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**Indigenous Leadership In A Flat World**

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# Indigenous Leadership in a Flat World<sup>1</sup>

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The world is flat, so we are now told. In his recent book *The World is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-First Century*, Thomas Friedman argues that since the beginning of the Twentieth century globalization\*<sup>2</sup> has evolved at an astronomically fast rate. As a result, the world is now inter-connected in complex ways such that time and space between peoples, nations, and individuals no longer matter.<sup>3</sup> The economic, political, and technological realities of the twenty-first century have profoundly leveled the global playing field and there is no turning back. The argument, although decidedly Eurocentric, shows quite clearly that the fate of Indigenous peoples remains under serious threat of political and cultural annihilation. In this discussion, we begin from this idea of a flat world and reflect on the idea of leadership and what it means for Aboriginal peoples to survive, not only in a complex modern world, but to thrive as distinctive Indigenous nations within it. The fact is, Indigenous peoples have *not* fallen off Friedman's flat world. Indeed, whatever the metaphor the dominant culture uses to understand modernity, the world's Indigenous peoples remain an integral part of humanity, and modernity. This paper represents a call to our people, especially our young people, to take up the challenges of so-

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<sup>2</sup> Terms that require additional explanation will be marked with an \* and defined in a glossary at the end of the paper.

<sup>3</sup> Thomas L. Friedman, *The World is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-First Century*, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2006.

called modernity and return Indigenous peoples to our rightful place within the global community.

Our discussion follows in two parts. The first part focuses on, although briefly, the complex relationship between modernity and Indigenous peoples. Contemporary Indigenous leadership must embrace many facets of modernity; yet, Indigenous peoples continue to assert and protect their distinctive “Indigenusness” or what has now trendily become known as our “Indigeneity.”\* Making sense of the meaning and content of our Indigeneity, and especially how it relates to modernity, is one theme of our discussion. Of course, understanding the meaning of modernity and Indigeneity is not only an intellectual challenge – it has substantial, often devastating, practical effects in our communities. We hope to show that Indigenous peoples are part of, indeed integral to, the evolving global community, and that the well being of our communities depends on how well our leaders can effectively participate in this complex, often challenging world. In this paper we use language that our scholarly training equips us with in order to convey the experience and the political positioning of our people under the difficult political conditions that we have inherited and live within and struggle with today. In this paper one of our underlying premises, or assumptions is that there is an “interpretive gap” between what the settler society believes to be their history and what their place in this territory is and our understanding of our history (and evolving histories) as distinct Indigenous nations and our place in this territory is. We invite our readers to think about that interpretive gap between understandings of the past and the present vis-à-vis settlers, but also direct our readers to think with the terminology -- the words and the languages that we have been trained to use -- in order to articulate, or to express our arguments in this paper.

Our position is that this is our land and it has never been sold or rightfully taken from us, that we are distinct peoples not only in relation to those that came here from Europe in the “modern period” but also that we are distinct from each other. Some of the terminology, or words that we use to express our distinctiveness from settlers, or Euro-Canadians, or more recent immigrants to North America such as “Indigenous”, “Indigeneity,” “First Nation”, “Indian”, do not properly capture or convey the rich distinctiveness of our cultural, philosophical or political traditions in the plural. Not only are we, as Indigenous peoples, very different from those that came to our lands and now claim it as their own, we are also very different from *each other*.

The language and the terms that we use in this paper can barely capture or convey those nuanced and meaningful differences but our aim is to protect those spaces of difference and invite our leaders to do so as well. We use scholarly terms such as “Indigeneity,” “modernity” and “colonialism”\* for just those purposes: to discuss the critical need for leadership in a time when some would imagine that our people and our cultures, like the world, would be flattened by the expectation of sameness. This is what modernity and now globalization would have some believe. We will argue otherwise. We have included a glossary at the end of this paper so that our readers will think with (and perhaps against) the terminology that we are using to express the experiences and political positioning of our people.

