

アメリカ・インディアン・リーダーシップの 過去と現在¹

American Indian Leadership in History to the Present¹

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Donald L. Fixico

Leadership has been and continues to be a critical subject among American Indians and their communities. In historical times and in the recent past, American Indian leadership changed according to the circumstances, yet it has remained basically the same. Great leaders of the past exhibited certain characteristics and these individuals included Tecumseh of the Shawnees, Osceola of the Seminoles, Black Hawk of the Sauk and Fox, Sitting Bull of the Hunkpapa Sioux and Geronimo of the Apaches. And, there have been many others. In modern times of the twentieth century, Peter MacDonald of the Navajo guided tribes throughout Indian Country into the era of Self-Determination and other such leaders included, Claud Cox of the Muscogee Creeks, Wilma Mankiller of the Cherokees, and Phillip Martin of the Mississippi Choctaws.

The purpose of this study is to draw conclusions from observing past and present Indian leaders in an overall assessment of American Indian leadership. Pertinent questions are raised and responses attempt to explain the kinds and characteristics of Indian leadership. In the process, several leaders of historic times are analyzed as well as several of modern Native American history.

There are some key interesting questions that can be asked to yield insightful understanding about native leadership. These questions are:

(1.) What is an Indian Leader? (2.) Does Indian leadership differ from mainstream leadership? (3.) How do tribal leaders and Indian leaders differ? (4.) Do Indian men and women lead differently? (5.) What are the qualities of Indian leaders? (6.) What is the reality of Indian leadership? These questions will be responded to while describing the conditions for this leadership as well as the individual historical context of the leaders.

It is important to establish a working definition of an “Indian leader” for the purpose of discussion and analysis. With this point in mind, native leaders are men and women, full-blood and mixed-blood, young and old, traditional and modern, and they possess common qualities. The definition here for an Indian leader is the following.

“An indigenous person who has been compelled to lead in a single event or for life, and who leads his or her people of the community to or from adversity for betterment in life.”

In addition to this definition of an American Indian leader, it is important to understand the point of view from the leader's culture and his or her tribal set of values. This also might be called native ethos in how the leaders “see” the world, issues, causes, and envision the big picture of their concerns to illustrate how their logic works.

Native ethos is based on four premises that generally define how Indian people “see” the world and the universe. It is from this cultural construct that their tribe interprets life and likely continues to “see” things in the same way, if the person is close to their traditions. These premises are (1.) Circular Thought, (2.) Perspective of a Natural Democracy, (3.) Presence of Metaphysical, and (4.) Understanding of Relationships.²

This essay maintains that native leaders who are close to their traditions possess a circular way of thinking that correlates to the rotation of the seasons, cycles of day and night, migration patterns of animals and growing seasons of plants that have come to acutely influence their way of thinking and logic. In this regard, native leaders are respectful of all

things, both human and non-human in what can be called a Natural Democracy. In sum, all things are acknowledged to exist, even the spiritual or metaphysical. The reality of this nativism recognizes the presence of the metaphysical in tandem with the constant physical reality as one. Finally, it is understood that “relationships” are important and imperative for all things in this democracy of respect. All things are related to each other, even when they are incongruently opposed to each other.

There are at least three interwoven fundamentals that have and continue to affect leadership and politics throughout Indian Country. They also might be called elements and are dependent upon each other, interacting with one another as a part of the tribal political system. These closely related elements are 1. Leadership, 2. Community, and 3. Place.

The source of leadership derives from community and place. The community decides who the leader will be and the leader is only effective as to the degree that he or she is supported by their people. Former Principal Chief of the Oklahoma Cherokees, Wilma Mankiller retired in 1995. She led with the support of her people and kept this in mind while realizing how important this was. She said, “I never overestimated my importance to the Cherokee Nation and always felt that my job was to do the best I could for a period of time and then pass the baton on to others to continue the revitalization of the Cherokee Nation. I have always like what it says in the Bible about everything having a season. My season here is come to an end. I look forward to continuing my journey through the circle of life.”³

Place is both physical and abstract. From an original physical state of being, it becomes a fixed site in the mind of the leader. Place is the source of power or inspiration that a leader will draw strength. During the War of 1812, Tecumseh of the Shawnees organized a large Indian army of many tribes while his brother, Tenskwatawa, the Shawnee Prophet became the spiritual guide for this force against the Americans. Near the Prophetstown in Indiana, the Prophet regularly visited a shallow cave to pray and chant as

he communicated with his deity, Moneto. He received visions and power from the spiritual world. This site became known as the Prophet's Rock, and it has become legendary to the locals in that part of Indiana. The story of Tecumseh and his brother the Prophet is well known when earthquakes occurred with showers of shooting stars, tornadoes, and an eclipse that the Prophet took credit for. In this cultural context, the Prophet and other such medicine leaders depended on supernatural powers to assist them.

The native leader is always in a precarious position. He or she becomes a point of fixture in the community as people depended upon him or her for strength. Drained of physical and mental strength, the leader had to retreat to some familiar place, perhaps a place of empowerment to rest and replenish their energy. In such a place, the leader was safe, secure and re-energized.

But, from what physical position does the leader lead from in correlation to his or her community? This question inspires the responses that theoretically the leader can lead from three physical positions of "Inside" the community, from the "Edge" of the community or "Outside" of the community.

