



TEACHER'S GUIDE



IN THE LIGHT OF  
REVERENCE

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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You may download the guide as a pdf file at [www.sacredland.org/teach](http://www.sacredland.org/teach), or explore a regularly updated version with hot links and expanded activities and resources. Send your feedback to [slfp@igc.org](mailto:slfp@igc.org). We'll revise and improve the on-line guide and add activities you create.

For additional guides or information:

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**itvs**



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Dear Teacher,

In a time of clashing cultures, we all need to build bridges. Dialogue, understanding and critical thinking have never been more important. We spent 10 years making *In the Light of Reverence* to provide a teaching tool that would spark dialogue and inspire reconciliation.



JOHN SCHAEFER

Filmmakers Malinda Maynor, Lumbee, and Christopher "Toby" McLeod with Vernon Masayesva, Hopi (right).

The film illustrates how sacred places give meaning and identity to communities and individuals. Its message is summed up in Vine Deloria's final comment, which calls for an evaluation of how individual rights should be tempered by community responsibilities. The film also opens a window on the complex phenomenon we call "racism," in which assertions of biological and cultural superiority have been used to justify the taking of Native American land.

We hope your students will grasp the irony that a nation founded on religious freedom would ban the religious practices of its native peoples. We hope they will come to see how long, historic connections to place and deep spiritual roots that sink into land could be nurtured by indigenous people for generations but ignored by newcomers from Europe.

Native people warn that human survival is in jeopardy because of the way we are treating the earth. Spirituality, they say, is a question of values. Instead of asking "What is sacred?" you might start by asking your students: "What do you value most deeply?"

We hope you find the film to be a powerful teaching tool. We welcome your comments and encourage you to send us any exercises that you create, which we'll add to our on-line edition of the Teacher's Guide.

Thank you.

*Toby McLeod Malinda Maynor*

Christopher McLeod and Malinda Maynor

• RECOMMENDED FOR GRADES 7 - ADULT •

SUBJECT AREAS: **Civics, Constitutional Law, Cultural Studies, Earth Science, Environment, Geography, Geology, Government, History, Language Arts, Multicultural Education, Political Science, Religion, Social Studies**

FILM LENGTH: **73 minutes. The film is also available as three separate half-hour segments on VHS tape or DVD.**

## THE FILM

*IN THE LIGHT OF REVERENCE* is a documentary that explores three legal clashes over natural resources in the United States. The disputes are between American Indians who consider the three sites sacred and other Americans who wish to use the sites for recreation and commercial enterprises. These disputes raise questions about the environment, religious freedom, the relationship of citizens to federally owned land, the lasting impact of historical inequities, and how our society mediates between groups whose vastly differing experiences have produced competing needs and belief systems.

*In the Light of Reverence* juxtaposes Lakota, Hopi and Wintu elders' reflections on the spiritual meaning of place with non-Indians' views of how best to use the land. The contrasting positions reveal deep cultural and historical conflicts: Native American tribes hold land communally, derive spiritual sustenance from nature and place little value on individual rights, while American culture reveres private property rights, separates religion from land and greatly values individual freedom. Historically, the United States has not protected religions based on the former point of view but has gone to great lengths to protect those based on the latter.



CORDY FERGUS



## FILM SECTIONS AND KEY CONCEPTS

*IN THE LIGHT OF REVERENCE*, an interdisciplinary teaching tool, presents each conflict in a separate section, making it easy to use a single segment if classroom time is limited.

### **The Lakota and Devils Tower**

*(24:05 segment in the full film; 29:47 in separate videotape or DVD segment)*

AT ISSUE: Climbing a sacred site

*Mato Tipila*, the Lodge of the Bear, also known as Devils Tower, is one of the premier climbing challenges in the world. For the Lakota and 16 other tribes of the northern Plains who perform sun dances and vision quests nearby, the monolith is sacred. In the 1990s, the National Park Service considered a ban on climbing the tower. Opponents argued that the government was taking sides—promoting Indian religion—and denying climbers their right of access. In court, the Park Service argued it was a matter of respect and accommodation of cultural traditions. Eventually, the Park Service adopted a compromise, asking climbers not to climb during June, when Indian ceremonies are at their height. Today, 85% of climbers have voluntarily stopped climbing in June. The Lakota observe with some irony that climbing is banned entirely at sites that others consider “sacred,” including Mt. Rushmore.



### **The Hopi and the Colorado Plateau**

*(22:49 segment in the full film; 29:22 in separate videotape or DVD segment)*

AT ISSUE: Mining at important archaeological and sacred sites

The Hopi have a spiritual covenant to care for their desert homeland. Throughout the Colorado Plateau, mining companies extract pumice, gravel, coal and water for profit. Private property rights won out over religious concerns at Woodruff Butte, and Hopi shrines were bulldozed. The government bought out a pumice mine on public land at the sacred San Francisco Peaks. A coal mining lease on reservation land at Black Mesa has led to the depletion of vital Hopi village springs as coal is mixed with water and slurried to a distant power plant.

### **The Wintu and Mt. Shasta**

*(26:47 segment in the full film; 31:22 in separate videotape or DVD segment)*

AT ISSUE: The Wintu, the U.S. Forest Service and New Age religion practitioners want to use the same sacred place but in different, mutually exclusive ways.

For a thousand years, the Winnemem band of the Wintu has conducted healing ceremonies on *Bulyum Puyuik*, “Great Mountain,” also known as Mt. Shasta. When a proposed ski resort threatened a sacred spring, the Wintu and other tribes fought and defeated the ski resort. Ironically, the publicity from the battle drew growing crowds of New Age spiritual seekers to Mt. Shasta. The Winnemem Wintu believe that some New Age practices offend the mountain and mock their traditional ceremony. They are attempting to influence what is permitted. The Forest Service superintendent denied the permit for the ski resort, citing the Winnemem’s concerns for the spiritual integrity of the mountain.



JOHN SCHAEFER

*Filming at the pumice mine on the San Francisco Peaks near Flagstaff, Arizona.*

## THE GUIDE

*IN THE LIGHT OF REVERENCE* can be used in many curriculum areas. This guide includes a variety of activities and discussion prompts to help you use the film productively in different classroom settings and grade levels, so not every activity will be appropriate for your students. Choose those that best meet your needs.

Activities are organized by topics within the main social studies, environment and language arts sections, and a topic may be further organized by teaching ideas that can be used before, during and after students watch the

film. Again, select the topics that you want to focus on, rather than moving from one topic to the next. Most activities conclude with specific resources for researching the questions asked or issues raised.

The guide begins with several introductory discussion questions that may be useful before showing the film to students and for following up after they have watched it. As with many of the questions throughout the guide, they encourage viewers of *In the Light of Reverence* to reflect on complex situations, not reach definitive answers.

Unless otherwise noted, activities apply to the film in general. If you are viewing only one section—or only one of the three separate videotapes—be sure to preview the film to ensure that your chosen activity relates to the section that the class has seen.

A list of books, articles and general Web resources appears at the end of the guide. More detailed resources can be found at the film's Web site, [www.sacredland.org](http://www.sacredland.org).

The DVD of *In the Light of Reverence*, another good resource for teachers and students, contains seven scenes that didn't make it into the film; an extended interview with Lakota scholar Vine Deloria Jr.; an update on other threatened sites, such as Zuni Salt Lake in New Mexico and Quechan Indian Pass in California; and two interviews with the filmmakers. For more information about the DVD, see the inside back cover of this guide.



CHRISTOPHER MCLEOD



## ACTIVITIES SUMMARY



Activities in the social studies section are appropriate for:

- U.S. history
- Government and civics—Constitutional issues, federal park policy, rights of citizenship, definitions of democracy, differences between state, federal and tribal law
- Cultural studies—concepts of religion, progress, rights, conflicting perspectives
- Geography—location of landmarks and tribes, the relationship between land, religion and culture
- Archaeology
- Media literacy
- Racism—lasting impacts of discrimination and forced assimilation

Activities in the environment section relate to:

- Corporate responsibility
- Geology
- Private and communal land use
- Sustainable economic development
- Environmental justice
- Politics of water

Activities in the language arts section can be used with:

- Public speaking and persuasive writing assignments
- Native American literature
- Mythology
- Linguistics
- Storytelling

## INTRODUCTORY DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What do you think the film's title means? What do you revere? How is what you revere the same or different from what other people in your community revere? What accounts for the differences—age? gender? race or ethnicity? religion? economic status? cultural traditions and values?
- Can you name one new thing you learned from this film that you didn't know before? How does that new knowledge influence your thinking about things like U.S. history, how well the Constitution provides justice for all citizens, or government efforts to protect the environment?

