

THE WOMEN OF DRUMS AND THE STRUGGLE FOR MENOMINEE RESTORATION

Ethan W. Bowers

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate College of Bowling Green
State University in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

May 2015

Committee:

Nicole M. Jackson, Advisor

Andrea Riley-Mukavetz

ABSTRACT

Nicole M. Jackson, Advisor

During the 1950s and 1960s the Menominee were casualties of the Federal Termination Policy; stripped of all ties to the U.S. government, the Menominee people, economy, and environment suffered great consequences. In 1970, Determination of Rights and Unity for Menominee Shareholders (DRUMS) emerged as an activist organization in opposition to Termination and the Menominee governing elite controlling Menominee Enterprises Inc. (MEI), the tribe's political voice, and its assets. In similar fashion to the American Indian Movement (AIM), DRUMS protested, published newsletters, and spoke out against MEI. In contrast to AIM, DRUMS struggled for cultural preservation through reform of federal policy and was lead primarily by women. Three women: Ada Deer, Sylvia Wilber, and Shirley Daly aided in devising and executing a diplomatic strategy of federal lobbying, democratic election, and public protest. DRUMS formed inter-organizational linkages, and infiltrated institutional establishments to affect change through democratically representative channels. Research of extensive primary material available on this subject including news clippings, meeting minutes, financial documents, legislative studies, personal correspondence, and referendums, confirms that DRUMS, while similar to AIM, was composed of a distinct grassroots demographic of women who re-constructed methods of resistance utilized by the dominant society to ensure survivance. Furthermore, evidence should explicate DRUMS as a noteworthy activist group led publicly and politically by women such as Ada Deer, Sylvia Wilber, and Shirley Daly, and that the women of DRUMS deserve credit for their contribution to the end of the termination era in federal Indian policy in the 1970s.

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this text to my wife, who has supported the advancement of my education without question. She sacrificed weekends, evenings, and many opportunities to expand her own horizons so that I would be able to achieve this goal. She has listened to my rather dry, boring, and unending worry about whether or not I would finish this endeavor, and she continues to push me to pursue my dreams, often at the expense of her own. Her support in the first few weeks of graduate school saved me from walking away from what has been a journey of growth for both my education and our relationship. My parents Bill and Vickie Bowers also played an enormous role in this achievement. Without their moral, financial, and loving support I would not be here today. Even when they could not understand exactly what I was doing with my life, they always maintained interest, and never questioned my motivation to succeed and my ability be the best son, husband, and scholar possible.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

There are an unending number of people I need to acknowledge for their work and guidance during the process of developing this project. First and foremost, Dr. Nicole Jackson, the professor I was so terribly afraid to propose my project to in the beginning. She has had a great influence on how I have been shaped as a professional, as a scholar, and as a person. Her constructive criticism has fostered so much growth in my academic work over the last two years. Dr. Andrea Riley-Mukavetz, who stuck with me throughout this project when I had difficulty in finding a like-minded American Indian scholar. She opened new perspectives that made this work better than it could have been without her help. Dr. Michael Brooks, for providing guidance as a counselor and for coming up with funding for my research endeavors and in countless other times of need. Lisa Lamson, who introduced me to Dr. Jackson and calmed many of the fears and anxieties I had as a first year graduate student. Brian Matve of St. Mary's College, a dear friend and colleague who offered his time, his mind, and his advice, without which this project would be structured much differently. To the BGSU graduate college, for providing funding through the Katzner Research Award and allowing me to further my studies at this institution. To the BGSU History Department and all of the members of my cohort, for being such a helpful group to grow alongside. The College of Menominee Nation, for allowing me to conduct research on the Menominee people, and accommodating my needs so fully. Lastly, thank you to Bryan Stevenson, for guiding me through the documents available in the CMN Special Collections.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
INTRODUCTION	1
Historiography of American Indian Activism	2
Reflection of a National Picture.....	7
The Women of DRUMS	8
Missing Historical Legacy	10
CHAPTER I: THE TERMINATION ERA AND STRUCTURE OF GOVERNANCE.....	13
CHAPTER II: THE EMERGENCE AND MISSTEPS OF DRUMS.....	28
CHAPTER III: ADAPTING STRATEGY AND PROVIDING A VOICE	50
CHAPTER IV: CONSTRUCTING LEADERSHIP, LIAISON, AND LEGISLATION.....	71
CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION.....	86
REFERENCES	93

INTRODUCTION

In 1954, the Eighty-Third Congress of the United States passed the Menominee Termination Act of 1954 as Public Law 399. With this legislation, the Menominee people and over one hundred other tribal relationships with the federal government were terminated.¹ Discussion of Termination began in the 1940s and early 1950s, and was made the official Indian policy of the federal government in 1953, with the joint passage of House Concurrent Resolution 108 and Public Law 280.² The Menominee tribe was officially terminated in 1961. The delay in Termination was due to investigation into the readiness of the Menominee nation to exist as a private and isolated entity. Throughout Termination, Menominee tribal assets were almost entirely drained, the tribe was forced to sell its land, and Menominee County, Wisconsin developed into one of the most impoverished areas in the Midwest.³ On December 22, 1973, the Menominee were the first tribe to have its relationship with the federal government restored when Richard Nixon signed the Menominee Restoration Act of 1973.⁴ This legislation effectively ended the policy of Termination and restored the original Menominee reservation.