As the meaning and content of modernity evolve, the unfortunate reality is that, for many non-Indigenous people, Indigenous peoples continue to represent modernity’s antithesis – if European cultures represent the civilized world, then Indigenous cultures represent the barbaric world. The next few generations of Indigenous leaders must understand the complexities of modernity, and how to engage the dominant culture, but they must do so in ways that preserves a rich understanding of what makes Indigenous peoples Indigenous: this is how we want to

characterize our Indigeneity. In a very real way, our survival as distinctive political entities depends on how well we can assert and protect our cultures *within* an evolving, often-hostile, global world.

If one part of our discussion focuses on the idea of modernity and how it relates to Indigenous peoples and the global community, the other part has to focus on our communities themselves. It is important for young Indigenous people to grow up knowing that our leaders are not only our politically elected officials or hereditary chiefs; rather, our artists, writers, intellectuals of various sorts (for example, our medicine people and teachers) must also exercise important leadership roles in our communities. In addition, the role of women as social and political leaders is central to the health and well-being of virtually all Indigenous cultures. Most importantly, communities need to become aware that who speaks *for* the community matters, just as who speaks as leaders *within* the community matters. Numerous influences from outside the community continue to challenge Indigenous cultures, and one way to resist this onslaught is for Indigenous communities to know what they need to do to protect their Indigeneity. This involves a complex relationship between looking outwards at the dominant culture and looking within our communities. We will show that this dynamic relationship is not so easily understood; yet, our survival as distinctive political entities within the “flat” world depends on it.

The idea of a flat world is, as defended by Friedman, decidedly Eurocentric.\* For centuries, European intellectuals have been trying make sense of the world. Since the so-called “discovery” of the so-called “new” world, there have been countless explanations about what it all means for us – “us” meaning, of course, Europeans. Friedman’s account of a flat world is yet another explanation of the way the world “is.” Indigenous peoples have their own explanations of the way the world is too, the main difference being that our explanations do not find their way into

the dominant culture's landscape of useful ideas. Colonialism is an unavoidable dimension of our reality; yet, making sense of it and, more importantly, making our understandings of colonialism ultimately do work for us in ways that empower us as Indigenous peoples is quite another matter. Part of Indigenous leadership must think about the global world and act in it *because* we are part of it, and therefore we ought to have a say in how humanity should evolve. We cannot do so unless we come to grips with what colonialism means and how it is put to use in the world.

Indigenous leadership embraces a complex overlapping set of practices that weave together Indigenous and Eurocentric cultural practices. This means that our leaders have to consist of people who know Indigenous ways of living and people who are familiar with how the dominant world functions. We understand that this is challenging and that our leaders are not perfect people that can always do both. However, they should try to be open to both, and if possible, to find a balance between our traditions and the mainstream, or dominant world. Our survival as distinctive political communities depends on how effectively we assert and protect our Indigeneity against the perpetual onslaught of European colonialism.

### **Modernity and Indigeneity**

Indigenous peoples have always had to survive in the world. Many of the conditions that we lived within were not man-made, although inter-human violence certainly was a part of Indigenous life. Indigenous peoples still need to survive harsh conditions. The difference is that the conditions of survival have changed drastically. Many of the harsh conditions that we face in our day-to-day lives are man-made and are a result of power inequities. Violence of many kinds has become much more destructive. Capitalist, property-based, global societies, where particular

kinds of discourses determine the legitimacy, or justness, of a people's course of action, now dominate world and domestic politics.\* Indigenous peoples cannot ignore the swiftly changing world of global politics. Our very survival as Indigenous peoples depends on it, as these are the globalizing discourses of change and that would flatten us and have us disappear.

Yet, how we do so matters greatly. Global and domestic politics have evolved in ways that continue to ignore, marginalize and distort Indigenous peoples' ways of thinking about the world (and certainly traditional ways of living). Indigenous leadership is intimately connected with how well we can assert and defend our rights, sovereignty, and nationhood in the hostile culture of Eurocentric politics. This is no easy task. It means that we have to understand, not only the effects of colonialism, but also the sources of colonialism, as well as the way in which it is still a governing logic in our lives. Our leaders have to know more about European ways of thinking *because*, for the most part, we do not have a big say in determining the legal and political practices of the state. At the same time, we may need to think about forming our own states around our own First Nations, and understand simultaneously how both systems of governance work: ours and theirs. If our leaders are to make inroads into these exclusive kinds of legal and political practices they must be accepted into the community of practitioners. Indigenous peoples have made their presence felt in areas of law, politics, and academia, but in many ways we remain frustratingly on the outside of the movers and shakers in these various fields. Because many of us have decided to *remain* Indigenous rather than assimilate into the mainstream means that we remain outside of, are marginalized from and are critical of certain spheres of power and many facets of mainstream society. As well, on a different level, both racism and sexism alienate us not only from certain "fields" or "literatures" or "career-choices", racism and sexism