- After reminding students that the film portrays just three out of more than 500 unique American Indian cultures, ask them what they learned about “land-based religion.” What are some differences between spiritual practices that take place outdoors in nature and those practiced in a church, synagogue, mosque or temple?
- How do the maps in your classroom, textbooks or atlases label these sites? Whose terminology do they use? Compare the Indian names for sacred places on the map below with the English names on the page 6 map.



*Each of the places on this map is sacred to more than one tribe and so each place has several different names. The Lakota, Wintu and Hopi names on this map translate to: Mato Tipila, Lodge of the Bear (Devils Tower), Bulyum Puyuik, Great Mountain (Mt. Shasta), Tuuwanasave'e, The Earth Center (Black Mesa), Tsimontukwi, Jimson Weed Place (Woodruff Butte), and Nuvatukaovi, The Place of Snow on the Very Top (San Francisco Peaks).*



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

*In 1890, Kicking Bear, a Miniconjou Sioux, brought the Ghost Dance to Sitting Bull's people at Standing Rock, South Dakota. Within months, General Miles and the Seventh Cavalry arrived to suppress the ceremony. Kicking Bear survived the Wounded Knee massacre, in which 250 Lakota were killed by U.S. government troops, and he was one of the last ghost dancers to turn in his rifle. Sites of terrorism can become "sacred ground."*



# SOCIAL STUDIES ACTIVITIES

## THE IMPORTANCE OF DEFINITIONS

THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES can help deepen students' understanding of how language influences perspective, especially on democracy and religion.

- Before viewing *In the Light of Reverence*, ask students to define the following terms and give examples of them: sacred, religion, shrine, freedom, progress and right (as in “we have the right”). Younger students might be asked to focus on a single term rather than the entire list.
- Let students compare their answers and discuss any significant differences. Why are there differences? Can two students have different definitions without one being accurate and one being inaccurate?
- Ask students to listen for definitions of the terms on their list as they're watching the film (see below).
- After viewing, discuss the definitions the students heard. Did any of them expand on, change or reinforce students' original definitions? If they heard definitions that differed from their own, what accounted for the differences?



CHRISTOPHER MCLEOD

Thomas Banyacya (Hopi) at  
Chaco Canyon.

**Note that the film does not stop to highlight definitions. Students will have to listen for them in the context of people's comments, for example:**

**shrine** — “...doorways to the spiritual world.”

—VERNON MASAYESVA, HOPI

**religion** — “It's not something that you read in a book, but it's the way you walk on the land, and the way you treat your relatives, all of the relatives.”

—CALEEN SISK-FRANCO, WINNEMEM WINTU

“Religion is something you do in a church. Real religion isn't something you do in nature. The category for that is recreation.”

—CHARLES WILKINSON, PROFESSOR OF LAW

**sacred** — “What is sacred is elusive, like a spider web, unseen until it catches the light.” —NARRATOR



- You might follow up with advanced students by asking them to look carefully at any chapter in the main textbook for your class and create a list of key terms used in the text. Examples from a typical U.S. history textbook: “*Westward expansion*,” “*religious freedom*,” “*hero*,” “*civilized*,” “*educated*,” “*border*,” “*frontier*,” “*treaty*,” “*pre-history*.”
  - ◆ Which terms have shared definitions and which might be defined differently depending on your perspective or experience?
  - ◆ How do readers’ perspectives (i.e., the definitions they use) influence their understanding of what the text says?
  - ◆ What definition do you think the author was using and how do you know?
  - ◆ How do our definitions influence our understanding of history?
  - ◆ What role does racism play in the definitions that become accepted as standards?
  - ◆ Why is it important in a multicultural democracy like the United States to have shared definitions?



AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

*In 1950, the Hidatsa were pressured into signing away their sacred ancestral lands along the Missouri River in North Dakota. At the signing, Hidatsa leader George Gillette was overcome by emotion. The Garrison Dam subsequently flooded most of the traditional Mandan and Hidatsa village sites.*

## WHAT DO YOU KNOW? HOW DO YOU KNOW IT?

THESE ACTIVITIES ARE DESIGNED to help students think about where their perceptions come from and how accurate they are.



- Before viewing the film, have the class brainstorm a list of everything they know about American Indians. Fill the blackboard with their answers.
- Then view the film and ask students to listen for and jot down facts about one or more of the featured cultures (see below).
- After the film, compare students' notes on facts from the film with the list on the blackboard. What was the same? What was missing? What was distorted?
- Then ask students to consider whether all the information on the blackboard is accurate. Can they identify the sources of their information? Help students examine where their information came from. Which sources of information are reliable and which are not? How have media repetitions of stereotypes influenced what students think they know about Native Americans?
- Try this homework assignment: Look for a current artifact that misrepresents indigenous cultures (can be film, photo, art, etc.). Write a critique and, if possible, bring the artifact to class for discussion.

### Examples of facts students might hear:

In 1917, Woodruff Butte was purchased from the U.S. government for \$400. At that time, the government routinely sold land to settlers and miners, but not to Indians. The butte was purchased in 1991 for \$100,000. The owner offered to sell it to the Hopis in 1996 for \$3 million, which the Hopis could not afford.

At the time of first contact with Euro-American settlers, there were 14,000 Wintu. By 1910, there were only 395. The Wintu have no reservation. California Gold Rush miners and settlers took all of their land. The Winnemem Wintu are not officially recognized by the U.S. government.

The government paid bounty hunters \$5 a head to kill Indians. Indians were forcibly sent to boarding schools designed to eliminate indigenous cultures.

## SEEING PROOF



TO WIN A DISPUTE IN COURT, or to convince others that you have an historical claim to a particular site, you need evidence. The following activities help students consider how evidence requirements favor some cultures over others.



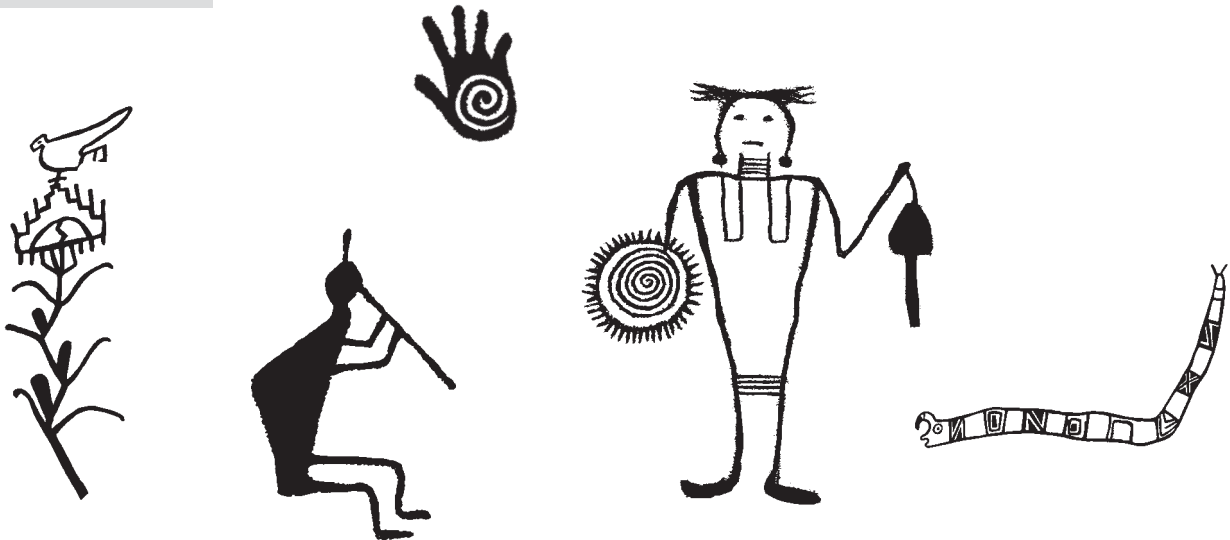
CHRISTOPHER MCLEOD

A southern Utah pictograph, a cave painting in red, white and blue known as All American Man. Pueblo people call this figure Oshach Paiyatiuma, Sun Youth, with colors symbolizing blue sky, white clouds and red rain. It was painted in A.D. 1295.

