

This is a short excerpt of the page proofs from the first chapter of the book, *Webs of Kinship*. To find the entire published book, see:

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Chapter One

Potatoes and Mountain Dew: An Introduction

The summer of 2006 had been too hot to spend much time outside, but when the sun sets in Montana, everything cools down quickly so that even the hottest days fade into pleasant nights. One August evening, Ms. DG and I used the break in the heat as an opportunity to relax after dinner on folding chairs in the driveway of her apartment in Billings. We were enjoying multiple cups of coffee and watching her grandchildren ride their bikes back and forth. The sky slowly faded from rosy yellow to deep blue, and the stars began to shyly wink. In the comfort of that evening, I remembered my anxiety during my first meeting with her several years earlier.

My undergraduate mentor, a professor who had worked with Ms. DG, had put me in contact with her. We had emailed back and forth, but I had not been able to get her to agree to work with me before I went to the reservation. I was naïve then about the importance of meeting face to face. I did not realize the extent of the favor I was asking. So I headed to Montana in the spring of 2004, not knowing whether she or anyone else would even consider speaking with me about Cheyenne history. When I got to Billings, I settled into a hotel room and called Ms. DG. She asked me to come to her workplace. When I met her, she suggested we head outside into the warm air for a smoke break. I still smoked then and was quick to offer her a cigarette as we settled on the concrete retaining wall under a shady tree in front of the building. I knew that Ms. DG played important roles in the political, cultural, and religious workings of her nation and was highly respected—and still is—for her knowledge of Cheyenne history, but I did not realize at the time how lucky I was to meet with her. As we smoked, I started to tell her about how I imagined my project.

I told her that I was interested in the formation of the Northern Cheyenne reservation and that I wanted to trace the bands that came together there. I wanted to tell the story of how they won the reservation from the federal government on land that had never been recognized as theirs, at a time when other Native peoples were losing millions upon millions of acres. After talking for what felt like a really long time while she politely listened, I gathered the courage to ask her face to face whether she would be willing to work with me. She still did not say yes; instead, she asked if I had a tent. I was a little surprised, but I told her of course, in the trunk of my car. In what seems to be the tradition, my anthropology professors had been quite mysterious about exactly what we were meant to do in “the field,” but I had known enough to bring a tent. Once she knew I was equipped, Ms. DG extended an invitation to camp with her family at the pow-wow that coming week. I still did not have a yes, but it was much better than a no.

I also knew that I should not arrive at the camp empty-handed, so I asked what I could bring. She answered by telling me about the first time that my mentor camped with her family many years earlier. Apparently my mentor had asked the same question, and Ms. DG, who didn't know what her mother might need, suggested potatoes and Mountain Dew, but they ended up with more potatoes and Mountain Dew than they knew what to do with, cases of pop and bags upon bags of potatoes. We both laughed and I relaxed upon learning that my mentor had made mistakes in her day too. Looking back, I think Ms. DG was teaching me several things at once with her story. She had humbled herself by implying that she had little knowledge of what was needed in a camp kitchen, and indicated that whatever I saw fit to bring would be fine. She also welcomed me by reminding me that, even though I had not been aware of it, I was embedded in a larger

web of personal relationships that had history and resilience. I could not process all of that in the moment—I only thought that I still wasn't sure what to bring. Slowly, I was beginning to realize that it was going to be much more difficult than I thought to move from archival research to learning from the Cheyenne themselves. Not until much later would I begin to understand the power of the large web of personal relationships that connected me to people I had yet to meet.

The powwow was my introduction to Ms. DG's extended family. It gave me my first opportunities to cook and work with her family at their campsite and to introduce my project. The family got to size me up as I negotiated unfamiliar cultural expectations. By spending time with Ms. DG's family and working alongside them, I was able to demonstrate that I was serious about learning from them. As I met more community members, I identified people who were interested in telling me about Northern Cheyenne history. Although I conducted formal interviews with members of several families, much of what I learned was told to me as I lived with and performed daily tasks alongside Ms. DG's family or at formal events such as powwows, ceremonies, and other large gatherings where I was introduced to extended family and other community members.