may also alienate us from *safety*, as the thirty-year crisis of “murdered and missing” Native women in Canada attests.<sup>4</sup>

The point we wish to make here however, is one about knowledge production, which may also relate to how safe we may be in the long run. Being “outside of the movers and shakers in these various fields” is not a condition that is particular to people of our era. Anti-colonial thinkers such as Frantz Fanon, Alfred Memmi, Vine Deloria Jr. and Edward Said reflected critically upon the world that they lived within and what was needed to create more just relations between people.<sup>5</sup> They wrote from different places and prescribed different forms of action but they all discussed the role of the intellectual as a person of action (although sometimes of exile). They argued that it was not easy for any one to be aware of the unjust political and economic conditions that most of the world has inherited, but how consciousness or awareness of this must engender change. Taiaiake Alfred has most recently written about this in the Indigenous context, and he instructs us to return to our traditions and also to move away from a model of “co-

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<sup>4</sup> Please consult STOLEN SISTERS: Discrimination and Violence Against Indigenous Women in Canada – A Summary of Amnesty International’s Concerns <http://web.amnesty.org/library/index/engamr200012004> (last accessed 16/06/2007) and Sherene Razack “The Murder of Pamela George” in *Race, Space and the Law: Unmapping a White Settler Society* edited by Sherene H. Razack, Toronto: Between the Lines Press, 2002. For a cross-border treatment of similar issues of gender/race and violence please consult Andrea Lee Smith’s *Conquest: Sexual Violence and Native American Genocide*, Boston: South End Press, 2004;

<sup>5</sup> Several of the classic texts on anti-colonialism are: Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, Trans. By Richard Philcox, Grove Press, 2004; Alfred Memmi, *The Colonizer and the Colonized*, Trans. By Howard Greenfeld, Orion Press, 1965; Vine Deloria, Jr., *Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto*, Oklahoma Press, 1988; Edward Said, *Orientalism*, Pantheon Books, 1978. See also Winona LaDuke, *All Our Relations: Native Struggles for Land and Life*, South End Press, 1999; Patricia Monture-Angus, *Thunder in my Soul: A Mohawk Woman Speaks*, Fernwood Publishing, 1999; and, Rigoberta Menchu, *I, Rigoberta Menchu: An Indian Woman in Guatamala*, Trans. Ann Wright, London, Verso, 1984.

optation”, a space where we work for regimes of power that continue to oppress us and keep us down.<sup>6</sup>

Indigenous youth must be mindful of these issues, because regardless of how one views the legal and political relationship we cannot escape the reality of colonialism. Indigenous peoples remain very much embedded in a system of colonial power relations. The Oxford English dictionary defines “colonialism” as a system or principle “used in the derogatory sense of an *alleged* policy of exploitation of backward or weak peoples by a large power”(emphasis added). For Indigenous people colonialism is *not* an historical period that is now over; it continues to define the relationship between our people and the European newcomers. In this respect, Indigenous peoples live with the practical, and philosophical, effects of colonialism in the *present*. Colonialism is the reason why our people still have difficulty getting bank loans, why there is *not* a national crisis over the missing or murdered native women in Canada, why there are barricades and protests by our people over land issues every two to five years, and why some of our people hold cards that declare that they are Indian and some (who we know are) do not. Colonialism as a physical force has showed its effects clearly, but we are only now examining – in serious ways – its effects on the very way Indigenous peoples have come to think about the world, and more importantly, how we think about ourselves. We also have internalized many of these views about our value in the larger society and sometimes allow certain forms of systemic or institutional forms of racism and sexism to persist. How often do we see Indian bank tellers in Montreal? Or Halifax? Or Toronto?