- Reproduce the images below so that all the students can see them. Ask students to write down what they think the images are or what information they convey.
- After students have shared some guesses, explain that these are Hopi petroglyphs and pictographs and that those who can read the language of rock writing understand them to have important cultural meaning (see descriptions below the images). A petroglyph is carved into rock. A pictograph is painted. Have students consider this quote:

*“You have to know the culture to identify what you see, and if you don’t know the culture, you don’t see nothing.”* —ELAINE QUIVER, LAKOTA

What does the quote suggest about what different people recognize as evidence (of a holy site, of historical connection, of ownership) and what the law recognizes as evidence?



*In the oral tradition of native peoples, rock writing often has “sacred origins”—the images depict a creation story, an important tribal myth, a shaman’s dream or vision. They are a history book written on the land. These figures (from left to right) tell of corn, rain and the spirit world; Kokopelli, the hump-backed flute player; the energy of a guardian spirit’s hand that mirrors the shape of the Hopi homeland on Black Mesa; a ceremonial leader’s power to guide people on the journey toward knowledge; and a snake, a messenger to the rain clouds.*

- Take the discussion further by considering the implications of the following points of view expressed by Native Americans in the film.
  - ◆ Religious ritual is appropriate only if it leaves no marks.
  - ◆ Religious practice prohibits revealing sacred sites to the uninitiated.
  - ◆ Discovery of historical evidence often has led to its confiscation or destruction.
  - ◆ Petroglyphs on particular rocks preserve cultural records and their location is part of their message, unlike books that can be moved anywhere.
  - ◆ “Seeing is believing” is a notion of the dominant culture. Can you think of examples when “seeing” provides irrefutable evidence and examples when it does not?

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## RESOURCES

See the Hopi Cultural Preservation Office’s Web site for:

- A statement on “Respect for Hopi Knowledge”—a contrast of the Western idea of having a “right” to know something with the Hopi idea of restricting knowledge to those who have the wisdom to use it — [http://www.nau.edu/~hcpc-p/current/hopi\\_nis.htm](http://www.nau.edu/~hcpc-p/current/hopi_nis.htm)
- Guidelines for how to respect Hopi religious practices. The statement on “Intellectual Property Rights” explains the historical appropriation of ceremonial objects and rituals — [http://www.nau.edu/~hcpc-p/current/hopi\\_ipr.htm](http://www.nau.edu/~hcpc-p/current/hopi_ipr.htm)

See also:

- Suggested “Guidelines for Respecting Cultural Knowledge” at the Alaska Native Knowledge Web site — <http://www.ankn.uaf.edu/standards/culturaldoc.html>
- *Indian Rock Art of the Southwest* by Polly Schaafsma
- *Tapamveni: The Rock Art Galleries of Petrified Forest* by Patricia McCreery and Ekkehart Malotki
- For discussion of ethics of observation and etiquette for visiting sites: The National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS), Bureau of Land Management and Capitol Reef National Monument’s “Cultural Site Etiquette” — <http://www.nps.gov/care/arpa.htm>
- For images and interpretations of rock art from the West and links to other rock art sites — [http://www.jqjacobs.net/rock\\_art/](http://www.jqjacobs.net/rock_art/)



# WHO WRITES HISTORY?



USE THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITY to place your students in the role of public historian, which will help them understand that history is not a group of simple, objective facts but a specific storyteller’s view of what happened. The activity also helps students see that a person’s world view and values influence the kind of stories she or he tells.

Part of the mission of the National Park Service is to preserve and teach “the American story.” Tell students that they are now Park Service employees. Assign each student or team of students to be the “official” curator of a soon-to-be-built visitors’ center at each site described in the film (or at a meaningful site in your community). The curator needs to decide what information to share with visitors and how to present the site’s stories. As students develop their exhibits, have them consider the following issues:

- How did the Park become public land? What process was used to transfer stewardship from Native Americans to the government?
- Are there different versions of the history of the area? If so, which version will the visitors’ center present? What will you do if, for example, the information in the brochure that the state board of tourism wants to distribute at the site contradicts the information that local tribal governments provide?
- Who wrote or published the available historical documents? How were those authors or publishers influenced by things like racism, the concept of Manifest Destiny, a belief in Christianity, etc.?
- How does the history of your site compare to other national parks, like the Grand Canyon or Yellowstone, both of which were taken directly from indigenous people and from which native people were forcibly kept out?
- What role did racism play in the history of your site and what people use the site for today?

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## RESOURCES

Explore these National Park Service resources:

- List of all national parks — <http://www.nps.gov/parks.html>
- Tribal Preservation Program — <http://www2.cr.nps.gov/tribal/index.htm>
- Historic Landscape Initiative — <http://www2.cr.nps.gov/hli/>
- American Indian Liaison Office — <http://www.cr.nps.gov/ailo/>
- Archaeology and Ethnography Program — <http://www.cr.nps.gov/aad/>
- National Register of Historic Places — <http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/>

## TRIBAL ORAL HISTORIANS VS. SCIENTIFIC ARCHAEOLOGISTS

ARCHAEOLOGY IS THE SCIENTIFIC STUDY of “prehistoric” cultures through excavations and artifacts. In North America, prehistory going back many thousands of years is *tribal* history.

Archaeologists employed on federal lands consult with federal land managers on how to manage prehistoric cultural resources, but their

interpretations and recommendations often are at odds with tribal history as native people understand it. Tribal historians contend that archaeologists’ prehistories may be scientific but are irrelevant to Native Americans’ oral history traditions. The archaeologists’ reports used as evidence for formulating cultural resource policy on federal land often fail to consider tribal histories.

Adding to the friction are archaeologists’ excavations of ancestral native sites. These excavations usually disturb Native American burials, sacred places and the environment. Also, archaeologists often store excavated artifacts such as human bones and ceremonial objects in museums far from Native American communities. In both situations, tribal historians advocate for preserving the natural environment and their sacred burial places.



JOHN SCHAEFER

At the White Vulcan Mine on the San Francisco Peaks, Hopi elder Dalton Taylor points out a pilgrimage trail to U.S. Forest Service archaeologist Linda Farnsworth.

- Ask students to discuss federal policy regarding cultural resources. How should federal land managers prioritize scientific data about “prehistoric” cultures, oral history about those cultures, and living cultural traditions? Should they make artifacts available for scientific study in a laboratory or leave them undisturbed in the earth?
- Should living tribal histories be compromised for the scientific understanding of prehistoric peoples? Many tribes explain the world through stories that utilize metaphor, landscape and ritual. Western societies explain the world through science, empirical experimentation, and trial and error. Is one “correct” while the other is not?
- Should land management policy ignore, accommodate or defer to Native American oral histories that are fundamentally different from the Western, scientific world view?