It is likely that most native leaders have led and often lead from the inside of their community or tribe as they gave an impressive speech and the people rallied behind them in support. A superb example is in Tecumseh who rendered brilliant oratorical speeches. He convinced other tribes to join his growing campaign to form one huge army of warriors to stop the advancement of white settlers into the Ohio Country, the homeland of the Shawnee and other tribes. These following compelling words are of Tecumseh while persuading other Indians to join him:

“. . . It is true I am Shawnee. My forefathers were warriors. Their son is a warrior. From them I only take my existence; from my tribe I take nothing. I am the maker of my own fortune; and oh! That I could make that of my red people, and of my country, as great as the conceptions of my mind, when I think of the Spirit that rules the universe. I would not then come to Governor [William Henry] Harrison, to ask him to tear the treaty, and to obliterate the landmark; but I would

say to him, Sir, you have liberty to return to your own country. The being within, communing with past ages, tells me, that once, nor until lately, there was no white man on this continent. That it then all belonged to red men, children of the same parents, placed on it by the Great Spirit that made them, to keep it, to traverse it, to enjoy its productions, and to fill it with the same race. Once a happy race. Since made miserable by the white people, who are never contended, but always encroaching. The way, and the only way to check and stop this evil, is, for all the red men to unite in claiming a common and equal right in the land, as it was at first, and should be yet; for it never was divided, but belongs to all, for the use of each. That no part has a right to sell, even to each other, much less to strangers; those who want all, and will not do with less. The white people have no right to take the land from the Indians, because they had it first; it is their. They may sell, but all must join."⁴

Tecumseh's oratorical talent is exemplified in other native leaders, both historic and modern, whose passion-driven speeches created charisma and magnetism for others to join them. At the same time, a charismatic deals with the glamour of a campaign as well as the mundane daily activities.

In a tribal government, the leader is in charge of daily operations with other tribal officials and long ago, he or she actually led warriors on the battlefield. Overseeing, delegating and giving orders was a part of the leader's tasks and convincing people to carry them out.

Leading from the Edge of the community or tribe is an uncommon position and Crazy Horse of the Lakota was such a case example. His people often did not know where he was when he was making raids on his own. The Lakota respected Crazy horse and followed his leadership. Another such situation would be the example of Geronimo who led bands of warriors, including women and children, while other bands both admired and criticized him. The bands respected him and often joined him.

Leading from the Outside position was a common situation and continued to be when tribal leaders traveled to Washington or council sites to negotiate treaties or represent their people's interests. Tribal histories are

filled with accounts of tribes sending their leaders to Washington to speak to the President of the United States such as Sara Winnemucca of the Paiutes in Nevada, John Ross of the Cherokees, Ira Hayes for the Pimas and many others.⁵

In the Indian world, there are polar opposites which constitute a natural dichotomy. For example, there is a natural dichotomy of Indian-white relations such as the example of “us and them.” The polar opposites represent the antithesis of each other such that there is light and dark, good and evil, man and woman, human and non-human. In this thinking, such a duality is leader and community or tribe. Theoretically, the two opposites might be best illustrated by two circles and they have a “shared space” when they overlap or interact, causing a “shared experience.”

It is this interaction of shared experience that results in conflict or reinforcement of both circles of differences. In this process, something new develops such as effective leadership in battle or representing one's tribe's interests in a speech before the U.S. Congress or in a council meeting. Unfortunately, the majority of recognized Indian leaders have been in war with the United States where more than 1,600 battles, skirmishes, and wars were authorized by the U.S. Government against Indian people. Simultaneously many Indian leaders became nationally recognized when they had a white counterpart such as Sitting Bull and George Armstrong Custer, Osceola and Thomas Jesup, and Chief Joseph and Oliver Otis Howard. The duo of opposing individuals has helped to promote historical interests about them as both are leaders of forces of warriors and soldiers fighting against each other.

One noteworthy point is that as Indian leaders came into contact increasingly with white Americans, they began to acquire more mainstream skills and learn the ways of the white man. This is evident from the experiences that native leaders among the Cherokees had like John Ross, Elias Boudinot and Stand Watie. They were educated in eastern boarding

schools for Anglo-Americans and used their reading and writing talents in English to fight for their people until they were removed to Indian Territory (Oklahoma) in the West. This list of Indian leaders educated in white ways goes on, including Elizabeth White of the Hopi, Carlos Montezuma of the Yavapai, Gertrude Bonnin of the Lakota, and others.

In close proximity with white Americans, Indian leaders learned many of the white ways, but also retained native ways of leadership. This leads to the question of “How does Indian leadership differ from mainstream leadership?”

Indian leadership and White leadership differed according to the values of each side in general. Among Native Americans, the following values were germane to the people in general. These are (1.) Communal Support, (2.) Holistic and Future orientation, (3.) Tribal/Group Values, (4.) Natural Environment, and (5.) All Things being Related. While generalizations can be exaggerated, it is suggested here that native leaders exhibit all of the five above characteristics.

White American leaders seemed to be (1.) Individualistic, (2.) Political-Future Focused, (3.) Human to Human Focused, (4.) Business Emphasis, and (5.) Related only to Mainstream. Again, while generalizations can be misleading, these five observations seem inherently related to the American mainstream and run counter to the style of Indian leadership.