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<sup>6</sup> See Taiaiake Alfred, *Peace Power and Righteousness*, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1999 and *Wasasé: Indigenous Pathways of Action and Freedom*, Peterborough, Broadview Press, 2005.

These inequities are governed by institutions but those institutions are also guided by ideas that justify their practices. And so it is that we always must turn to the ideas, the problem of finding the philosophical roots of colonialism, and how we ought to think about it, is that it involves quite a different kind of “investigation”. For example, the relationships between colonialism, modernity and Indigeneity are complex, and it is well beyond the scope of this discussion to examine these relationships closely. It is important, though, to see that colonialism continues to shape modernity in ways that distort and marginalize Indigenous ways of thinking about the world. For example, one of the defining characteristics of modernity is the authority of science.<sup>7</sup> Generally, science is thought of as something that advances ; as it progresses science generates more and more knowledge about the world. To *do* science is to engage the real world, to be able to work with its laws and theories in order to discover more about how the world “is”. By being good scientists we gain access to the truth about the world – at the very least, science is valued by many as the only legitimate source of knowledge.

But science is also a social activity. The training required to become a member of the scientific community involves years and years of difficult study. To *be* a scientist is to *learn* to think about and see the world in a certain way and to demonstrate this knowledge within a community of privileged practitioners. Of course, scientists disagree with each other, sometimes vehemently; but the fact remains that all scientists receive the same kind of education. As a community, practitioners determine what kinds of problems are relevant, and therefore what kinds of solutions count as legitimate. Science evolves by using the scientific method, which is built upon the foundations of empirical evidence\* and theoretical corroboration.

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<sup>7</sup> For the classic work on the authority of scientific inquiry, and especially the idea of a changing “scientific paradigm,” in the European intellectual tradition, see Thomas Kuhn’s *Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962.

Technology is, of course, the realization of a scientific body of knowledge. Changes in medicine, communication, and especially military weapons have re-invented a world so radically different from even twenty years ago that we cannot ignore its effects on us. Indigenous peoples must understand the effects of these technologies on their cultures. Yet, we cannot lose sight of the fact that, as Indigenous peoples, we have technologies that are specific to our cultures such as our languages, our traditional knowledges and the instruments that we use to implement those knowledges as we heal our people and harvest and cultivate our crops in the present day. But the scientific and technological dimensions of contemporary life are only part of the story about modernity. The intellectual framework that underlies the scientific understanding of the world is deeply embedded in the way we make sense of the world. But Indigenous peoples have worldviews of their own that have evolved for thousands of years **without** European influence. For the most part, these ways of understanding the world have not been recognized as valuable within the Western European history of ideas. This flattening of our philosophies and our technologies by the discourse of science (among other discourses) is part of our struggle with modernity.

Of course, though, we have tried to validate our ways of thinking about the world in the dominant culture – without much success. The problem for us is that, although there are those non-Indigenous people who do recognize the value of our ways of understanding the world, the fact remains that Indigenous ways of understanding the world remain marginalized within the legal, political, and social practices of the dominant culture. This is not going to change anytime soon, and we probably have to just accept this and continue to learn, practice, and re-learn our traditions in the face of this indifference to our ways of knowing. At the same time, colonialism demands that we speak the language of the status quo. More precisely stated: the fact that we

must speak the language of the dominant culture in order to assert and protect our rights, sovereignty, and nationhood shows that we remain embedded in a colonial relationship – this imperative itself is a manifestation of colonialism.

It is important to see, though, that Indigenous peoples have always resisted colonialism. Through the various forms of resistance we have defined and re-defined ourselves within the ongoing historical relationship with the dominant culture. So where there has been colonialism, there has been resistance. It is also important to see that many of these forms of resistance have been directed outwards – towards the dominant culture. This means that we have always had to engage the dominant culture at some level. In a very real way, the relationship has always been dialogical. But what do we mean by “dialogical”? We must first ask what we mean by “dialogue”?\* Colonialism has created a legal and political relationship where our survival as distinct nations depends on how effective we are at using the discourses of the state. An example of what we mean by discourse is to examine what Section 35(1) of the *Constitution Act, 1982* means in legal practice. Remember that section 35(1) states: “The existing aboriginal and treaty rights of the aboriginal peoples in Canada are hereby recognized and affirmed.” The Supreme Court has interpreted the meaning and content of section 35 since its inception in 1982. By now, it should be self-evident that being able to influence the Court’s legal decisions about the meaning and content of section 35 rights is a necessary condition of our survival. What we mean by dialogue and “dialogical” is that we must be able to engage both of these discourses: our own and those of the state.