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### RESOURCES

- *Indigenous Archaeology* by Joe Watkins
- *Custer Died for Your Sins* (see chapter on anthropologists) by Vine Deloria Jr.
- Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 — [www.sacredland.org/legal.html](http://www.sacredland.org/legal.html)

## DISCUSSING RELIGION AND CULTURE



THE QUESTIONS BELOW can help students explore the intersections among religious perspectives, law, discrimination and public policy. According to most U.S. history textbooks, European settlers arrived on American shores seeking religious freedom, and the United States was founded, in part, to guarantee freedom of religion. Compare the expansion of immigrants' religious freedom with what happened to the religious freedom of indigenous peoples. Consider the following observation from the film:

*"For most Americans, the Holy Land exists on another continent, but for Native Americans, the holy land is here."* —NARRATOR

- What did you learn from the film about Lakota, Hopi and Wintu cultures? In addition to attitudes toward the land, consider what you saw or heard about family, relations with ancestors, treatment of elders, language, valuing cooperation over competition, and individual rights vs. community responsibilities.
- Compare U.S. policy on declaring and protecting sacred sites with the policies of other nations. Is the destruction of Woodruff Butte comparable to the Taliban's decision to blow up Buddhist statues in Afghanistan?
- For much of U.S. history, Christian missionaries, supported by government policies that made it illegal for tribes to practice their rituals publicly, offered Native Americans food, health care and education in exchange for abandoning their tribal religions. How are groups affected by having to practice their religion in secret? How does the government's banning and suppression of Native American religious practices influence your perception of native people today? What was the impact of the passage of the American Indian Religious Freedom Act (1978) on native communities and what you know or don't know about tribal rituals?

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## RESOURCES

United Nations' protections for natural, cultural and historic places can be explored by visiting:

- World Commission on Protected Areas — <http://wcpa.iucn.org/>
- World Heritage Convention — [http://whc.unesco.org/world\\_he.htm](http://whc.unesco.org/world_he.htm)
- World Heritage Site List — <http://whc.unesco.org/heritage.htm>
- International Council on Monuments and Sites — <http://www.icomos.org>

## THE U.S. JUSTICE SYSTEM

ASK STUDENTS TO CONSIDER why we call our legal system the “justice” system. Then consider the following legal issues and disputes that arise in the film. Can those disputes be resolved “justly”?

### ■ Private property and inheritance

*“The biggest right we have is private property, and that’s huge.”*

—DALE MCKINNON, OWNER, WOODRUFF BUTTE

One implication of private property is that owners are entitled to convey property to the descendants of their choice. Native Americans generally have not been able to convey their land to their descendants.

How does inheritance law support a Western concept of land ownership? Why is that law difficult to apply to Native American relationships to the land? Can the U.S. Constitution ensure both religious freedom and the pursuit of property when some religions teach that land is sacred—belonging to the community—and cannot be owned privately?

- ◆ What determines a particular people’s ties to particular pieces of land? If heritage plays a role, what are the implications of the New Age belief in reincarnation?

*“Spiritual lineage is as important as blood lineage. I feel I’ve been Native American. I’ve been black, Chinese, Egyptian...”*

—ROWENA KRYDER, NEW AGE AUTHOR

- ◆ What role does war play?

*“This is Forest Service land. This is not Indian land. I don’t want to sound cold or bitter, but they lost the war.”*

—DARRYL LINDSEY, MINER

### ■ Pursuit of happiness

*“Pretty soon we’re going to be a country that’s fragmented by every group having its own little set of rights. The pursuit of happiness was a pursuit of private property, and now that’s being eroded, in essence, under the guise of religion.”* —JIM AYER, REAL ESTATE AGENT

Is property a source of happiness? What happens when land becomes a commodity, bought and sold, and not held in common?

How did attitudes toward property influence rules about homesteading, which required homesteaders to develop or build on their land to retain ownership? Trace the lasting impact of the exclusion of American Indians from homesteading opportunities. If Native Americans had been allowed to homestead, how might they have reconciled a world



CHRISTOPHER MCLEOD

Black Mesa mine.



view that showed respect for valued land by preserving it as is with the legal requirement that ownership be established by altering the land?

### ■ **Origin of rights**

Where do rights come from? Are they granted by God? By governments? By tribes? Are human beings entitled to some kinds of rights just because we are human? Are rights inextricably linked to responsibilities? If so, what are those responsibilities?

Use Vine Deloria's concluding comments in the film as a springboard for your discussion (see sidebar below).

Ask students to compare what they hear in the film about Native American and U.S. governmental concepts of rights with the international policies on human rights developed by the United Nations. According to United Nations standards, have Native Americans been granted appropriate rights?

### ■ **Government stewardship**

In concept, public land belongs to the public. Does that give all citizens the right to use public land in any way they want? If not, when does the government have the right to impose limitations or rules? If two entities

have competing and mutually exclusive claims, what principles does a judge or land manager use to decide? What role have racism and attitudes of cultural superiority played in the development of those principles?

We know that government rules are not always applied equitably. Who seems to benefit most from government policies? Can a society that views land as property accommodate or integrate the spiritual beliefs of indigenous peoples, who hold nature as sacred and, therefore, impossible to own?

### ■ **Separation of church and state**

How does the government preserve historic religious sites—Spanish missions, Arlington National Cemetery, the nation's first synagogue, the church where Martin Luther King Jr. preached, for example—without appearing to endorse a particular religion? What is the difference between “accommodation” and “endorsement” of religion?



WILL PARRINELLO

VINE DELORIA JR., LAKOTA SCHOLAR

*“The attitude of our species is that this whole thing was created for us. It has no value except how we use it. The basic problem is that American society is a ‘rights society’ not a ‘responsibilities society.’ What you’ve got is each individual saying, ‘Well, I have a right to do this.’ Having religious places, revolving your religion around that, means you are always in contact with the earth, you’re responsible for it and to it.”*

■ **Treaties with tribes**

American history is replete with examples of treaties signed and broken. What is a treaty? Which treaties does your textbook cite? Which are omitted from your textbook? Can you name the treaties that govern the land on which your community is built or that relate to your state?

■ **American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978 (AIRFA)**

Native American ceremonies were banned for more than 100 years, and it took an act of Congress—AIRFA—to allow native people to come out of hiding and perform ceremonies. Has AIRFA succeeded in protecting Indian religious practice? Does the evidence indicate that the religious liberties guaranteed to all Americans by the Constitution have been granted to American Indians?



RESOURCES

- The United Nations in 1948 adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and in 1994 began considering a Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples —  
<http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instree/b1udhr.htm>  
<http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instree/declra.htm>
- Full text of the Homestead Act, the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978, related court cases and links to the texts of hundreds of treaties — [www.sacredland.org/legal.html](http://www.sacredland.org/legal.html)
- Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868 between the Sioux and the United States —  
<http://digital.library.okstate.edu/kappler/Vol2/treaties/sio0998.htm>



WILL PARRINELLO

Elaine Quiver (Lakota) at Mato Tipila.

- National Park Service management policy, see Chapters 5 and 8 (section 8.5 is “Native American Use”) —  
<http://www.nps.gov/refdesk/mp/>
- List of religious features and structures in U.S. National Parks —  
[www.sacredland.org/NPSlist.html](http://www.sacredland.org/NPSlist.html)
- “Freedom, Law, and Prophecy: A Brief History of Native American Religious Resistance,” pp. 295–316, in *Native American Spirituality*, edited by Lee Irwin



## FIELD TRIPS AND GUEST SPEAKERS

THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES can provide students with an opportunity to practice writing and interviewing skills as they learn more about Native American culture and history and explore how people transmit their heritage from one generation to the next.

- Invite a Native American elder to your classroom to tell students about a sacred place nearby, recount its history, tell stories, and perhaps share a song. Prior to the visit, research how people in that tribe demonstrate respect for elders. Use the film and additional research to help students prepare interview questions related to their studies.



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

- If appropriate, take a field trip to a special Native American site and meet with tribal representatives there. Before you visit, discuss the meaning of the word “sacred” and how one behaves at a sacred site. Use the visit to explore questions like: Why are these places so important? Why do some tribal religious leaders say, “Our culture cannot survive without our sacred places”? Why would some tribes not want to reveal their sacred places?
- After your film viewing and site visit, summarize the tribe’s world view. How is it the same and how is it different from your students’ world views? Also consider the role of elders and the importance of continuity in keeping cultures alive. Who keeps the traditions of your culture alive and how do they pass cultural knowledge down to future generations? What happens when people are prevented from passing down their traditions?