I spent as much time as I could on the Northern Cheyenne reservation from the spring of 2004 until the fall of 2008, arriving as soon as I finished teaching in the spring and leaving as late as I could in the fall. I was familiar with the critiques launched against non-Native researchers working in Native communities, and had many conversations with Native professors and students in graduate school about the colonial nature of much of the research conducted by outsiders. Fully aware of my position as a middle-class, Euro-American woman, I proceeded with caution, working to build trust, paying attention

to protocol, and developing respectful relationships with those with whom I discussed Cheyenne history. I never went to anyone's house empty handed, and I made myself as useful as I could. Most of my interviews were opened-ended; I often posed a question or two and allowed the conversation to take its course, which meant that my research evolved slowly but naturally.

I discovered that conversations flow more easily without a tape recorder. Elders valued my ability to listen and remember what they said, so we were able to have fuller discussions. In fact, most people I worked with commented at either the first or second meeting, that they were glad I did not have a tape recorder or even a pencil and paper. For me, these initial interviews had been meant to get to know people without the awkwardness of recording conversations, but I was so praised for this that I made the conscious decision not to record my interviews. Instead I listened as carefully as I could and used mnemonic devices to remember details. I made extensive field notes as soon as possible after conversations. At subsequent visits, I brought lists of questions to make sure that I hadn't misremembered. As a result, I have not quoted any conversation word for word. I have, however, given what I have written to each conversant and asked for corrections to ensure that when I have used their ideas, what was written reflects what they wanted to say. I have also encrypted each conversant's name and represented it using initials to retain anonymity because none wished to be identified in the final book. I have used Ms. and Mr. to indicate the gender of the speaker, but have attempted to exclude any other identifying information.

I had come to the community with the idea that I would research the bands that came together in Montana to form the reservation, but many Northern Cheyenne people

shaped my project and encouraged me to think about the impact of family relationships on history and to more fully explore the early reservation period. I had planned to end my narrative in 1884 with the establishment of the reservation, but several Cheyenne I worked with strongly encouraged me to discuss the homesteading of reservation lands and the expansion of the reservation boundaries in 1900. I knew very little about this history because it is rarely mentioned in the secondary scholarship on the Northern Cheyenne, but in the archives I discovered a powerful story that strengthened my original purpose. Furthermore, I was able to explore a history of importance to the Northern Cheyenne themselves. They talked to me about the oral histories they had heard about the expansion, they encouraged me to find government documents from this period, and their narratives guided me as I sifted through documents in the archives. They provided names of places, people, and instructions for finding materials written about them. Without their direction, I would not have been able to uncover such a trove of rich documents on the early reservation period.

Although I conducted formal interviews, I gained some of my most important insights from impromptu stories like the one Ms. DG told me the day we met. In fact, during that cool, clear Montana night on lawn chairs in the driveway, I had no idea that what she was about to tell me would completely reshape the way I thought about the Cheyenne history I had been researching for years. We had been talking about all kinds of things from her new cigarette-rolling machine to the multiple ways Cheyenne people have interpreted and used their own historical narratives. After a lull in the conversation, Ms. DG broke the silence by telling me that the histories that have been written about the Cheyenne by outsiders had gotten the story all wrong. I was not taken aback that a

Cheyenne woman who was well versed in her family's history and in Cheyenne nationalist histories would be critical of what had been written about her people. Nevertheless, as a non-Cheyenne, I got a little nervous that she might be launching a critique of my own work carefully veiled out of respect for me as a friend.

I asked her what she meant, hoping that she would tell me about specific narratives that outsider writers had represented inaccurately and reference texts that I knew she had read. Although I was nervous about how her comments might change the direction of my research, I was also excited to hear details that contradicted or enhanced the histories I had pored over for such a long time. I had tried to come to the reservation with a sense of humility and an openness to learn. I had spent years with excellent teachers in college and graduate school who taught me to read critically and interpret archival documents. Most of them were either Native themselves or had spent years living and working in Native communities. At the same time, I assumed that, as a young, non-Native woman without much life experience or time on reservations, I would be positioned as a student at Northern Cheyenne. Actually, I discovered that I started out with less knowledge than children. Often the youngest members of the family would explain to me that I shouldn't touch this or walk over there while that was going on. I would immediately obey, but by the time Ms. DG and I were enjoying the sunset in Billings, I felt pretty confident about my ability to understand what people were trying to teach me. Of course, comprehending Cheyenne perspectives of history and how they are shaped by a Cheyenne worldview takes a lifetime, not just in a Cheyenne community but in a Cheyenne family, and I knew I still had a lot to learn.

