albatross Press, 2009), 85–99; M. Annette Jaimes and Theresa Halsey, "American Indian Women at the Center of Indigenous Resistance in Contemporary North America," in *The State of Native America: Genocide, Colonization, and Resistance*, ed. M. Annette Jaimes (Boston: South End Press, 1992), 311–44. For an exception, see Matthias André Voigt, "Between Powerlessness and Protest: Indigenous Men and Masculinities in the Twin Cities and the Emergence of the American Indian Movement," *Settler Colonial Studies* 11, no. 2 (2021), 221–41.

5. Joane Nagel, *American Indian Ethnic Renewal: Red Power and the Resurgence of Identity and Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 158–255.

6. Troy R. Johnson, Joanne Nagel, and Duane Champagne, "American Indian Activism and Transformation, Lessons from Alcatraz," in *Contemporary Native American Communities*, ed. Troy Johnson (Walnut Creek: AltaMira Press, 1999), 283–314; *American Indian Activism: Alcatraz to the Longest Walk*, ed. Troy Johnson, Joane Nagel, and Duane Champagne (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997).

7. Johnson, et al., "American Indian Activism and Transformation," 284–92.

8. Ibid., 292.

9. Ibid.; Johnson, et al., *American Indian Activism*; Nagel, *American Indian Ethnic Renewal*. For the Alcatraz occupation, see particularly the scholarship of the Troy Johnson, *The American Indian Occupation of Alcatraz Island: Red Power and Self-Determination* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008). More lately, the pivotal role of Richard Oakes in Red Power activism of the 1960s and 1970s and the the takeover has been highlighted by historian Kent Blansett. Kent Blansett, *A Journey to Freedom: Richard Oakes, Alcatraz, and the Red Power Movement* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018).

10. Lucie Kýrová & György Ferenc Tóth, "Red Power at 50: Re-evaluations and Memory," *Comparative American Studies, An International Journal* 17, no. 2 (2020): 107–16, 108, https://doi.org/10.1080/14775700.2020.1718057.

11. Bradley Shreve, *Red Power Rising: The National Indian Youth Council and the Origins of Native Activism* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2011); Paul McKenzie-Jones, *Clyde Warrior, Tradition, Community, and Red Power* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2015). See also Daniel M. Cobb, Sarah Berger, and Lily Skopp, "'A Sickness that has Grown to Epidemic Proportions': American Indian Anti- and Decolonial Thought During the Long 1960s," *Comparative American Studies, An International Journal* 17, no. 2 (2020): 199–223. Daniel Cobb and Loretta Fowler have begun to broadly contextualize twentieth-century Indigenous activism; see Daniel Cobb, *Native Activism in Cold War America: The Struggle for Sovereignty* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2008); Daniel Cobb and Loretta Fowler, *Beyond Red Power: American Indian Politics and Activism since 1900* (Santa Fe: School for Advanced Research, 2007).

12. Sam Hitchmough, "Performative Protest and the Lost Contours of Red Power Activism," *Comparative American Studies: An International Journal* 17, no. 2 (2020): 224–37, 225, https://doi.org/10.1080/14775700.2020.1736459.

13. Shreve, *Red Power Rising*, 6–15.

14. For definitions of these terms, see Leah Sneider, "Complementary Relationships: A Review of Indigenous Gender Studies," in *Indigenous Men and Masculinities, Legacies, Identities, Regeneration*, ed. Robert Alexander Innes and Kim Anderson (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2015), 65.

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

16. Tom Holm, Diane Pearson, and Ben Chavis have conceptualized peoplehood as the intertwining of four factors: language, sacred history, religion, and land—a concept which points to the inherent sovereignty of Indigenous peoples. Tom Holm, Diane J. Pearson, and Ben Chavis,

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"Peoplehood: A Model for the Extension of Sovereignty in American Indian Studies," *Wicazo Sa Review* 18, no. 1 (2003), 7–24, https://doi.org/10.1353/wic.2003.0004.