*Between the 1887 passage of the Dawes Severalty Act, known as the Allotment Act, and the 1930s, the Indian land base was reduced from 140 million acres to 50 million acres.*

*This Department of Interior advertisement, circa 1911, invited homesteaders to purchase land designated as “surplus” after tribal allotments had been made to Indians. In 1911, 150,000 acres of Indian land were sold for \$2.5 million, an average of \$16 per acre. The person in the photograph is Not Afraid of Pawnee (Yankton Sioux).*

## RESOURCES

For ideas about appropriate behavior at a sacred place, see [www.sacredland.org/ethics.html](http://www.sacredland.org/ethics.html)





LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

*Sioux woman and child, 1908.  
The caption on this archival photograph reads:  
"Bone Shirt's Squaw and Papoose."*



# ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVITIES

## DEFINING ENVIRONMENTALISM

USE THIS ACTIVITY to help students understand that scientific terms are not necessarily objective.

- Before viewing the film, ask students to define “environmentalism.” Compare their definitions with definitions or perspectives presented in the film.

*“The most important thing for a human being is to go back to nature. Nature takes care of your mind and your heart and soul.”*

—FLORENCE JONES, WINNEMEM WINTU SPIRITUAL LEADER

*“The environmental movement, whether anybody wants to see it or not, is a movement of religion. It’s a movement of respecting Mother Earth as opposed to the God of the universe who I believe created all things.”*

—JIM AYER, REAL ESTATE AGENT

- Discuss how Native American perspectives on nature have been simplified or romanticized by environmentalists and the media. How has the environmental movement used native perceptions of nature for its own purposes?
- Have students evaluate a proposal for a mine, ski resort or dam on federal land. Craft the circumstances of the exercise to parallel a situation in your region. For example, students could form an Army Corps of Engineers team evaluating a plan to construct a hydroelectric dam on a river that is culturally significant to a local tribe, or a mine on Bureau of Land Management land near a national park that contains local tribes’ ancestral villages and human burial sites. Have students consider existing laws and frame a policy that takes into account the cultural attitudes of the area’s native people.
- Consider how native cultures instill the value of restraint in land use. If elders teach that the earth is alive and conscious, that ancestors should not be disturbed, and that every place has a spirit, what kinds of economic development are possible?

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## RESOURCES

The historic relationship of native peoples to the environment is complex and controversial. An unsympathetic view is Shepard Krech’s *The Ecological Indian*. In contrast, see Winona LaDuke’s *All My Relations*. For reviews and analysis of these two books — [www.sacredland.org/krech.html](http://www.sacredland.org/krech.html)



NEW YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

*On the trail with horses and travois in the late 19th century, heading toward Cut Bank Camp in northern Montana's Rocky Mountains.*

## ENVIRONMENT AND THE LAW

THE QUESTIONS BELOW can help students explore the intersections between science and the law.

The film provides several instances of people using the justice system to seek protection for the land. Explore some of those instances with the following discussion questions.

- Woodruff Butte is privately owned. What projects in your own community on privately owned land require environmental impact studies? On what basis could the government require an owner to conduct an archaeological survey or an environmental impact study before beginning mining operations?
- The Hopis and Navajos sold their Black Mesa mineral and water rights relying on a promise that the sale would have little impact on scarce water resources. But the mining process may be draining the land dry. The Secretary of the Interior has the power to shut down the slurry line that is draining the water. Should the Secretary do so? Do the benefits of the slurry line outweigh the impacts?

- In Panther Meadows on Mt. Shasta, New Agers not only perform ceremonies that the Wintu see as desecration, they also have an impact on fragile ecology—they trample plants, leave litter, bathe in pristine waters, burn wood, “love the place to death.” Should federal land managers control access to land people want to enjoy?

Have students investigate pending disputes in your community or region.

## CORPORATE ACCOUNTABILITY

SOMETIMES SACRED LANDS are threatened by government actions and sometimes by corporations. In *Resource Rebels*, a book on corporate environmental practices and indigenous peoples around the world, author Al Gedicks concludes, “There is an inseparable connection between massive environmental degradation and widespread human rights violations.” The hidden costs of resource extraction have been ignored for many years, but a movement to hold corporations accountable is on the rise.

- *In the Light of Reverence* depicts how the Peabody mining company threatens Hopi water supplies. Peabody denies that it is harming distant springs and has stated its intention to stop pumping groundwater, but it has refused to act. Ask students to consider how citizens might respond to Peabody. You can help them begin brainstorming by discussing the following assignments.
  - ◆ Draft a shareholders’ motion to encourage Peabody management to change practices that damage communities in which they mine. As you draft the motion, discuss the values that should guide corporate decision makers.
  - ◆ Write a piece of journalism on the conflict at Black Mesa, weighing the arguments on both sides, while focusing on economic power and corporate policies.
- Around the world, mining provides metals, energy, jobs and tax revenue to governments. Mining also affects land, individuals and communities. Use the first link in the resources below to initiate a classroom discussion on sustainable economic development.
- Using the second link in the resources below, have students research how their government representatives vote on corporate accountability issues and investigate which corporations donate money to the campaigns of the elected officials in your area.

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## RESOURCES

- International Institute for Environment and Development report “Breaking New Ground: Mining, Minerals and Sustainable Development,” containing a chapter on indigenous peoples — <http://www.iied.org/mmsd/finalreport/index.html>
- Research Your Politicians: Quick Links to Campaign Contribution and Voting Records — [www.corporations.org/campaign\\$\\$/](http://www.corporations.org/campaign$$/)
- Explore the conflict between the Hopi and Peabody Coal Company — [www.sacredland.org/black\\_mesa.html](http://www.sacredland.org/black_mesa.html)
- *Resource Rebels: Native Challenges to Mining and Oil Corporations* by Al Gedicks

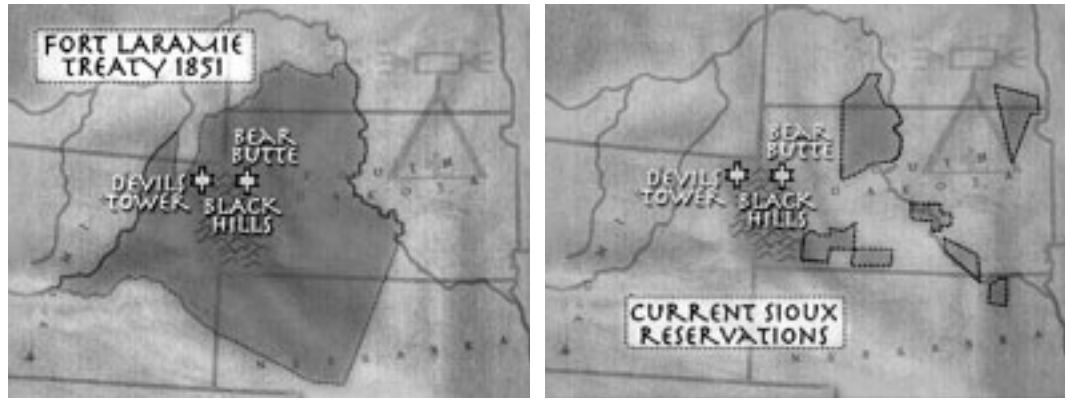
## WHAT SUSTAINS LIFE?

THE ENVIRONMENT often is studied through one of the traditional sciences such as biology, botany or chemistry. Help students reflect on what happens when they add the lens of culture or religion to their examination.

- *In the Light of Reverence* demonstrates that physical needs for clean air and water are just part of the nourishment provided by the natural world. As students watch the film, have them list ways that particular ecosystems sustain specific communities and cultures. Ask them to consider how destruction of nature can have a physiological, psychological or cultural impact as well as a physical or biological impact. After viewing, ask what students learned about ecology or environmentalism. Did the film change or challenge their perceptions in any way?
- Assess the conflicts described in the film by asking how well the stewards of the sites are achieving “environmental justice” as defined by the Environmental Protection Agency (<http://www.epa.gov/compliance/environmentaljustice/index.html>):

*Environmental justice:* “The fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.”