How leaders were selected in native communities is according to traditional systematic ways. In general, an analysis might present the following criteria of selection which would contain at least five characteristics. They were (1.) Native Ethos of Elders' Knowledge, (2.) Intellectual, (3.) Activism and Organization, (4.) Expression of Leadership and Presence, and (5.) Contributions Leading to Impact. Among the many indigenous leaders, Sitting Bull of the Lakota, exhibited these criteria. Raised as a traditionalist of his people, he was an intelligent individual who acted according to his well organized plans, such as his engagements

with the U.S. Military. His leadership yielded status among his people that overlapped with his enemies, both Indian and non-Indians, such that he became a respected celebrity among white Americans. Overall, his actions and shaping of history have enabled him to make a significant impact on the history of American Indians as well as on his own people's history and how America remembers him.

In examining Indian leadership, there are several kinds or categories. The kinds of leadership are: (1.) Leaders in War and Warriors, (2.) Native Women Leaders, (3.) Visionaries, Medicine Men and Elders, (4.) American Indian Activists, (5.) Non-Indian Indian Leaders, (6.) Tribal Leaders and Tribal Chairmen, (7.) Native Intellectual Leaders, and (8.) Modern American Indian Leadership. In the broadest way of thinking about native leadership, these eight categories provide a systematic means of classifying American Indian leaders. It also includes non-Indians who have taken up Indian causes when no Indian person has been available such as Senator Daniel Inouye and Senator James Abourezk. Both congressmen advocated Indian Self-Determination to help the modern development of tribal governments as well as introducing other legislation that has benefited the Indian populace.

Each Indian leader has strengths and weaknesses. The following is an analysis for producing a profile of what the leaders may have in common to prove their success as leaders. This profile of leadership includes: (1.) Vision, (2.) Oratory and Inspires others, (3.) Big Picture, (4.) Resourcefulness, (5.) Listens to Others, (6.) Cultural Knowledge, (7.) Takes Action, (8.) Intelligence, (9.) Community, and (10.) Presence.

One of the greatest Indian leaders exhibited almost all of these ten characteristics. That was Chief Joseph of the Nez Perce in his effort to lead his people from destruction on a 1,500 mile journey that almost ended in safety. He tried to reach Canada where his people would be in a foreign land. A soft spoken person, Chief Joseph gave perhaps the most moving speech in Indian history when he eloquently spoke these words in the final

surrender of his people.

“Tell General [Oliver Otis] Howard I know his heart. What he told me before I have in my heart. I am tired of fighting. Our chiefs are killed. Looking Glass is dead. The old men are all killed. It is the young men who say yea or no. He who led the young men is dead. It is cold and we have no blankets. The little children are freezing to death. My people, some of them, have run away to the hills and have no blankets, no food; no one knows where they are, perhaps freezing to death. I want time to look for my children and see how many of them I can find. Maybe I shall find them among the dead. Hear me, my chiefs, I am tired; my heart is sick and sad. From where the sun now stands, I will fight no more forever.”⁶

While the vision of Joseph is vague and less recognized when compared to his other actions, his oratory in his speech above has been recognized as most likely the greatest one in American Indian history that even impressed his captors when he surrendered himself and his people in order to save them during the cold wintry day on October 5, 1877. Chief Joseph was incredibly resourceful in leading his people to scoring several victories against the U.S. Military on his extensive trek towards Canada. In doing so, he easily recognized the big picture that a leader must do with his mission to save his people. In addition, he was a listener, learning about his people's culture and history from his father, the Elder Joseph. Chief Joseph was intelligent in applying survival tactics against the U.S. commanders and his people believed in him with their lives hanging in the balance. In the end, Chief Joseph has a historical presence that is respectfully acknowledged among Indian and non-Indian peoples.

As Chief Joseph exhibited many leadership characteristics, another pertinent question arises. How do Indian men and women lead differently? This is an important question and there are differences with two separate leadership styles. These differences include: (1.) Men are more event oriented, (2.) Women are family oriented, (3.) Women are more inclusive,

and (4.) Women ask more advice. Of the historic past, Sarah Winnemucca represents these qualities for native women leaders when she went to Washington with her father to advocate for her people to the President Rutherford B. Hayes. Listening to her father's wishes, she was inclusive of her people's needs. In modern times, Dr. Karen Gayton Swisher, former President of Haskell Indian Nations University and Standing Rock Sioux member exhibits the same style of leadership. A listener to and seeker of advice, Swisher was inclusive of her concerns for all of the college students attending Haskell while she was a Dean and President of the University. She continues to be this way.

While leadership cases of Winnemucca and Swisher also represent the "internal" politics of Indian leadership, there have been problems and factions within Indian communities from then to the present. Factionalism is constant. This fact begs the question of who do people follow when given the choice of more than one leader? One noted situation in history to illustrate this particular point is the division created among the Sauk and Fox in their war with the United States in 1832.

Who is the true patriot? "Who would you join, Black Hawk in fighting to the death for your homeland or Keokuk on the trail of tears to Kansas and Oklahoma?" On a personal note, I have always asked this question in my Indian history survey classes over the years and every time, almost all of my students will side with Black Hawk in their choice to fight for their homeland and risk losing their lives in battle.