17. Baylor, *Modern Warriors*, iii; Johnson, et al., "American Indian Activism and Transformation," 305–7.

18. Julie L. Davis, *Survival Schools: The American Indian Movement and Community Education in the Twin Cities* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 28–37, 42–51. See also Voigt, "Between Powerlessness and Protest."

19. Akim D. Reinhardt, *Ruling Pine Ridge: Oglala Lakota Politics from the IRA to Wounded Knee* (Lubbock: Texas Tech University Press, 2007), 159–63.

20. Ibid., 159–63, 164–88.

21. Compare Ty Tengan, *Native Men Remade: Gender and Nation in Contemporary Hawai'i* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), 8, 53.

22. Rolland Dewing, *Wounded Knee II* (Chadron, NE: Great Plains Network, 1995).

23. Paul Chaat Smith and Robert Allen Warrior, *Like A Hurricane: The Indian Movement from Alcatraz to Wounded Knee* (New York: New Press, 1996), 194–297.

24. Reinhardt, *Ruling Pine Ridge*, 3–8, 12–16, 202–209, 215.

25. A significant number of scholarly studies have been conducted into the American Indian Movement and media relations. See Baylor, *Modern Warriors*; Jeremy Busacca, *Seeking Self-Determination: Framing, the American Indian Movement, and American Indian Media*, PhD diss., The Claremont Graduate University, 2007); Mavis Ione Richardson, *Constructing Two Cultural Realities, Newspaper Coverage of Two American Indian Protest Events*, PhD diss., University of Minnesota, 2005); Bruce D'Arcus, *The Wounded Knee Occupation and the Politics of Scale, Marginal Protest and Central Authority in a Media Age*, PhD diss., Syracuse University, 2001); Rolland Dewing, "South Dakota Newspaper Coverage of the 1973 Occupation of Wounded Knee," *South Dakota History* 12, no. 1 (1982), 48–64, https://www.sdhspress.com/journal/south-dakota-history-12-1/south-dakota-newspaper-coverage-of-the-1973-occupation-of-wounded-knee/vol-12-no-1-south-dakota-newspaper-coverage-of-the-1973-occupation-of-wounded-knee.pdf.

26. Baylor, *Modern Warriors*, 179–82, 187; Busacca, *Seeking Self-Determination*, 2, 89, 96–98, 136–48.

27. Schwarz, *Fighting Colonialism*, 15–43.

28. Ibid., 16–17, 38–41; Tom Holm, *Strong Hearts, Wounded Souls* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1996), 176–79; Al Carroll, *Medicine Bags and Dog Tags: American Indian Veterans from Colonial Times to the Second Iraq War* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008), 163–72.

29. Matthias André Voigt, *Reinventing the Warrior: Race, Gender, and Nation in Contemporary Indian Country*, PhD diss., Goethe University Frankfurt, 2019), 268–74.

30. Gerald Vizenor, *Manifest Manners, Narratives on Postindian Survivance* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999), 152.

31. For insights into Indigenous women at Wounded Knee, see Johnson, *Red Power*, 69–75; Jaimes and Halsey, "American Indian Women," 311–14.

32. Mihesuah, *Indigenous American Women*, 119.

33. *Voices from Wounded Knee, 1973. In the Words of the Participants*, 3d ed. (Rooseveltown, NY: Akwesasne Notes, 1976), 22, 31.