*Fair treatment:* “No group of people, including a racial, ethnic or socioeconomic group, should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial,



The first comprehensive treaty with the Sioux, signed at Fort Laramie, Wyoming, in 1851, recognized as sovereign Sioux territory a large area including the sacred Black Hills and the important ceremonial sites at Bear Butte and Bear's Lodge (Devils Tower). The discovery of gold led to subsequent treaties and acts of Congress that separated the nine bands of the Sioux from many of their sacred places.

municipal and commercial operations or the execution of federal, state, local, and tribal programs and policies.”

- What role has racism or cultural prejudice played in the practice of environmental justice in the United States?

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## RESOURCES

*Defending Mother Earth: Native American Perspectives on Environmental Justice*, edited by Jace Weaver

## DEFINING PROGRESS

USE THE FOLLOWING HOPI STORY as a writing prompt. Ask students to think about how they define progress and how their definitions relate to the practice of environmental science.

*“In the previous world, the people living there perfected technology to the point where they began to use it for the wrong reasons: accumulating wealth, power. They did magnificent things with technology, to the point where they felt that God, the Creator, or whatever you call it, was no longer needed, that we have become the gods. We’re now letting technology out of control again, giving it a life of its own. We’re repeating the mistake. We haven’t learned our lesson.”*

—VERNON MASAYESVA, HOPI

## HOLY GEOLOGY!

USE THE FOLLOWING activity to help reflect on how geological formations influence human cultures or are incorporated into them.



- As you view the film, ask students to list the geological terms for the disputed sites. Can they identify anything about these particular sites that might have led Native Americans to deem them holy? For example, in Hopi tradition, the San Francisco Peaks are the home of the *kachinas*—the bringers of rain. If you look at actual weather patterns, storm clouds seem to emanate from these peaks. Can students think of any other distinctive geological formations that have been designated as sacred by a people, nation or religion?
- The film points out that some sacred structures—churches, synagogues, mosques—are built where it’s convenient for people. Conversely, many Native Americans believe that sacred places define themselves and that it’s up to humans to find them and care for them, not create or own them. What leads one culture to name a place Devils Tower—and want to climb to the top of it—while native people revere it, keep their distance and perform pipe ceremonies?

## SOURCES OF SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE

WESTERN CULTURE OFTEN VALUES empirical knowledge to the exclusion of other kinds of knowledge. Use this activity to help students consider the value of nontraditional scientific information.



JOHN SCHAEFER

VERNON MASAYESVA, HOPI

*“The Hopi say when you die, when every living thing dies, they join the cloud people. We rise from our graves as mist, and we travel up to the mountains. We come down as rain or snow. Then we take our long journey back home: the ocean, the underground aquifers. We’re going home. We go home, we rest, we come back again. Western science has the same version, except the ‘we’ is disconnected totally from the phenomena, the cycle. We have no part in it. In our world view, we are the clouds. We are the rain that comes down.”*

- Assign each student a different animal or plant that is found in your community. Have them write a report that summarizes what they know about their subject, including listing the sources of their information. As part of the report, have students investigate traditional Native American teachings about the animal or plant. How are they different from non-native scientific findings? Are there ancient traditions or beliefs that we now can verify or disprove with empirical evidence? What do we lose if we reject those traditions or beliefs?
- Consider the impact of suppressing oral native traditions. If a language is lost, if stories and songs are forgotten, what kind of information about a place or about the workings of the natural world go with them?

## TAKING CARE OF WATER

THE HOPI BELIEVE they violated a spiritual covenant to protect their homeland when they leased water to Peabody Coal Company for money. The water, a free and sacred resource that they promised to respect and take care of through ceremony, now has become a commodity—something to be bought and sold. What are the differences between the Hopi view of the water cycle and the view of Western science and corporations?



NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY CLINE LIBRARY (NAU.PH.93.38.1)

*In this 1922 photo by Edward Curtis, “Loitering at the Spring,”  
Hopi women gather water in the evening.*





© 1967 & 1995, UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA PRESS

From A Pictographic History of the Oglala Sioux by Amos Bad Heart Bull, Lakota, this 19th century ledger drawing clearly shows the Black Hills surrounded by the sacred hoop known as “the racetrack,” along with Mato Tipila (aka Bear’s Lodge or Devils Tower) at the top of the hoop and Bear Butte just outside the hoop.

Have students write research papers on the following expert opinions, which relate to the Hopi situation at Black Mesa and are heard with increasing frequency in the media:

- According to the United Nations, more than a billion people—a sixth of the world’s population—lack access to safe water.
- By 2020, a third of the world’s population will be without potable drinking water.
- Many future wars will be fought over water.
- Water will be to the 21st century what oil was to the 20th century.

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**RESOURCES**

- “Paavahu and Paanaqso’a: The Wellsprings of Life and the Slurry of Death” by Peter Whiteley and Vernon Masayesva, pp. 188-207, in *Rethinking Hopi Ethnography* by Peter Whiteley
- *Blue Gold: The Fight to Stop the Corporate Theft of the World’s Water* by Maude Barlow and Tony Clarke
- *Water Wars: Privatization, Pollution and Profit* by Vandana Shiva
- Black Mesa Trust – <http://www.blackmesatrust.org>
- GRACE (Global Resource Action Center for the Environment) – <http://www.gracelinks.org/water.html>

## HEALING THE LAND

ATTEMPTS TO PRESERVE ECOSYSTEMS or protect endangered species may conflict with grazing, logging, mining or recreational interests. Native Americans have spiritual practices tied to the land that go far back in history and require solitude, silence, and access to plants or minerals. These cultural traditions may conflict with the definition of national parks or private property boundaries and create challenges for federal land managers.

*“I’m trying to figure out a way that I can keep everybody else out and still allow for your ceremony. But I can’t break the law—because it’s public land.”*

—KATHY HAMMOND, U.S. FOREST SERVICE

- Have students create a map of your state or region over the last 500 years, showing how and when Native American cultural areas became federal, state, private and reservation lands.
- Develop a policy for tribal co-management of federal lands, including site monitoring and stewardship, and plans for sustainable economic development that incorporate protection of sacred places.
- Discuss what Vine Deloria means when he says: “That location is sacred enough, it should have *time of its own*. And once it has time of its own, then the people who know how to do ceremonies should come and minister to it.”
- How do laws aimed at environmental protection, historic preservation and freedom of religion conflict with each other? How are such conflicts resolved?
- In 1876, Lakota/Sioux bands were divided onto nine reservations, treaties were voided, and the Black Hills and other sacred places were left outside the reservation boundaries (see maps on page 30). Imagine Congress has passed a law instructing U.S. federal agencies to return the Black Hills to Lakota sovereign control over a 20-year period. Divide students into two teams: native interests and the federal government. Considering what we know now about history, sacred lands and the rights of indigenous peoples, have the two teams negotiate co-management, sacred site monitoring and stewardship of the Black Hills, ending with the transfer of the hills to Lakota control.

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**RESOURCES**

*Black Hills, White Justice: The Sioux Nation Versus the United States, 1775 to the Present* by Edward Lazarus



THOMAS HOUSEWORTH/NATIONAL ANTHROPOLOGICAL ARCHIVES, SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

*Kloochy, an 80-year-old Wintu man on the McCloud River in California, circa 1882.*



# LANGUAGE ARTS ACTIVITIES

## DEBATES AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION

THESE ACTIVITIES CAN PROVIDE students with opportunities to practice speaking, persuasive writing, critical thinking, and conflict-resolution skills as they cover civics, law, religion, history, economics, ecology and culture topics.

*In the Light of Reverence* describes several disputes that provide excellent material for student debates or persuasive writing assignments. Consider assigning students one or all of the issues below. You may wish to add a third alternative to the traditional “pro/con” debate framework by allowing students to argue for a compromise position. This third position would be especially important for students studying or practicing conflict-resolution techniques. Viewing of the film is the first part of the students’ preparation.

Refer students to their textbooks, your school librarian, local community groups and the film Web site for additional resources.

As an alternative to debates, encourage students to practice conflict-resolution skills by role-playing the scenarios. Let students trained in peer-mediation skills serve as mediators. You also might play out the scenarios as mock trials. Are the resolutions that come out of mock trials different from those based on peer mediation?