The Sauk and Fox were people of the western Illinois area. Known as people of the "Yellow Earth," the Sauk number about 1,200 people. They were patrilineal in their society and their clans included bald eagle, bear, bear potato, black bass, deer, great lake, panther, ringed perch, sturgeon, swan, thunder, and wolf.

In the early years, the Fox people who are also called Mesquakie were numerous. Their population has been estimated at 1,600 people. Known as

the “Red Earth” people, the Fox were originally distinct from the Sauk. The Fox had Black and White divisions or moieties. They also had patrilineal clans consisting of the bear, fox, wolf, swan, partridge, thunder, elk and black bass. In 1712 and 1728, the Fox people waged the Fox Wars against the French. At various times, they also went to war against the Dakota, Chippewa, Ottawa, Potawatomi, and Wyandot. The allies to the Fox people were the Winnebago, Kickapoo, and Mascouten.

Black Hawk was a member of the Thunder clan, “Those Above,” which supplied warriors, but not official leadership for the Sauk, much less than the Fox. Black Hawk’s warriors were mostly of the Thunder, Eagle, Bear and Grouse clans. Only highly respected men of the Fox, Sturgeon and Trout clans could become leader of the tribe. Keokuk was of the Fox tribe, and his name meant, “He Who Moves About.”

Keokuk belonged to the Fox clan. About two-thirds of Keokuk’s supporters came from his clan (Fox), Trout, and Sturgeon. This was important because his supporters came from higher clans than Black Hawk’s supporters. Keokuk was ten years younger, born about 1780, and he possessed blue-gray eyes due to his part French-Canadian blood.

The primary treaties affecting the Sauk and Fox included the Treaty of 1804. In this agreement, the two tribes agreed to cede Saukenuk (Rock Island) located in the Mississippi River, near the western edge of Illinois.

The next major agreement was the Treaty of Prairie du Chien that was signed in 1825. This act led to further land cessions and removal of the Sauk and Fox from their homelands in western Illinois called Saukenuk. To compound this difficult situation, in 1830 the Indian Removal Act was passed by Congress and it had a devastating on all Indians living east of the Mississippi River.⁷ In the following months, Black Hawk rallied an impressive following of the Sauk and Fox to fight for their homelands and return to Saukenuk.

On April 5, 1832, the Battle of Stillman’s Run occurred with surprising

results. On the battlefield, General H. Atkinson and Captain Isiah Stillman with 700 men were defeated by Black Hawk and an estimated 500 Indians. On July 21, 1832, the Battle of Wisconsin happened with victory for the Indians. Colonel Henry Dodge and General James Henry were defeated in this conflict.

Finally, the Battle of Bad Axe River occurred on August 2, 1832. This main incident culminated in 15 weeks of attack and resulted in deaths of 50 settlers and soldiers. In three hours, soldiers killed 150 Sauks and many drowned. Unfortunately for the Sauk and Fox, the Winnebago would not help them fight the soldiers. Considerable Sauk and Fox land cessions followed their defeat in war. Nine of fifteen treaties from 1804 to 1867 were signed by the Sauk and Fox, and included the signature of Keokuk.⁸

While survival was key to the remaining Sauk and Fox, a good many of their people chose to follow Black Hawk into war and risk their lives for a chance to return to their homeland. Such a cost would seem high, but this native patriotism should not be underestimated when each region of Indian Country in the following decades of the nineteenth century witnessed Indians fighting for the same cause. Ultimately, the infamous Wounded Knee Massacre and the less known Crazy Snake War involving Creek resistance to forced land allotments closed the era of Indian Wars. In these historic times, it should be noted that Indian leadership was actually tribal leadership where native leaders led their peoples to save their homelands. In modern Indian history of the twentieth century, this would change as national Indian organizations emerged and native leaders led them, without tribal issues being most important. This led to two distinct kinds of leadership—tribal leadership and Indian leadership.

How do Indian leaders and tribal leaders lead differently? This is an important question for understanding also the differences between tribal leaders of the past in comparison to Indian leaders in modern Indian history. These differences are: (1.) Tribal leaders have community support, (2.) Indian leaders function in mainstream, (3.) Tribal identities are

dissolved, (4.) Tribal leaders are within and external, and (5.) Indian leaders are mostly external.

The twentieth century recorded the development of two kinds of native leadership, although tribal leadership has continued even to the present. Tribal leaders must retain community support that means the support of their tribe. Wilma Mankiller comments on the importance of these objectives and Peter MacDonald lost community support when he was defeated for re-election by Peterson Zah, another Navajo candidate for tribal chairman. However, Indian organizations that emerged in the twentieth century called for such individuals like Peter MacDonald to become the head of the Board of Directors of the organization called the Council of Energy Resource Tribes (CERT) in 1975. The most important interest was that of the organization protecting the natural resources of the 25-member tribes. There were other national Indian organizations like the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) formed in 1944, National Indian Youth Council (NIYC) formed in 1960, American Indian Movement (AIM) formed in 1968, and National Tribal Chairmen's Association (NTCA) formed in 1972.