This brings us to the point we want to make in this first part of our discussion: the need for dialogue means that we must engage the discourses of rights, sovereignty, nationhood and the importance of leadership within our communities that can interpret, translate and then express

what those terms mean both to us and to the world outside of us. What does this mean in terms of how we ought to think about Indigenous leadership? It means that some of our leaders must assert the legitimacy of our claims, and defend our lands, using the recognized discourses of the state. To do so effectively means that we need to understand how the philosophical frameworks that define the normative language of rights, sovereignty, and nationhood are held together. As we stated earlier, this is no easy task. To complicate matters, while Indigenous intellectuals need to engage these discourses, they must also be keenly aware of the hard fact that how they engage the legal and political practices of the state matters. In Canada, it means that we cannot believe that the *only* source of legitimacy for our claims against the state is rooted in section 35 of the Constitution. In other words, we cannot become “Hang around the court Indians,” this will be manifest in the exercise of our *inherent rights*. Our leaders must believe that Indigenous ways of knowing the world are valuable, and therefore are also indispensable sources of legal and political legitimacy.

### *Asymmetries and Leadership*

But this raises a serious dilemma for our leaders. The dilemma arises when we examine the following table:

<b>Indigenous Ways of Knowing</b>	<b>Settler Ways of Knowing</b>
Indigenous explanations of ownership. Oral histories.	Discourse of rights, sovereignty, and nationhood. Legal and political practices of the state. (e.g. Section 35(1) Aboriginal rights.)

<b>Foundations:</b> Indigenous ways of knowing. Indigenous oral traditions.	<b>Foundations:</b> Western European history of ideas. Western European philosophical tradition.
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The table captures the dilemma faced by our leaders. How do our leaders translate what is important to us into terms that are understandable to the state and how do they do so without sacrificing our own meanings, our integrity as self-determining and self-governing peoples? For example, Indigenous explanations of ownership are rooted in Indigenous intellectual traditions that have long philosophical traditions. Does the language of ‘property’ as set forth by Western political theorists like John Locke then capture the meaning of ownership, or ‘relatedness’ to our land when we talk about *territory*?\* As you can see from the table above, there will necessarily be an asymmetry, or a difference, in the meanings of these terms for each people, and it is the responsibility of our leaders to make that translation for us and to do so in ways that preserve the interpretations and meanings of the people they represent.

For example, in the case of Aboriginal Rights (sec. 35 (1) ) of the *Constitution Act, 1982*) the asymmetry arises because Indigenous leaders are forced to use Indigenous ways of knowing – our oral traditions – to justify the legitimacy of section 35 rights, which are embedded within the Western European philosophical tradition. Indigenous oral histories generate explanations that are rooted in Indigenous intellectual traditions. Whether the oral traditions can be used to generate suitable explanations within the discourses of rights, sovereignty, and nationhood remains to be determined. Can Indigenous explanations of ownership simply be “translated” into the languages of Canadian public policy? Highly specialized skills in interpretation and translation are needed by our leaders as they have to communicate in these languages. Whether

the answer is yes or no, for Indigenous peoples, *who* engages in these kinds of intellectual activities matters. We are arguing here that it is leadership in every form – artists, intellectuals, parents, youth – that must undertake these activities.