### DEVILS TOWER

Members of the Lakota tribe have asked the U.S. Park Service to protect one of their sacred sites, Devils Tower, by banning rock climbing on it.

**PRO:** The Park Service bans climbing on other sites, like Mt. Rushmore. It is hypocritical for them to allow climbing on Devils Tower.

*“Anyone on the tower, or anyone pounding bolts in the tower, is acting in a disrespectful manner.”*

—DEB LIGGETT, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**CON:** Federal land belongs to the people—all of the people—including climbers.

*“If there’s a climbing ban that’s put in effect, then I’m being locked out of my church.”* —FRANK SANDERS,

CLIMBER

#### Related Issues

- How is religion defined? What is the legal relationship between recreation and religion? Should one outweigh the other when their interests conflict?



CHRISTOPHER MCLEOD

“Devils Tower” or “Mato Tipila”?

- Is climbing a religious expression or recreation?
- What does the legal system recognize as a sacred site?



- Is this land exclusively federal, or do the Lakota also have legal claim to it? Aside from signed treaties, is it relevant that the Lakota, as a sovereign nation, battled for control of Devils Tower and lost?
- If the Park Service uses Lakota tradition to determine its policies about Devils Tower, is that a church/state conflict, i.e., does it amount to government endorsement of a particular religion or religious practice?
- What is the environmental impact of Lakota practice? What is the environmental impact of climbing? What is the government's interest in protecting the environment?
- What is the economic impact of Lakota practice? What is the economic impact of climbing? What is the government's interest in encouraging economic development?
- If the name "Devils Tower" is insulting to native people, should it be changed to "Mato Tipila"?

## WOODRUFF BUTTE

The owner of Woodruff Butte has applied for the necessary permissions to begin mining his land, but Hopi Indians, who consider the site sacred, object.

PRO: Mining is both legal and necessary to progress and development.

CHRISTOPHER MCLEOD



Mine blast at Black Mesa.

*"You can't make roads, you can't make anything without tearing into a mountain; it's just impossible. That's how we make things. That's our culture."* —DARRYL LINDSEY, MINER

CON: Mining would irreparably destroy the ability of Hopi Indians to use the site for their sacred purposes.

*"It's hard to stop people when they're just making money off something that's not supposed to be sold."* —LEE WAYNE LOMAYESTEWA, HOPI

## Related Issues

- Does the purpose of the mining matter? Should satisfying consumer demand for stonewashed jeans carry the same weight as providing gravel for a public project such as a road, or coal for electricity?
- What evidence is needed to declare something a sacred site? What happens when one tradition marks sacred sites by leaving them



SOUTHWEST MUSEUM, LOS ANGELES

*Many Hopis refused to go along with government privatization of land and refused to send their children to schools where the Hopi language was banned and only English was taught. These Hopi men, known as “Hostiles,” were imprisoned at Alcatraz in 1895 for resisting government edicts.*

undisturbed and another marks sacred sites by altering them with buildings, altars or other structures? Consider the following quotes from the film.

*“There’s nothing out there on this piece of property [Woodruff Butte] that’s tangible to me. I’ve been out there a lot, and I stand there some days by myself and try to understand what they’re telling me. And there’s nothing I can see, so I can’t perceive it being important to this degree. It’s not a burial site, there’s not artifacts scattered all over it. This is not what I’d consider a beautiful piece of property, with birds and trees and a creek running through it. This is a barren piece of rock, sticking up in a barren piece of land.”* —DALE MCKINNON, OWNER, WOODRUFF BUTTE

*“When you look at the land, what is the first thing people see? How they can make money on it. So it’s money, or learning how to value what looks like nothing. ’Cause when the people came here, they said, ‘Look at the Indians, they’ve done nothing with this land.’ Well, in our world view, that’s great. It looks so natural. That’s the way it’s supposed to be!”*

—CALEEN SISK-FRANCO, WINTU

- Under U.S. law, property owners have great leeway, but are not permitted to do whatever they wish on their land. What are the limits of private property? What kinds of actions are—or should be—restricted and why?
- What is the environmental impact of Hopi practice? What is the



environmental impact of mining? What is the government’s interest in protecting the environment?

- What is the economic impact of Hopi practice? What is the economic impact of mining? What is the government’s interest in encouraging economic development?
- Are there costs of development that are not economic, material or easily measured?

## MT. SHASTA

The Winnemem Wintu have considered Mt. Shasta a sacred place for generations. They consider the site too powerful for children and they show respect by remaining clothed. Recently, followers of New Age religions, who also consider Mt. Shasta sacred, have begun to gather on the mountain. Those gatherings often include nudity or young children. The Forest Service is considering requiring visitors to abide by Wintu protocol while on the mountain.

PRO: Others may visit, but they should be respectful of Wintu traditions, just as tourists who visit a church observe local custom and don’t disrupt worshippers.

*“It’s our church.”* —FLORENCE JONES, WINTU ELDER

CON: The mountain is sacred to a lot of people and belongs to all of us. You can respect the Wintu traditions, but I shouldn’t be bound by them.

*“It doesn’t really matter what culture it’s coming from, or whether it’s indigenous or not. When people are drawn to a sacred place, I feel the need to allow space for inspiration, for a person coming from wherever.”*

—ROWENA KRYDER, NEW AGE AUTHOR



CHRISTOPHER MCLEOD

Mt. Shasta.

## Related Issues

- How can Forest Service policy be fair to everyone? Would it be fair to keep everyone out? Should the Forest Service use environmental protection as a basis on which to exclude everyone except the Wintu?
- How does the legal system define a sacred site? Consider the following quote from the film.

*“That area right there is our church, and this is how you behave in our church. But they believe that it’s as much theirs as anybody’s because it’s out here. If we built a building around it and said, ‘This is our building, and inside this building is our sacred spring, and this is how you behave in it,’ then maybe they would, because then they could see the boundaries of*

*what is ours. Just like we couldn't walk into a Catholic church and say, 'Hey, I think we should have a little fire right here because that's our way. We need a fire. That's a sacred thing.' That would ruin the church, right?"*

—CALEEN SISK-FRANCO, WINNEMEM WINTU

- Given the separation between church and state, what should the government do when it finds that it owns sacred ground? What is current policy when churches, graveyards or other religious sites are on federal land?
- How does the length of time that a particular group has occupied or used a particular site factor into this dispute? Does it matter that Wintu traditions go back for generations but New Age ties to Mt. Shasta are recent?
- How does the fact that the U.S. government does not officially recognize the Winnemem Wintu as a tribe affect this dispute?

In addition to the major disputes, the following quotes from the film also can be used as debate prompts:

*"White people only look for money and jobs and a good time. They don't care about land. They only sell and buy and destroy things."* —THOMAS BANYACYA, HOPI

*"In our common land, we do not share a common vision."* —NARRATOR

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## RESOURCES

- For a definition of sacred land, read Vine Deloria's essay "Sacred Lands and Religious Freedom" and compare it to the much shorter definition in President Clinton's Executive Order 13007 (both can be downloaded from the film Web site — [www.sacredland.org/bibliography](http://www.sacredland.org/bibliography))
- Explore the "wise use" philosophy through Property Rights Foundation of America — <http://www.prfamerica.org/>
- For the climbing community's position, see the Access Fund — <http://www.accessfund.org/>
- For a New Age perspective — <http://www.creative-harmonics.org/index.html>
- *Dialogue and the Art of Thinking Together* by William Isaacs
- *On Dialogue* by David Bohm
- For conflict resolution — <http://www.communityboards.org>
- For federal policy on burials see the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) — [www.sacredland.org/legal.html](http://www.sacredland.org/legal.html)
- See extensive National Park Service resources, pages 17 and 22



## LANGUAGE AND LINGUISTICS: WHAT'S IN A NAME?



HOW WE VIEW THE WORLD is determined largely by the words we use. People using a different language may actually see and experience a different world. In the Hopi language, nouns are more like verbs—objects are what they do. Land is *tuuwaqatsi*, which translates “from the land we all live”—blending relationship, vitality and other species all into one word. Emphasis is on processes, cycles and events rather than objects, things and individuals. Dale McKinnon sees Woodruff Butte as “an ugly pile of rocks” but Dalton Taylor sees *Tsimontukwi*, Jimson Weed Place, as an ancestral homeland of medicine gathering, pilgrimage and thanksgiving.

