

Chapter 3.

PEOPLES OF THE NORTHERN GREAT PLAINS

Part I. HOME IS THE RANGE

Pre-Columbian Conditions. Evidence of pre-historic bison hunting and a bison-based culture in the Northern Great Plains parallels that of the pre-history of the Southern Plains at the beginning of Chapter 2. And as in the Southern Great Plains, later immigration by predominantly agricultural tribes from the eastern plains resulted in a richer diversity of cultural expression, as the ways and rituals of the nomadic hunters and the farmers intermingled. The eastern tribes brought corn and semi-fixed encampments tied to agricultural productivity, while the pre-existing northern plains tribes shared the horse, and the high-protein meat and other essentials of survival afforded by the buffalo.

Contact and Conquest. By the time French trappers made their way into the Upper Plains in the mid-1700's, the region housed a rich cultural tapestry of tribes arrayed along the east-west corridor later to be documented in the journals of Merriwether Lewis and William Clark. The French first encountered the Nakota, Dakota, and Lakota peoples whom they collectively assigned the name "Sioux" because of language similarities. Further west they encountered the Shoshone, the Crow, the Hidatsa, the Kiowa, the Northern Cheyenne, and numerous other loosely affiliated culture groups.

One feature all these groups held in common is that they were at least seasonally nomadic. Those most heavily dependent on the bison simply moved with the herds, while those who had begun to incorporate agriculture, inter-tribal

commerce, and subsistence hunting on other less migratory game species roamed the range less extensively.

But for all these Northern Plains tribes, home was not a fixed place on the landscape. Their home was not *on* the range; home *was* the range. And at least in terms of contemporary cultural consciousness, the same is just as true today. There are sacred sites (many of them located in national parklands, such as Bears Lodge/Devils Tower) where tribal members still gather to perform ancient rituals on which the continuing rebirth of their cultures depend. These are to some degree simply focal points for the reaffirmation of deep-seated connections Plains tribal members hold for the vast landscapes that have nurtured and sustained their cultures over the centuries.

Several driving forces culminated in the scenes of great national tragedy on the Western Plains, such as the Sand Creek Massacre of 1864 and the Washita Battleground massacre of 1868 in the southern plains, and the Battle of the Little Bighorn a decade later and further north. Important among them is the almost incomprehensibly different visions of what it meant to be “home on the range” held by the Plains tribes whose home this was, and the immigrant homesteaders whose home this was to become.

For the indigenous seasonal nomads, home was wherever on the Plains within their traditional hunting grounds they happened to be. They carried their dwellings (tipis) with them, but it was the changing landscapes in which they pitched them that was home. But Kansas resident Brewster Higley wrote the lyrics to “Home on the Range” (which was to become the Kansas state song) in 1872 in the cradle of American Homesteader culture. This was a cluster of beliefs and legal doctrines,

grounded in congressional adoption of the Homestead Act of 1862, that had at its core the statutory right of any American citizen with the courage and fortitude to do so to stake an exclusive claim of private ownership on a plot of land open for entry on the Public Domain. The only responsibility accompanying this right was that homesteaders risk their family's lives and fortunes on converting these former indigenous hunting grounds into productive farmland.

If the gamble paid off, they would be Jefferson's "yeoman farmers", doing Congress' bidding in slicing and dicing what had been the free range of the national buffalo commons into an immense, compact checkerboard of fenced farmlands. This Civil War-era effort to populate the Great Plains with settlers from the east would nearly doom both the American Bison and the many culture groups that depended upon it. In the process, it also doomed several homesteader families and outposts who had innocently put down roots on lands tribal warrior societies regarded as essential hunting grounds.