If Indigenous ways of knowing the world are translatable into the legal and political discourses of the state, then we must be very cautious about who does the translating. In addition, we must have a rich dialogue within our communities so that those who participate in the broader intellectual culture may hear these translations – interpretations – by women, youth and intellectuals. How the meaning and content of our ways of knowing the world are explained in English to a culture that is not intimately familiar with Indigenous cultures is a tough task. In many Indigenous communities, only certain people may speak about and/or teach Indigenous knowledge, and then they may not reveal the context from which Indigenous practices gain their legitimacy. Regardless, to translate Indigenous ways of knowing the world into English may read as an attempt to *change* Indigenous cultures, the interior spaces of our communities and our knowledges where sacredness and tradition reside, into cultures that unproblematically accept the discourses of rights, sovereignty, and nationhood as the only authoritative sources of Indigenous political claims. We realize these languages may be read as a sort of violence upon those interior spaces of our being, but we want to argue instead that they are used to simply protect, through the language of the dominant culture – in a way that they understand – what we regard as ours.

However, two imperatives arise if the legal and political of the state could evolve in ways that accommodated or respected Indigenous ways of knowing the world. First, Indigenous voices would need to participate in these practices on their own terms. Secondly, Indigenous intellectuals would need to be intimately familiar with the legal and political discourses that are supposed to be able to evolve and accommodate Indigenous ways of knowing. The relationship

between the forms of knowledge embedded in our communities and the discourses of rights, sovereignty, and nationhood represent the division of intellectual labour that Indigenous peoples must seek to resolve. Our young people need to know who speaks about what and when to say it.

The relationship is difficult enough when we enter into a dialogue believing that we can understand each other. It becomes much more troublesome when we assume that Indigenous ways of knowing the world are not compatible with Western European modes of thinking – when we assume that we cannot understand each other, and therefore we do not attempt to dialogue. What makes this kind of political relationship troublesome is that Indigenous peoples must articulate the meaning and content of their rights in a language that is acceptable to the Canadian legal and political system. Quite simply, we have to assert and defend the legitimacy of our legal and political claims within the existing legal and political practices of the state. But if we assume that they will never understand us, then what does that tell us about how we ought to participate in a political relationship with the state?

We do not have firm answers to these questions, but based on this discussion have some suggestions. Our leadership, understood by us to be not only formally elected communicators with the state (such as band council officials) but also hereditary leaders, as well as women, youth, intellectuals and others who are in relationships of concern, care and listening, are the social basis of all knowledge-formation within Indigenous communities. They *become* leaders when they move from a position of concern, care and listening to one of action. We are, as Indigenous peoples of the 21st century, deeply involved in the processes and flows of the so-called modern world – of colonialism and globalization. As we translate our care and concern into action we have to speak languages that are understandable to both ourselves and to them and we must be able to participate effectively across divides. There will be costs and

misunderstandings, but it is a strong leadership, emerging from a diverse field of experience and discourse within our communities, that can advance our solutions in our own ways. As we attempt to redress the difficult asymmetries of power and knowledge that have marked the colonial experience for us, it is this task at hand that we must undertake. We are people, not objects of some Eurocentric idea of modernity, but people who change global and local conditions for ourselves and, possibly even, for others. When we are seen in this way we can never be understood as the antithesis of modernity.

### ***Final Thoughts***

Leadership, then, embraces complex relationships within our communities. Our young people live in a world that continues to be shaped by the values, institutions, economies, and political policies of the dominant culture. But we continue to assert forms of legal, political and spiritual distinctiveness. Our children need to be raised in communities that know and respect our distinctiveness – *our* Indigeneity. When we respect our cultural values we respect ourselves - then we are able to embrace the difficult work of revitalizing our languages, ceremonies and political institutions. When we celebrate the healthy vibrancy of our day-to-day community life our children grow up with a deeper sense of belonging. We do not need to feel a deep sense of loss when our children leave our communities, nor will our children feel the desire to leave their communities to seek a “better” life in a flat world. Our young people need to see that the better life lies within our existing communities and it is up to all of us to determine how we should act accordingly. It is a challenge, but our survival as Indigenous peoples depends upon it. We call

upon our youth to accept this challenge and for our men, women, and Elders to nurture and guide them accordingly.

## Glossary of Terms

Page 1: “*Globalization*” – “Globalization” is a term that is similar in spirit to Friedman’s view of a “flat world.” Globalization refers to the fact that the world is now connected in economic, technical and cultural spheres that have evolved into one unified global community. For more accessible definitions of globalization see <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/globalization/> and <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Globalization>. For more detailed accounts of globalization see Joseph E. Stiglitz. *Globalization and Its Discontents*, New York: W.W. Norton & Company, (2002) and Alex MacGillivray. *A Brief History of Globalization: the Untold Story of our Incredible Shrinking Planet*, Carroll & Graf (2006).