- Divide the class in half and have one half leave the classroom. Ask the remaining students to describe an ordinary classroom object in terms of what it does—that is, think of the object as a verb. Write the description on the board and hide the object. Ask the students to come back into the classroom and guess what the object is.
- After the above activity, ask students to discuss what difference language makes in relation to the places featured in the film:



WILL PARRINELLO

CALEEN SISK-FRANCO, WINNEMEM WINTU

*“We call the spring sauwel mem. Sauwel means a place that has a sacredness about it, like it’s the beginning of something, or it’s the life form of something. And mem is water. So, this is the life-giving water and it runs all the way through our land. The winnemem is the middle river (McCloud River), which comes from this spring. So, all the water from this sauwel mem gives life to everything down river, down through the valley, all the way down through Sacramento. It all comes from this life-giving force. When you recognize that, it’s kind of like your mother. That’s your life-giver that brought you into this world. Without this spring, nothing else would be.”*

- ◆ What is Devils Tower to a tourist from New Jersey is the Lodge of the Bear to a Lakota. The tourist may associate it with evil, the Lakota with children saved from a bear by prayer.
- ◆ Maps label the Hopis’ home Black Mesa, but the people who have lived there since long before maps were printed know it as *Tuuwanasave’e*, The Earth Center. The Hopi name conveys the ideas of an energy center, with power underneath and within (coal and water), and a healing center where medicinal waters quench more than thirst.
- ◆ New Age seekers congregate at Panther Spring on Mt. Shasta, many of them seeing it for the first time. The Wintu call the spring *sauwel mem* (see sidebar at left) and have a connection to the place that goes back more than a thousand years.
- The Hopi language has no exact words for past and future. The idea of “future” is conveyed by words meaning “inside of us.” The future is not out there waiting to be discovered, but is waiting to be created by the community. Other native communities consider the impact of present-day

decisions on the seventh generation. Discuss how this view of the future as “inside of us” would affect how people treat the earth.

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**RESOURCES**

- *The Spell of the Sensuous: Perception and Language in a More-Than-Human World* by David Abram
- See the essay “The Hopi Environmental Ethos” by Judith Todd — [www.sacredland.org/todd.html](http://www.sacredland.org/todd.html)
- See the essay “Keepers of the Earth” by Jeannette Armstrong — [www.sacredland.org/armstrong.html](http://www.sacredland.org/armstrong.html)

**IRONY**

AS A LITERARY CONCEPT, “irony” can be difficult for some students to grasp. *In the Light of Reverence* provides several real-life examples. Ask students to identify ironic situations as they view the film, for example:

- “You can go on public lands to strip a mountain and leave a cyanide pool, but you cannot go on public lands to pray for the earth and its continued fertility.” —VINE DELORIA JR., NATIVE AMERICAN SCHOLAR
- You can climb Devils Tower, but climbing Mt. Rushmore is forbidden.



NATIONAL ANTHROPOLOGICAL ARCHIVES, SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

*An unidentified Sioux woman with U.S. Indian Peace Commissioners at the signing of the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty in Wyoming. Commissioners from left are General Alfred Terry, Gen. William Harney, Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman, John Sanborn, Samuel Tappan, and Gen. Christopher Augur.*

- New Agers look to fill their own spiritual needs with traditions of indigenous peoples, and in the process, they appropriate, misuse, cause offense and deny native peoples their own culture.
- Though founded on the principle of religious freedom, the U.S. government suppressed Native American religions for more than a century.

## COMPARATIVE MYTHOLOGY

STUDENTS CAN USE STORIES told in the film to expand their knowledge of mythology and Native American literature.

- Ask students to compare the stories included in each section with other creation or etiological myths they know.
- Review each story. What are the lessons of the story? Why is it being told now? How does it relate to the conflict it accompanies?
- Follow up by reading other Spider Woman stories. What do the stories reveal about the culture of the tribe that passes them down?

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## RESOURCES

- Download the Spider Woman texts from the *In the Light of Reverence* Web site — [www.sacredland.org/transcript.html](http://www.sacredland.org/transcript.html)
- *Spider Woman Stories—Legends of the Hopi Indians* by G.M. Mullett
- Explore Native American storytelling at this interactive Web site — <http://www.pbs.org/circleofstories>

## THE ART OF STORYTELLING

STUDENTS CAN PRACTICE oral and written storytelling to help them understand the role of each in Native American and other cultures.

- Use the Native American stories in each section of the film as prompts to examine the role of storytelling in Indian cultures. Consider references to specific places and the values or lessons that are conveyed.
- Have students assume the role of storyteller and retell the events surrounding one of the disputes in the film. Does a particular genre of story emerge, such as an epic battle or a classic hero struggle? Does everyone identify the same characters as heroes? Villains?

## WRITING PROMPTS

STUDENTS CAN PRACTICE expository, persuasive, editorial, business and autobiographical writing by using issues in the film as prompts.

- What is sacred to you? Where are your sacred places? What was sacred to your ancestors? Is what was sacred the same for them as for you? If not, what accounts for the changes?
- Do you have a story of a place that had a profound impact on your life, your sense of identity, a place that is special and gives meaning to you and your family? Has that place changed over the years, been threatened or destroyed? Imagine physical and spiritual connection to place as practiced by an entire community.
- Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper, or to your Congressional representatives, expressing your opinion about a place that is important to you that is threatened.
- Draft a policy on land use for your local Chamber of Commerce. Be sure the policy preserves critical ecosystems and respects the cultural practices of indigenous peoples.
- The spiritual ways of other people can seem alien. Are there examples of other cultures with beliefs that are surprising to you? What do you do when you encounter cultures with such beliefs? What role does tolerance play in preserving democracy?
- Explore what it means to be a community. Does community include land and other species?
- Consider the ways in which biological diversity makes an ecosystem stronger and more resilient, and compare this to the impact of cultural diversity on a society.
- *In the Light of Reverence* provides several examples of people acting or making decisions according to what is in the best interest of Native Americans—85% of climbers are choosing not to climb Devils Tower and the Forest Service chose not to permit a new ski resort on Mt. Shasta, for example. When the government was actively engaged in trying to exterminate Native American culture 100 years ago, such decisions would have been unthinkable. What accounts for the change in attitude?



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## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The *In the Light of Reverence* Web site includes resources that can help in your lesson preparation. At [www.sacredland.org](http://www.sacredland.org), you'll find:

Under "The Film"

- A full transcript of the film

Under "Resources"

- Links to related organizations and resources
- A bibliography, including related novels and poetry
- A filmography, including other films about Native American issues
- An annotated list of U.S. laws and court cases involving sacred lands
- *Sacred Land Reader* by Peter Nabokov, introduction by Vine Deloria Jr.

Use the resource link to Film Discussion Guides to find:

- Lesson plans for an elaborate Supreme Court simulation
- A facilitator's guide for community-based discussions of the film
- The most current version of this teacher's guide, with live links

Under "Get Involved"

- A list of current conflicts at sacred sites—check whether something is happening in your region

Under "History"

- A list of historic struggles over sacred places—discover what has happened in your region in recent years

Also recommended are these excellent Native American resources:

Radio

- You can listen to voices from Indian Country every day on-line. Check out National Public Radio's daily show *Native America Calling* (you can access archives or listen live weekdays at 11 AM Mountain Time) — <http://www.nativecalling.org/>

Print journalism

- Follow the latest news via the on-line edition of the daily newspaper *Indian Country Today* — <http://www.indiancountry.com/>

Web resources

- Native American Rights Fund — <http://www.narf.org/index/html>
- Honor the Earth — <http://www.honorearth.org/>
- Indigenous Environmental Network — <http://www.ienearth.org/>
- Seventh Generation Fund — <http://www.7genfund.org/environmental.html>

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