In some ways, the westward migrants from increasingly compacted and opportunity-starved eastern states seeking a new life of self-determination on the western plains—as well as their unwilling indigenous new neighbors—can be seen as pawns in the terrible chess game Congress initiated in the 1862 Homestead Act. As described in Chapter 2, the 1851 Treaty of Fort Laramie assured to the Plains tribes unrestricted use of all lands east of the Continental Divide, north of the Arkansas River, south of the Platte River, and bounded on the east by a line 300 miles east of the Divide (much of present-day Colorado). But the U.S. Government failed to prevent white settlers and gold miners from invading this space. A decade later the government offered new conditions in the Treaty of Fort Wise, in which the tribes

would relinquish claims to about 90% of this territory (basically, the eastern two thirds of Colorado). A few tribes acceded to these conditions, but many did not.

Then came the 1862 Homestead Act, in which settlers were invited to establish farms and ranches on lands some of the Plains tribes had never agreed to relinquish. The stage was set for violent flare-ups between warrior tribes of the Plains and settlers working to convert tribal hunting grounds into farms and ranches. All hope of peaceful resolution of this intercultural conflict was lost in the wake of the 1864 Sand Creek Massacre (see Chapter 2); and war raged between the U.S. Army and the Plains Indians warrior societies throughout the 1860s.

Colorado Governor Evans authorized the killing of any American Indian not on a reservation in Colorado in 1864, which precipitated the Sand Creek Massacre and four long years of warfare between army units and Cheyenne warrior societies throughout the Colorado plains. Then in 1868, Army Commander Philip Sheridan authorized Colonel George Custer to essentially start committing genocide against any off-reservation Indians he founded encamped on the southern Plains, resulting in the Washita Massacre in Oklahoma in November of that year. His orders to Custer read, “to proceed . . . toward the Washita River, the supposed winter seat of the hostile tribes; to destroy their villages and ponies; to kill or hang all warriors and bring back all the women and children”.¹ This scorched-earth, total war approach launched against all the southern Plains tribes would soon clear the Colorado Territory of its indigenous population, with the exception of the high-country Utes (see chapter X).

Following in Sheridan’s wake was the utter transformation of the southern Plains landscape. His forces constituted a great Grim Reaper in more ways than one. As they killed or captured Plains Indians and destroyed their villages, following closely

behind were the ranchers, farmers, mining and logging companies, railroads, and land developers who would literally plow under the buffalo commons, and transform it into quilted squares of fenced homesteads, ranches and prairie towns.

They destroyed the buffalo herds, destroyed their habitat so they could not recover, and thus did their best to plow under Plains Indian culture as well. That Sheridan was waging war on the environment as a strategy for eradicating indigenous cultures is revealed in his own writings: “soon we shall have no Buffalo, no Elk, or Bear, and maybe no Indians. I think our new Museum (the Smithsonian in Washington) will have to collect samples of them for preservation to show our children”.²

But events further north were not paralleling Sheridan’s success in subduing the Arapaho and Cheyenne on the southern Plains. Surveying expeditions sent by the army in 1865 to establish a string of forts and permanent routes through Wyoming and into the Montana goldfields and points west—lands deep within the traditional hunting grounds/homelands of the Sioux—soon learned how formidable an adversary their unwilling hosts would be.³ A series of encounters culminated in resounding defeats of U.S. Cavalry forces in 1866 and 1867 by the Sioux war chiefs Red Cloud and Crazy Horse.

Rather than open a second northern front in the war against the Plains tribes, the federal government resolved to make peace with the Sioux in the north in the same year that Custer was staging dawn attacks on defenseless Cheyenne villages further south.⁴ With the end of the Civil War, Congress had reduced the Army’s budget and forces, and thus its war-fighting capabilities on the western frontier. So in April of 1868, a commission of U.S. Army generals made peace with the Lakota Sioux and

Arapaho at Ft. Laramie, Wyoming Territory. The treaty included an Army agreement to withdraw all forces from forts north of Wyoming's Powder River, leaving the plains to the north in Sioux hands. The Indian war chiefs agreed to cease depredations on Army posts and homesteaders south of the river,⁵ and to move onto the great Sioux reservation created by the treaty.

As it turned out, war with the Sioux was not so much averted as postponed. Rumors of gold in the Black Hills of present-day western South Dakota started circulating in 1871, confirmed by a cavalry expedition led by Col. George Armstrong Custer north of the Powder River into the Black Hills in 1874. A tidal wave of Gold Fever-infected prospectors and mining-related commerce then flowed into the Black Hills. The U.S. Government abandoned all pretense of enforcing the 1868 Treaty of Ft. Laramie, which called for keeping all Americans south of the Powder River. The Sioux felt betrayed, and responded accordingly.

Late in 1875 the U.S. Interior Department ordered all Plains tribes to report to their designated reservations, in an effort to bring hostilities to an end. The order also stipulated tribes or bands who chose not to do so would be considered enemies of the government. But many Sioux leaders and their councils refused. So often since the 1868 treaty, the food, blankets, and other provisions the federal government had promised the tribes to help them survive the brutal winters of the northern plains had not been supplied. Indians reporting to forts, agencies, and reservations were all too often starving, freezing, and/or succumbing to diseases for which their bodies had no defense. They understood the Interior Department order to be a death sentence.

In June of 1876, the Teton Sioux held a great summer encampment in eastern Montana on near the banks of the Little Bighorn River, which included both tribal

members who had left the reservation and those who had refused to settle there. Joined by bands of Arapaho and Northern Cheyenne, this encampment constituted what Crow scouts tracking them for the U.S. Army described the largest single gathering of Plains they had ever seen.⁶ Later estimates would put the size of the encampment at somewhere between three and four thousand lodges (warrior-led families).⁷

Now the Army finally took to the field *en masse* for what was assumed to be its final confrontation with the off-reservation Sioux. Under the command of Col. George Custer, 7th Cavalry forces (numbering about 600) approached the encampment on the Little Bighorn in late June. Dividing his command into three widely separated groups, near mid-day on June 25 he ordered an attack across the river and into the Lakota and Cheyenne villages.⁸

Though some of the facts are well-documented, to this day there seems little consensus as to the motivations, judgment, decisions under fire, and actions of both the indigenous and Army war chiefs in what would become known as the Battle of the Little Bighorn. That Custer chose to mount an aggressive assault with divided forces against what turned out to be overwhelming odds is well established; *why* he chose to do so remains a matter of conjecture—whether because he was personally unable to verify his scouts’ estimations of Sioux/Cheyenne strength, or perhaps because he believed that the warriors were absent from their villages.⁹

That the indigenous warriors were both merciless and relentless in massacring Custer’s assault group and decimating the other two divisions of his command is also well documented. Oral histories handed down from Sioux and Cheyenne veterans of the conflict indicate that they knew in advance that the “squaw killer” Custer was in

command of the Army troops. This would be an opportunity to avenge his massacre of Black Kettle's peaceable Cheyenne encampment on Oklahoma's Washita River six years earlier, in which Custer had also divided his troops, and left a contingent behind to be slain. So the power of vengeance, as well as the foreknowledge that if they did not stop the Army now the northern Plains tribes as sovereign people were doomed, may have lent added ferocity to their actions in the field.

News of Custer's defeat and death, along with that other Sioux and Cheyenne victories over the Army that summer, shocked the powers that be in Washington. Reinforcing troops were sent west, and Army contingents attacked Sioux and Cheyenne encampments throughout the fall of 1876 and into 1877.

When one after another of the villages fell to the relentless advances of the Army, Crazy Horse, Red Cloud, and other war chiefs finally brought in their followers to make peace at Camp Robinson (in northwestern Nebraska), in May of 1877. Sitting Bull and his forces had fled north to Canada. In the fall of that year Crazy Horse was arrested at Camp Robinson on suspicion of trying to raise an insurrection among reservation Sioux; and was stabbed to death while in captivity.¹⁰

As among the most feared and revered of all the Sioux war chiefs, the murder of Crazy Horse in an Army stockade marked both a literal and figurative end to the control of the northern Plains by the northern Plains tribes. Their home had been the open range; now they were confined like livestock on remote reservations within it.

Contemporary Conditions, Sustainability, and the Sacred. Descendants of the Arapaho, Northern Cheyenne, Lakota, and other Sioux peoples who once freely roamed the northern Plains with the buffalo still live on or near reservations and

agencies assigned to them in Montana, Wyoming, and the Dakotas in the late nineteenth. But living sustainably on these remote and sparsely populated lands, far from centers of commercial activity and economic development in the urban centers of the West, is a major challenge. The wealth and prospects of American Indian tribes vary widely from region to region, for and for a variety of reasons. Collectively, however, members of Native American Indian tribes are statistically the most economically disadvantaged ethnic group in American society; and unemployment rates on some reservations exceeds 50%.

This being said, there are at least two bright spots on the sustainability horizon. One is the development of wind power on lands of the northern Plains tribes. Though their reservations were located on lands thought to be relatively resource-poor compared to the lands they lost, new technologies have made possible the conversion of these continuously wind-swept high prairie landscapes into rich wind energy fields. Though the wind energy potential on northern Plains reservation lands is among the best in the nation, obstacles to advancing its development are many. Some are common to the wind energy industry overall, and some are unique to the tribes.

First is the policy uncertainty besetting the future of renewable resource support and development at the federal level. Crucial to the commercialization of renewable energy resources have been the tax credits and associated programs available to those who invest in and install them. Yet as the Congress seems perpetually divided over how consistently and strongly to support renewables, every year solar and wind energy tax credits are dragged onto the budgetary chopping block. In this game of budgetary brinksmanship, so far the price to be paid for continuing the

tax credits for renewables has been the continuation of tax subsidies for the oil and gas industries, which are already among the world's most profitable.

Another industry-wide issue is the financing and construction of high-voltage transmission capacity capable of conveying commercial quantities of tribally generated wind energy into the regional grid. Again, the question is what level of investment the nation is willing to make, and at what pace, to further expand the share of renewables in its energy portfolio.

One problem unique to the relatively impoverished reservations of the northern Plains tribes is that of finding the investment capital necessary for investment in tribal wind energy infrastructure development. As state laws and public utility commission orders have begun to mandate steadily higher levels of renewable energy generation in utility company generation capacity, the utilities have likewise invested more of their own resources in either developing their own renewable generation capacity.

Not having access to this source of capital, for the most part the tribes have been dependent on federal funding for pilot projects on the reservations. But just as Congress is ambivalent on the future of renewable energy generally, so too has it been of mixed mind on the question of how much it should help these wind-rich but capital-poor reservations to help themselves.

There is a clear line of legal precedent emanating from the federal courts all the way back to the 1830's to the effect that, when the federal government defeats tribes militarily or otherwise disposes them and distributes their lands and resources to white settlers and private industries, it thereby established a "trust relationship" with the tribes.¹¹ That is, it assumed an ongoing legal as well as moral obligation to ensure that the tribes are given the means to become economically self-sufficient in their newly

changed circumstances. In some cases, this has included a financial obligation to manages resources taken from the tribes on their behalf.

So one argument runs that the federal government has a trust responsibility obligation to assist the tribes in developing this renewable resource, just as it had a treaty responsibility in the 19th century to try to convert these hunters and gatherers into farmers and ranchers. However, the counter-argument (based more on political realities than legal precedent) is that the trust responsibility to the tribes did not extend beyond the terms of whatever treaties were signed with the tribes after they had been crushed by the U.S. Army in the 1870's.¹²

Both arguments come into play in congressional budget battles over funding for renewable energy projects on tribal lands. In sum, whether the great potential for northern Plains reservations becoming regional wind energy centers is ever realized depends heavily on the extent to which the federal government continues to provide focused leadership and support for a transition to a renewable energy resource economy.

By contrast, several northern Plains tribes have been hosting bison herds on their reservation lands for some time now; and the prospects for the continued growth of this sustainable and potentially profitable use of reservations lands are tied to the increasing market popularity of buffalo meat. Representatives from many reservations on or near the Great Plains met in Albuquerque, New Mexico in 1992 to form the Inter-Tribal Bison Cooperative. Some member reservations were already running bison herds, and others were interested in doing so.¹³

Now known as the Inter-Tribal Buffalo Council, the organization provides assistance to tribes already managing bison herds and those doing feasibility studies on

the prospects for doing so.¹⁴ Some tribes have moved in the direction of managing herds for commercial production; some have focused more on maintaining subsistence herds for tribal nutritional purposes and cultural rituals; while still others manage them only as wildlife in tribal parks and game preserves. The ITBC has also traditionally advocated for a greater buffalo

As buffalo meat has continued to grow in popularity in the American diet because of its health benefits relative to most beef, so too has market competition among bison herders. The best capitalized commercial operations with the newest processing facilities and access to the largest buffalo herds can achieve economies of production scale that tend to marginalize the generally smaller scale tribal herding and marketing efforts.

Similar to the case of reservation wind energy development, tribes aiming to be fully competitive in the buffalo production marketplace could benefit enormously from the kind of financial and technical support that non-Indian commercial operators are able to obtain from commercial banks and other lending institutions. (A variety of institutional complications make it difficult for tribes to access traditional forms of commercial credit.) And as with wind energy development, again comes the debate over whether the federal government bears a continuing trust responsibility obligation to assist the tribes in converting to more genuinely sustainable long-term strategies for both economic and cultural survival on the remnants of their traditional homelands that they now inhabit.

The sacred aspects of both the wind and the buffalo are deeply embedded in many indigenous Plains cultures. According to northwestern Plains cultures such as the Lakota, the wind from each of the four quarters has its own qualities and

characteristics; and each brings with it its own set of changes, challenges, and opportunities. Further east, to cultures such as the Oglala, the winds are further embodied as the beating of the wings of the thunderbirds, whose actions command the weather. Much further to the northeast, an old Ojibway saying goes “At times I go about lost in self-pity. But all the while a wind is moving me across a Great Sky”. In this understanding, the wind—like the water—is a medium of spiritual transit, moving the spirit from the individual and the static to the universal and the dynamic.

And for every hunting and gathering Plains tribe from Canada to Mexico, the buffalo was near the center of their spiritual universe. Their very survival was inextricably linked with the wellbeing of the buffalo herds on which they depended; and anthropologists tell us that it is in the nature of any indigenous culture that fully understands the extent of its dependence on its environment to revere life-sustaining elements of that environment. As was the case nearly a century and a half ago, the cultural identity of the Plains tribes remains thoroughly bound to the well being of the buffalo.

The Parklands Connection. In a landscape riven by such intense inter-cultural conflict over so long a period of time, it should come as no surprise that some of the sites on which national parks and monuments are now located continue to be contested landscapes. Disputes over sacred sites, land ownership, and public lands management in the northern Great Plains continue to flare up from time to time, in venues ranging from informal administrative consultations to the halls of the United States Supreme Court.

To the traditional Lakota, their most revered sacred space was and is not one single feature of the northern Plains landscape, but rather the entirety of the Black Hills, in present-day western South Dakota. This was the space the U.S. Government promised would remain inviolate and undisturbed by miners, settlers, and the railroads in the 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie. But in the wake of Custer's 1874 confirmation of gold in the Hills, such an invasion is exactly what happened. And when the tribes sought to enforce their treaty rights through force of arms, the U.S. Cavalry finally and soundly defeated them.

The general pattern following such defeats in the 1860s and 1870s was that the vanquished tribe would enter into a highly disadvantageous treaty in which it would sign away all its lands claims and agree to be confined to a reservation, in return for the promise of supplies, tools, and training to allow them to convert from a hunting and gathering to an agrarian economy and culture. With regard to the Sioux and the Black Hills, however, this was not to be the case.

Though Sioux leaders agreed to cease hostilities and report to reservations, they never signed away land rights to the Black Hills. This was among the holdings in *U.S. v. Sioux Nations*,¹⁵ a landmark decision handed down by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1980. The Court also decided that an 1877 act of Congress asserting title to the Black Hills constituted a compensable taking of tribal property interests, since Congress simply seized control of the land and dispossessed its indigenous inhabitants. The amount subsequently awarded to various Sioux tribes, with accrued interest, totaled over \$1 billion as of the end of 2011.

However, most of the plaintiff Sioux in this court action have refused to accept monetary compensation for the loss of the Hills, on the understanding that to take the

money would mean relinquishing all claims to an ownership interest in and stewardship authority over this sacred ground. At the same time, given the depressed economic conditions on most Sioux reservations, in 2009 some individual Indian plaintiffs have sued for release of some of these funds being held in trust by the courts, as compensation for the loss of natural resources if not land title.

They view the chances of ever regaining any form of land title to the Black Hills as remote to impossible, while their economic needs are immediate and severe.¹⁶ Feelings among tribal members run deep in this matter. Some of those opposing acceptance of the compensation argue that “to take the money would bless the theft” of the Hills by the federal government.¹⁷

Tribal governments have since intervened in this action in an effort to keep individual tribal members from accepting compensation and thereby endangering tribal government land claims. In August of 2011, a federal district court judge in South Dakota ruled that tribal governments are indispensable parties to this compensation action, and that individual claims could therefore not go forward, absent tribal consent.¹⁸ And so, well over a century since the U.S. Government wrested the Black Hills from the Sioux as the spoils of war, the ongoing conflict over this sacred space remains an open wound.

Disputes over the management of sacred space elsewhere in the region have achieved a little more finality, although some underlying historical and cultural tensions linger. One of the better known of these sites lies at nears the western edge of the Black Hills region. The Lakota know it as *Mato Tipila* (Bears Lodge). But in his first executive action authorized by the 1906 Antiquities Act, President Theodore Roosevelt proclaimed it to be Devils Tower National Monument.

Held sacred in the cultures of many Plains tribes, the site was a springtime ritual gathering place for tribes that at other, less plentiful times of year be in conflict over hunting grounds and access to other resources. In replication of this tradition, late in the 20th century Indian peoples from various northern Plains tribes once again began to assemble near the time of the summer solstice to perform the Sun Dance, and other rituals of personal and cultural rebirth.¹⁹

But this massive striated monolith, nearly a thousand feet in height from its riverine base to its summit, is also one of the worlds most celebrated sites for climbers who specialize in the technique of “layback” or “crack climbing”. In the mid-1990s, competition grew among climbers for access to these coveted climbing routes, at the same time tribal representatives were requesting that no one climb the Tower at all during their period of their late seasonal ceremonial observances.

Finally, the superintendent of Devils Tower National Monument adopted a final climbing management plan that, on behalf of the tribes’ spiritual interests, requested that rock climbers not ascend the Tower during the month of June. She was thereupon sued by commercial rock climbing guides in the area on the grounds that even a voluntary closure of the site to climbing was having a chilling effect on their business, and that to ask park visitors to modify their behavior out of respect for tribal beliefs and practices represented an impermissible establishment of Indian religion, in contravention of the U. S. Constitution’s Establishment Clause.

Based partly on the argument that other national monuments with particular ritual significance to a religious group (such as historic mission churches) also make the same request of park visitors, federal judges in the trial court in Wyoming and the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals in Denver all ruled that far from establishing Indian

religion, what the superintendent's management plan was instead seeking to do was protect the Indians' free exercise of their religion. Without comment, in 2000 the U.S. Supreme Court concurred in this First Amendment interpretation.

Similar reasoning came to bear in resolution of a dispute over U.S. Forest Service management of the viewshed surrounding the Big Horn Medicine Wheel, a sacred site in Wyoming's Big Horn Mountains. The Wheel is a huge circular arranged rock formation used for hundreds of years by northern Plains tribes as a sun-sighting structure for ceremonies during the equinoxes and solstices; some have likened its function to Stonehenge in England.

On advice from both the affected tribes and the Wyoming State Historical Preservation Office, the forest supervisor in this case first decided that not only should the Medicine Wheel itself remain undisturbed, but that so should the surrounding viewscape. For to allow disruptive resource extractive activities such as logging or mining would disturb the character of the site to the point where it would lose all ritual value, thus degrading the meaning and use of the site for both Indian religious practitioners and non-Indian site visitors.²⁰

Though logging permits had not yet been granted for the area, a regional sawmill operator sued the Forest Service anyway, on the grounds that less logging meant less business, and that to manage public lands in a way that acknowledges and preserves their indigenous ritual significance constitutes an establishment of Indian religion. But following the same reasoning as in the Devils Tower litigation, the federal courts ruled in a way that was equally supportive of tribal interests and the discretionary authority of the Forest Service to include the religious ritual significance of sites on the public lands as a permissible management objective.

Northward of the sites of these legal skirmishes, on Montana's Little Bighorn River, is another site—this one held sacred by both mainstream American and indigenous Plains cultures, because it is a military graveyard. The dead of both cultures lie beneath the soil at the site where Custer led his men to fatal defeat. In death, Cheyenne Sioux warriors and 7th Cavalry troopers finally share the earth they had so bitterly contested when alive.

Thus, the dominant features of this historical record record are those of conflict: 19th century military clashes between Plains Indian warriors and the U.S. Cavalry, and late 20th century legal disputes between those seeking to protect the sacred character of these sites and those advocating commercial over spiritual uses of the public lands. Given this context, it is a tribute to the healing power of story telling that the two Place and Native Voice interns who served at Devils Tower National Monument (known to many Plains tribes as Bears Lodge) assembled presentations that emphasize the site's traditional indigenous significance as a place of unification and peace making.

Both Greg Holder and Karyn Hacker are Lakota Sioux—of the same cultural lineage whose ancestors fought to the death for the preservation of their sacred landscapes. But the stories they both tell are of homecoming and restoration. Greg's narrative explains how the shape of this great natural obelisk resembles a tipi, the moveable lodge structure of historic Plains cultures. To see this structure from any vantage point in the western Black Hills region was to be reminded that one was home.

Caryn's presentation deals instead with landscapes of the mind—landscapes created by language. What she is able to demonstrate through a study of the diverse

languages of tribes having a traditional cultural relationship with Bears Lodge/Devils Tower is the essential unity underlying this diversity. In these words she sums up what she learned from visiting many of these tribes and learning of their relationship to the sacred lands they hold in common: “The lesson I learned was so simple yet profound... Like plants we are a fragile and interconnected system, but we are all connected. The stories of their people, of my people, of all people, are important and we must learn them”.

¹ Dee Brown, *The American West*. NY: Touchstone, 1995, at 103.

² Peter Decker, *The Utes Must Go: American Expansion and the Removal of a People*. Golden, CO: Fulcrum Pub., 2004 [quoting correspondence of Philip Sheridan to a friend], at 122.

³ Brown, at 78-98.

⁴ Id.

⁵ Id.

⁶ Mari Sandoz, *The Battle of the Little Bighorn*. NY: Lippincott/Bison, 1978, at 51-57.

⁷ Id.

⁸ Id. at 68.

⁹ Id. at 51-57.

¹⁰ Brown at 238-239.

¹¹ Lloyd Burton, *Worship and Wilderness: Culture, Religion, and Law in Public Lands Management*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2002, at 105-118.

¹² Id.

¹³ Homepage of the Inter-Tribal Buffalo Council: <http://itbcbison.com/about.php>. Accessed 3/19/12.

¹⁴ Id.

¹⁵ 448 U.S. 371 (1980).

¹⁶ Brokaw, Sioux Split on Seeking Money for Black Hills, *Seattle Times*, April 23, 2009.
http://seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/nationworld/2009107755_apusblackhillslawsuit.html.

¹⁷ Id.

¹⁸ Different Horse v. Salazar, 2011 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 86481.

¹⁹ Burton, *supra* note 11, chp. 6.

²⁰ Id. at chp. 7.