Members of NIYC and AIM found themselves soon identifying increasingly more with their national organization rather than their tribes as tribal identities began to dissolve and young Indian people began to forget tribal traditions, languages and tribal values as they became urbanized and educated in white schools.

The overall difference between tribal leaders and Indian leaders is that the former led internally from within their tribal communities and Indian leaders led organization in external leadership to the outside world or American mainstream.

Modern tribal leaders are many, but certain ones are analyzed here for their characteristics, leadership styles and impact on American Indian history. They are Peter MacDonald, Claud Cox, Wilma Mankiller, and Phillip Martin.

Peter MacDonald of the Navajos

Peter MacDonald rose to become among the first modern tribal leaders in the twentieth century. Outside near a place called Teec Nos Pos on the Navajo Reservation, Peter MacDonald was born into the Haskonhazohi and Betani clans.⁹

Peter MacDonald would face many tests in his life, beginning as early as age two when his father died.¹⁰ His family herded sheep, and the death of his father forced Peter to drop out of school after the seventh grade to take care of the family's herd.¹¹ MacDonald writes in his autobiography, "When I was two years old, my father was crushed by a horse. Given the year when this occurred and the extensiveness of the injuries, I doubt that he could have recovered no matter what treatment he received. Whatever the facts of his condition, he was too far from any hospital to be taken for help before he died."¹²

As a teenager, MacDonald went into the U.S. Marine Corps during World War II as a Navajo code talker. Afterwards, he attended Bacone Junior College in Oklahoma and graduated as an electrical engineer from the University of Oklahoma. Following some years in the business world as an engineer, he went to work for the Navajo tribe and became tribal chairman when he was elected by his people.

Under his leadership, Peter MacDonald helped to usher in a new era of Indian Self-Determination that became the prevailing federal Indian policy. As the tribal chairman of the largest tribe and largest reservation, MacDonald set a fine example of tribal development for the rest of Indian Country. In the process, he navigated his way through the factionalism of tribal politics in leading his people into modern Indian history.

Claud Cox of the Oklahoma Creeks

In 1971 the Muscogee Creeks held their first “official” election for the Principal Chief (since the Tribe voted Pleasant Porter to be Chief in 1903). Chief Claud Cox started his first four-year term in humble surroundings and had no official office to work in. His administrative staff consisted of himself and a part-time secretary with both of them working out of their own homes. Tribal property had been acquired by previous Chief Dode McIntosh for the construction of a tribal complex, but nothing else had been done until sufficient funding could be procured.

Construction for a new capitol complex began on the northside of Okmulgee in Oklahoma and within the next few years, the Cox administration flourished into a growing bureaucracy. Chief Cox envisioned a tribal complex that would serve the entire Muscogee Creek Nation and he believed the Creek Tribe could assume a leadership role among all tribes. The newly completed complex included the Tribes' administrative offices, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Housing Authority, Indian Health Service offices with a dental health clinic and an Environmental Health Office. In October 1975, the Muscogee Creeks held a dedication ceremony for the tribal complex. These activities marked the most progressive part of modern Creek history that the Creek Tribe had ever known.

Like MacDonald, Cox learned to persevere. Factionalism was a problem for him as well and he kept working towards the big picture of self-determination for the Muscogee Creek Nation. By tradition, the Creek people have communities spread throughout their part of Oklahoma. Like MacDonald, Cox had to earn communal support and sustain it while representing his people's interests to the federal government. Cox was a segue from tradition to modernity. Adopting many of the mainstream ways, he enabled the Creek tribe to grow in business and in self-governance.

Wilma Mankiller of the Oklahoma Cherokees

In 1945, Wilma Mankiller was born at the Indian Health Service hospital in Tahlequah, Oklahoma. Her family lived in rural poverty in Adair County. She was one of eleven children. Her father's limited employment forced the family to move to California via the federal relocation program for American Indians during 1952 to 1972.¹³

She was the first woman elected Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation. As chief, Mankiller has brought about major economic and social improvements for her tribe, including better health care, economic development and education. In Mankiller's words:

“Within only a few years [early 1980s], I would become first of all deputy chief and then principal chief of the Cherokee Nation. That vision of the spiritual Leader would come true. But none of that would have happened if it had not been for the ordeals I had survived in the first place. After that, I realized I could survive anything. I had faced adversity and turned it into a positive experience—a better path. I had found the way to be of good mind.”¹⁴

Mankiller is much the traditionalist native woman leader like Sarah Winnemucca and Karen Gayton Swisher. Inclusive in heart and passionate, she is “cause” driven to work for her people. As the Principal Chief, she did what her people wanted and saw herself as a part of the Cherokees. She did not place herself above the others. Perhaps Mankiller's greatest single achievement was bringing national attention to native women as leaders. As she traveled to give speeches, native and non-native young women learned about the native woman's voice that needed to be heard. In addition, Mankiller brought “presence” to native women in tribal governments, especially when she earned a White House invitation from President Bill Clinton. Mankiller continues to travel and give inspiring speeches.

Phillip Martin of the Mississippi Choctaws

Phillip Martin was born in Tucker, Mississippi on the Choctaw Reservation in 1926. Impoverished, his family was like most poor Choctaws. Phillip was the third of six children. The Martins were Catholic and attended the Catholic church in Tucker. In 1937, Phillip's father was killed by a driver of a car. Phillip was eleven years old at that time. The family struggled during the Depression like everyone else. "Everybody was poor in those days. The Choctaws were a bit worse," said Martin. He recalled cutting pulpwood, herding cows and chopping cotton for 50 cents per 100 pounds. Choctaw homes had no windows, electricity or running water. Mississippi whites treated Indians like African-Americans, and white society required them to sit with African-Americans in movie theaters and restaurants. "But we never had enough money to eat in a restaurant anyway," said Martin.¹⁵

He was educated at Cherokee Boarding School, served in the Army's air force in WW II, which officially became the U.S. Air Force in 1947. In 1962, Phillip Martin became Chairman of the Tribal Council at a wage of \$2.50 per hour. The Choctaw tribe had no money or control of its own affairs. The tribal council had no place to meet, and they met every four months in a demonstration kitchen at the agency. No salary or expenses was paid for the council positions, so all members earned a living during the day and had little time for tribal business. The superintendent exercised control over the Choctaws. Attitude and pride are important to Phillip Martin as he iterated in his own words:

"I don't like what this country did to the Indians: It was all ignorance based on more ignorance based on greed," said Phillip Martin of the Mississippi Choctaws. He continued saying, "But I don't believe that you have to do what others did to you. Ignorance is what kept us apart. We'd [Choctaws] never have accomplished

what we did if we'd taken the same attitude. I don't condemn anyone by race. What kept us down was our own lack of education, economy, health care—we had no way of making a living. I believe that if we're going to fit in this country, we'd better try our best to do it on our own terms. But we also have to live with our neighbors and with our community. We all have a common cause here: the lack of jobs and opportunities has kept everyone poor and ignorant. If we can help local non-Indian communities in the process, we do it. We all depend on one another, whether we realize it or not.”¹⁶

In 2000 Phillip Martin's Choctaw Nation had a tribal payroll of \$100 million. His administration managed 12 businesses with over \$300 million in annual sales. Chief Martin is the longest continuing tribal leader in office at the present and he has served his people since 1962. It is his longevity in office and his effectiveness as a leader that has given the Choctaws a firm voice in Mississippi, especially among tribal gaming operations and business investments.¹⁷

In retrospect, Indian leadership is a subject that deserves careful analysis. It can be actually divided into phases. For example, the phases of Indian leadership are the following. The first phase might be called the “Origin of Leadership.” This phase or stage is the origin and source of Indian leadership. It is also the first situation of the emergence of a native leader.

The next phase of native leadership is the “Actuality of Leadership.” There are the years or even a single day when a native leader leads his or her tribe or community into action. In the past, actuality has been most often in battle, even during times of survival during forced removal to a reservation and adjustment to a restricted lifestyle there. In modern times, actuality is the daily activities of a native leader whether leading his or her tribe or an Indian organization on a regional or national basis.

The “Results of Leadership” is the third phase of native leadership. This self-explanatory segment is the impact that the leader has made for his or her people and possible altering or shaping the course of American Indian history. Most successful Indian leaders have made a difference for their

people, hopefully for the better. Sometimes, it is even for survival as in the case earlier involving Keokuk of the Sauk and Fox. Due to the odds against fighting the U.S. Military, native leaders have done well enough to save their people like Chief Joseph, Keokuk, Sitting Bull and others.

The fourth phase of native leadership is "Image" or "Legacy." This is how people remember their leader and assess whether he or she was successful. Even in defeat, such as the case of Osceola of the Florida Seminoles, his legacy is a grand one. In fact, Osceola has received greater positive acclaim after his death in 1838 with seven states in the United States having towns named after him as well as schools and businesses that carry his name. He is a hero among the Seminoles.

Of all the Indian leaders, the one name that most people seem to know is Geronimo. In fact, there are more films and television shows (15) about Geronimo than books (9).¹⁸ This famed leader of the Bedonkohe Apache in Arizona became a legend in his own time and helped to influence the ferocious image of the Indian "warrior." His name was feared and his raids on white settlements and Mexican settlements spread panic and paranoia that he was always nearby to attack. One Apache said of Geronimo, "I was born in 1875. I remember the last time Geronimo went on the war-path. That was in 1885, but I had heard about his taking the war-path before this. . . . Geronimo . . . was called a human tiger. He would rather be on the war-path than anything else. He would advise his parents' group, and his wife's relatives, and any other relatives, to leave and he would take them out with him. . . . Then somebody would say, 'Geronimo is out again,' and there he would be with a small band of about forty men up in the mountains."¹⁹

In the final analysis, the reality of leadership from the point of view of the native leader is one on practical life and every day decision-making and making things happen. Or, in some cases, they have prevented things from happening that might have been damaging to their people and community. The reality of Indian leadership are the following: (1.) Being Different, (2.)

Overcoming Adversity, (3.) Action Oriented, (4.) Intellectual, (5.) Cause Orientation e.g. justice, (6.) See Big Picture, (7.) Organizational Skills, (8.) Plan or Goal with phases or steps, (9.) Mentoring Others, and (10.) Mental Strength/Stamina.

A native leader finds himself or herself being different from his or her group members because of their initiative to take action and people support them. So often, the leader has overcome some form of adversity such as a personal illness or personal problem or injury. Such indigenous leaders are action oriented and often they are more active than reactive. They simply make things happen, but with a plan in mind. Native leaders are also intelligent and in modern Indian history, they have some college education from mainstream schools. This was not so in time of Sitting Bull, although there is now a tribal college named after him. Native leaders are also cause oriented and demand justice for example in the case of Dennis Banks, an Ojibwa activist of the American Indian Movement during the late 1960s and 1970s in the twin cities area of Minnesota. He continues to advocate against unjust treatment of Indian people.

Indian leaders also see the big picture and put it in a context for others to understand. They also introduce this big picture or context to others. Indian leaders also have organization skills and this is imperative for any community or organization to develop, while remaining in tact. Thus, organization is essential. One of co-founder of the American Indian Movement in 1968, Clyde Bellecourt (Ojibwa) once said that “organization” was essential to the success of AIM and Indian leadership. An effective Indian leader has a goal or plan in mind, perhaps even written down and it is well thought out. Indian leaders almost always mentor others who are younger and it seems natural on their part to teach others who to do things and why they do them.

Last of all, the Indian leader has stamina or mental strength. Leaders need a source of mental strength to draw from since so much energy is

required of them. Such places are of strength to the native leader who returns to these sites of empowerment on a regular basis.

In conclusion, several overall assessments and observations can be made about native leadership of the past and in modern times. For the most part, the fundamental characteristics of native leaders have changed very little. Instead, the circumstances have changed with modernity as native leaders and their tribal communities found themselves in increasing contact with the dominant mainstream. Much cultural borrowing and learning how to deal with white bureaucrats have enabled Indian leaders to lead well while it may not seem so from the outside. It must be kept in mind there is a story “about” tribal communities from the outsider's point of view and there is an “internal” account from within the tribe.

First, an Indian leader is a community person who needs the support of his or her community. This point is further established by the fact that the community decides who the leaders will be, based on some systematic process. But, sometimes external intervention as in the case of Osceola, Black Hawk, and Tecumseh caused a disruption in the traditional leadership system. So, many leaders rise from emergencies or causes. They were not leaders according to the traditional customs, although they responded in crises to help their people.

Another significant point is that Indian leadership is different from the American mainstream. Based on retaining cultural traditions, Indian leadership focuses on the community or people and the native leader is willing to sacrifice for his or her people. Yet Indian leaders have had to act as go-betweens to be a part of their people as well as representing their people to mainstream America like diplomats in buckskins that historian Herman Viola has written about.

Thirdly, tribal leaders can become national leaders, but do not necessarily lead tribes. Once a tribal leader becomes the leader of a national organization, the connection with his or her tribe is threatened due to the

sustainable energy to lead the organization.

Another important point is that Indian men and women lead differently. Their approaches to leadership have different patterns, although the outcome may be the same. Although Indian men leaders will say that they are sensitive to their people's needs and issues, Indian women leaders will argue that they are more sensitive to these concerns.

One constant characteristic of native leadership is factionalism within the tribal communities. This is not a past problem, but a recurring one. Native leaders have always dealt with factionalism and in historic times, tribal councils came to a general consensus in decision-making. This was not easy and this virtue placed considerable pressure on the oratory skills of leaders as speakers. Tecumseh, Chief Joseph and others like Sitting Bull were noted for their gifted talents as orators and people listened to them.

The reality of Indian politics is both internal and external. This means that native leadership operates within the community where it has its own problems and concerns as well as issues. In addition, the reality of Indian politics includes operating outside such as a tribal leader going to Washington, D.C. to the Bureau of Indian Affairs or Congress and representing his or her people's best interests.

Last of all, tribal politics is sophisticated and complex. Tribal politics is well beyond the view of the typical outsider who is not familiar with clans or societies, moieties, kinship blocs, and kinship nepotism. From the inside of tribal politics, leadership, community and place are intriguingly intertwined and produce native leaders who are the most effective in leading their people with great sacrifices on their part. While much can be learned from this study, it also raises important questions that can also be asked of other indigenous peoples and the mainstream populations in other parts of the world. What is important to mention is that while all Indian leaders are different in their personalities, there are certain similarities in their talents and skills that they possessed in the historic past to the

present. Mainstream histories have portrayed Indian leaders too often in times of war against the United States that undermines the full appreciation of native leadership. Such portrayals have created stereotypes of Indians leaders being only important in times of war. Indian leaders have led in many capacities and continue to do so.

Notes

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- ² Donald L. Fixico, *The American Indian Mind in a Linear World: American Indian Studies and Traditional Knowledge* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 1-62.
- ³ Wilma Mankiller with Michael Wallis, *Mankiller: A Chief and Her People* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), 261-62.
- ⁴ Tecumseh Speaks Out Against Land Cessions, 1810.
- ⁵ See Herman J. Viola, *Diplomats in Buckskins: A History of Indian Delegations in Washington City* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1981).
- ⁶ Peter Nabakov, ed. *Native American Testimony: A Chronicle of Indian-White Relations from Prophecy to the Present, 1492-1992* (New York: Viking, 1991).
- ⁷ "Indian Removal Act," May 28, 1830, *U.S. Statutes at Large*, 4: 411-12.
- ⁸ The Sauk and Fox treaties were in 1804, 1815, 1816, 1822, 1824, 1830, 1832, 1836a, 1836b, 1837, 1842, 1854, 1859, 1861, and 1867. See the treaties of the Sauk and Fox in Charles Kappler, ed., *Indian Treaties: 1778-1883* (New York: Interland Pub., 1972).
- ⁹ Peter MacDonald with Ted Schwarz, *The Last Warrior: Peter MacDonald and the Navajo Nation* (New York: Orion Books, 1993), 1.
- ¹⁰ See Robert S. McPherson and David A. Wolff, "Poverty, Politics, and Petroleum: The Utah Navajo and the Aneth Oil Field," *American Indian Quarterly*, Vol. 21, No. 3 (Summer 1997): 451-470; Albert Nason, "The Carter Administration and Native Indian Affairs: The Case of the Hopi-Navajo Land Dispute," *Proceedings and Papers of the Georgia Association of Historians*, Vol. 11, (1990): 136-152; and Scott C. Russell and Eric Henderson, "The 1994 Navajo Presidential Election: Analysis of the Election and Results of an Exit Poll," *American Indian Quarterly*, Vol. 23, No. 2 (Spring 1999): 23-37.

11. "Peter MacDonald (1928-)" in Duane Champagne, ed. *The Native North American Almanac: A Reference Work on Native North Americans in the United States and Canada* (Detroit, Washington and London: Gale Research Inc. 1994), 1098.
12. Peter MacDonald with Ted Schwarz, *The Last Warrior: Peter MacDonald and the Navajo Nation* (New York: Orion Books, 1993), 18.
13. "Wilma P. Mankiller (1945-)" in Duane Champagne, ed. *The Native North American Almanac: A Reference Work on Native North Americans in the United States and Canada* (Detroit, Washington and London: Gale Research Inc. 1994), 1098-1099; Quannah Leonard, "Wilma Mankiller," *The Daily O'Collegian*, February 2, 2000, Stillwater, Oklahoma, <http://www.ocolly.com>; Ann Hafften, "Wilma Mankiller Speaks at Women of ELCA Convention," *ELCA News Service*, Minneapolis, Minnesota, July 11, 1996; and Mark Trahan, "Wilma Mankiller talks straight but makes mischief, too," *Seattle Times*, Seattle, Washington, May 21, 2000; and no author, "Former Cherokee Chief cites tenacity, courage," *Lawrence Journal-World*, Lawrence, Kansas, December 25, 1999, 10B.
14. Quote by Wilma Mankiller in Wilma Mankiller and Michael Wallis, *Mankiller: A Chief and Her People* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), 229.
15. Fergus M. Bordewich, "How to Succeed in business: follow Choctaws' lead," *Smithsonian*, Vol. 26, no number, (March 1996), 32-41.
16. Fergus M. Bordewich, "How to Succeed in business: follow Choctaws' lead," *Smithsonian* Vol. 26, no number, (March 1996), 6-7.
17. An insightful background of information about Phillip Martin is in Peter J. Ferrara, *The Choctaw Revolution: Lessons for Federal Indian Policy* (Washington, D.C.: Tax Reform Foundation, 1998). See also, Benton R. White and Christian Schultz White, "Phillip Martin/Mississippi Choctaw," in R. David Edmunds, ed., *The New Warriors: Native American Leaders Since 1900* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2001), 195-210.
18. Books about Geronimo include Joseph Bruchac, *Geronimo* (2006); S. M. Barrett, and Frederick W. Turner, eds. *Geronimo: His Own Story: The Autobiography of a Great Patriot Warrior by Geronimo*, (1996); Melissa Schwarz, *Geronimo: Apache Warrior*, (1992); C.L. Sonnichsen, ed., *Geronimo and the End of the Apache Wars*, (1990); Jason Hook, *Geronimo: Last Renegade of the Apache*, (1989); Angie Debo, *Geronimo: The Man, His Time, His Place*, (1976); Britton Davis, *The Truth About Geronimo*, (1976); Alexander B. Adams, *Geronimo*, (1972); and Odie B. Faulk, *The Geronimo Campaign*, (1969).
 Films and television shows about Geronimo include *Geronimo: An American Legend* (1993); *Geronimo* (1990); *Gunsmoke: The Last Apache* (1990) (TV) Minor character in film; *Mr. Horn* (1979) (TV) Minor character in film; *Geronimo und die Räuber* (1966) (West German TV); *Geronimo* (1962); *Walk the Proud Land* (1956) Minor character in film; *Taza, Son of Cochise* (1954). Minor character in film; *Son of Geronimo: Apache Avenger* (1952); *The Battle of Apache Pass* (1952) Minor character in film; *Indian Uprising* (1952) Minor character in film; *Killed Geronimo* (1950); *Broken Arrow* (1950) Minor character in film.; *Valley of the Sun* (1942) Minor character in film.; *Geronimo* (1939); *Geronimo's Last Raid* (1912).
19. Samuel E. Kenoi, "A Chiricahua Apache's Account of the Geronimo Campaign of 1886," in C.L. Sonnichsen, ed., *Geronimo and the End of the Apache Wars* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1986), 71-72.