



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Because I live in the desert, blowing dust from the mesas surrounds me. But because there is a mountain out my window, I am reminded of how a shift in the altitude can change the nature of the blowing winds. In the spirit of sharing deep contemplations and small insights into the nature of humanity, we gift another understanding of American Indian philosophy in what is now our sixth newsletter. Like the multicolored natural habitat of desert flowers blooming in the midst of drought, a canvas of color in arid summer heat, like an impressionist painting, these ideas are to be shared. I thank our authors, our readers, and the American Philosophical Association and the American Indian Philosophy Association for their continued support and participation in gifting the field of contemporary American Indian philosophy.

The first paper is by Anne Waters: "Structural Disadvantage and a Place At the Table: Creating Space for Indigenous Philosophers to Be More Pro-Actively Involved in Decision Making Forums Affecting the Emergence and Impact of Indigenous Philosophies in the Americas." In this paper, Waters first introduces American Indians who hold a Ph.D. in philosophy. She then points to the reality that there are still no American Indians holding a philosophy tenure-track position in an educational institution granting a terminal philosophy degree.

She interprets this to mean that because American Indians are unable to garner the financial, collegial, and academic support needed to rise to inclusive positions in the philosophical profession, most of our colleagues and students remain uneducated and ignorant about indigenous people and our philosophies that are still alive today on this shared American continent. America's indigenous philosophers have important contributions to make to philosophy and culture; yet our conceptual nonexistence exacerbates our veridical non-integration. Waters holds that it is a cultural luxury for the APA to not address these problems. In some moral worlds, the APA Board might have a positive obligation to address the status of American Indian philosophy with all due haste.

Waters suggests three possible ways of indexing American Indian philosophy for inclusion in the discipline, and points out how each raises unique and particular problems for the profession. She suggests a field of Indigenous philosophy (global) that might emerge over time, having subfields of diverse cultural philosophies, not necessarily linked to nation states or current geopolitical regions.

Waters also claims that the exclusion of American Indian philosophy in the context of world philosophy, the exclusion of American Indian philosophy in the context of the history of philosophy, the exclusion of American Indian philosophy in the context of American philosophy, and the exclusion of American

Indian philosophers in almost the entire structure of the APA and its board, and in all tenured faculty appointments around the world, could easily be addressed by the APA Board in any number of ways. The APA Board sits at the table in the context of an historical ethical crisis; and from any ethical framework, the global influence of the APA suggests a correlative accountability: the APA remains historically morally bound to address and perhaps even redress American Indian exclusionism in the profession upon which it acts, and in the culture it complicitly creates.

This article raises the following questions: Where is the philosophical discussion of the need for integrative action respecting the inclusion of American Indians in professional philosophy? Who are the leaders of conscience among our diversity and mainstream APA leaders? How is the APA silence about American Indian segregation related to the framework that constitutes leadership among APA Board members? Noting the important relationship between creativity and memory, I conclude that if Indigenous peoples of the Americas are included in professional philosophical culture and memory, we will not be systematically erased, not the product of complicit intellectual genocide by specific individual actions, not the survivors of systemic complicit segregation by governing and policies, and not complicitly excluded from full participation in the settler philosophical culture created in the Americas. In short, Waters argues that to ease the inclusion of American Indians into the philosophical profession is one of the responsibilities of history-making in the context of the APA, its board, and its members.

In the second paper "Manger Malade: 'Eating Disorders' and the North American Drum Community," Lillian Friedberg enters the dialogue of American Indian philosophy by drawing our attention to the interplay of ethics and drumming among Malinke drummers of West Africa. Her message: to drum well is like eating well. The focus of this paper is how to reconcile traditional ethics of African drumming to the contemporary commodification of the aesthetics of drumming. To separate the aesthetics of the practices of drumming from the ethics of the art of drumming, can be likened to separating the aesthetics of the practices of fine dining from the ethics of the art of fine dining. Drumming is the metaphor used to discuss the serious art of eating well in an African context, which is the metaphor for living well: the participant engages in the practice well, only by adhering to the ethical system that permeates the art. Drawing an analogy to American Indian culture, Friedman directs our attention to the ethics of cultural interaction, and the global commodification of African and American Indian culture. Her paper leaves room for pause about a theory of human nature and aesthetics: no one eats well unless all eat well, and to eat well is to share equally with respect for the unique value of each human being.

The book review by Agnes B. Curry announces the long awaited and now available *American Indian Thought: Philosophical Essays*, edited by Anne Waters (Blackwell 2003). In this gift of a book review, Curry informs us that this text is a

necessary contribution to the field of academic philosophy. For those concerned with the conditions for responsible cross-cultural philosophizing, the book can serve both Indian and non-Indian students in and out of the classroom by introducing them to some contemporary writings of American Indian philosophers. Curry identifies one of the core tenets of American Indian thinking expressed throughout the book: “. . . the notion that epistemology, metaphysics, ethics and politics are analytically separable only through introducing distortions whose conceptual and human costs must finally be recognized as unacceptable.”

In these two articles and one book review, the weaving of global ethical concerns looms large over the canvas. The relevance of epistemology and metaphysics to the ethical, social and political philosophies of our times, may at once appear to be lost in contemporary philosophical forums. Yet there remains this connection, most especially among philosophers of science and social and political theorists, that the ethics of a culture is rooted in metaphysical and epistemological ways of being as developed in particular geographical locations. The articulation of the aesthetics of a global commodification of resources as seen through the lens of American Indians in these articles, directs our attention to ethical values as enacted and mirrored by practitioners of unjust global commodification. This thematic runs constant over the canvas of contemporary American Indian thought.

ARTICLES

Structural Disadvantage and a Place at the Table: Creating Space for Indigenous Philosophers to Be More Proactively Involved in Decision-Making Forums Affecting the Emergence and Impact of Indigenous Philosophies in the Americas

Anne Waters, J.D., Ph.D.

Seminole Indigenous Philosopher

I am happy to have this opportunity to report to the APA Board as I step down from the Chair of the APA Committee on the Status of American Indians in Philosophy. Since first petitioning the APA to create this committee in 1997, a long journey was endured to arrive here today. Sponsored by the American Indian Philosophy Association, the committee has achieved great progress within the APA, and I am deeply thankful for the support given to us by the Board over these years. Gravity is pulling me to different paths now, and is tugging at Dr. Dale Turner to ascend to responsibilities as new chair of this committee. In leaving this position, I've talked with Dale, and know that good things are in store for us with him at the helm in the future. The status of American Indians in philosophy is summarized below.

I. Who and Where We Are

In 1992, the first two American Indians to receive a Ph.D. in Philosophy from Universities in the U.S. appeared on the scene: Viola Cordova from the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, and Anne Waters from Purdue University, West Lafayette. Already Laurie Anne Whitt had received her Ph.D. in Philosophy from the University of Ontario in Canada. As of 2003, there are an additional eight American Indians holding a Ph.D. in

philosophy, including seven from U.S. institutions, and one from McGill University, Ontario, Canada. In addition to Viola Cordova (who passed on November 2002), Laurie Anne Whitt (Choctaw, Humanities Department, Michigan Technological University), and Anne Waters (Seminole, Philosophy, Interpretation, and Culture Program, State University of New York, Binghamton), the currently identified American Indians with a Ph.D. in philosophy include: Thomas Norton Smith (Shawnee, Philosophy Department, Kent State University, Stark, Ohio); Lee Stauffer (Seminole, English and Philosophy Department, Highlands University,); Gordon Christie (Anishinaubae, Law School, University of Osgood, Canada); Thurman Lee Hester, Jr. (Choctaw, American Indian Studies, University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma); David Martinez (Gila River Pima, Native American Studies, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis); John Dufour (L/Nakota, Humanities, College of Santa Fe, New Mexico); Dale Turner (Anishinaubae, Native American Studies, Dartmouth, Massachusetts); and Katy Gray Brown (Cherokee, Adult Education, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis).

II. Barometer of Integration into the APA and Philosophy Departments

From 1992 to 2003 numbers of American Indians in philosophy increased dramatically relative to our population, and this speaks for our interest, opportunity, support, commitment, participation, and inclusion in the profession through the Ph.D. level. Yet the barometer of our integration post Ph.D. is at ground zero: there are no American Indians who are philosophy faculty who hold a tenure track position in an educational institution granting a terminal degree in philosophy. The crucial factor that influenced my accepting the position as Chair of the APA Committee on the Status of American Indians in Philosophy was this lack of our integration in the APA. It remains the yardstick of our success as First Nations and Indigenous People in the Americas by which to measure our inclusion in the internationally recognized and premier academic association for professional philosophy in the U.S. It also remains the barometer that measures the American academic response to the emerging fields (and philosophers) of American Indian and Indigenous philosophy.

Interpreting the data to mean that we are active, but are not recognized, might mean we remain invisible to professional philosophical circles. If so, we have not come far enough, and need to push further in our struggle to be included, and to integrate, as distinct from acculturate, into the mainstream of our discipline. It also means that unable to garner the financial, collegial, and academic support needed to rise to inclusive positions, many of our colleagues and students remain uneducated about indigenous people and our philosophies that are still alive today on this shared American continent. It means that what has passed as American philosophy in universities around the world for the past several hundred years has been a conception of 'American philosophy' that has and continues to exclude contributions of indigenous residents in the Americas.

III. Indexical Mien

Two immediate problems are confronted by our absence in the general milieu of philosophical circles. First, invisibility creates a situation where students (and faculty) in the U.S. are denied access to learning about world views and knowledge bases of distinctly indigenous philosophy of the continent they inhabit; moreover they lose an opportunity to learn about worldviews that have the potential to contradict, create conflict within, and ultimately complement dominant philosophical worldviews; American Indian philosophy has important contributions to make to the history of philosophy. Second, not including American Indigenous philosophy in the category of American philosophy (and American Indians from faculty positions in

American philosophy) makes American Indian philosophy (and philosophers) invisible because it is (and we are) subsequently conceptually excluded from this indexical system. This conceptual nonexistence exacerbates our veridical nonintegration.

These problems need to be addressed in the APA: if the field of American Indian philosophy is (along with American Indian philosophers) to be a part of American education, how we get indexed becomes a political issue of magnitude. At least three options for indexing are patent. First, American Indian philosophy may be indexed as American philosophy (as a subset of the dominant philosophical type in the U.S., indexed using historical racialized ethnic and national ideological parsing of analytic and pragmatic intellectual types); second, American Indian philosophy may be indexed as World Philosophy (as a subset of philosophy around the globe using historical racialized ethnic and national geographical parsing of physical location); or third, American Indian philosophy may be indexed as International philosophy (as a subset of nationalist groups indexed by global and tribal state nations using colonial imperialist economics of development parsing).

Each of these indexical categories raises unique particular problems for American Indians. First, by what kind of accepted reasoning could Indigenous philosophy of the Americas be a subset of American philosophy? The word 'American' philosophy, as used in U.S. philosophical circles by precedent, refers only to philosophers who follow the professional pragmatic or analytic persuasion, and thus have a link to European pragmatic or analytic philosophy. *Prima facie*, American Indians need not fit into such a category to be products of, or doing, indigenous philosophy. Second, if American Indian philosophy (and philosophers) are indexed as part of World philosophy, from what part of the world do our traditions emerge? Indigenous tribal nations remain geographical internal colonized nations on the American continent, in our homelands. Even this statement raises problematic questions about what the word 'American' denotes and connotes in this context. Professional American Indian philosophers engaged in World Indigenous philosophy, moreover, might not have any inherent reason to participate in an American philosophical association.

The third option, that Indigenous philosophers of the Americas might be better served by the International Congress of Philosophy, places us again into the hegemonic indexing context of racialized ethnic and economic imperialist international state nations. This is problematic for asserting sovereignty as autonomous nations in sovereignty relations with the USA. So also, in the arena of the International Congress of Philosophy, what groups would have indexical philosophical affinities with American Indian philosophy? Would it be those of like intellectual epistemological, metaphysical, or political persuasion? Or would it be those of the least advantaged groups, whether in numbers, economics, or political power? Would our presence in this arena also pale, just as it has done in the APA?

In each of these contexts, American Indians must have a homebase of identification, which of course, for American Indians, is our homeland occupied by the settler nation state of the USA. Hence, categorizing American Indian Philosophy as International or World philosophy might assist to keep us invisible among American philosophers in the APA.

IV. Common Sense

What appears problematic here is really quite simple: we do belong in the APA, and of course the APA Board recognizes this reality. Indigenous philosophers of the U.S. are involved in the International Congress of Philosophy, and are a part of World

philosophy, and are indexed for these purposes as 'American'. It may be that what appears problematic about American Indian philosophy and philosophers is only problematic if we accept the hegemonic cultural racialized categorization among mainstream American philosophers in the APA. This raises important political and educational issues about who and what will count as American philosophers and philosophy.

In other words, American Indians classified as American philosophers pose a problem only for those philosophers academically and philosophically descended from the pragmatist and analytic schools of philosophy, who want the concept of 'American' philosophy to retain its (this) historical rubric of definition and meaning. It is not yet clear where American Hispanic/Latina/o Caribbean philosophers are going to hang their philosophical hats on this issue. But I believe members of these groups have already been integrated (accepted in) circles of American philosophy, as well as European philosophy, and African philosophy, garnering a triple dip on the job market and in the profession. But their integration into these circles has been based up their accepting the traditional indexicals of types of philosophy, i.e. American pragmatist and analytic, and Continental postmodernism. Significantly, and on point, I have not noticed member of these groups being welcomed by those currently classified as the type "American philosophers" unless they are also pragmatists or analytics. And I would not hesitate to indicate that my own perception suggests the same applies for Asian American and African American philosophers and philosophies.

V. Impact of Situated Homelands

There is an important landbased difference in the Americas between professional philosophers who are Hispanic/Latina/o/Caribbean Americans, Asian Americans, African Americans, and American Indians. This difference, and the point needing clarification with respect to the APA Committee on the Status of American Indians in Philosophy is this: Hispanic/Latina/o/Caribbean American, Asian American, and African American philosophers enter into American, International, and World philosophical gatherings with a "homeland" or "homebase" that is not restricted to the Americas. If persons identifying as member of these groups are not to be a part of the popularly conceptualized "American" philosophical arenas by virtue of being pragmatists or analytics, they have international and world audiences with whom they may discuss these concerns. American Indians however, are on our homeland in the Americas. And because we are home in the Americas, our presence demands the attention of those who would be classified as "American" philosophers in the context of an association declaring itself to be THE American Philosophical Association. We do not have an "alternative" global philosophical audience with which to discuss this concern. And the sad fact remains that this association, as a premiere philosophical association, must be called upon to address why it has not yet brought about conditions to integrate any American Indians in the profession at any significant level of accomplishment beyond the Ph.D.

Shockingly, American Indians remain the only group represented by an APA diversity committee that has not been able to integrate into the tenured philosophy faculty of American universities in institutions that offer the terminal philosophy degree. This was brought to the attention of the APA Board back in 1997. Neither are our philosophies included in curriculum to the same degrees that philosophy not having primarily indigenous roots in the Americas has been included.

The paucity of American Indian faculty that might otherwise begin to balance (in the USA) the power to exercise authority and influence over research, resources, and researchers doing indigenous philosophy, what is taught and who are the teachers

of Indigenous philosophy, and the protection of Indigenous stakeholders, mirrors the fact that we have not been integrated into the discipline as professionals, even though we have met all criteria of membership.

In the last section of this report, I have tried to show how the structural dynamics of the APA are not conducive to integrating indigenous philosophers of the Americas (as indigenous philosophers of the Americas) in any meaningful way without creative imagination. At this time, in the past, present, and foreseeable future, there remain no indigenous philosophers on any APA national committees (except the committee on the status of American Indians in philosophy), on any APA Division committees, on editorial boards of prominent philosophical journals, on tenure review committees, or review committees for research funding, on the APA Board, or in the National Office. In reality, we don't exist in these circles. This report operates as testament to our meeting the requirements of participating in, but not being able to integrate the American philosophical discipline.

VI. Integrating American Indians into Professional Philosophy

What have been successful measures to assimilate American Indians into the APA? Without being integrated into professional philosophical communities, American Indians have already penetrated the philosophical Ph.D. market. We have jumped the academic intellectual hurdles of honors, awards, publications, and all other requirements of our discipline that would normally result in a tenured position at an exceptionally reputable academic institution. Yet still we remain on the margins of philosophical halls of academe where rewards are normally gleaned from participation. Perhaps there is some reason, or some reasoning that creates this situation. After my experience as Chair of the APA Committee on the Status of American Indians in Philosophy I have come to recognize that the article written about systemic institutional racism in the APA, by Leonard Harris (a member of my own dissertation committee a decade ago), rings as true for American Indians today, as it did for African Americans years ago. (This article was first published in the Newsletter on the Status of Blacks in Philosophy over a decade ago.)

Low numbers of American Indians and lack of institutional power and position in the APA, has created fertile ground for the situation whereby those who are not American Indians have been able in the past, and continue, to build their own careers upon what they classify as "American Indian" philosophy. Because of this systemically created situation, it will be very difficult for any American Indian who does not parrot the dogma of what currently passes as "American" (or Continental, Asian, or African) philosophy in the U.S., to be taken seriously in the APA. This is not to suggest it cannot happen, but only to point to what I have understood to be one of the major difficulties for American Indians trying to make the best of employment opportunities and a professional career in an academic philosophical profession.

If the APA wants to continue to build the new academic field of American Indian philosophy in a professional context, we will need to consider the importance of integrating our currently elite group of American Indian philosophers in such a way that these philosophers receive the customary support of jobs, research opportunities, and collegial relations that successful scholars (and some not so successful) are afforded via the ranks and influence of the APA.

If America's indigenous philosophers are to be situated in places where we can continue to build this new academic field, we will need to be retrieved from the margins of mainstream philosophy, and situated in supportive environments to create

intellectual legacies. Histories of philosophy replicate hegemonic situated worldviews about geography and the role of imperial nation states and global colonization in the parsing of intellectual legacies. American Indians need to gain access to the tools that play creative enterprises that build the written records of the history of human thought. The APA has a significant calling to play an historical role in this continual recreation of human thought. It can have a role to play integrating American Indians into this cultural flow.

When indigenous philosophers of the Americas go to a place at the table of thought, we must be able to recognize an integrated contemporary place set as our own. If the place set is not driven by America's indigenous community needs, then it will not be our own (as we say in Indian Country) because it will not be consistent with indigenous values. Preservation of American philosophy includes the preservation of aboriginal philosophy in the Americas, its origins being in the Americas. If the preservation of the APAs include the preservation of indigenous philosophy in the US, it will not perpetuate the ontology of "us and others" where indigenous philosophers are indexically classified as "others" (or members of one of the diverse (others) groups). Signifying "diversity groups" within the APA has already articulated the boundaries of who currently (historically) counts as others.

Significantly, as many philosophers have previously articulated, the existence of the classification of some as others, in the context of the APA, points to the bedrock platform that views the other. With this platform revealed, the makeup of the dominant hegemonic structure of the APA by "nonothers" is revealed. Although it has been argued that those who are integrated into the structure are not situated in, and hence cannot see from, the platform of exclusion, I disagree to some extent. People of conscience in the '60's in the US did not need to be members of nonintegrated groups to see nonintegration. At the same time that some integrated members of the APA view and experience from the platform of dominant geographical, global, racialized, ethnic, and national cultural ideologies, they also view and experience the loss and nonpresence of aboriginal descendants when it is brought to their attention.

It may be that the normative intellectual paradigm, or framework, of the APA, has no conceptual place at the table for American Indians and our ideas about the world without shifting current paradigmatic views about what, and who counts as American philosophy and philosophers, by what and whose set precedent. But this move may threaten the contemporary hold on ideology in all fields and areas of American philosophy. This remains to be examined more fully by the APA, along with whether the current paradigm precludes or at least makes it difficult for American Indians and American Indian philosophy to integrate the APA.

The exclusion of American Indian philosophy in the context of world philosophy, the exclusion of American Indian philosophy in the context of the history of philosophy, the exclusion of American Indian philosophy in the context of American philosophy, and the exclusion of American Indian philosophers in the structure of the APA, and in faculty appointments, needs to be addressed by the APA board. The APA board sits at the table in the context of an historical ethical crisis; from any ethical framework, the APA needs to address and redress American Indian exclusion in the profession. The continuing daily recreation of an association based on the exclusion of descendants of aboriginal people calls out to be, and can be proactively addressed via a statement by and from representatives of the APA Board, as members of one of the most elite, premier, and dominant philosophical associations in the Americas, and in the world. Exercising this power would

place controversial issues affecting American Indians in the APA spotlight, and in the field of vision of the philosophical profession, where philosophers could apply our analytical reasoning to controversies, and measure our success in the APA by a yardstick set by, and hence accountable to the APA Board with respect to American Indians.

VII. Creating BiDialectical Philosophical Dialogue

In creating cross-cultural dialogue about America's Indigenous philosophical memory, it is important to remember that this memory and the creation of the American philosophical discipline are historically linked. Most American philosophy textbooks would have students and philosophers alike believing and acting as though nothing philosophical was here prior to the settler founding fathers. Given this situation, many questions have to be asked, and among them are the following.

First, are questions of invisibility. Is it that the indigenous philosophical memory of this continent is too painful to remember? Too difficult to study? Too political to mention? Too contradictory to an accepted "just so" story? Too threatening to an established system?

Second, are questions of alliances. Where is the Latino memory of the blending with indigenous philosophy in the Americas? Where is the African memory of the blending with indigenous philosophy in the Americas? Where is the Asian memory of the blending with indigenous philosophy in the Americas? Where is the European memory of the blending with indigenous philosophy in the Americas?

Third, are questions of responsibility. Where is the contemporary philosophical discussion of the social and political ethics and effects of events that created and continue to create a post traumatic stress syndrome resulting from settler populations complicitly participating in an American Indian genocide? Where is the social and political discussion of the effects of the religious and political ethics of those who continue to benefit from this genocide? Where is the philosophical discussion of the need for integrative action respecting the inclusion of American Indians in professional philosophy? Where are the leaders of conscience among our diversity and mainstream APA leaders? How is APA silence about American Indian segregation related to what framework constitutes leadership among APA members?

And finally, how does raising the above questions affect the ability of the APA to integrate American Indian philosophers and philosophy into the American mainstream, and subsequently, the world. Can memory be retrieved? Can paradigms shift in the APA? Can complicity change to assertive integrative activities with respect to integrating American Indian philosophy in traditional philosophical areas of epistemology? metaphysics? ontology? philosophy of science? value theory? etc. And how can plausible explanations for the segregated existence of American Indian philosophers, and American Indian Epistemology, Metaphysics, Ontology, Science, Value Theory, etc. in the APA, bring about an integration with all due haste?

VIII. Conclusion

American Indians need to be supported in professional philosophy, if we are to have American Indian writers to write about these things. We need to be supported in the job markets of professional philosophy, and be able to mentor those who might follow a legacy of raising these questions that can benefit humankind. With a commitment to effective integrative action regarding American Indians in philosophy, and inclusion of American Indian philosophy in the fields of professional philosophy, we Indigenous peoples of the Americas can be included in professional philosophical memory, and will not be systematically erased, not the product of an intellectual

genocide, not the survivors of systemic segregation, and not excluded from full participation in the settler philosophical culture of the Americas. Philosophical memory is linked to philosophical creation, and we are all interdependently connected to all our relations and our future generations for the values we recreate. Thank you.

As I leave this chair, I will be turning my attention more directly to applied Indigenous philosophy of the Americas, and how this philosophy itself may lead us to an understanding of why our participation in the APA is important, as I continue to believe it is. I will also be turning attention to strengthening the American Indian Philosophy Association, sponsor of the APA Committee on American Indians in Philosophy, and the Value Inquiry Book Special Series on Indigenous Philosophy of the Americas. As ex officio member of the committee, I thank those who have stepped forward to be new members of this committee, and past members who have contributed to the committee vision and programs over the past several years. I am deeply indebted to the clarity, foresight, and support of the diversity group chairs, and Board members who had heard our concerns.

Manger Malade: 'Eating Disorders' and the North American Drum Community'

Lilian Friedberg

University of Illinois-Chicago

The Malinke drum traditions have their origin in those regions of West Africa inhabited by the Malinke people—primarily in Mali and Guinea. The traditional Malinke orchestra is unique to the Hamanah region of Guinea and is characterized by the complex interplay between five drums: three bass drums and two djembe drums. The highly nuanced rapport between these five drums is what marks the Malinke tradition as distinct from other West African drum traditions.

My journey into the world of the Malinke began in Germany where I first encountered trained practitioners of the Malinke tradition performing at a youth center in Eckernförde, a small town on the coast of the Baltic Sea. The drummers were artists from Berlin—Silvie Kronewald and Paul Engel. The two had studied for many years with Cote d' Ivoire legend Adama Drame and had, at the time, recently teamed up with the grand master of the Malinke tradition, Famoudou Konate.

Paul Engel could be described as nothing less than a musical prodigy, whose insatiable passion for rhythm had taken him to all corners of the world—he'd studied under Moustapha Teddy Addi in Ghana, with Adama Drame in Abidjan, and had traveled to New York, where he'd studied Afro-Cuban and Puerto Rican conga traditions. Engel developed his interest in the djembe while studying and performing with Adama Drame. But when he first met up with Famoudou Konate in the mid-1980s, a decade-long period of cross-cultural cooperation ensued which would dramatically influence the integration of the Malinke rhythms within European culture. In his partnership with Silvie Kronewald, the twosome defied many conventional notions about West African music—not least of which, the common misconception that women are barred or discouraged from participating in these traditions, and the notion that these traditions can only be adequately grasped by indigenous members of the culture. It was Paul Engel, who, in 1991, contracted by the Ethnomusicological Museum in Berlin, produced the first field recordings of Famoudou Konate in Guinea on a CD that has since become a cherished international classic.

Perhaps the most profound contribution the team made to the development of cross-cultural cooperation was that they stressed the systematic complexity of the Malinke musical traditions, and, by transposing these rhythmic structures into western musical notation, vastly enhanced our ability to comprehend the intricacy of these rhythms and songs within a western musical context.

While most of the western world was still intently focused on the djembe as a solo instrument, Paul Engel was engaged in the task of understanding and outlining the interplay between *all* the drums of the Malinke orchestra and the way they intermingle to create multi-layered melodies that form the foundation of the music. With their insistence on precision and comprehensive understanding in both composition and form, Engel and Kronewald set the bar in Europe for what constituted qualified instruction and performance practice. There were no short-cuts, no “dumbing down” of the traditions to make them more easily consumed by western practitioners; healthy hierarchies were maintained based on considerations of skill, seniority and accomplishment, not on the hubris, chutzpa and “survival of the savviest” mentality that characterizes hierarchical relations in the western capitalist context.

In the US, where we have tended to address discrepancies in power, status, and position emanating from our own supremacist history by promoting ideologies of “we are all equal” or “we are all the same inside,” the notion of assigning “added value” to the interests of certain individuals based on acquired skills, knowledge and experience is a bitter pill to swallow, and the organic hierarchies that emerge in the course of studying and practicing Malinke traditions may reside uncomfortably in a liberalist context that seeks to deconstruct imbalances in power and status by indiscriminately dismantling hierarchies of any kind. And yet these are some of the discomfiting realities we need to confront and respect as we proceed down the path of cultural exchange with the source culture of the Malinke traditions. There is in the Malinke language a very powerful phrase for expressing the value of differing degrees of competency and areas of expertise among people: that phrase is “Bee man kan”—not all people are the same, each has his own area of competence and expertise, and it is unbecoming of an individual to overstep the bounds of his competence.

Kronewald and Engel established in Europe such high standards for instruction and performance that it was all but impossible for under-trained but self-proclaimed “experts” and would-be professionals to establish a foothold, either as performers or as instructors, on the commercial market. We see the results of their efforts reflected in the current state of percussive practice in Europe—where any number of highly qualified practitioners have been offering “master class” instruction and performances that are readily recognizable to indigenous practitioners as “authentic” for almost two decades now—ten to fifteen years before the first practitioners who might be considered “qualified” by indigenous standards began offering their wares on the American market.

The problem in the US is that, before solid information about these traditions was widely available, people with no formal training had already begun offering “instruction” in African drumming. The problem was exacerbated by the development of the “drum circle”—a uniquely North American phenomenon in which participants gather to form a circle of drums—drums from any cultural tradition—and, led by a highly paid “facilitator,” use them to create rudimentary rhythms in an event that bears little resemblance to any form of authentic African drumming. This movement fostered the illusion that anyone with the means to purchase such an instrument automatically qualifies as a drummer. What is more, students

and practitioners in the US had acquired a substantial body of *misinformation* which they were disseminating in their courses, and this unduly complicated the process of providing real knowledge to North American drum communities. The spread of misinformation was fueled not only by North American entrepreneurs seeking innovative ways to capitalize on America’s voracious appetite for “cultural diversity,” it was furthermore promoted by African nationals from non-Malinke traditions exploiting the ignorance of the American public by selling themselves as knowledgeable experts in traditions that, until recently, were not recognized by audiences outside Africa as being culturally and geographically distinct from those that developed, for example, in Ghana, Senegal and/or Nigeria.

The “confusion,” as Mamady Keita describes it, made it all the more difficult to transmit accurate information about these rhythms. So the practice of offering unqualified instruction over many years in the US acted as a hindrance in the development of a thriving community of djembe drummers like the one that emerged on the European scene in the 1980s and 1990s. Many, though fortunately not all, of the drum students currently marketing themselves as “professionals” in North America still would be classified as *beginning students* of the Malinke tradition on the European market, but at least the spread of misinformation has been substantially reduced.

In Conakry, these self-appointed instructors are recognized as astute businesspeople and, accordingly, showered with flattery and encouragement by up-and-coming drummers from the Continent seeking to establish business relations with individuals from affluent industrialized nations. The people in Conakry who “service” the annual flood of students during the tourist season there have long since recognized the value of flattery as a business strategy. As much as we’d like to believe that our experiences as workshop participants in Conakry derive exclusively from heartfelt affinity for us as individuals, we risk subscribing to a sort of “Noble Savage” mentality when we fail to recognize these people as business partners with commercial interests that are likely to prevail over any personal interest they may have in us as human beings. Ultimately, workshop participants are seen as *customers*, and the Africans who work for them understand the economic issues involved in keeping the customer satisfied. The more cut-throat the market becomes, the more likely commercial interests are to prevail over traditional considerations of honor. As early models developed through European-Guinean collaborations in the 1980s demonstrate, however, it is possible to settle on a “middle ground” that functions both economically and socially to the mutual benefit of all participants.

As an instrumental and founding member of that first generation of non-African djembe drummers working under the guidance of Silvie Kronewald and Paul Engel, I had the privilege of watching djembe drumming grow in popularity and professionalism first in Europe and now, for the past decade, in the US. Once interest in the djembe drum tradition had been elevated to a new level in Europe with the work of the Famoudou Konate Ensemble, the door was open for other major players from Guinea to enter the scene, and it wasn’t long before Mamady Keita similarly established a name for himself first in Belgium, then in much of Europe, and ultimately in Japan and the US.

In spite of the long-established presence in New York of a third legendary Malinke drummer, Ladi Camara, opportunities for solid training in the authentic traditions of the Malinke were not widely available in the US until Mamady Keita began touring regularly in the mid-1990s, and even though the Percussive Arts Society published, in 1993, an article about the Famoudou Konate Ensemble and developments in Germany, still relatively little attention was being paid to traditional Malinke drummers

in the US. But with the growing presence of Mamady Keita and, beginning in the year 2000, Famoudou Konate, came also an increase in translations from German and French—for example, the 2000 release of the English-language edition of Konate's book, *Rhythms and Songs of the Malinke* (originally published in German in 1997), translations of the 1996 interviews with Konate originally broadcast by German public radio in Berlin (published in *Percussive Notes*, 2001), the tri-lingual edition of Mamady Keita's *A Life for the Djembe* (Arun, 1999) and tri-lingual liner notes both on Keita's and Konate's more recent CDs, the translation of promotional materials for Konate's workshops in Africa and two US-workshop tours organized by the Chicago Djembe Project under the management of one of Chicago's top advertising and promotions professionals, James E. Banks.

Based on these developments, North American students gained access to the same teachers, materials, and opportunities that had been standard fare in Europe since the mid-1980s, and the face of the US drum scene has changed substantially as a result. Drum circles consisting of novitiates flailing *en masse* and *fortissimo* at the skins, oblivious to the high level of sophistication with which these instruments are associated in the source culture, have diminished both in decibel and in number and we see an increasing presence of performing groups whose work accurately reflects the complexity of the Malinke tradition. Gone are the "anything goes" days where untrained musicians offered classes and performances to uninformed audiences under the illusion that these exchanges involved authentic "African music." But, while the project to inform and inspire both US-American and European practitioners has been successful from a musical perspective, it may be another decade before some of the social lessons associated with the traditions begin filtering through.

This year, I sponsored and hosted at my home in Chicago two of the most promising artists in Guinea today: Nansedy Keita and Sayon Camara. Both Keita and Camara grew up in the village tradition—it wasn't until a few years ago that they moved to the capital city of Conakry where they first began speaking French and first encountered many of the "marvels" of the western world—things like money, means, and the value of the title "master drummer" on a market they'd never even known existed. Unlike many of the drummers currently emerging from the Conakry-based scene, where money has become the primary motivating factor for practitioners of the drum tradition as drummers and dancers flock to the drum camps during the tourist season, only to head out as soon as the last of the "Tubabs" has boarded a plane bound for less temperate regions in Europe and elsewhere in the industrialized world, Keita and Camara dedicated their lives to the music in spite of the fact that, even as the drum business was booming in the big city, commitment to the tradition was quickly becoming a boondoggle for drummers from the village who risked being viewed as provincial, backward, out of step with the times.

When Keita and Camara first arrived in Conakry, they were clearly recognized as a "threat" to the generations of novitiates who'd picked up their traditions and their trade in bits and pieces on the streets of Simbaya or in snippets from workshops designed to teach tourists and students from afar. Accordingly, attempts were made to marginalize them, to distract and detract from the invaluable lessons they had to teach as a result of having been raised and trained in the cultural milieu in which the drum traditions are embedded—in short, to eliminate them as sources of competition for drummers whose path to the drum has been anything but traditional.

Hearing their story, I couldn't help but note parallels between developments in Conakry and those here in the Midwest. I came to this country with several years as a professional practitioner of the Malinke rhythms under my belt.

I had offered well-attended classes in the cities of Bonn and Wuppertal, performed throughout Germany in several all-women's percussion ensembles, performed in Berlin with some of the finest "first generation" European djembe drummers and even today am often asked to substitute-teach at Berlin's UFA-Fabrik, a flourishing cultural center that has been at the forefront of developments in djembe drumming since even before Konate arrived on the German scene in 1986. I had studied intensely with Konate since he first arrived in Germany, and was among the first workshop participants to work with him at his home in Simbaya—a place that has since become a thriving mecca for drum enthusiasts worldwide. In a sense, coming to the US from Europe in the early 1990s, I was something of a "village drummer"—vilified, marginalized and despised for my insistence on maintaining the integrity of the tradition.

Persistently, here in the U.S., students came to my classes, picked up skills, know-how and information and, just as the sounds they began to produce on the djembe barely assumed an intelligible tonality—began offering "their" wares on the commercial market—often in dumbed-down versions of what I had taught. When students suddenly quit attending classes, it was usually with the explanation (either explicit or implied) that they'd taken from my classes enough to qualify them as instructors. Even in those few cases where I expressed concern about whether they were really "ready" to enter the market as qualified professionals, my concerns were patently dismissed. Before long, I was out of a job and my students were making more money than I was on the very market I had invested so many years in helping to create—from both the supply and demand ends.

In my attempts to elevate the standards, I made available, through an internet website, information that had thus far only been available in German and, at the same time, organized for Konate a US-workshop tour. For four consecutive years, I organized workshops in Chicago for master drummer Mamady Keita. These efforts ultimately translated into professional suicide for me as an instructor, as my students subsequently became students of Famoudou Konate and Mamady Keita. Many of them erased from the record the fact that they'd sat at my side for months, in some cases, years, before they ever encountered Famoudou Konate, his home in Simbaya or his home in Sangbarala, the village of his birth. The fact that my partner and I were the ones who secured the visas, booked the tickets and the venues, provided the drums, translated and redrafted the promotional materials, and developed the administrative infrastructure needed to give them access to Konate and others was incidental. The fact that I had, in years of instruction, provided them the fundamental skills they needed to even begin to comprehend what Konate had to teach was also incidental. As I have always explained to my students, though, "I am not a master drummer, nor do I know even a portion of all there is to know about these traditions: all I can do is put you in a position to study with the masters of the tradition." From this perspective, my career as a drum instructor has been enormously successful, even though I am now out of a job.

Discussing these developments with Nansedy Keita and Sayon Camara, I find myself fearing the path that lies before them, for in many ways, now—with the legitimacy that comes with having conducted their own US-workshop and concert tour—they are likely to be viewed as an even greater threat to "business as usual" in the Conakry scene with its international affiliates in Europe, the Americas, Japan and elsewhere. In speaking with them, exchanging stories about the way the dynamics of "eliminating the competition" work in any commercial context informed by capitalist interests from the

west, I've learned a thing or two about contending with these dynamics without compromising integrity.

In Chicago, Keita and Camara selected as curricular material for their workshops several rhythms from a complex of harvest rhythms, collectively known as "Kassa," but each with a specific purpose and meaning. What I found most interesting about these rhythms was not their musical merit, but the contexts in which they are played in traditional Malinke culture. Kassa is the time of harvest, when the Malinke people leave their homes in the village, and set out on foot to trek to the fields where they set up camp, living and working together while the fields are harvested. There are Kassa rhythms to alleviate fatigue on the part of field workers, Kassa rhythms to give thanks for the harvest, and for many other purposes. The first of the two Kassas we were taught is played when a man touches a woman against her will. When the drummers strike up this rhythm, it signals a form of public shaming—the man's violation of the woman is broadcast to the entire community in song and the man is shamed to the extent that should prevent any future infringements on this basic rule of decorum. The event represents a form of reprimand and acts as a deterrent to future violators because the act of public shaming bears significant moral impact in a social structure in which individual survival is very much contingent on collective opinion.

The second of the two Kassas we were taught teaches us a lesson based on the eating habits of the Malinke people. The Malinke eat from the same plate, with bare hands, and each person at the plate is assigned a designated spot from which to eat. Much in the same way our standards for table manners mandate that we not reach across the table, the table manners of the Malinke strictly prohibit anyone from taking food from another's space on the plate. This second Kassa again involves a form of public ridicule in response to someone who has taken food from another's spot on the plate. In the indigenous context, the person who committed the violation is singled out and subjected to the disapproval of the entire community. The act of public shaming again acts as reprimand and deterrent. However, in a cultural context such as ours, public shaming cannot function effectively as moral reprimand or deterrent because negative publicity is better than none at all and furthermore, because we enjoy the "freedom" of not having to concern ourselves with what members of our community think about our actions, so the social function of the music becomes irrelevant and loses its purpose.

After the Kassa workshop, Nansedy Keita explained that he had left out one significant detail in his public telling of the tale, which we came to refer to as "*manger malade*"—or "the eating disorder": it is the eldest member of the community who places the meat at the center of the plate and who subsequently distributes it to more junior members of the community. In this way, proper conduct is rewarded and improper conduct discouraged, based on the judgment of the person in possession of "seniority" at the table who, by virtue of *experience* is considered uniquely qualified to "pass judgment".

These are some of the deeper lessons we have to learn from the rhythms of the Malinke—lessons which, though they are by no means estranged from the music, may not be immediately comprehensible to members of communities in the industrialized world where the distribution of food (and by analogy money, means and merit) is determined not by seniority, collective consensus or the modalities of collective survival, but rather by individual initiative propelled by egoistic considerations that exist in a vacuum where anyone with the means, the money and the motivation to buy out the slaughterhouse can bring home the beef, baste or broil it to his liking, and serve it up in individual chop-licking portions to be consumed by anyone with the knife and fork to carve it—

savoring everything but the meaning in the most mannerly of ways.

Impolite though it may seem, I spent a lot of time observing the eating habits of my guests—I apologized profusely, explaining my fascination for the way I saw in their table manners a reflection of their approach to life, and accordingly, a reflection of their music. I didn't spend a lot of time fretting over what came first, the music or the meat. What fascinated me was the way that no matter how food was placed on the plate, all members of the community eating from the same plate (in this case, there were only two) ended up eating exactly the same amount of everything in equal proportion. Morsels of meat were slid from one side to another based on collective decisions made in the bat of an eye or indicated with a slight nod of the head, a raised eyebrow, a barely audible "awah."

This pattern of sharing was evident in everything the artists did—whether it involved divvying up work, wealth or the front seat in the car—everything was shared in equal measure. It is important to bear in mind the fact that I was witnessing a relationship between equals—two men with similar, though not identical, histories, with levels of skill and dedication to the tradition that were more or less at parity. There was no substantial disparity in status, skills or position between them. In another context, the person with "seniority" may have automatically been afforded certain privileges. I was reminded of the constant give-and-take so central to the rapport between instruments in the Malinke ensemble—the way that, in the traditional context, one drummer does not seek to drown out or out-drum the other, but rather, where each is given his turn to speak in accordance with his ability. In the case of younger, less-developed drummers, that may involve something as seemingly insignificant as holding down the kenkeni drum, a voice that generally remains static and unchanged in the Malinke ensemble, but which is nevertheless essential to maintaining the integrity and continuity of the whole. As the drummer's skills increase, he is given increasing opportunities for joining in the rapport, but he never shuns the duty of adopting less visible roles in the ensemble. If his skills on the kenkeni are needed, that is where he will go, and he will play with the same enthusiasm he demonstrates for the djembe solo. He will generally not embarrass himself by attempting to play a role for which he has not yet attained the skills to assume.

Clearly, the New Age "scramble for Africa" is on and North Americans have begun "discovering" the source culture for the djembe drum. Considering the history of "discovery" all North Americans share, it would seem this process might merit some measure of reflection about the way we seek to initiate and promote cultural exchange with indigenous cultures in Africa. Five hundred years ago, this continent was peopled by a population who shared the same fundamental conviction that it is wrong to derive nourishment from the food placed on someone else's plate. This conviction went hand-in-hand with the notion that it is a shameful thing for one man to be in possession of great wealth while others go hungry. Both ideas emanated from and served the interests of collective survival—then came "rugged individualism" and collective interests were clear-cut from the landscape in order to make way for the pilgrimages of "self-made" men.

Yet it's not as though there was no mutual exchange of ideas between the indigenous populations of the Americas and the incoming settler populations—this much is evidenced by the fact that the US constitution was based on the prevailing system of government created by the Iroquois. This example is ideally suited for demonstrating the dangers inherent in an incomplete or modified appropriation of indigenous concepts into western systems of thought and behavior: whereas the Iroquois League of Nations was a system of government based not on a principle

of “majority rules,” but rather one of *consensus*, the US Constitution changed that part of the system to create a situation in which the country is in a chronic state of strife because any time the “majority rules,” the presence of a disaffected “minority” is guaranteed. In the Iroquois system, all parties sat down at the table to draft solutions that everyone could live with. Another major departure the “founding fathers” introduced to the Iroquois system was to establish a government of, by, and for the people. The Iroquois system was a government of and by the people for future generations. This “minor” divergence from the source culture’s blueprint has contributed substantially to the social, economic and political shortsightedness for which this country has since become infamous.

The parallels between these developments and the process of cultural exchange between North Americans and the source culture of the *djembe* are striking: we now have a population diligently engaged in deriving from the Malinke certain knowledge and information. This situation has tremendous potential for mutually beneficial cultural exchange. But, unless we are vigilant in our efforts to take the music along with the social mores it reflects—we risk repeating the mistakes of history, to our own detriment. To me, it seems, we’re even abandoning our own table manners in this process: how can you have any pudding if you haven’t eaten your meat? The *music* of the Malinke is the dessert—the icing on the cake—the *meat* of the matter is in the mores. The music is but a reflection of the same. We would do well to recognize that a steady diet of pudding and cake is not likely to provide the nourishment we need to survive—collectively or individually—in the concrete jungles of the capitalist world.

Lilian Friedberg is a bi-lingual author/translator/scholar whose work has appeared in American Indian Quarterly, African Studies Quarterly, New German Critique, Transition, Denver Quarterly, Chicago Review and elsewhere. She is currently Assistant Editor for the German Quarterly. As Artistic Director of the Chicago Djembe Project, she continues to organize North American workshops and concerts for indigenous artists from the source culture of the Malinke. For more information on these programs, please visit the Chicago Djembe Project website at www.chidjembe.com.

Endnotes

1. “*Manger Malade: ‘Eating Disorders’ in the North American Drum Community*” was inspired by conversations with Nansedy Keita and Sayon Camara on their recent visit to the U.S.. It was drafted as a contribution to the conference, “Cultures in Motion: The Africa Connection,” at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville and presented there in February 2003.

BOOK REVIEW

Review of *American Indian Thought: Philosophical Essays*, edited by Anne Waters (Blackwell, 2003)

Agnes B. Curry
Saint Joseph College, West Hartford, CT

In this review I shall first discuss what I take to be the aims of the collection. Then I will discuss the main sections and individual articles in turn.

First of all, the anthology is a necessary contribution to the field of academic philosophy. It will be useful to thinkers and teachers concerned about American Indian philosophy, its practitioners and students, and to those concerned with the conditions for responsible cross-cultural philosophizing. The editor has managed to accomplish a number of aims simultaneously. First, the selections, of current work by American Indian philosophers, introduce basic themes, procedures and associated restraints, and urgent problems in ways accessible to those unfamiliar with American Indian philosophy. Thus the anthology is suitable for classroom settings, including but not limited to courses in American Indian philosophy, and can serve both Indian and non-Indian students. At the same time, it situates itself in the midst of ongoing professional conversations and weighs in about current epistemological, metaphysical, ethical and political issues in transformative ways. In this light, the thematic interweaving of the volume, straining to explode the linearity of the eight section headings, serves concretely to demonstrate what I understand to be one of the core tenets of American Indian thinking, the notion that epistemology, metaphysics, ethics and politics are analytically separable only through introducing distortions whose conceptual and human costs must finally be recognized as unacceptable. Finally, the volume serves as an unmistakable salvo in the battle for academic credibility in the world of professional philosophy.

The Editor characterizes the anthology as a “gift” (Waters xiii). As Laurie Whitt informs (or reminds) readers later in the volume, “when gifts are given, the continuity of social relationships (and, we shall add, of relationships with the natural world) has the effect that the gift always remains the givers’. It is inalienable” (Whitt 208). The anthology is offered in the spirit of fostering community between Indigenous Western-trained philosophers and other American Indian intellectuals, and between them and the largely “white” world of academic philosophy. But the terms of the gifting remain specified by the givers, procedurally, stylistically, and substantially. The work is for American Indian philosophers and students, a guide as they craft their thinking and negotiate their responsibilities to their various communities. The difficulty of their paths is not papered over in an ultimately disingenuous effort to present a united front to a skeptical, possibly hostile (or, alternatively, a romanticizing and expropriative) external audience. Again, the terms of the gift remain the prerogative of the givers.

The anthology opens with a very helpful Editor’s Introduction interpreting each contribution. There are twenty-two readings by seventeen philosophers, organized under eight headings. In addition, there is an extensive bibliography of print and online resources.

Part 1, American Indians and Philosophy, consists of a single article by Vine Deloria. In “Philosophy and Tribal Peoples,” he confronts issues of identity and community for peoples buffeted by genocidal pressures leading to the simultaneous loss, distortion, and manufacture of memory, and asks difficult questions of American Indian philosophers. What is the place they seek? How do they negotiate diverse sets of training with often-conflicting criteria of credibility? More bluntly, how do they vie for admission to “this last bastion of white male supremacy” (Deloria 3), the cornerstone of castles of thought built on distinguishing the “primitive” from the “civilized,” without undermining their intellectual and social integrity? These issues are revisited through the volume, and various, sometimes conflicting answers are offered.

Deloria claims that creating an American Indian philosophy that can withstand the centrifugal forces of knowledge-politics both on and off the reservations demands first of all the demonstration, in language both translatable to Western

academics *and* ultimately comprehensible to local people, of the fact that Indigenous thinking offers conclusions that “make sense” (Deloria 6). I interpret making sense to involve three factors. Such conclusions must first, shed light on crucial features of the world, and second, do so in ways that are appropriate to a conception of human knowers as highly responsible. Finally, in its efforts to make sense, American Indian philosophy should use the resources of Western philosophy to explain Indian views and issues, not to integrate Indian views into Western philosophy. This is the approach taken by the writers of the essays. While several writers find aid in the phenomenological tradition in particular, and others employ Wittgenstein, Aristotle, deconstruction and discourse analysis, and analytic methods, these insights and methods are employed where they can communicate Indigenist concerns.

Deloria raises several methodological and epistemological considerations and thus his essay also serves as a transition to **Part II, Epistemology and Knowing**. The foremost epistemological tenet, according to Deloria, is that knowledge begins in experience and must remain rooted in, and returnable, to experience. Adhering to this tenet yields knowledge practices that are at once much more parsimonious about terminology and about inferring from global assumptions, and more open to unexpected shifts in the phenomena under consideration, than most Western views.

One theme unifying the epistemological reflections in Part II is the insistence on interweaving epistemology and ethics. All three authors insist that according to American Indian philosophy, knowing is not best viewed as an accomplishment of the isolated individual, regardless of how personal that knowing is. There are ramifications for communities, thus knowledge always involves moral considerations. In “What Coyote and Thales Can Teach Us: An Outline for an American Indian Epistemology,” Brian Yazzie Burkhart argues further that an American Indian epistemology is intertwined with a metaphysics that models humans as important — though by no means the only — participants in the ongoing birth of meaning in the world-process. Congruent with the disciplinary intertwinings, Burkhart offers a Principle of Relatedness that is as fundamental to Native approaches to knowing as Deloria’s empiricist criterion of origins and verification.

Perhaps the central difference between an American Indian approach and most Western approaches is outlined in what I will call Burkhart’s principles of limitation. The first, of the Limits of Questioning, reminds us that asking questions is an *action*, which can be done well or badly, appropriately or obtusely. This concern, for the *how* of questioning, relates directly to the notion that humans participate in the meaning-making of the world. The second dimension of the principles of limitation is perhaps most jarring to Western philosophical sensibilities, for it directly contradicts that paradigmatically Western attitude that the quest for knowledge ideally should be limitless. While it has been recognized that there may be truths beyond our abilities to understand, and skepticism has a long history in the West, the notion that we should limit grasping after knowledge is (the Biblical narrative of the Fall notwithstanding) a decidedly marginalized one. I imagine it will be greeted dubiously by many Western philosophers. I have trouble with the claim, because it seems to be in tension with a metaphysics stressing creativity and because in its social dimensions it can boomerang against its own proponents in unpredictable and harmful ways. But considering the principles of limitation in light of Laurie Anne Whitt’s later discussions of biocolonialist piracy of Indigenous knowledges and the frantic attempts to collect Native peoples’ genetic information with scant consideration of the “vanishing” people embodying the codes, or Annette Arkeketa’s discussion of the inability of many Western scientists to understand the

sheer wrongness of plundering graves and sacred sites for study, should give pause.

In “Approaches to Native American Philosophy,” V. F. Cordova opens by discussing Wittgenstein’s remarks about the extreme difficulty monocultural individuals have in recognizing perspectives different from their own. She then speaks to the current academic situation, in which the field of Native American philosophy is dominated by non-Indians. She offers some guidelines for practitioners. It is crucial to interrogate assumptions about the sameness of people. Dispense with the panoply of assumptions arrayed around the “primitive”/“advanced” dichotomy, embedded in words like “tribal,” “superstition,” “imagination,” and “myth,” on the one hand, and “development,” “observation,” “experience,” and “reflection,” on the other. Beware of reducing Native philosophy to stories taken out of context. A more appropriate focus is on the differing logical structures of Indigenous languages, for it is in language and logical relations that epistemological and metaphysical differences will be most clearly exhibited. Resist the urge to encompass or to focus on commonalities. Finally, include American Indians in the activity of philosophizing, which involves creating the institutional conditions where they are not subject to double standards and varieties of racism.

John DuFour’s “Ethics and Understanding” continues the argument for an ethico-epistemology by offering a broadly Wittgensteinian account of justification of knowledge claims in terms of the believing-agent’s initiation into the *belief practices* of a community. He understands organized sorts of social practices such as ceremonies as structuring the expression and further extension of knowledge in terms of the moral concerns of a community. Distinguishing the epistemic *content-merit* of a belief from the ethical *state merit* that a belief may have in relation to the believing agent enables a focus on the acceptability of the route by which someone came to his or her belief, as well as the epistemic acceptability of the belief itself. DuFour’s suggestion that in an American Indian epistemology, knowledge claims and knowing agents should be assessed in terms of a morally-laden, practice-based contextualist justification model raises serious questions about how to specify the ultimate value of the practices themselves. All three articles set the stage for further development in American Indian epistemological reflection as well as orienting the non-Indian reader to interlocking ethical concerns revisited throughout the volume.

Part III, Science, Math, Logic, contains one article devoted to each topic. In “Philosophy of Native Science,” Gregory Cajete follows Husserl and other perceptual phenomenologists in grounding science in the species-specific, pre-cultural perceptual lifeworld. He suggests that Native cultural practices have not sundered the sense of ecological embeddedness accessible in perceptual experience. Therefore, the Native conception of science is far more multi-valent than Western understandings, and includes under its domain art, ceremony, and philosophy. In “Indigenous Numerical Thought in Two American Indian Tribes,” Thomas M. Norton-Smith critiques culturalist explanations of numerical thinking as insufficiently nuanced. Through an examination of number concepts in the Shawnee and Ojibwa languages, he suggests that the unmistakable differences from Western numerical thinking exhibited in the languages are at the same time compatible with some models of numerical thinking as innate. Further, Norton-Smith shows that it is an illicit move to compare Western styles of numerical thinking, stressing abstraction, with contextual and inclusive styles of Native numerical reasoning. If they are different kinds of thought, then one cannot be a ‘primitive’ stage of the other. Thus Cajete and Norton-Smith both argue for human universals in tandem with a strong sense of how different

environments elicit different development. Such an approach seems a promising one to me, though some of the authors perhaps disagree.

Anne Waters' article, "That Alchemical Bering Strait Theory: American's Indigenous Nations and Informal Logic Courses," links issues of responsible pedagogy with American Indian critiques of some Western scientific orthodoxies as rife with fallacious reasoning. Incorporating culturally relevant content that opens up a variety of views to critical examination from a variety of perspectives sensitizes students of all background to the operations of knowledge *systems* at the same time it gives American Indian students specific creative and critical thinking tools contributive to success as bicultural beings.

More broadly, Water's concerns link to those raised in Part II, while Cajete's also anticipate those of **Part IV, Metaphysics and Being**. In "Notes on Identity, Time, Space and Place," Ted Jojola explores the differences between Indigenous communal and land-based foundations of identity and those in mainstream society. He argues that in spite of the divide-and-conquer tactics of deculturation, identities structured along distinctively Indigenous modalities of time, space, and place remain accessible. Seeing the traditional models as both stable and transformative vehicles for allowing past and present to give coherent shape to the future is crucial for Indian community planners resisting the processes of fragmentation and deculturation.

In "Language Matters: Nondiscrete Nonbinary Dualism," Anne Waters uses the example of gender categories to reconstruct how some Indian languages point us to an Indigenist ontology offering non-essentialist understandings of identity categories. Eurocentric ontology is premised on a tightly bounded discrete binary logic. This framework would fail to comprehend a non-discrete, non-binary dualism of animate, malleable, interpenetrating complementarities. The lack of mutual comprehension, coupled with traditions of hierarchical ranking systems enabled by strict dualism, combined with other historical factors to produce tragic consequences. On the other hand, an Indigenist ontology of interpenetrating relations is in at least some respects accessible and could model a more flexible and multiple understanding of gender and other concepts key for identification and value. Understanding the presence of both logics on the current scene may help, Waters suggests, to illuminate some basic misunderstandings between diverse women and thus more adequately to discern the shape of some roadblocks in current feminist theorizing.

The understandings embedded in suppressed religious practices is the issue in Maureen E. Smith's "Crippling the Spirit, Wounding the Soul: Native American Spiritual and Religious Suppression." While stressing the diversity of Indian communities and the individual dimension of spirituality, Smith sketches in broad strokes some widely shared core beliefs, such as in a single, non-gendered, often unnamed divine being/force, a reference for creation structured in terms of reciprocal responsibilities, and place-based and cyclical cosmologies. Smith notes the significant place of humor in many Native religious beliefs, and echoes Waters' claims about logical permeability of categories and concepts. She distinguishes Native concepts from a briefly-sketched model of European Christianity. While I think the sketch is not adequate to the complexity of Christianity, Smith's historical documentation of the clash of cultures, efforts to kill Native religions, the variety of American Indians' responses, and the generally sorry record of the US government in according Constitutional protections to Indians is compelling. In tandem with Waters' work, Smith's raises questions about the embeddedness of ways of being in Indigenous ways of speaking. Both essays alert us to further

dimensions of Jojola's concerns about retrieving the past to craft a future that makes sense.

As noted earlier, several of the writers find thinkers in the phenomenological tradition helpful to their efforts at explaining their perspectives. In **Part V, Phenomenology and Ontology**, Marilyn Notah Verney utilizes Heidegger to elucidate aspects of her thought about the losses accrued by acculturation in her chapter "On Authenticity." Characterizing Euro-American philosophical methods as built on analyzing and distinguishing, with the attendant danger of losing context, Verney characterizes Diné philosophizing as more interested in connections and interdependencies. These cultural differences of approach are manifest in differing attitudes toward the land. Indeed, land, as Mother Earth is *the* central philosophical concept for Verney. Thus without grasping the ramifications of this centrality, understanding American Indian philosophy is impossible. Transmitting American Indian philosophy is, according to Verney, best done orally.

The issue of oral tradition would seem to be a complex one. Indeed, reliance on written forms would seem to violate deeply the principles of Native metaphysics. And later Dale Turner wonders about the political wisdom of articulating oral wisdom in frameworks where its justification will always be suspect. Verney and Turner both stress the deep lack of fit between American Indian philosophy and the institutions of the dominant society – the academy in Verney's case, legal institutions in Turner's. Their responses are in important respects different. Perhaps some small hope for the academy can be gleaned from the fact that even as it has developed in the West, a Socratic tradition of understanding philosophy as *event* has not been completely lost.

The next selection, "Phenomenology of a Mugwump Type of Life in an Autobiographical Snippet," by Leslie Nawagesic, invites further reflection about appropriate vehicles for American Indian philosophy in particular and philosophy in general. Using autobiographical narrative, Nawagesic describes the gradual emergence of one type of identity importantly (but not exclusively) premised on difference and subordination in relation to the dominant culture. Besides the phenomenological retrieval of a pattern I would argue is analogous to other people's ways of human-being built on negotiating political dominion and exile from one's home, the narrative reminded me of some remarks by Karen Warren about the need for first-person narrative in any ethics that takes relationships *seriously*.¹

The last selection in this section, "Ontology of Identity and Interstitial Being," by Anne Waters, thematizes an American Identity as liminal and protean, built on cognitive dissonances, yet important, anchored by place, kinship, and responsibility. Such an identity fosters recognition of the political factors at work in its own formation, and is not easily described in terms of the dominant models of identity as unitary or coherent. Yet as anchored, interstitial being opens out to accountability, conscience, and moral-political commitment.

Waters' essay thus forms a bridge to **Part VI, Ethics and Respect**. V. F. Cordova's "Ethics: The We and the I," frames American Indian considerations in light of a reading of Aristotle's ethics as importantly counter to the distorted understandings of individuality characterizing most Western ethical models. Native ethics improves upon Aristotle's in understanding of social being in far more extensive and non-hierarchical terms. These differences are manifest, anthropologists' misunderstandings notwithstanding, in American Indian concepts and practices for teaching of autonomy, self-reliance and responsibility as intertwined virtues. Additional practices of moral education are both depicted and demonstrated in the next article, "Choctaw Conceptions of the Excellence of the Self, with Implications for Education," by Thurman Lee Hester,

Jr. Hester is particularly masterful at transitioning between Choctaw modes of storytelling and more Western styles of philosophical discourse. He is specifically concerned to demonstrate the ethical ramifications of sensitivity to contexts and related ethical-epistemological attention to efficiency, practices of correction, and the nuances of respecting others. Hester's adroit use of humor is notable as well, and an American Indian philosophical consideration of the place of humor in morality and metaphysics is worthy of consideration. I'll come back to this issue a little later.

Like all decent conceptions of ethics (I think), Native concepts are *irreducibly* social, and we have seen arguments from the beginning about the ethical dimensions of epistemology. So it is fitting that the final article in the section links both issues and thus also serves as a fitting transition to the next section on social and political philosophy. In "Biocolonialism and the Commodification of Knowledge," Laurie Anne Whitt traces the rise in intellectual property law in the service of capitalist profit motives and the nefarious consequences for Indigenous peoples around the globe. The notions of knowledge as product contrasts with an alternative Indigenous conception of knowledge (and diverse life forms) as gifts, "given, not produced" (Whitt 195) and not simply detachable from their environmental, historical and social context without grave damage. Seen in terms of this conception, Native peoples' opposition to the Human Genome Diversity Project and to the patenting of traditional knowledge is coherent and compelling. Rather than racing to document, those interested in preserving biodiversity and retrieving endangered knowledge practices should first address the social-political *causes* of endangerment and disappearance, and thus align themselves with Native efforts to gain self-determination. It is the responsibility and right of the bearers of traditional knowledges to determine to whom, and how, their gift should be given.

The first reading in **Part VII, Social and Political Philosophy**, continues examination of the alignment of the law and colonialist power. In "The Jurisprudence of Colonialism," Steve Russell argues that as objects of legal discourses, an externalist, postmodern incredulity is the appropriate stance from which to undertake the urgent work of American Indian legal philosophy. Taking us through the development of U.S. Indian law and policy with attention to several specific cases, he shows that it can only be understood deconstructively. At the same time, American Indian experience shows the insufficiency of postmodernism for articulating calls for justice. Russell's work thus implicitly raises the issue of philosophy as strategy in a dangerous political context.

This issue is approached directly in Dale Turner's "Oral Traditions and the Politics of (Mis)recognition." For Turner, the central problem for American Indian intellectuals is that of nations' sovereignty and political recognition. He suggests that to argue that Indigenous oral traditions furnish philosophical answers to epistemological and metaphysical questions is to perhaps miss the point, and to misplace energies better devoted to grappling with the fact that legal and political issues facing Native peoples will always be couched in the terms of the dominators. Turner argues that oral traditions should stay in their communities, because he is skeptical that juridical attempts to accommodate them can be successful. In juridical discourse, oral traditions will always be structured by an inherent asymmetry of justification; to make sense to the dominant language they will have to be deformed, and the attempt to make sense marks them as somehow up for negotiation. Turner urges American Indian philosophers to reticence and to the dangerous, lonely work of being "word

warriors," adept at dominant discourses in the service of community survival and sovereignty.

In "Repatriation: Religious Freedom, Equal Protection, and Institutional Racism," Annette Arkeketa takes readers through the history of government-sanctioned looting of Native graves and other sacred sites. Her chronicle ends on a somewhat hopeful note as she documents some positive development accomplished by the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978, and in particular, the Native American Graves Repatriation Act of 1990.

Part VIII, Esthetics, opens with V.F. Cordova's "Ethics: From an Artist's Point of View." Offering a comparison between Western and Indian conceptions of the artist and her responsibility to her community, Cordova characterizes the Western artist as understood in metaphysical terms as a disruptive reflection of a chaotic universe, often alienated from the community. In contrast, a Native view of the artist is as a scientist investigating the world and a healer nurturing the creative powers of a fundamentally orderly universe, fully embedded in the community. Cordova argues that in American Indian thought, ethics and esthetics are fundamentally indistinguishable and are based on the principles of balance and harmony. While balance is not stasis, it is on the side of order, and this brings me to a question.

Balance and harmony on all levels are values emphasized by a number of thinkers through the anthology. On the social level, DuFour stresses their centrality as moral concerns structuring belief practices. And Cajete stresses the view of the universe as balanced that is operative in Native conceptions of science. Cajete also interestingly links balance with chaos. In this light I wonder again about the function of humor. Humor would seem to be more allied with chaos – in the service of order perhaps, but operating via the sometimes subtle, sometimes shocking disruption of the psychic, conceptual, or social status quo. How does humor fit with Cordova's ethical conception of the artist as investigator and healer?

The next selection, by David Martinez, considers the path of integration charted by Ojibwa abstract painter George Morrison in "Along the Horizon World Appears: George Morrison and the Pursuit of an American Indian Esthetic." Morrison trained in Western schools of painting and spent a good part of his life far from his birthplace. Although devoid of specific representational content or symbol, Morrison's "Horizon Series" is a sustained act of reverence, a ritual, in honor of Lake Superior as sacred to the Ojibwa, accomplished after Morrison moved back to its shores. As such, it is also an investigation, in Cordova's sense, of the perceptual horizon as organizing our visual experience and the bodily-historical-cultural horizon organizing memory and place. As moving in correlation with the person, a horizon is perceived ambiguously, and it forms a boundary between the known and the mysterious. Rendering this ambiguity, presenting it for meditation, is part of Morrison's task as an artist bringing forth the perceptual world. Listening to his origins speak through dreams and memory, and participating through his painting in bringing forth the living spirit of the lake is part of Morrison's task as an artist who is Ojibwa. Thus Morrison's living and working presents another conception of American Indian authenticity.

The chapter on Esthetics ends with a consideration by Thurman Lee Hester Jr., of the proper and fitting ways to bring forth American Indian philosophy in the Euro-American context. The article thus comes full circle to concerns raised by Deloria in the anthology's inaugural chapter. Characterizing Euro-American philosophy as focused almost exclusively on arriving at the correct beliefs, he elucidates American Indian emphases on practices, fittingly through a story. The profound difference between concern for orthodoxy on the one side and orthopraxy

on the other (the ramifications of which have barely been touched upon), will cause some trouble in the communication between Native American philosophers and the Euro-American philosophers who are the gatekeepers to the academy for the foreseeable future. Yet communication is crucial, as the potential benefits to us all could be enormous. Hester offers suggestions not only for the recognizing of diverse wisdoms but for the working together of diverse peoples, and his contribution closes the anthology's essay section on a hopeful and graceful note.

Disclosure about the reviewer:

Agnes B. Curry is a philosopher of mixed Latino-Anglo heritage whose training is mainly in Western historical, phenomenological, and critical theory traditions.

Endnotes

1. Karen J. Warren, "The Power and the Promise of Ecological Feminism," reprinted in various anthologies from *Environmental Ethics*, Vol. 12 (Summer 1990). My copy is reprinted in *Environmental Ethics: Readings in Theory and Application*, ed. Louis P. Pojman (Wadsworth, 2001), 193.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

a. Submissions are requested for the *APA Newsletter on American Indians In Philosophy*, email to brendam234@aol.com, or snail mail to Anne Waters, 1806 Arizona, NE, Albuquerque, NM 87110 USA.

b. The new book *American Indian Thought: Philosophical Essays*, edited by Anne Waters, has just been released by Blackwell. A special session devoted to discussion articles in the book will be held at the Pacific Division APA meeting in 2004. Books are available for Spring courses.

c. Dale Turner is working on gathering scholars to Dartmouth University for the first ever independent meeting of the American Indian Philosophy Association. New webpages are underway and will be forthcoming by early 2004. Please contact Dale Turner at dale.turner@Dartmouth.edu or Anne Waters at brendam234@aol.com if you have any joint funding ideas or want to share in bringing this conference to fruition in any other ways.