Ms. DG responded to my question by explaining that non-Native authors always focused on one man who had done extraordinary things—like Dull Knife or Little Wolf. These texts described Cheyenne history as the outcome of the actions of a few exemplary individuals. The authors assumed that these men—and it was always men—used their courage or intelligence or strategic abilities or military prowess to determine the historical trajectory of the entire people. She told me that this was simply not true. Certainly Cheyenne leaders and warriors were brave, and they led the people with intelligence and strategy, but they did not determine the course of Cheyenne history as individuals. I was impressed with this critique, but it was not new to me. Social historians have for some time taken issue with the idea that specific great men determined the course of historical events.

The alternative Ms. DG proposed, however, opened my eyes to a motivation for social and political action I had not yet considered. For her, the narrative of great men represented a profound disconnect between the individualistic way that Cheyenne history had been portrayed by scholars and the centrality of social life in the way Cheyenne people themselves presented it. Yet she was not suggesting a move to examine the impact that categories like race, class, power, or gender had on historical action. Nor was she encouraging me to understand history by considering the impact events had on the average Cheyenne, or even their participation in the sweeping story of global history. Instead of any of these other social categories, Ms. DG emphasized family. She was arguing that non-Native scholars missed the centrality of kinship relations as a motivating factor in Cheyenne history.

Those famous Cheyenne men always thought of their relatives first, not themselves, she told me. She explained that the leaders never acted out of personal interest. When they made the decisions that are emphasized in Euro-American histories, they were thinking first of their families. She was not arguing that warriors and leaders fought and made decisions for the good of their wives, children, and grandparents, as Euro-Americans have often claimed about their political and military leaders. She was saying that Cheyenne leaders made decisions with their entire extended family in mind—not just those living today, but those who came before and those yet to be born. In Cheyenne political thought, establishing, perpetuating, and strengthening networks of personal relationships based on kin was the driving motivation behind not just cultural or social action, but political and economic action as well. I came to discover that these kinship relationships were the channels that Cheyennes accessed in order to act on economic or political decisions. As a result, each person, including leaders, acted first to maintain the web of kinship that tied them to each other, to their ancestors and descendants, to their cultural and political identity, and to the land and its resources. Cheyenne life depended on this web. The decisions of leaders did not simply account for family; they were shaped by its mechanisms. Any political action sought to strengthen internal and/or external social relationships, not to dominate land or people. Ms. DG inspired me to theorize kinship as a primary political mechanism within the Cheyenne nation, and so I made kinship the primary theme of my study of Cheyenne removal and the establishment of the reservation. She reminded me that Dull Knife had a family. He still does today.

Dull Knife is famous in the history of the American West. In his Cheyenne language, he was called Morning Star, but Euro-Americans and Lakotas called him Dull Knife, the name he is most known by today.ⁱ His picture hangs on the walls of countless roadside diners throughout Nebraska and South Dakota. He has been immortalized not only in scholarly histories, but in novels and films as well. Many tourists believe he was at the Battle of Little Big Horn in 1876. He was not, but his camp suffered severe retribution from Colonel Ranald S. Mackenzie and his troops, forcing them to take refuge with Crazy Horse's camp. After Little Bighorn, federal officials exerted more effort to contain all Cheyenne people on the southern reservation. When Dull Knife's group finally came to Fort Robinson in 1877, they were forcibly removed from the Great Sioux reservation in Dakota Territory to the Southern Cheyenne agency in Indian Territory. He captured the American imagination when he, along with Little Wolf and more than 300 men, women, and children, fled the reservation in an effort to return north.ⁱⁱ Their goal was to return home and to reunite with relatives in their beloved valley along the Powder River.