Page 1: “*Modernity*” - The concept of “modernity” has been at the center of Western European intellectual culture at least since the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and therefore literature on the subject is enormous. There is a great deal of controversy and disagreement over what modernity means, as it encompasses virtually every aspect of life: art, science, technology, architecture, literature, economics, politics, philosophy, and of course culture. For a general discussion of modernity see <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Modernity>. For a general survey of the origins and evolution of modernity in Western European thought, see *Introducing the Enlightenment*, Lloyd Spencer, Andrzej, Richard Appignanesi (Editors), Icon Books, Ltd., 2006, and *Modernity: An Introduction to Modern Societies*, Stuart Hall et al. (Editors), Blackwell Publishers, 1996.

Page 2 : “*Indigeneity*” - “Indigeneity” is a term used to characterize the distinctive cultural, historical and political reality of Indigenous peoples. These forms of distinctiveness emerge, in part, from Indigenous peoples’ unique political and historical experiences with European settlers. Indigenous peoples, however, argue that their unique relationships to their homelands constitute the main moral and political force of their legal and political distinctiveness. The liberal rights theorist Jeremy Waldron argues that the distinctive historical and political relationships that settler societies have with Indigenous peoples do *not* merit special consideration for the determination of Indigenous rights today, even though Indigenous people have experienced great historical injustice in the process of having their land and their culture radically transformed by the process of colonization. See Jeremy Waldron, “Indigeneity? First Peoples and Last Occupancy,” *NZJPIL*, Vol. 1, 2003. For critiques of Waldron’s argument see Duncan Ivison, “Historical Injustice,” *Oxford Handbook to Political Theory*, Jon Dryzek, Bonnie Honnig, Anne Phillipps (eds), Oxford University Press, 2006, and Paul Patton, “Historic Injustice and the Possibility of Supersession,” *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 26(3), 2005.

Page 3: “*Colonialism*” – In its most straightforward context, “colonialism” refers to the territorial expansion of one society into the territory of another. But colonialism has much deeper roots in the context of Indigenous peoples. Colonialism also includes the explicit and implicit “set of beliefs” that are used to justify the expansion of one people into the territory of another. Colonialism, then, has both physical and philosophical dimensions. For a general discussion of colonialism see <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colonialism>. For more detailed discussions about Indigenous peoples and colonialism see Colin Calloway, *First Peoples: A Documentary Survey of American Indian History*, Bedford/St. Martins, 1999 and Robert Williams, Jr., *The American Indian in Western Legal Thought*, New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990.

Page 4: “*Eurocentric*” – By “Eurocentric” we mean that the way a problem is thought about and articulated is in a way that does not (seriously) consider the intelligibility of Indigenous worldviews.

Page 6: “*Discourse*” - We use the word “discourse” in this paper in a special way. A discourse is not only a language that contains conversations, arguments, and other narratives; it also includes a political dimension. A discourse is grounded in the assumptions that generate language, such as the way we understand race, class, gender and, for our purposes, Indigenous peoples.

Page 9: “*Empirical evidence*” – “Empirical evidence” is evidence that we obtain solely through our senses. There is a long philosophical debate over the nature of knowledge and the “true” sources of knowledge. Empiricists defend the position that we can only gain knowledge of the world through the use of our senses. For a philosophical discussion of empiricism and its objections see <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/rationalism-empiricism/>.

Page 11: “*Dialogical*” – The main point we are making here is that to move beyond the contemporary colonial relationship will, by necessity, involve some kind of dialogue with the dominant culture.

Page 13: “*Political theorists like John Locke*” – John Locke (1632-1704) is an important European philosopher because his political philosophy, and in particular his views on property, have shaped contemporary legal understandings of property, justice, and even the way we understand knowledge. Locke is also important because he, along with Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) and Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), are known as “social contract theorists.” Social contract theory centers on the idea that legitimate political authority can only arise from the consent of those governed. Of course, how this consent is supposed to arise has been the subject of vigorous debate since the time of Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau.