

## **There Is No Question of American Indian Genocide**

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“Among the justifications for this opposition [to the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide] were that the physical destruction of groups was more serious than the destruction of their culture, that cultural genocide could result in ‘spurious claims’ being brought, and that the inclusion of cultural genocide could inhibit the assimilation of cultural or linguistic groups. Ironically, delegates from some countries, including the United States and Canada, were also apparently concerned that the inclusion of cultural genocide could lead to claims by indigenous groups.”

Tove Skutnabb-Kangas and Robert Dunbar

The images and stories from my 2010 trip to the Pacific Northwest still guide me. I sit across the table from a man, slightly older than me. The water outside lapping the edges of Alert Bay near Vancouver, Canada, remains in my mind even now, just as the colder wind stays within my skin, chilling my bones. It’s warmer there by the food, and I pick at my BBQ salmon. The salt mingles with the tangy, smoked sauce.

“You worked with those at the museum?” I asked.

“Yeah, we did. They called us in to collaborate on an exhibit about our people.”

The pride fills my breaths. We matter, I think. They might be listening. I am there as part of a group studying Pacific Northwest Alaska Native and First Nations cultures. But it seems I end up studying more the problems with being spoken about as Indigenous peoples by outsiders.

“That’s cool. Then they took your advice?”

“No. Not usually. We went in and told them what things were for or meant. And then they turned around and wrote it differently.”

My eyebrows rise. I’m starting to not be surprised. I’m starting to get used to a regular turn about us that includes, but doesn’t actively listen, and so refuses to actively understand. You know, gaining meaning from the real stories. Recognizing the truth in them and changing their own mindsets, their own misinterpretations.

“That’s the way it usually goes,” he says. Then he continues eating and our conversation moves to the cultural center.

The Indigenous peoples I meet over those four weeks in July change my understanding and my purpose for being. Their stories gave me many voices that build one important case: we,

American Indian peoples, are not really here. Not in the minds of those who are non-Native. Our realities have, in fact, been erased from every space touched by US control. This is the ongoing genocide of our peoples. And yet, we are here, speaking up, theorizing with our stories.

I am Seneca, part of the Haudenosaunee community which includes six nations: Seneca, Mohawk, Tuscarora, Oneida, Onondaga, and Cayuga. When the Peacemaker brought us together for peace and brotherhood, he did so by bringing us to one community mind through attitudes of gratefulness and brotherhood. We were then open to one another’s ideas and to working together. My intent here is not to retell the story of the Peacemaker. There are many important sources that already do so.<sup>1</sup> This inclusion of how the Peacemaker opened our minds stresses the need for a reader’s open mind and for the reader’s call to be interactive with this introduction and with the issue as a whole. In my community, we open each activity with the Thanksgiving Address, or Ganönyök, to remember this. We do this for two reasons: to show that we are thankful for all things on this earth, from the people to the plants and so on, and to bring all of us to the same mindset—one of balance, kindness, and love. At the end of each section of thanks, we say that now our minds are one. We are then in a mindset where we help one another. Knowledges add to our own knowledges. We are riding in ships and canoes in the same river, but we don’t disturb each other’s journeys. Before anyone continues through the essays in this issue, it is important that we are all on the same pathway of positive change and helping one another. So I ask, first, please listen to the following Thanksgiving Address video created by Amber Lane, an Allegany Seneca community member, given in Seneca, before you read on:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8qBMbLzGJco>. There are some difficult topics ahead, and a balanced and open mind for all will move our minds forward. It’s imperative that the audience is actively involved in the process of understanding and redefining genocide.

As the bridge between reader, knowledge of Indigenous genocides, and the articles, I set forth an argument denying the question of American Indian genocide that emerges out of Haudenosaunee ways of knowing. I specifically focus on the United States in my argument because this is my scholarly background. However, these steps can be applied in different ways to other genocides throughout the Americas. Each section calls the reader’s attention to acts of witnessing that should be considered some of the defining factors of genocide. From the very title of this article, “There Is No Question of American Indian Genocide,” I mean to spark a dialogue amongst those who agree, those who haven’t thought about genocide in this way, and

those who deny American Indian genocide, both inside academic spaces and within our communities and sites of work. My introduction will move through three assertions: 1) the current definition of genocide is derived from a legal model that relies heavily on a particular non-Indigenous model of intent, which allows some scholars and non-scholars to take a position denying genocide; 2) by redefining genocide from an Indigenous perspective, a Good-Minded positionality means this article adds to the currently narrow, legalistic definitions of genocide in order to account for both the experiences of and witnessings to the effects of policies and the processes of extermination of those who suffer from the policies; and 3) repositioning an understanding of the effects of this suffering from such an Indigenous perspective will enable future revisions of legal discourse to allow all of us to better address the full scale of Indigenous experiences.

The history of the term “genocide” illuminates how American involvement, as well as that of other countries with Indigenous populations, reframes the definition so that American Indians could *not* make claims of genocide. American Indian genocide has thus far been defined by outsiders who have not experienced genocide themselves. The definition of genocidal actions carried out against Indigenous minds and bodies, as outlined here, shows that the United States carried out an erasure of these stories and was then, and has always been, involved in not simply the extermination process. American Indian genocide viewed as a process rather than one moment better allows the definition of genocide to include and use our Indigenous stories, both past and present, to prove genocide has been enacted as an ongoing process since colonization. During the erasures process, not only has American Indian genocide been denied by the United States, but so too have genocides been carried out in other North and South American countries. I then define erasure as a part of the extermination process which, for American Indian genocide, is an erasure of stories from daily conversations.

Gerald Vizenor’s chapter, “Genocide Tribunals,” acknowledges a need for dialogues about genocide in controlled public spaces so that mindset changes can begin. He argues for the experiences of those who have died to be central in engaging in any argument about genocide because our ancestors’ perspectives show genocide occurring over hundreds of years. The final section calls the reader to become a part of the witnessing process, as listening/reading unsilences and denies erasure from further occurring. I build a case that shows there is no question of genocides in the Americas. No section seeks to blame. Each one follows the other to

offer reasons to use Indigenous perspectives about genocide. What the essay does seek is to encourage us to have dialogues about the *stories* of genocide rather than exclude their importance in critical and educational spaces. Using the term “genocide” here occurs outside of state and national considerations because many Indigenous groups do not organize in this way. But we still must push back and tell our stories, as we seek to reframe minds and knowledge. At its very simple, but imperative, core, my argument is that we have a sovereign intellectual right to define genocide through experiential means.

Abenaki scholar Lisa Brooks argues that our sovereign intellectualism has been ongoing since before contact, but often is presumed to be “new” scholarship. Indigenous scholars offer a unique approach to texts and ideas that must also be incorporated into academic pursuits (235). Haudenosaunee values and ways of knowing offer a framework for realigning the question of American Indian genocide from an Indigenous positionality, but they are not the only ways. The discussion in this article will center on the question of genocide and genocide’s definitional history.<sup>2</sup>

When I was invited to create this introduction, I saw a need to discuss an Indigenous consideration of genocide and why only seeing genocide from the United Nations’ definition can be problematic. It may be easy to presume, as an intellectual, that American Indian genocide is not a questioned genocide. However, few critical books discuss genocide on American soil,<sup>3</sup> and most of those do not include direct interaction with people from those affected communities, allowing them to define genocide themselves. They instead focus on statistics and historical documents by colonizers and on only certain moments as genocide. Rarely is the conversation about the impact of genocide on today’s generations or the overall steps that lead to genocide. As well, most curricula in the education system, from kindergarten up through to college, does not discuss in detail American Indian genocide beyond possibly a quick one-day mention of the Cherokee Trail of Tears.<sup>4</sup> This exclusion leaves out not only the hundreds of other forced removals but also the histories before and after that Indigenous peoples define as genocides and hundreds of years of events. Therefore, the full scope of American Indian genocide has not been critiqued within scholarship, nor is it a dialogue amongst citizens. When both spaces have this dialogue fruitfully, then we can engage in better relations.

### Good-Minded Dialogues

The Great Law of Peace helps me think through how we resist invisibility and stake serious claims for not simply the inclusion of our stories as they already exist, but necessary, active understanding that highlights settler-colonial denial of its actions. Brooks borrows a line from Joy Harjo that my use of The Great Law enacts: “I crave both literature and scholarship that shows us ‘thinking in our skin’” (242). As Onondaga Faithkeeper Oren Lyons outlines, Haudenosaunee lifeways come from The Great Law of Peace that creates the Good Mind:

We lived contentedly under the Gai Enesha Go’Nah, The Great Law of Peace. We were instructed to create societies based on the principles of Peace, Equity, Justice, and the Power of Good Minds.

Our societies are based upon great democratic principles of the authority of the people and equal responsibilities for the men and the women. [...] Our leaders were instructed to be men of vision and to make every decision on behalf of the seventh generation to come; to have compassion and love for those generations yet unborn. [...]

We were instructed to be generous and to share equally with our brothers and sisters so that all may be content. We were instructed to respect and love our Elders, [...] to love our children, indeed to love *ALL* children. (Lyons)

I am seeking to create a relationship that opens readers to what’s written in this issue and to a Good-Minded reconsideration of how we define genocide and truly *hear* survivors. Good Mind means a way of thinking and being that is both spiritual and relational and an intricate lifeway and a spiritual ideology where individuals and ancestors build a consciousness for a community. Lakota scholar Nicholle Dragone, in her Master’s thesis and forthcoming monograph, outlines the Good Mind through principles by way of Lyons.<sup>5</sup> The Good Mind theorizes through three principles: “peace in mind and community,” equity resulting in community justice, and “the power of the Good Minds, which embodies good health and reason” (Lyons qtd. in Dragone 47). The principles allow the Good Mind’s peace and connection to the world where no one wars or presumes they are worth more than another and that no knowledge or way of being is considered better than another. Good health and reason presumes that, to heal and to have better relations as nations, we must tell our stories and that those outside of our experiences should listen to and utilize our definitions rather than their own. Peace in mind and community sets up a calm

dialogue to hear these stories and to believe them. We therefore would have a conversation about genocide, about the term’s history, and how it impacts visibility of violence committed against us. It is inherently Good-Minded not to strictly eliminate a term or to fully take it over, but to *add on* to the definition. It is also inherently Good Minded to look carefully at our histories and learn from them. We do think about what’s gone on in the past as well as what dialogues exist now before moving forward. Critically examining the definition itself is part of our witnessing.

Thinking with the Good Mind as a framework for being a good reader while reading the issue means acknowledging that there are many ways to define genocide and to explore in scholarship how to talk about these issues. The stories and histories included throughout this issue act as the defining factors of genocide in the Americas. Importantly, as oral traditions do, the sentences here must evoke such orality in order to help the reader/listener become involved in the stories. At the moment of reading, changes in the reader’s mind can move that reader momentarily outside of their positionality and their previous conceptions of genocide, whether legal or presumed. Orality simultaneously decolonizes both the writing *and* the reader through the experiences we reveal. By using stories and orality, we evoke what LeAnne Howe insists: that tribalographies theorize our ways of knowing and being,<sup>6</sup> including our genocides. The truth has to come from story spaces, from those who’ve experienced genocide and those who have arisen resilient. Here, we expand those ways to critique and include narrative, for example, in tone and sentence style, including “me” so that orality is not only throughout the story but inside each sentence and each word. Oral elements are intentional for two reasons: sound imparts voice and a storytelling engagement with readers evokes witnessing between scholar and reader. Orality gets inscribed in multiple ways which may also look different from typical academic writing and sentence structure. It is conversational, which then may contain more casual language, repetition, direct address of readers, “that” and “which” used interchangeably for sound, a repeated phrase, intense details, dialogue, thoughts, and contractions. Orality in writing calls for an active response from a reader—in turn becoming like a tribunal: the motivation to understand one’s own positionality, understanding that that positionality lacks knowledge about other people groups, seeking out more information from American Indians themselves, having compassion for those atrocities that have occurred and still occur, not questioning *if* genocide happened, and desiring positive changes.

### Tribunals as Witnessing Spaces

“Charles Aubid declared by stories his *anishinaabe* human rights and sovereignty. He created a vital ‘fourth person,’ sense of presence and survivance, and defied the cultural hearsay of ethnologies, absence and victimry.”

“...but the *anishinaabe* always understood their rights in stories.”

Gerald Vizenor

Gerald Vizenor gives a 2006 speech arguing that lived experiences act as evidence of violent, intentional wrongdoings. Vizenor seeks stories, particularly those *passed down* orally through Indigenous communities and families, to stand as important, accepted evidence of genocide, acting as another type of witnessing. The presence of these stories, including the fourth-person accounts of those who have died, are the stories we should hear as testimony in discussions of genocide. Charles Aubid, a central person in Vizenor’s speech, who argued in court to keep control over their manoomin or wild rice harvest, brings in fourth-person accounts from stories passed down to him during his courtroom testimony. He proves that our oral stories are vital witnessings to genocide, violence, and erasure (135). Because of Aubid’s lived experiences in the court system, Vizenor calls for genocide tribunals—spaces for testimony of these witnessings—to create dialogues which will then stop generations of wrongdoings.

Vizenor argues that when we invoke a sense of presence, we stir fears because our stories outline attrition processes and lay the groundwork for defining American Indian genocide. He seeks for future generations of Natives and non-Natives an empowering understanding of sovereignty and the forced absences of American Indians from legal processes. Vizenor’s goal is positive changes to laws, so he suggests that genocide be brought up in university settings, particularly law schools (138). The tribunals would “justly expose,” through “venues of reason” the “continental ethnic cleansing, mass murder, torture, and religious persecution, past and present” (139). Vizenor finds problematic that, without these tribunals, there lacks reason and acknowledgement of these crimes which means that the “perpetrators of serious crimes against Native American Indians have seldom been punished, and the insidious deniers of genocide protect the impunity of the perpetrators” (140). There are generations of students moving into legal systems, then, who don’t have a full understanding of violence on US soil.

Tribunals act as a go-between within Western and non-Western senses of justice. Vizenor specifically desires conversations in universities, particularly with law students in moot courts, much like mock trials, because “[t]he point of these proposed genocide tribunals is to consider native equity, moral accountability, the reasonable competition of evidence, and to create narratives of survivance” (139-40, 144). He’s seeking for the law to make space for Indigenous iterations which includes narrative in spaces. We can then teach different approaches to understanding how the law could work. Too, university spaces allow for thinking beyond the United Nations genocide definition. And the hope would be to change how the legal system traditionally thinks when new lawyers gain a stronger understanding of the issues and positively evolve the law. Vizenor seeks, therefore, a mindset and community change, resulting in changing treatment of one another—much like the Haudenosaunee—now our minds are one. When we recognize that genocide is more than a specific event where mass killings are employed, and that it’s a planned process, then Vizenor’s tribunals have teeth—the kind of proof that cannot be made invisible.

### **The Questions of Genocide: History Unsilenced**

When I first read the phrase, “The Question of Genocide,”<sup>7</sup> I assumed scholars might explore genocidal actions. However, when I learned that this phrase began by denying the Holocaust and, from there, many other genocides, I became angry that even today, in 2018, we still cannot have open dialogues about genocide. Scholars have too often employed the phrase to rhetorically deny that genocide occurred within a nation’s boundaries. In the process of denying genocide, countries have therefore also negated the experiences of victims. Genocide is challenged when groups of people actively pursue the recognition of their genocide. Then, their stories and experiences are denounced. The phrase originated in Alain Finkielkraut’s 1998 work, *The Future of a Negation: Reflections on the Question of Genocide*, where he studies French critics, particularly Robert Faurisson, who tried to deny Adolf Hitler’s attempt to exterminate Jewish peoples. Other scholars have since used this phrase to investigate genocide, some coming to the conclusion that the violence against a people group is genocide.<sup>8</sup> Other texts suggest certain histories do not meet the legal definition of genocide, and the term is overused and misused in regards to these experiences.<sup>9</sup>

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Genocide was not an official term until defined by Raphael Lemkin for the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. He framed the definition after the Holocaust to correspond with what had occurred so that responsible Nazi leaders could be prosecuted—moving genocide into a legal argument. However, Lemkin’s deep interest in histories of violence influenced his outline of genocide (Lemkin 2013, 134). It’s important to note that Lemkin himself was a Polish Jew who escaped Europe to America after German forces invaded Poland (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum). He understood the depths of genocide.<sup>10</sup> The historical examples of genocide that Lemkin brought with him to the Convention ranged in multitudes of variations, none exactly the same extermination process (Lemkin 2013, 138). Phyllis Bardeau, a Seneca elder and language expert, recommends defining the term from the moment itself. Bardeau argues that the stories that surround any event act as necessary evidence for how we should define that event. Although Lemkin called upon multiple genocides as examples for the Convention, he understood how fluid the definition would need to be to fittingly protect *every* nation.

In order to revise and rethink genocide and absence, American Indian stories are imperative to drastically altering the narrative, just as testimony was to the Holocaust. I borrow from Holocaust studies not as a comparison between genocides which devalues one or the other. We must be careful not to become “rival narratives of genocide,” as Chickasaw scholar Jodi Byrd warns (311). I work against “disavowing” those experiences and toward having all experiences work together to help tell a fuller, more complete story of American Indian genocide. The Convention I discuss completed work important and imperative to the prosecution of genocidal actions resulting in the Holocaust. However, importantly, therein the history also lay moments of denial by other countries of their genocides.

Crucial moments and decisions at the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide denied certain key factors for prosecuting genocide that actually help other countries avoid responsibility for their own genocidal actions. The Convention was held on December 9, 1948 and used Lemkin’s definition as a foundation for the United Nation’s adoption of Resolution 260, officially enacted in 1951. An ad hoc committee put forth three subparts to the definition of genocide for Article II and III of the resolution: physical, biological, and cultural (Skutnabb-Kangas and Dunbar 79-80). Each was inspired by Lemkin’s outline, but

*edited* his original definitions. Physical and biological definitions were passed and included with the following language:

In the present Convention, genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:

- (a) Killing members of the group;
- (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
- (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
- (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
- (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group. (United Nations Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility Project)

However, an addition of cultural genocide was barred from the United Nations’ definition because countries were afraid of “spurious claims” (Skutnabb-Kangas and Dunbar 80). They were concerned such claims would stop certain peoples from positively assimilating to the dominant country’s social and legal customs. Yet from those expectations of assimilation, the expected loss fits cultural genocide. Most notably, Canada and the United States were afraid Indigenous populations would then make claims of cultural genocide (Skutnabb-Kangas and Dunbar 80-81). The very dominant cultural ideals that enforced genocide and harmed the lives of millions were left to decide how to define genocide. The Convention also decided that claiming genocide would not be retroactive for legal recourse. Any country having experienced genocide previous to the 1948 Convention could not claim genocide.

The problem with the United Nations’ definition specifically for Indigenous peoples is that it is created by non-Indigenous peoples who have more often focused on nation states as the subject of genocide within boundaries created by those who marked national territories *over* Indigenous lands. However, the past is integral to defining American Indian genocide since it’s been witnessed from the beginning of colonization. Consider Laguna Pueblo author Leslie Marmon Silko’s description of Pueblo time:

The Pueblo people and the indigenous people of the Americas see time as round, not as a long linear string. If time is round, if time is an ocean, then something that happened 500 years ago may be quite immediate and real, whereas something

inconsequential that happened an hour ago could be far away. Think of time as an ocean always moving. (Silko)

The past affects the present, which affects the future, which passes directly down through a community across time. The genocides that happened so many years ago are just as detrimental today. That's why they continue to be known through oral traditions; stories, which Silko also emphasizes, distinctively mark those passages of time. Application of Indigenous considerations of time and its influence on genocide must be how we theorize through American Indian genocide. To that end, cultural genocide becomes an imperative part of this adding on to. Silko's consideration of time could mean that there is no statute of limitations on American Indian genocide because of how genocidal actions deeply impact our lives today.

Some of the language in the UN definition evokes a way of broadening that could fit Indigenous genocides. Scholars such as Tove Skutnabb-Kangas and Robert Dunbar and Mvskoke/Creek scholar K. Tsianina Lomawaima have contended that forcible removal of Indigenous youth to boarding schools and stripping of language and culture fits the United Nation's genocide point of physical removal of one group to another. Others, such as Benjamin Madley and Brendan C. Lindsay, argue that American Indians have experienced genocide and outline past state genocidal actions, although not national ones. Neither Madley nor Lindsay seek legal recourse, but instead use historical written documents and accounts to provide evidence of genocide. Dakota scholar Chris Mato Nunpa outlines how each section of the UN definition can be seen through both historical moments and the lived experiences of his nation. We do not teach these genocidal histories within most educational institutions. Using the UN definition, whether with legal or scholarly intention, doesn't thus far seem to work to change a national mindset. What's now necessary within this dialogue is a closer reading of cultural genocide through Silko's wave-like time which crosses over itself. When we view genocide as a longer process that moves from one generation to another, more impactful in the present moment than what's occurring in the present moment, we can better understand why that part of the definition is so vital. Too, cultural genocide points to why the United States would have agreed to remove cultural genocide and not acknowledged US influence on how the legal definition could work. The UN genocide definition might work for some nations, but by not incorporating Indigenous epistemologies and perspectives, even the idea of having a definition that implicates perpetrators does not live up to the full potential the convention was created to prevent.

The layperson does not think about genocide as a legal term, but instead as an experiential one. Violent actions against people groups, such as the Holocaust, South African apartheid, and slavery, are often taught without discussion of the legalities of the time, but instead as what occurred to whom. The fact of the matter is, the outcomes of settler colonial decisions have been the destruction of Indigenous peoples. If we focus more on extermination than on intent, we gain ways to stop the process.

As Haudenosaunee people, we would not simply come up with a new term. We would first investigate and unpack what’s being used now and how our experiences could bring about changes to perceptions of how genocide works in other situations. By using Haudenosaunee terms of *adding on* to, if we add back *in* the section on cultural genocide, the past absence of it illuminates an erasure of histories. Since other scholars have done work reading through the current UN definition, this essay discusses why cultural genocide is a valid adding on to which offers more stakes in American Indian genocide claims of a longer duration of genocide. Therefore, the failure to incorporate cultural genocide as a tenet of genocide is of significant historical importance in investigating relations between the US and tribal nations.

When first presented to the Convention, cultural genocide was defined as destroying the specific characteristics of a group: “any deliberate act committed with the intent to destroy the language, religion, or culture of a national, racial, or religious group” (Skutnabb-Kangas and Dunbar 80). This could be exemplified in the following:

1. Prohibiting the use of the language of the group in daily intercourse or in schools, or the printing and circulation of publications in the language of the group;
2. Destroying or preventing the use of libraries, museums, schools, historical monuments, places of worship or other cultural institutions and objects of the group. (*ibid*)

Tribal nations each have their own national systems, languages, and religious practices. All of these were outlawed by the US government in some way. Indigenous language was, and still is, removed from many education systems. We were forced to move off of both historical and sacred spaces, and many of those spaces have been either bulldozed over for development or contaminated by environmental toxins. During each of these steps, a personhood is stripped from the body and the soul. Cultural genocide is the ongoing genocide that, in the case of the United States, continues after initial contact and removal. Upon initial settler colonialism, genocide took place as immediate murder of American Indians, raping, and burning and pillaging of villages

and crops. Once we take the historical turn to removal from land to reservations and removal of children from tribal nations to boarding schools, the process slows down and seeks removal of the American Indian soul from his or her ways, versus an extermination of body. The breakdown of the kinship structure here is the legacy and how extermination transforms into acts of cultural genocide over time. Cultural genocide outlines that there can be a drawn-out duration that impacts groups over time and years to deconstruct a people's culture.

### **The Extermination Process**

Particular to the case of American Indian genocide, we can learn that genocide is fluid, and we should re-define it every time. There are critical genocide studies lenses in place which can offer some ways to investigate genocide's fluidity. Clinical professor of law Sheri P. Rosenberg has argued for viewing genocide as a process, rather than an event. Rosenberg states that process is important because it inherently breaks down the logic for the processes which ensue to exterminate immediately, *as well as* to exterminate over time. As she notes, because the term genocide has become so narrow due to "the emphasis on legalism," scholars and the public miss "that genocide is a fluid and complex social phenomenon, not a static term" (17). Examining process rather than event theorizes how there is no *one* genocide or one way to exterminate, an argument the definitional actions of both Lemkin and Bardeau outline. Presuming genocide is simply the act of extermination is a disturbing privileging of a certain trauma. As the editors argue in the introduction to *Hidden Genocides: Power, Knowledge, Memory*, the question isn't whether genocide occurred or not, but instead why has that genocide become so hidden by a political force that it isn't discussed (Irvin-Erikson, et al. 1-17)? As history shows, there can be the creation of an important and largely influential legal document which carries out the prosecutions intended, but still has histories of negative power moves buried within the creation process. When a small group is allowed to police definition, it becomes convenient for the people doing the harm to continue executing genocidal steps. Critiquing genocide through stages unique to a situation places the power back with those impacted in Good-Minded ways. The problematic presumption is the fear that redefining genocide seeks criminal investigations. Issues which bring about fear-based thinking cloud the Good Mind. My hope is that understanding this history will allow us, in time, to refine the legal discourse, by first unclouding what occurred before.

First coined by Helen Fein, then used by Mark Bradbury, Donald Bloxham, and Rosenberg, the concept of attrition marks a pathway to the perpetrators and makes hidden genocides visible. Each of these scholars, as well as other critical genocide studies scholars, noticed that genocide is more often a long-term process rather than immediate violence (Rosenberg, et al. 109). Attrition does not replace genocide; rather, it interrupts the narrow definition utilized previously by the UN and expands how genocide unfolds within perpetrator systems and actions. As Rosenberg and Everita Silina explain,

genocide by attrition refers to a slow process of annihilation that reflects the unfolding phenomenon of the mass killing of a protected group, rather than the immediate unleashing of violence and death. The methods of genocide by attrition describe state and non-state policies and practices that deprive individuals of a specific set of human rights that do not cause immediate death, but rather lead to the slow and steady destruction of the group. (Rosenberg, et al. 107)

The action of analyzing using attrition defines intent and genocide through the genocide itself, adding on to how we might read the United Nations’ broader definition. Neither Rosenberg nor Silina desire a new definition of genocide or adding to its terms, but rather a more refined way of viewing the definition already in place. I would disagree here. Attrition offers an opening for new positionalities and additions previously denied by the removal of cultural genocide.

Attrition shows current genocides *still* in place, as well as traces of past genocides. There is then fluidity to genocide and therefore should also be fluidity to how we might define it *and* its intent. Process is important to understanding how coloniality uniquely carries out extermination, because, as María Regina Firmino Castillo argues in this special issue and as Lemkin pointed out, coloniality will always have a relationship with genocidal ways. Coloniality destroys those who are in the way of colonial control (Firmino Castillo 33-4). Without intense investigation of the process, and without proven extermination attempts, it’s easier to deny genocide and claim to save the savage Indian from him or herself. As Alain Finkielkraut argues about Holocaust denial, if rhetoric is spread wide enough by someone in power and their actions are perceived as humanitarian—for example, monetary government support of tribal nations, such as health care or resources specifically for enrolled members, or even the “setting aside” of land to create reservations—it *will* be believed. The negation takes on a life of its own so that logic presumes those in power helped rather than harmed (xvii).

Each genocide is distinct, and those distinct traits define for that group their genocide. The extermination processes being distinct and different is *not* what makes it impossible to define genocide. It is what shows us that genocide comes in many packages, processes, and politics. We need many stories for the public to understand invisible genocides.

### **Erasure: A Step in the Genocide Process**

Why don't we take action with this term "genocide" when so many stories from many countries clearly show genocide in their own distinct ways? When thousands of voices are speaking out, the question really is not if an event was genocide, but what *fear* forces people to deny genocide or to make it invisible? Erasure is the set of rhetorical devices used by a perpetrator to rid history of their involvement in genocide acts, as well as to remove all traces of their victim's existence from body to traditions to kinship ties. The erasure process, when viewed as part of extermination processes, allows genocide to be determined from more than moments of mass extermination: genocide then becomes more clearly a planned, drawn-out, living part of colonization. Erasure connects mass immediate extermination to the policies and practices which then keep the extermination ongoing within cultural genocide—one continuous genocide. When genocide stories are excluded from the national dialogue and mindset and not taught within national educational institutions, there is an erasure of stories detailing the long extermination: a removal from land, a removal from family, a removal of ways of knowing replaced with colonized ways, and finally a removal of histories and stories from national systems. Cultural genocide carried out using erasure rhetorics is a literal destruction in capacity of an individual's ability to live as Tohono O'odham, as Navajo, as Puyallup. What remains is a silent social national acceptance that American Indian genocide is neither talked about nor recognized.

Erasure is also the ridding of American Indians from a system simply expecting assimilation, rather than honoring differences. Assimilation becomes a systematic erasure of a people because it requires that American Indians make American ways their main ways of being. *Hidden Genocides* also argues that using the concept of "hidden" allows for "critically examining cases of genocide that have been 'hidden' politically, socially, culturally, or historically in accordance with broader systems of political and social power" (Irvin-Erikson, et al. 2). The editors recognize that "certain cases of genocide [have been] denied, diminished, or ignored" (*ibid*). When history is erased, that is part of the attrition process. The editors point out

troubling US history showing that genocide was hidden in America after the late 1800s. An 1881 report from the US Commissioner of Indian Affairs outlines both the Indian question and the *policy* of extermination: “one of two things must eventually take place [...] either civilization or extermination of the Indian. Savage and civilized life cannot live and prosper on the same ground. One of the two must die” (qtd. in Irvin-Erikson, et. al 3). At one moment in time, extermination was an accepted end to American Indian ways through both bodily death *and* assimilation. Today it’s hidden. Erasure is a process of rhetorics changed over to meet mass social expectations but still engaged in slowly etching away personhood.

If you take away our right to tell those stories, you take away our ways of witnessing past atrocities and how those become today’s trauma. What’s problematic is that the system that denies us our right to seek justice is a Western system put in place by those who carry out genocide. When perpetrators are protected, the stories hold no true meaning to non-Natives and therefore have a more difficult time creating change in relationships. The stories are then made to seem as if they are one event or one person’s story rather than the multiple killing ways.

Extermination steps have occurred in the United States from contact to today’s erasure, and we can see those actions more clearly if we critically examine them as a process of stages meant to see out the finality of the erasure process. There is an inherent desire by those in power for the deletion of identity, personhood, and rights in body and/or mind; those less than have no either/or in assimilative situations. They must relinquish to the powerful their own ways of knowing and being in order to survive (as we see above from the US Commissioner) because the only other option is a daily fight to practice their traditions. Take for example the reasoning in Richard Henry Pratt’s 1892 speech on his conception of running American Indian boarding schools. He argues for assimilative practices to “[k]ill the Indian, and save the man.”<sup>11</sup> Within those words, there is an understanding and acceptance that the “Indian” part of those students is going to die and is meant to die. Pratt carries out the Commissioner’s policy with governmental funding of his boarding schools. Boarding schools only began closing after the passing of the 1978 Indian Child Welfare Act, when American Indian parents regained their legal rights to send their children to schools they chose. Processing American Indians into the American system through assimilative education went on for over 86 years via boarding schools.

Today, such public rhetoric exists differently, but seeks similar ends. Erasure occurs through a rendered narrative rhetorically altered so that realities about American Indians no

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longer exist in national mindsets. Because erasure becomes so deeply embedded in the nation's systems, the system creates hidden genocides. The question of American Indian genocide therefore becomes a national question to investigate: not the genocide itself, but how the policies then and now still carry on those assumptions of extermination. Nunpa states that "the United States is conspicuous by its silence, and it suppresses the truth of what really happened in its development as a nation" (97). He, too, argues for lifting the veil of invisibility placed around American genocidares: "As a consequence of this historical amnesia, the U.S. public does not see that its government and society was established through genocide" (98). He outlines how and where US actions have fit five of the United Nations' criteria for genocide, "and yet this genocide has still remained hidden" (*ibid*). He believes the dialogue requires participation by non-Native scholars because policy makers and other academics often will not take our concerns seriously. At stake for him is that the dialogue must be had by more than American Indian Studies scholars. Without such involvement, his outline showing how our genocide fits each category will go unnoticed by the public. I add that American Indian genocides remain hidden because we trigger questions that illuminate the US intent to *kill*.

The rhetorics in place that hold the UN definition of intent as the deciding marker of genocide, too, allows for other scholars to circle around the problem of intent. So, when non-Native scholars do make such arguments without our Indigenous perspectives involved, it becomes too easy to continue genocide denial. Alex Alvarez, a political science scholar, does such circling and warns there was no intent to harm American Indians; therefore, it would be difficult to label the actions in the United States as genocide (159-67). However, our stories are stories of destruction enforced by a larger system. How the United States forcibly removed American Indians from their homes and land and forced American Indian youth into Western education systems is not saving American Indians, as Alvarez argues, but causing long-lasting and detrimental violence against Indigenous knowledges. You don't have to destroy a body to destroy a people. Over time, mental destruction is less obviously provable and depends on personal narratives for the effect to be demonstrated. Then a country cannot see its own implications in extermination. Tying attrition to intent helps make this connection between intent and the Good-Minded adding on and illuminates genocide as a drawn-out process distinct in each situation—which is also how Bardeau would consider intent. Therefore, intent should be

redefined with each situation of genocide as much as genocide should be redefined within each situation of genocide.

Genocide occurs on US soil and has done so transcending historical boundaries of simply first settlement in the form of murder, rape, trauma, kidnapping, scalping, forced assimilation, forced removal, laws, loss of whole tribal nations and languages, killing of land, and devastation from misrepresentation in media, education, and politics (Nunpa 98-105). Some of these parts of the American genocide process involve physical death, and some involve a mental death—a removal of ways of knowing, thinking, and theorizing. When such erasure occurs so deeply within a system that so many non-Natives don’t recognize the violence against American Indians as ongoing genocide, it is in fact a distinct removal of a people group from the national mindset. Although Rosenberg and Silina and those above do not discuss mental death and historical trauma, these are important markers of attritional genocide for Indigenous peoples as well.

Unlike well-known genocides such as the Holocaust in Europe and genocide in Darfur, where institutional policies of truth and reconciliation publicly attempted both to apologize and to educate their nations about genocide, the United States has avoided the start of a healing process and a readjustment of knowledge and national mindset.<sup>12</sup> In 2010, President Barak Obama included in a defense bill a three-line apology “on behalf of the people of the United States” for maltreatment of American Indians (Capriccioso). He received some rebuke for such a quick and almost hidden action which supposedly reconciles hundreds of years of violence against Indigenous peoples. However, publicly, this small acknowledgement and the criticism that followed did not result in impactful changes. Apologies should come in the form of a change in action, national mindset, and understanding in order for reconciliation to take place. Obama’s apology appears as though the government is sorry for its actions, but a true apology institutes a change in action. Hiding the apology follows past rhetorical erasures.

### **Listening Becomes the Second Witnessing**

“It’s not that we have lost the old ways and intelligences, but that we are lost from them.”

Linda Hogan

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Returning to my opening story, Indigenous peoples are not lost from our traditions. The museum director erased the stories given to him in order to follow the expected rhetoric about American Indians. Ignoring the stories keeps the erasure process going. But our stories will always retain our traditions, as well as the rights and sovereignties Charles Aubid showed, as our witnessing to genocide and our true presence. The stories situate the power within our nations, thereby denying the question of genocide and lifting the veils of silence which keep the questions hanging in the air. Through stories, we come back to our identities and our ways. Recognizing these histories and their outcomes, both as Native and non-Native peoples, we take our witnessing power back. Too, those hearing or reading the stories become important to the process of stopping genocide because that then stops the stages of extermination. Witnessing means naming the atrocities, recognizing the effects of those atrocities still taking place today, and telling the stories. These are steps towards healing, which I define further in a forthcoming monograph, but they begin by many sides telling and listening—a witnessing process only able to continue if those listening are open. For Haudenosaunee peoples, being cleansed is how we clear our clouded minds—the things that keep us from our Good Minds. There must be a release that is then replaced with positive people, places, and ideas.<sup>13</sup> When we grieve loved ones who have passed away, we must go through ceremony to heal. The facts and stories below, and in particular the articles which follow, are this issue's witnessing and cycle of clearing the air because Indigenous histories are being made visible.

Indigenous genocide draws from the attrition process and is a slow genocide which compiles and compiles death and trauma. The slow pace results in intentionally declining numbers of Indigenous people and their land that we can see occurring across over 518 years in both body and mind. David Stannard estimates that Indigenous populations in North America (north of Mexico) during pre-Columbian periods were upwards of 8-12 million with the Americas totaling 75-100 million, which still may be a low estimate (268). He argues that habitation of the Americas began around 70,000 BC, and that populations were larger than previously thought, thus proving that massive societies existed before contact with multilayered, intelligent communities. The population of American Indians in 1900 from US Census statistics were at 237,196. Nunpa estimates these numbers show a 98.5 percent rate in decline of Native populations in the United States, numbers which indicate an extermination magnitude (97).

There have been many ways between then and now that have been and continue to be an extermination pathway. Extermination now exists as an inherited, intergenerational trauma which passes on into our bodies so long as genocide continues. One way has been assimilation practices such as forced Americanized education. There is a wealth of scholarship on these histories doing exemplary work discussing boarding schools and their violent outcomes.<sup>14</sup> When we scholars spend so much time, however, writing the theories, numbers, and criticisms, it can become easy to forget that there are people connected to those horrors—people whose experiences prove the intent to exterminate without needing any further words—the beginnings of the witnessing process. I embed the following video excerpt here because merely reading about the events could not fully impart the experiences as being told orally. The clip I include is from *Our Spirits Don't Speak English*, a documentary on Indigenous boarding schools that contains interviews with boarding school survivors, scholarly commentary, photos, and historical information. In this clip, an interview with Chippewa Cree community member, Andrew Windyboy, expresses his experiences at two boarding schools: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=qDshQTBh5d4&t=106s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qDshQTBh5d4&t=106s). When you hear the words, there is no question that assimilation does unjustifiable damage.

Too, the shame imparted by a system that believes you should kill your Indian self, or that you should only be a mascot running around a football field, or that you should exist in the past with teepees, has resulted in the highest suicide rates amongst a people in the country. American Indians are committing suicide at 21.5 percent per 100,000 of American Indians, a number 3.5 times higher than other group rates. As Rachel A. Leavitt and her fellow authors contend at the Center for Disease Control, the suicide rates are correlative with factors such as where they live, if they knew others who committed suicide or passed on, and substance abuse. Residential status in particular could result in someone not receiving culturally competent care, which has been known to be preventative to such suicide occurrences with American Indians (Leavitt, et al.).<sup>15</sup>

As well, today, thousands of missing American Indian men and women have been kidnapped and murdered. American Indian women are murdered at a rate ten times higher than other women nationally (Pember 2016).<sup>16</sup> Without a comprehensive data collection system, there is no true number of just how many women, let alone men, are murdered. As Whisperkish argues in her TEDx Talks, violence against Indigenous peoples has been normalized, particularly against women, and control of the Indigenous body became accepted at the moment of

colonization. Importantly, she incorporates dimensions of oral traditions through her vocal intonations which becomes another way to witness in storytelling ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mg2Jjam0p-U](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mg2Jjam0p-U)). She raises and lowers her voice, changes her tone from soft to angry, and emphasizes certain words and stories. Her talk involves the audience present at the TEDx, as well as those watching online, where emotional tones emphasize important silences and gaps in audience knowledges. Listening seeks an emotional reaction from the audience, to also raise anger in their bodies or for them to listen more closely when the tone goes soft. By requiring involvement in the talk, the audience pays more careful attention—at least this is what Whisperkish appears to seek—she can't let her audience walk away without hearing her because the US has done little to ameliorate documenting the epidemic against American Indian women. Whisperkish becomes that documentation in that moment. Her audience will remember those facts and histories better because of the performance and the emphasis in tones and will hopefully pass the stories on, creating a cycle of witnessing.

### **The Collection: Working Against Erasure and Genocide in the Americas**

Lisa Brooks points out that she has “come to most value scholarship that recognizes intellectual work as an activity that has effects on and participates in the ‘real’ world that we inhabit. Perhaps the concern to which we should turn is the need for thought that acknowledges its embeddedness in experience, which cultivates and expresses an intimate relationship with the world in which it thinks” (242). This introduction and the articles that follow are argued and organized through both experiences and tribal and community perspectives. Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Ngāti Awa and Ngāti Porou, Māori scholar, has argued that the researched must become the researchers. She urges Indigenous scholars to use their own tools in order to decolonize projects and frame our experiences our own ways. After the release of her seminal text, *Decolonizing Methodologies*, one might think that academia would change entirely how we expect research to look and be about and by Indigenous peoples. But we still have evolutions to make in research—so here, we too evolve Indigenous methodologies and theorizing practices. Because we will be discussing genocide and absence in this issue, I have included arguments, my own and those of the other scholars, that honored those real-world intimate and intellectual activities born out of our resilience and experiences with genocide. This issue by no means desires seeking, at this

juncture, any legal case against any country. Our arguments re-see genocide so that we can move through a healing process.

In the call seeking articles for this special issue, the editors and I sought a space to discuss genocide in the Americas. The call was fairly open because tribal nations experience genocide differently. What we received were many angles voicing how we, as Indigenous peoples, survived colonization by both Spanish and American settlers and how North and South American choices have affected the way the United States treats Indigenous histories and knowledges. Resilience and resistance despite forced and intentional erasure became a theme that, more than ever, witnesses how we are *not* conquered people and how we are worthy of speaking and evoking our sovereign intellect.

The three articles included in this issue all argue for clearer understandings of North and South American histories—histories colliding with settler colonial narrative control that Indigenous peoples have resisted through daily living and their own ways of knowing and being. Each article and my introduction weave together personal experience with the experiences of others to theorize genocide. Those writing from and about South American genocide are also affected by US settler-colonial discourse as it impacts dialogues about Indigenous peoples in their own countries. As well, those from South America living in the United States constantly encounter misrepresented narratives about colonial control of their homes. The core topic of genocide and Indigenous peoples seems either silenced or misrepresented altogether by American dialogues, seemingly to avoid conversations leading to questions of their own genocidal actions. Storytelling in Indigenous communities, which my introduction and the articles enact in different ways, becomes a witnessing for Indigenous peoples acting against political and legal choices made to erase us. Witnessing through words allows others to understand those realities and makes bodies, either dead or traumatized, *visible*. When the invisible becomes visible, stories can heal through that witnessing and recognition of pain. But if the dominant culture still does not recognize genocide stories, those deaths go unresolved.

I and the authors who follow argue that Indigenous genocides and the national absences of our resulting realities are important markers of history *and* the present day. The stories told throughout the critical works here show extermination and its many sides, processes, and perpetrators. We each argue that genocide is not in the past and is still suffered in different ways by American Indians and other Indigenous populations. Understanding and knowledge are the

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path to healing. Recognizing that we are resilient, and some of us intentionally resistant because we have fought back with our survival and within our own knowledges and ways of being, will help us all heal. The 2013 US Census estimates today's American Indian populations at 5.2 million which shows our numbers increasing (United States Census Bureau). Much of that comes from unsilencing and recognizing our souls require healing as much as our bodies and minds.

This collection shows some of these stories. The more we engage in these conversations, the more we arrive at a space not just of inclusion, not just of having people hear us, but of those listening and understanding and becoming active learners who care about how they ask questions, seek out information, and interpret said information in peaceful ways. Consider these articles as a foundation to Vizenor's Genocide Tribunals—the dialogues that openly and actively deconstruct genocide and build resilience. Because if we do not raise our voices, we cannot move forward. If we do not tell our stories, we cannot see the trauma and the resilience. If we do not understand, we cannot all heal.

The first article in our special issue investigates how story imbeds in the land, surviving through the people to whom the land is intimately tied. With a journalistic and scholarly style, historian Steve Andrews, in "Creation Stories: Survivance, Sovereignty, and Oil in MHA Country," describes how the Mandan, Hadatsa, and Arikara Nations retain land control, even though the colonizer forced absences of those nations by controlling treaty language. Andrews argues that a crease implies a fold unfolded, a mind made up and then unmade, and an opening that refuses the very closure that created it. Through two interviews, he traces the implications for Tribal sovereignty as it pertains to the interviewees, Lisa and Cory. Interwoven and creating the true narrative through the essay, are four different types of creation stories: the tale told by oil; the stories told by Cory and Lisa and the examples they embody that take sustenance from that deep past *in order to* progress toward a workable and sustainable future; and finally, the critique of the dominant culture's political creation story.

Molly McGlennen in "Chasms and Collisions: Native American Women's Decolonial Labor" similarly argues that the artwork we create enacts survivance, while also illuminating long histories of genocide. Indigenous artwork creates Indigenous visualities that trouble settler-colonial designs of signifying the *Indian*—engaging audience awareness that settler-colonial images act in troubling ways as the markers of authenticity rather than Indigenous experiences. Chitimacha/Choctaw artist Sarah Sense and Cherokee artist Shan Goshorn create complex, three-

dimensional narratives of Native women that resist metonymic settler-colonial constructions, which not only perpetuate fetishized stereotypes but also normalize and justify ongoing violence against Native women. Both artists’ visual narratives are the types of stories that prove genocide at the same time as they intensify a critical discourse of survivance.

In “What Ma Lach’s Bones Tell Us: Performances of Relational Materiality in Response to Genocide” María Regina Firmino Castillo argues that performance was used to implement violent ontological impositions during Guatemala’s genocidal war against the Ixil Maya (1979-1985) while highlighting performance’s role in ontological regeneration in postwar Guatemala and other places undergoing similar struggles. Castillo uses Chela Sandoval’s semiological deconstruction to reveal that the acts of violence committed against the Ixil was not only staged to commit genocide but also to impose upon survivors’ specific ontological dispositions aligned with state interests. In turn, survivors also engaged in performative activities to regenerate Ixil ways of being and relating to territory. The argument deepens understandings of how genocide and ecocide are braided together with ontological destruction.

The question is not whether this is American Indian genocide. There are instead questions we must continue to examine even beyond our special issue. The question is: How do the perpetrators keep getting away with it? The question is: Why has America worked so hard to rid from all structures the presence of American Indians, except if controlled rhetoric, forced laws, or revised histories? The question is: How does genocide only get defined by the perpetrators? The question is: Why do those who stole the land, forced removal of millions from their land, raped women, gave smallpox-laced blankets to tribal nations, burned entire crops, massacred entire or nearly entire nations, educated to assimilate to kill the Indian, and has and still is killing the very land they stole still control the narrative? How has this logic not been broken down, torn apart, and flung to the far reaches of the vast oceans to disappear? How does genocide keep happening over and over— different peoples, different patterns, same logic, same deniers— across the world?

A long history of intergenerational genocide exists from contact through today, and not simply intergenerational trauma because the genocide has been passed down, evolved within political systems, and ingrained in all tribal communities—so hidden that it doesn’t seem like genocide. Each nation and each individual of that nation is affected. The act of erasing implies intent to tamper with historical record, education systems, and public knowledge. That would mean it was a choice that this history and these stories were simply left to float out into the wind,

intentionally away from public knowledge. Forcibly removed. Thought to be in places from which they would not return. Hoped would not return.

A slow genocide is still an intentional genocide.

When you want to be more dead than alive because of these systems—isn't that genocide?

When the borders you live within treat you as if you *are* already dead—isn't that genocide?

This audience remembering the above points becomes a better experiencing audience now open to redefining genocide through those who have experienced the cycles of extermination—cycles that are a process which can be broken by unclouded Good Minds.

There is no question of American Indian genocide.

And our theories are still here to combat any question.

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### Notes

<sup>1</sup> For further discussions of the Peace Confederacy and its impact on Haudenosaunee communities, please see the following sources: A.W. Paul Wallace, *White Roots of Peace*; TreeTV, “The Peacemaker and Tadadaho”; Penelope Kelsey, *Reading the Wampum: Essays on Hodinöhsö:ni’: Visual Code and Epistemological Recovery* (65-80); Jeanette Rodriguez, *A Clan Mother’s Call: Reconstructing Haudenosaunee Cultural Memory*.

<sup>2</sup> In a monograph I am developing, I discuss how these dialogues can be healing and how the Good Mind and Haudenosaunee values can act as theoretical approaches to trauma, genocide, and reconciliation.

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, David E. Stannard; Benjamin Madley; Brendan C. Lindsay; Edward B. Westermann; and Gary Clayton Anderson. Other books, such as those by Samantha Power and John Toland, also have dialogues about genocide and US reactions to genocide. Power does not discuss American Indian genocide, but specifically details America’s lack of involvement and silence in genocide within other countries. Toland deconstructs how Hitler’s logic was inspired by America’s use of the removal and reservation system.

<sup>4</sup> After a formal study I completed with 25 voluntary students, informal discussions with 8 years of students in my classrooms, colleagues, friends, and family, this appears the rule, rather than the exception of what is learned.

<sup>5</sup> Please see Nicolle Dragone’s “Haudenosaunee Literature: A View from Outside the Culture.” MA thesis, University of Oklahoma, 2002. Dragone’s work argues for applying a tribal nation’s theories to its own literature for a deeper, more respectful critique and understanding of the text. She builds a case for reading Haudenosaunee literature using a Haudenosaunee-based theoretical model developed by Wisconsin Oneida, Carol Cornelius.

<sup>6</sup> See LeAnne Howe, *Choctalking on Other Realities*.

<sup>7</sup> See *Native America and the Question of Genocide*.

<sup>8</sup> Please see Ronald Grigor Suny et al., *The Question of Genocide: Armenians and Turks at the End of the Ottoman Empire*.

<sup>9</sup> See Michael M. Gunter, *Armenian History and the Question of Genocide* and Alex Alvarez, *Native America and the Question of Genocide*.

<sup>10</sup> For more information on how Lemkin developed the term “genocide,” see *Totally Unofficial: The Autobiography of Raphael Lemkin* by Raphael Lemkin (edited by Donna-Lee Frieze) and *Raphaël Lemkin and the Concept of Genocide* by Douglas Irvin-Erickson.

<sup>11</sup> “‘Kill the Indian, and Save the Man’: Captain Richard H. Pratt on the Education of the Native Americans.” *History Matters*. [historymatters.gmu.edu/d/4929/](http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/4929/)

<sup>12</sup> There have been other spaces, too, which have formed Truth and Reconciliation Commissions, such as Canada, Columbia, Australia, and the list could on. Some are ongoing commissions. Some have been commissions which existed for specific times. Some commissions sought justice specifically for genocide or crimes against humanity. Other commissions sought investigations of single events. It’s important to note that many commissions have had problematic systems or ways of carrying out reconciliation. For more information, see “Measuring the Impacts of Truth and Reconciliation Commissions” by Michal Ben-Josef Hirsch, et al.

<sup>13</sup> This is part of our Condolence Ceremony, which is a grieving process when someone passes away. For further discussions of this ceremony, see Taiaiake Alfred’s *Peace, Power, Righteousness: An Indigenous Manifesto*.

<sup>14</sup> See David Wallace Adams's *Education for Extinction*; Colin Calloway’s *Indian History of an American Institution: American Indians and Dartmouth*; K. Tsianina Lomawaima’s “Domesticity in the Federal Indian Schools: The Power of Authority Over Mind and Body”; Joseph Johnson’s *To Do Good to My Indian Brethren: The Writings of Joseph Johnson 1751-1776*; Jon Reyhner, et al. *A History of Indian Education*; Margaret Connell Szasz’s *Indian Education in the American Colonies 1607-1783*; and Clifford E. Trafzer, et al edited collection, *Boarding School Blues*.

<sup>15</sup> See also Laura Santhanam, et al, “Suicide Among American Indians Nearly Double National Rate.”

<sup>16</sup> See this article for more information on the Tribal Access Program for National Crime Information which was launched in 2015: [newsmaven.io/indiancountrytoday/archive/missing-and-murdered-no-one-knows-how-many-native-women-have-disappeared-lGvN2Pw97E6Dg\\_guqcpMQ/](http://newsmaven.io/indiancountrytoday/archive/missing-and-murdered-no-one-knows-how-many-native-women-have-disappeared-lGvN2Pw97E6Dg_guqcpMQ/)

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