The Northern Cheyenne hunted, gathered, and traded from the Powder River region in southeastern Montana onto the plains of Nebraska and traveled an even larger swath of land for economic, social, and political purposes. Their Southern Cheyenne relatives preferred the plains of Colorado and Kansas for their home. Families in both groups traveled this entire region to hunt, visit relatives, trade, put up Sun Dances, and join in military action. While their southern kin had signed treaties for land south of the Platte River, Northern Cheyenne bands had signed treaties that acknowledged their joint ownership, along with the Lakota and Northern Arapaho, of the Black Hills complex.

They had never signed a treaty acknowledging their ownership of the Powder River, their favorite hunting and camping grounds, but the Cheyenne knew that this land was theirs. Dull Knife and Little Wolf paid no attention to such U.S. legal barriers when they fled Indian Territory. They were more concerned with the military might, over 2,000 men strong, biting at their heels as they ran. Dull Knife and the others were not just fleeing to return to their homeland, they were also fighting to reunite their families. Those who were removed were not only separated from their homelands, but also their families, not only Lakota and Arapaho relatives, but other Cheyenne family members—brothers, sisters, parents, and grandparents—who had escaped the long walk south. Americans were instantly fascinated by this story as they watched it unfold in their newspapers in 1879. They have not stopped telling it since.

Dull Knife's story fascinates Americans because it is heart-wrenchingly tragic and the end (at least in the popular version) is so satisfying. So many people died on the journey, and even women and children were massacred at Fort Robinson, but the United States ultimately granted the Cheyenne the land they sacrificed so much for. The Cheyenne characters represented so often in novels and movies play the role of "the Indian" in the hegemonic American nationalist narrative perfectly. They begin the story as bloodthirsty savages who threaten to disrupt U.S. national unity but, through struggle and suffering, shift to the role of the noble savage who falls before the inevitability of coming civilization. While they succeeded in returning to their homeland, they were no longer able to roam the plains, living free among the buffalo. The hegemonic power of settler society subdues the savages and ultimately assimilates them. In this narrative, the United States plays the role of the repentant benefactor who abuses his might to control

his most unruly children, but ultimately redeems himself by granting the Cheyenne their deepest wish, while simultaneously bringing them the light of civilization. American listeners can feel sympathetic towards the romantic noble savage without pausing to question the motives of their nation.

It is easy to see where the novels and movies came from, but this is not the story Cheyenne people tell themselves, and anyone who listens closely will be left with many unsettling questions. Why is there a northern and a southern reservation if the Cheyenne are one people? Why did the United States establish a Northern Cheyenne reservation at the same time they were taking millions of acres of land away from other Native peoples through the Allotment Act and its corollaries?ⁱⁱⁱ Does it seem likely that Congress or the president set land aside for Native peoples simply because of a sympathetic response to a massacre committed by U.S. troops? Such a telling of Dull Knife's role in the American nationalist narrative ends in an emotionally satisfying way, but it is doubtful that this is where the motivation lay.

Before 1880, the U.S. government never intended to grant the Northern Cheyenne their own reservation. Because the Northern Cheyenne did not have a separate treaty with the U.S. government that set aside land solely for them, they had no separate reservation or agency.^{iv} According to government treaties, the Northern Cheyenne were to live either with the Lakota at their agency in Dakota Territory or with the Southern Cheyenne at their agency in Indian Territory. Yet the Northern Cheyenne, whom government officials recorded as a defeated people and as prisoners of war, won a reservation in their beloved homeland less than a decade after participating in the Battle of Little Big Horn, one of the most devastating blows to U. S. forces during the Indian Wars.^v In 1884 President

Chester A. Arthur established the Northern Cheyenne Reservation by executive order. He made this order ten to twenty years after many American Indian peoples had lost millions of acres of land granted by treaties as the United States carved small reservations from large land bases.^{vi} The Southern Cheyenne set no precedent, as they had been pushed from their prized hunting grounds in Colorado onto a reservation in Indian Territory. Another executive order in 1900 extended the Northern Cheyenne reservation just as the Allotment Act was taking ninety-three million acres away from other American Indian peoples by dividing tribally owned reservations into individually owned acreages and opening the rest of the reservation lands to white settlement. Southern Cheyenne people were not spared from this land loss either. According to U.S. law, the Cheyenne had no right to their northern territories and no legal recourse. So how did a people who were not recognized as a distinct tribal nation by the United States gain recognition of their connection to a part of their homeland that was not acknowledged as belonging solely to them in any treaty?