34. For accounts on Indigenous women at Wounded Knee, see Mary Brave Bird and Richard Erdoes, *Lakota Woman* (New York, NY: Grove Weidenfeld, 1990), 128–43; Mary Brave Bird and Richard Erdoes, *Ohitika Woman* (New York: HarperPerennial, 1993), 194–205 (Mary Crow Dog later changed her name to Mary Brave Bird). See also *Voices from Wounded Knee*, 22–32; 161ff, 165, 201; Madonna Thunder Hawk, "Madonna Thunder Hawk on Wounded Knee," extended interviews by Emily Kunstler and Sarah Kunstler for the documentary *William Kunstler, Disturbing the Universe*,

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prod. and dir. Emily Kunstler and Sarah Kunstler (Disturbing The Universe, Independent Television Service, 2010), http://www.pbs.org/pov/disturbingtheuniverse/extended-interviews/9/. Further insights are found here: Dennis Banks and Richard Erdoes, *Ojibwa Warrior: Dennis Banks and the Rise of the American Indian Movement* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2004), 160; Russell Means and Marvin J. Wolf, *Where White Men Fear to Tread: The Autobiography of Russell Means* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), 265–66; Clyde Bellecourt and Jon Lurie, *The Thunder Before the Storm: The Autobiography of Clyde Bellecourt* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2016), 151–52.

35. Jaimes and Halsey, "American Indian Women," 329.

36. Mihesuah, *Indigenous American Women*, 108, 163. See also Crow Dog and Erdoes, *Lakota Woman*, 65–66, 69, 78, 138, 191–192.

37. Robert Alexander Innes and Kim Anderson, *Indigenous Men and Masculinities, Legacies, Identities, and Regeneration* (University of Manitoba Press, 2015), 11.

38. Joane Nagel, "Nation," in *Handbook of Studies on Men and Masculinities*, ed. Michael Kimmel, Jeff Hearn, Jeff and Raewyn Connell (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2005), 400.

39. Nagel, "Nation," 400f; Joane Nagel, "Masculinity and Nationalism: Gender and Sexuality in the Making of Nations," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 21, no. 2 (2010): 242–69, 247f, https://doi.org/10.1080/014198798330007.

40. Nagel, "Masculinity and Nationalism," 247; Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2006); Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 23d ed. (Cambridge University Press, 2015); Anthony Cohen, *The Symbolic Construction of Community* (New York: Tavistock, 1985).

41. Nagel, "Masculinity and Nationalism," 248.

42. David Brown, "Are There Good and Bad Nationalisms?," *Nations and Nationalism* 5, no. 2 (1999): 281–302, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1354-5078.1999.00281.x; David Brown, "The Ethnic Majority: Benign or Malign?" *Nations and Nationalism* 14, no. 4 (2008): 768–88, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-8129.2008.00330.x.

43. Yuval-Davis, *Gender & Nation* (London, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1997), 1; Cynthia H. Enloe. *Bananas, Beaches and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics* (2nd revised ed.; Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2014), 87ff.

44. Nagel, "Masculinity and Nationalism," 243, 242, 249–256; Nagel, "Nation"; Enloe, *Bananas*, 83–124 ; Yuval-Davis, *Gender and Nation*, 2.

45. Todd W. Reeser, *Masculinities in Theory: An Introduction* (Chichester; Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010); Nagel, "Nation"; Nagel, "Masculinity and Nationalism."

46. Enloe, *Bananas*, 87ff.

47. Thembisa Waetjen, "The Limits of Gender Rhetoric for Nationalism: A Case Study from Southern Africa, "*Theory and Society* 30, no. 1 (Feb. 2001), 121–22; Thembisa Waetjen, *Workers and Warriors: Masculinity and the Struggle for Nation in South Africa* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004), 2.

48. Waetjen, "The Limits of Gender Rhetoric," 122; Waetjen, *Workers and Warriors*, 2–6.

49. Nagel, "Masculinity and Nationalism," 244, 249.

50. Ibid., 252–54; Nagel, "Nation," 402–4.

51. Waetjen, "The Limits of Gender Rhetoric," 123–24.

52. Simon Wendt and Pablo Dominguez Anderson, *Masculinities and the Nation in the Modern World: Between Hegemony and Marginalization* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 3, 8, 14–15.

53. *Global Masculinities and Manhood*, ed. Ronald L. Jackson and Murali Balaji (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2011), 21.

54. Ibid.

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55. Balaji and Jackson, *Global Masculinities*, 18; Reeser, *Masculinities in Theory*, 144–70.

56. Reeser, *Masculinities in Theory*, 147–58. For a case in point, see Mrinalini Sinha, *Colonial Masculinity: The 'Manly Englishman' and the 'Effeminate Bengali' in the Late Nineteenth Century* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1995).

57. Sinha, *Colonial Masculinity*; Sikata Banerjee, *Make Me a Man: Masculinity, Hinduism, and Nationalism in India* (State University of New York Press, 2005); Sikata Banerjee, *Muscular Nationalism: Gender, Violence, and Empire in Indian and Ireland* (New York University Press, 2012); Wendt and Anderson, *Masculinities and the Nation*, 7–8.

58. Reeser, *Masculinities in Theory*, 191.

59. For the American Indian Movement, see Schwarz, *Fighting Colonialism*, 15–43; Carroll, *Medicine Bags*, 163–72; Holm, *Strong Hearts*, 171–83 (esp. 176ff). For a general discussion of the interplay between remasculinizing and nationalism, see Reeser, *Masculinities in Theory*, 188–93.

60. Innes and Anderson, *Indigenous Men and Masculinities*; Sam McKegney, *Masculindians: Conversations about Indigenous Manhood* (Michigan State University Press, 2014), Tengan, *Native Men Remade*.

61. McKegney, *Masculindians*, 2–3.

62. Ibid., 3.

63. Ibid., 4–5. This article therefore does not attempt to trace how traditional Indigenous understandings of masculinity have become obfuscated through settler-colonial policies and then transmuted through protest politics at Wounded Knee. Rather, this article seeks to point to the hybrid, complex, ambiguous, and contradictory nature of Indigenous men and masculinities at Wounded Knee.

64. Ibid., 4–5; Brendan Hokowhitu, "The Death of Koro Paka: 'Traditional' Māori Patriarchy," *Contemporary Pacific* 20, no. 1 (2008): 115–41, 133, https://doi.org/10.1353/cp.2008.0000.

65. Qtd. in McKegney, *Masculindians*, 5.

66. Innes and Anderson, *Indigenous Men and Masculinities*, 3–17; McKegney, *Masculindians*, 5; Tengan, *Native Men Remade*, 1–32.

67. Enloe, *Bananas*, 93.

68. David W. Grua, *Surviving Wounded Knee: The Lakotas and the Politics of Memory* (Oxford University Press, 2016).

69. The Wounded Knee massacre has produced its own historiography. For a starting point, see Jerome A. Greene, *American Carnage: Wounded Knee, 1890* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2014); Grua, *Surviving Wounded Knee*; Jeffrey Ostler, *The Plains Sioux and U.S. Colonialism from Lewis and Clark to Wounded Knee* (Cambridge University Press, 2004), 338–60. For Indigenous perspectives, see Jerome A. Greene, *All Guns Fired at One Time: Native Voices of Wounded Knee, 1890* (Pierre: South Dakota Historical Society, 2020); William S. E. Coleman, *Voices of Wounded Knee* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000); Renée Sansom Flood, *Lost Bord of Wounded Knee: Spirit of the Lakota* (New York: Scribner, 2014).

70. Dee Alexander Brown, *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee: An Indian History of the American West* (New York: Bantam Books, 1971).

71. The Wounded Knee Trading Post was owned by Clive and Agnes Gildersleeve since 1934. In 1968, it changed hands. Under ownership of Jan and James A. Czywczynski, exploitative business practices and spiritual degradation of the grace site reached another level. See Reinhardt, *Ruling Pine Ridge*, 193–202.

72. Schwarz, *Fighting Colonialism*, 31f.

73. Ibid., 31.

74. Tengan, *Native Men*, 11–14.

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75. Clara Sue Kidwell, "Foreword," in *Ruling Pine Ridge*, xv–xix; Castile, *To Show Heart*, 129–33; Reinhardt, *Ruling Pine Ridge*.

76. Reinhardt, *Ruling Pine Ridge*, 19–41. To the present day, Indigenous identity continues to be measured by blood quantum. See David E. Wilkins and Heidi Kiiwetinepinesiik Stark, *American Indian Politics and the American Political System* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2017).

77. Ibid., 13, 88–96, 209.

78. Kidwell, "Foreword," xvii–xviii.

79. For an overview, see Reinhardt, *Ruling Pine Ridge*, 129–88.

80. Ibid., 137–38,150–59.

81. Ibid., 157–58.

82. *Voices from Wounded Knee*, 20–21.

83. Ibid., 31–32.

84. Reinhardt, *Ruling Pine Ridge*, 161.

85. US Congress, Senate Hearings Before the Subcommittee on Indian Affairs of the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, *Occupation of Wounded Knee, The Causes and Aftermath of the Wounded Knee Takeover*, 93rd Congress, June 16, 1973, Pine Ridge, SD and June 17, 1973, Kyle, SD (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office 1974) [hereafter "Wounded Knee Hearing"], 251–56, 311.

86. See pictures in *Voices from Wounded Knee*.

87. Carroll, *Medicine Bags*, 163–64.

88. In his influential *The Movement and the Sixties*, Terry Andersen views the standoff at Wounded Knee as "the end of the Sixties," that was paralleled by another event that came to symbolize protest activism, the conclusion of the Vietnam War. Terry Anderson, *The Movement and the Sixties, Protest from Greensboro to Wounded Knee*, rev. ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 407–8.

89. Anonymous, "Thursday, March 22, 1973," *Akwesasne Notes* 5, no. 2 (Early Spring 1973): 43.

90. Bill Means, "I Wanna Wear That Uniform," extended interviews by Emily Kunstler and Sarah Kunstler for the documentary *William Kunstler, Disturbing the Universe*, prod. and dir. Emily Kunstler and Sarah Kunstler, Independent Television Service, 2010, http://www.pbs.org/pov/disturbingtheuniverse/extended-interviews/3/.

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92. *Voices from Wounded Knee*, 54–58, 262–63.

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95. Ward Churchill and Jim Vander Wall, *Agents of Repression: The FBI's Secret Wars against the Black Panther Party and the American Indian Movement* (Boston: South End Press, 1988), 196.

96. *Voices from Wounded Knee*, 245–61.

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98. Walter Littlemoon with Jane Ridgway, *They Called Me Uncivilized: The Memoir of an Everyday Lakota Man from Wounded Knee* (Bloomington, IN: iUniverse, 2009), 73–78.

99. Ward Churchill and Jim Vander Wall, *The COINTEPLRO Papers: Documents from the FBI's Secret Wars against Domestic Dissent* (Boston: South End Press, 1990), 249ff; Churchill and Vander Wall, *Agents of Repression*, 175ff.

100. Nagel, *American Indian Ethnic Renewal*, 173–75.

101. Voigt, *Reinventing the Warrior*, 176–231.

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102. Holm, *Strong Hearts*; Carroll, *Medicine Bags*, 147–72.

103. Holm, *Strong Hearts*, 176–79; Carroll, *Medicine Bags*, 163–72.

104. *Voices from Wounded Knee*, 76–77. Compare the above discourse on the AIM warrior society with traditional cultural understandings of a warrior society. William C. Medows, *Kiowa, Apache, and Comanche Military Societies: Enduring Veterans, 1800 to the Present* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1999).

105. William C. Meadows, *Kiowa, Apache, and Comanche Military Societies: Enduring Veterans, 1800 to the Present* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1999), 1–13.

106. Meadows, *Military Societies*, 213.

107. For women's sodalities, see Marla N. Powers, *Oglala Women: Myth, Ritual, and Reality* (University of Chicago Press, 1986), 25–27, 73–74, 86–87, 139.

108. Raymond DeMallie, "Male and Female in Traditional Lakota Culture," in *The Hidden Half, Studies of Plains Indian Women*, ed. Patricia Albers and Bea Medicine (Washington, DC: University Press of America, 1983), 242.

109. Meadows, *Military Societies*, 8.

110. Ibid., 9.

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113. *Voices from Wounded Knee*, 60–64.

114. Ibid., 61–62.

115. Carter Camp, "War Stories and Wounded Knee 1973," *News from Indian Country*, March 10, 2003: 10a.

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117. Qtd. from Anonymous, "Oklahoma Indian Activist Carter Camp Dies at Age 72," in *Tulsa World*, Jan. 3, 2014, http://www.tulsaworld.com/obituaries/nationalobits/oklahoma-indian-activist-carter-camp-dies-at-age/article_4e9563be-3c0a-58b9-aa51-fd05e121d3be.html.

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119. Holm, *Strong Hearts*, 45–46.

120. *Voices from Wounded Knee*, 77.

121. *Voices from Wounded Knee*, 76ff.

122. Carol Talbert, "The Resurgence of Ethnicity among American Indians: Some Comments on the Occupation of Wounded Knee," in *Ethnicity in the Americas*, ed. Henry Frances (The Hague: Mouton Publishers, 1976), 367.

123. James G. Abourezk Papers, Stan Pottinger interviewed by James Abourezk, August 22, 1980, transcript, 7–25, Archives and Special Collections, University Libraries, University of South Dakota, Vermillion, SD.

124. Anonymous, "Frank Clearwater Mortally Wounded As U.S. Forces Fire On Oglalas Gathering Food," *Akwesasne Notes* 5, no. 3 (Early Summer 1973): 15; Anonymous, "Justice Dept. Admits Refusal to Negotiate," *Akwesasne Notes* 5, no. 3 (Early Summer 1973): 18.

125. Stan Pottinger, interviewed by James Abourezk, 7.

126. Bill Hall, interviewed by James Abourezk, September 11, 1980, James G. Abourezk Papers, Archives and Special Collections, University Libraries, University of South Dakota, Vermillion, SD, 18.

127. Stan Pottinger, interviewed by James Abourezk, 14–15.

128. Ibid., 27.

129. Bill Hall, interviewed by James Abourezk, 30.

130. Carrol, *Medicine Bags*, 164; Johnson, et al., "American Indian Activism and Transformation," 292–94, 303–10.

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131. Carroll, *Medicine Bags*, 164, 171–72.

132. Anonymous, "Sunday, March 18, 1973—It Means Total Capitulation," *Akwesasne Notes* 5, no. 2 (Early Spring 1973): 40.

133. Bob Anderson, personal interview with author, August 12, 2009, Albuquerque, NM. I interviewed Al Cooper and Bob Anderson during an archival research visit at the Center for Southwest Research and Special Collections (CSWR) at the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque. I became aware of Bob Anderson through his collection (housed at CSWR); and learned about Al Cooper from a website. Both Wounded Knee participants were active participants in other social movements: Al Cooper was involved in black civil rights and Bob Anderson in antiwar protest. The interviews took place at their home and were semi-structured (involving a narration and questions) as well as a conversation. Cooper and Anderson can also be found in Akwesasne Notes, *Voices*, 194–201 (Anderson); 240, 251 (Cooper).

134. *Voices from Wounded Knee*, 79–80.

135. Ibid., 80.

136. Carroll, *Medicine Bags*, 168.

137. Leonard Crow Dog and Richard Erdoes, *Crow Dog: Four Generations of Sioux Medicine Men* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1995), 203.

138. Bob Anderson, personal interview with author, August 12, 2009, Albuquerque, NM; Allen Cooper, personal interview with author, August 12, 2009, Albuquerque, NM.

139. Carrol, *Medicine Bags*, 168–69.

140. Bob Anderson, personal interview with author, August 12, 2009, Albuquerque, NM.

141. Crow Dog and Erdoes, *Crow Dog*, 197f; Brave Bird and Erdoes, *Lakota Woman*, 144ff.

142. Owen Luck, "A Witness at Wounded Knee, 1973," *The Princeton University Library Chronicle* 67, no. 2 (Winter 2006): 339–40, 343.

143. *Voices from Wounded Knee*, 76.

144. Royal B. Hassrick, *The Sioux: Life and Customs of a Warrior Society* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1964), 96–100.

145. Talbert, "Resurgence of Ethnicity," 368.

146. Carter Camp, "When in the Course of Human Events: An Interview with Carter Camp," *Akwesasne Notes* 5, no. 5 (Early Autumn 1973): 11; Holm, *Strong Hearts*, 45–46.

147. Camp, "When in the Course of Human Events," 11.

148. Nagel, *American Indian Ethnic Renewal*, 247–48, 258–61.

149. Reeser, *Masculinities in Theory*, 171ff.

150. Ibid., 171–99.

151. Schwarz, *Fighting Colonialism*, 31.

152. *Voices from Wounded Knee*, 54–64.

153. Eddie Benton-Benai, "Interview With Eddie Benton, Director, St. Paul American Indian Movement on March 14, 1973," File 176-2404, Section 8, March 21–24, 1973, in *The FBI Files on the American Indian Movement and Wounded Knee*, ed. Rolland Dewing (Frederick, MD: University Publications of America, 1986), Reel 21, 145.

154. See Wounded Knee Hearing, Statement of Louis Bad Wound, 233.

155. Anonymous, "Friday, May 3, 1973," *Akwesasne Notes* 5, no. 3 (Early Summer 1973): 27; Stanley David Lyman, Floyd A. O'Neill, Susan K. Lyman, and Susan McKay, *Wounded Knee 1973* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1991), 89ff. Compare with the statement of Louis Bad Wound, Wounded Knee Hearing, 233.

156. Reinhardt, *Ruling Pine Ridge*, 5f.

157. Wounded Knee Hearing, 234–35.

158. *Voices from Wounded Knee*, 55, 64.

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159. Ibid., 67.

160. Ibid., 81.

161. Al Cooper, personal interview with author, August 9, Albuquerque, NM.

162. Carroll, *Medicine Bags*, 154–58.

163. Means, *Where White Men*, 9–22.

164. Qtd. from *A Tattoo on My Heart, The Warriors of Wounded Knee 1973*, prod. and dir. Charles Abourezk and Breet Lawlor (Badland Films, 2004).

165. Ibid.

166. *Voices from Wounded Knee*, 96–97.

167. Anonymous, "Interview with Eddie Benton," 142–48.

168. Duane Noriyuki, "The Women of Wounded Knee," nd, http://www.dickshovel.com/lsa21.html.

169. Reeser, *Masculinities in Theory*, 177ff.

170. Raewyn Connell, *Masculinities* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1995), 61.

171. Reeser, *Masculinities in Theory*, 91–92.

172. Ibid., 91–118.

173. Castile, *To Show Heart*, 133.

174. For bodily-reflexive practices, see Tengan, *Native Men Remade*, 17, 87-89, 151, 186.

175. Reeser, *Masculinities in Theory*, 91–118.

176. Anonymous, "A Suspenseful Show of Red Power," *Time Magazine*, March 19, 1973: 16.

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181. Ostler, *The Plains Sioux*, 169–93.

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183. *Warrior Societies*, dir. Ryan Slater. Meeches Video Productions, 2007.

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186. Carter Camp, "For Our Uncle, Wallace Black Elk, "*Country Road Chronicles*, February 29, 2004, 5.

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192. Innes and Anderson, "Introduction," 4.

193. Qtd. from *A Tattoo on My Heart*.

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201. Wounded Knee Hearing, 141, 148.

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