Scholars of American Indian history have most often explored negotiation and enforcement of treaties as the dominant land retention efforts employed by Native peoples. Stuart Banner has called for scholars to explore other forms, arguing that most of the scholarship on American Indian land loss has assumed “that conquest and sale are mutually exclusive alternatives that exhaust the possible methods of land transfer.”^{vii} Underlying this assumption is the idea that when the United States asserted its sovereign status over Native peoples and declared them subject to the state, these groups either acquiesced to this role by navigating the rules of the state and eventually assimilating to accommodate them or rejected these new boundaries by fighting against them with both

military and political action. K. Tsianina Lomawaima has argued that Native peoples have often found themselves stuck in this binary when dealing with a nation-state that seeks to maintain their individual status as wards and their tribal status as domestic dependent nations. She has encouraged scholars to move creatively beyond the binary, asking, “How might we think of sovereignty in a less self-centered, reactive way?”^{viii} I attempt to answer her question by examining older, kin-based forms of political autonomy. Instead of relegating Native political assertions to those easily recognizable within Euro-American forms, this book seeks to illuminate the political formations embedded in family networks that Cheyenne peoples used not only to advance their political agenda concerning land during the colonial period, but to attempt to shape Euro-American responses as well.

When Dull Knife and Little Wolf fled Indian Territory, families in tow, they were responding to the imposition of Euro-American colonial control. The Northern Cheyenne forced onto the southern reservation seem to have little choice beyond the binary of assimilation to reservation life or a violent, military response. Yet, they were making a return home to reunite with family members. Because this choice was based on Cheyenne political formations that foregrounded kinship with both people and the landscape, it helped the Cheyenne who made it move beyond this binary. Usually, the histories that explain the Northern Cheyenne return to their homeland by focusing on Dull Knife and Little Wolf, such as Stan Hoig’s *Perilous Pursuit* and John Monnett’s *Tell Them We Are Going Home*, argue that Northern Cheyenne military persistence in returning home either wore out government officials or inspired them to take pity on the Northern Cheyenne.^{ix} These narratives emphasize Cheyenne military action and the political negotiations

between prominent headmen and U.S. government officials, often ending either with massacre or assimilation into reservation life in the north. Fleshing out the careful activation of kin relationships, both political and social, the Northern Cheyenne used to navigate U.S. policy opens alternative possibilities.

It has been easy to overlook the political power of these subtle kin negotiations in Cheyenne history because they are only revealed through an understanding of the centrality of kin networks to Cheyenne assertions of political autonomy. Many scholars have addressed the importance of family in other Native nations, particularly for extending economic opportunities but also for establishing political alliances, most often between Natives and non-Natives.^x Despite the groundbreaking work of this research, American Indian scholarship could benefit from more study on the full significance of the ways that political mechanisms have been embedded in familial formations. Sami Lakomaki has argued that scholarship on American Indian communal formations have either boxed Native peoples into the static, homogenous category of “tribe” using an evolutionary approach or have taken a revisionist approach, assuming Native national formations to be the products of European colonial expansion.^{xi} He and several other scholars have begun to explore forms of political expression that privilege Native articulations, recognizing that previous scholarly constructions of Indigenous sovereignty have emerged in comparison to state formations, focusing on external mechanisms of social change such as colonialism or global market forces.^{xii} Scholars throughout the social sciences have delineated the distinction between the fluid political constructions of the nation that have existed historically and its more specific political form, the state.^{xiii}

Yet, the idea that Native nations could easily be demarcated into distinct political groups based on objective criteria, like language, religion, or territory tenaciously remains.

The nineteenth century Cheyennes complicate attempts to neatly categorize the identities of Plains nations because each nation overlaps with others in many ways. The Cheyennes shared territory, treaties, and relatives with the Lakotas and Arapahos, and their language is very similar to Arapaho. They shared sacred landscapes and even some religious narratives with both of these groups, and with the Kiowa and Kiowa-Apache.^{xiv} Cheyenne national identity has never been static. Some bands of Cheyenne aligned themselves more closely with the Lakota, some aligned with the Arapaho, and some were allies with the Kiowa. Some bands moved onto the southern plains and others headed north from the Missouri River. While these widespread bands shared language, religion, and political organization, individual Cheyenne people debated their nation's course of action and the future of their community.^{xv} Defining Native group identities by objective criteria like language, religion, cultural traits, or even a bounded territory denies these groups the intellectual autonomy to creatively negotiate group identity and to exist as a people on completely different terms.

Several questions arise. If Cheyenne political organization did not depend on objectively demarcated markers like territory, religion, or language to assert a national status, what did it look like? More importantly, how could it have possibly remained intact during disruptions of encroachment, disease, violence, and diaspora? Are the objective criteria employed by nation-state governments to distinguish tribal nations adequate for understanding Cheyenne political organization? A national political entity must have some sort of cohesion, and by 1876, at least from the perspective of U.S.

government officials, the Cheyenne people had very little. Regardless, these same officials continued to negotiate treaties with both the southern and northern branches of the Cheyenne nation, implying that it remained politically autonomous. So how did the Cheyenne people activate this political autonomy without depending on the rigid institutional mechanisms used by the nation-state? Furthermore, how did they maintain a sense of political connectedness during diaspora?

By listening to Cheyenne elders focus on family as a central component of their histories, I came to understand that the actions taken by the Northern Cheyenne in their efforts to remain in and return to their homeland were embedded in a system of social relations based on kinship ties as opposed to objectively demarked sociopolitical markers. Historically, the Cheyenne nation did not need to maintain rigid cultural or territorial boundaries or require its members to submit to sovereign institutions in order to exist as a political body. Instead, it depended on the maintenance of kin-based relationships that could be strategically activated for political, economic, religious, or social actions when needed. Every person understood his or her place within the sociopolitical body of the Cheyenne nation in terms of privileges and obligations to other members of the nation created through relationships defined by family. While kinship acted as the mechanism through which members could take political action, the nation was also motivated by creating and sustaining social relationships, not by asserting sovereignty over its members or the land. Although kinship organized Native peoples at many levels, including the family, the clan, or the band, the Cheyenne used kin ties to construct a sociopolitical body that connected people across these smaller kin-based social units, tying people together by blood, by marriage, or by differing levels of adoptions.

i Joe Starita, *The Dull Knives of Pine Ridge*, p 29. For other descriptions of the origins of Dull Knife's name, see Charles Eastman, *Indian Heroes and Great Chieftains* (New York: Dover Publications, 1997), 82; Dusenberry, Verne. "The Northern Cheyenne, All They Have Asked is to Live in Montana." *Montana: the Magazine of Western History* 15 (Winter 1955), 27-28; and Stands in Timber, John, and Margot Liberty. *Cheyenne Memories*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967, 214.

ii I use the term "American" throughout to refer to a person who identifies him or herself with the political entity of the United States, accepting membership in the nation regardless of race or heritage. Although I employ this term, I recognize historically that the term American in reference to residents of the United States can sometimes become a monolith reference that either subsumes or erases other American nations, such as Mexico, Brazil, or Canada. I have chosen the term for its ease of use and employ it in a very specific sense. I use American to refer to all people who imagine themselves to be a part of what Benedict Anderson terms the deep, horizontal comradeship of the nation. See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Verso, 1983). This term refers not only to people the United States government recognizes as citizens, but to all people who claim membership in the nation as well. At a certain point in history, most American Indian people become Americans in the way that I use the term. However, American Indian membership in the United States is complicated by their continuing membership in their own nations. At the same time, Native people are not immune to the kinds of representations we see of American Indian people employed to legitimize the U.S. hegemonic nationalist narrative. They also find the heroic but tragic narratives constructed around their ancestors appealing and have sometimes used them to make their continued presence known to non-Natives and to bolster their own national claims.

iii The General Allotment Act, or the Dawes Act of 1887, divided reservation lands into 160-acre parcels. Heads of households chose parcels of land, and the government opened reservation land not claimed by tribal members for settlement by non-Natives. For more on the Allotment Act, see Chang, David A.

"Enclosures of Land and Sovereignty The Allotment of American Indian Lands." *Radical History Review*

2011, no. 109 (2011): 108-119; Genetin-Pilawa, C. Joseph. *Crooked Paths to Allotment: The Fight over Federal Indian Policy after the Civil War*. Univ of North Carolina Press, 2012; Greenwald, Emily. *Reconfiguring the Reservation: The Nez Percés, Jicarilla Apaches, and the Dawes Act*. UNM Press, 2002; and Otis, Delos Sacket. *The Dawes Act and the allotment of Indian lands*. Edited by Francis Paul Prucha. University of Oklahoma Press, 1973.

iv Although reservations boundaries were established through negotiations between Native peoples and U.S.

government officials, agencies often existed before reservation boundaries had been finalized. An agency acted as a specific spot within the territory of a particular Native nation where officials from the U.S. Indian Office distributed annuities and services guaranteed by treaties. Long before Plains nations paid attention to the geographic boundaries determined by treaties, families came to agencies to receive goods, trade, and negotiate political relationships with other nations, including the United States.

v Congress ended treaty-making in 1871, so the Northern Cheyenne would not have been able to negotiate a treaty to gain recognition of their northern homeland. For more on the 1871 end to treaty-making, see Francis Paul Prucha, *American Indian Treaties: The History of a Political Anomaly* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994); and Jill St. Germain, *Indian Treaty-Making Policy in the United States and Canada, 1867-1877* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2001).

vi The treaties most American Indian peoples negotiated with the United States often recognized some bounded region as territory belonging to that group. Reservations were sometimes established within this territory and sometimes they were not, but these reservations were most often smaller than the treaty-negotiated territory. Moving American Indian people onto reservations opened up millions of acres of land for non-Native settlement.

vii See Stuart Banner, *How the Indians Lost Their Land: Law and Power on the Frontier* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005), 3. Banner refers to European and American acquisition of land, yet his statement suggests that sale and conquest are the only descriptors in the current scholarly vocabulary used to discuss American Indian land transactions with the United States. Native retention of land through

means other than military action or the refusal to sell has rarely been addressed. For more complicated perspectives on land retention and loss in Native communities, see Brooks, Lisa Tanya. *The Common Pot: The Recovery of Native Space in the Northeast*. Vol. 7. U of Minnesota Press, 2008; Fisher, Andrew H. *Shadow Tribe: The Making of Columbia River Indian Identity*. University of Washington Press, 2010; Lakomäki, Sami. *Gathering Together: The Shawnee People Through Diaspora and Nationhood, 1600-1870*. Yale University Press, 2014; O'Brien, Jean M. *Dispossession by Degrees: Indian Land and Identity in Natick, Massachusetts, 1650-1790*. No. 5. Cambridge University Press, 1997); Liu, Shaunda AK. "Native Hawaiian homestead water reservation rights: providing good living conditions for native Hawaiian homesteaders." *U. Haw. L. Rev.* 25 (2002): 85; and Warren, Stephen. "' To Show the Public That We Were Good Indians': Origins and Meanings of the Meskwaki Powwow." *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 33, no. 4 (2009): 1-28.

viii Lomawaima, K. Tsianina. "The mutuality of citizenship and sovereignty: the society of American Indians and the battle to inherit America." *Studies in American Indian Literatures* 25, no. 2 (2013): 331-351, 345.

ix Stan Hoig, *Perilous Pursuit: The U.S. Cavalry and the Northern Cheyennes* (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2002) and John H. Monnett, *Tell Them We Are Going Home: The Odyssey of the Northern Cheyennes* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2001).

x See Jennifer S. H. Brown, *Strangers in Blood: Fur Trade Company Families in Indian Country* (Vancouver, 1980); Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women: Gender and Culture Change, 1700-1835* (Lincoln, 1998); Clara Sue Kidwell, "Indian Women as Cultural Mediators," *Ethnohistory*, Vol 39, No. 2 (Spring 1992) 97-107; Nancy Shoemaker, ed., *Negotiators of Change: Historical Perspectives on Native American Women* (New York, 1995); Susan Sleeper-Smith, *Indian Women and French Men: Rethinking Cultural Encounter in the Western Great Lakes* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001); Tanis C. Thorne, *The Many Hands of My Relations: French and Indians on the Lower Missouri* (Columbia, MO, 1996); Sylvia Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties: Women in Fur Trade Society, 1670-1870* (Norman, 1980). Some scholars have begun to directly address the implementation of kinship as a part of Indigenous political discourse, such as Braun, Sebastian Felix. "Against Procedural

Landscapes: Community, Kinship, and History." *Transforming Ethnohistories: Narrative, Meaning, and Community* (2013): 201; Hyde, Anne F. *Empires, Nations, and Families: A History of the North American West, 1800-1860*. U of Nebraska Press, 2011; Innes, Robert Alexander. *Elder Brother and the Law of the People: Contemporary Kinship and Cowessess First Nation*. Vol. 17. Univ. of Manitoba Press, 2013; Lakomäki, Sami. *Gathering Together: The Shawnee People Through Diaspora and Nationhood, 1600? 1870*. Yale University Press, 2014; Miles, Tiya. *Ties that bind: The story of an Afro-Cherokee family in slavery and freedom*. Univ of California Press, 2015; Rand, Jacki Thompson. *Kiowa Humanity and the Invasion of the State*. U of Nebraska Press, 2008; Rzeczkowski, Frank. *Uniting the Tribes: The Rise and Fall of Pan-Indian Community on the Crow Reservation*; University Press of Kansas, 2012. Witgen, Michael. "The rituals of possession: Native identity and the invention of empire in seventeenth-century western North America." *Ethnohistory* 54, no. 4 (2007): 639-668; and Witgen, Michael. *An Infinity of Nations: How the Native New World Shaped Early North America*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011.

^{xi} Sami Lakomaki, *Gathering Together*, 4.

xii For more on scholarship exploring forms of political expression that privilege Native formations, see Alfred, Taiaiake, and Jeff Corntassel. "Being Indigenous: Resurgences against contemporary colonialism." *Government and Opposition* 40, no. 4 (2005): 597-614; Bauerkemper, Joseph. "Narrating nationhood: Indian time and ideologies of progress." *Studies in American Indian Literatures* 19, no. 4 (2007): 27-53; Justice, Daniel Heath. *Our Fire Survives the Storm: A Cherokee Literary History*. U of Minnesota Press, 2006; Sami Lakomaki, *Gathering Together*; Stark, Heidi Kiiwetinepinesiik. "Marked by Fire: Anishinaabe Articulations of Nationhood in Treaty Making with the United States and Canada." *The American Indian Quarterly* 36, no. 2 (2012): 119-149; and Turner, Dale Antony. *This is not a peace pipe: Towards a critical indigenous philosophy*. University of Toronto Press, 2006.

^{xiii} Fixico, Donald L. *Indian Resilience and Rebuilding: Indigenous Nations in the Modern American West*. University of Arizona Press, 2013, 12; Scott, James C. *Seeing like a state: How certain schemes to improve the human condition have failed*. Yale University Press, 1998; and Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty.

"Nationalism and the Imagination." *Critical Studies* 37, no. 1 (2014): 31-55; and Zaum, Dominik. *The sovereignty paradox: the norms and politics of international statebuilding*. Vol. 4. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

xiv Sundstrom, Linea. "Mirror of heaven: Cross-cultural transference of the sacred geography of the Black Hills." *World archaeology* 28, no. 2 (1996): 177-189.

xv I use the term "Cheyenne" to refer to this Native nation throughout because although its organization shifted over time, the Cheyenne people have seen themselves as a sociopolitical collective and have been recognized as such by outsiders for at least several hundred years. Today Northern Cheyenne people use the term Cheyenne, which refers to both Tsitsitsas and Suhtaio peoples, when speaking in English to refer to their own collective cultural identity and the political entity of their nation. They also use Cheyenne to encompass both Northern and Southern Cheyenne peoples as one nation. While the Northern Cheyenne reservation has its own government, as does the Southern Cheyenne reservation, the people see these two reservations as parts of one larger Cheyenne nation.