The early 1970s marked a political and social turning point in American Indian activism. the American Indian Movement (AIM) had already occupied Alcatraz Island and Red Power had emerged as a movement with social and political force.⁵ Over the course of the next few years,

¹ The Menominee Termination Act organized the Menominee Lumber Mill, Menominee Land, treaty annuities, and tribal assets into a corporate entity known as Menominee Enterprises, Inc. Annuity payments and assets for Menominee people were handled by The First Wisconsin Bank and Trust Company, and the Menominee Common Stock Voting Trust appointed MEI board trustees. Members enrolled before 1954 elected the MCSVT board members. The Menominee reservation was organized as a county in the state of Wisconsin. The act ensured the privatization of a tribe previously occupying a ward-trust relationship with the federal government. The federal government was absolved of any financial, social, and ethical responsibilities to the Menominee people and all Menominee born after 1954 were no longer legally considered tribal members or American Indians.

² U.S. Congress. 67. Stat. 588

³ Nicholas C. Peroff, *Menominee DRUMS: Tribal Termination and Restoration, 1954-1974*, (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1982), 129.

⁴ Peroff, 226.

⁵ Red power was a pan-Indian movement advocating for an American Indian identity, cultural autonomy, and tribal sovereignty. Red Power activism primarily took place during the 1960s and 1970s.

AIM was eminent in the national picture of American Indian activism. Leaders such as Dennis Banks and Russell Means adopted protest tactics similar to the Civil Rights and the Black Power Movements, engaging in sit-ins, protests, and militant occupations.⁶ Many historians consider AIM to be the central organization affecting change in federal Indian Policy, and some have attributed the success of the movement to its radical militant tactics.

Determination of Rights and Unity for Menominee Shareholders (DRUMS) played as crucial a role in American Indian activism by utilizing linkages with political leaders within established para-colonial institutions in order to navigate democratically representative channels. DRUMS leaders including Ada Deer, Sylvia Wilber, and Shirley Daly lobbied politically and provided testimony to aid the passage of the Menominee Restoration Act of 1973 and gained elected positions to aid Menominee shareholders. DRUMS' membership and leadership was also composed of a substantial enrollment of women. Over the course of the 1970s, AIM and DRUMS utilized distinct methods of achieving the same goals, both attaining victories for cultural autonomy and preservation.

Historiography of American Indian Activism

During the 1970s through the 1990s, scholarly interest in the origins of the Red Power movement surged. Vine Deloria, a lawyer of American Indian ancestry, was active in lobbying for tribal self-determination. In fact, most historians credit Deloria with coining the term Red Power. In *Custer Died for Your Sins: An American Indian Manifesto*, published in 1971, Deloria encourages young American Indians to assert cultural autonomy by rejecting Anglo-American influence and promoting traditional indigenous religions, cultures, and lifestyles.⁷ While he

⁶ Susan Applegate Krouse, "What Came Out of the Takeovers: Women's Activism and the Indian Community School of Milwaukee," *American Indian Quarterly* 27, no. 3 (Autumn 2003): 533-47, accessed January 15, 2015, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4138961>, 533.

⁷ Vine Deloria Jr., *Custer Died for Your Sins: an Indian Manifesto*, (New York, NY: The Macmillan Company,

supports some radical organizations such as the National Congress of American Indians, he more highly advocates intellectual struggle in changing the perception of American Indians; believing that militant action does not foster increased tribalism and community. Deloria's work was published the same year that members of AIM and other young activists occupied Alcatraz Island, and it has become one of the most important texts documenting American Indian activism.

Joane Nagel, Troy Johnson, and Alvin Josephy have also published important comprehensive texts. In *American Indian Ethnic Renewal*, Nagel argues that federal policy intended to assimilate American Indians only strengthened interest in ethnic identity, peaking curiosity in the urbanized population in particular.⁸ Nagel asserts that opposition to oppressive policy encouraged a renewal of traditional tribal practices and peaked curiosity in migrating from city to reservation. Josephy, Johnson, and Nagel edited one the most influential compilations concerning the issues facing American Indian activists, *Red Power: American Indians' Fight For Freedom*. Utilizing primary sources, such as speeches from the National Congress of American Indians and journal entries from activists, the authors outline the chronological development of Red Power.⁹ These authors document how activists asserted cultural autonomy, fought for indigenous rights, and challenged stereotypes by creating a network of pan-Indian communication and organization. Highlighted in this narrative are American Indian experiences from all backgrounds including urban, military, traditional, educational, and political, and preceding each primary source is an editorial detailing the struggle for self-determination.

1971).

⁸ Joane Nagel, *American Indian Ethnic Renewal: Red Power and the Resurgence of Identity and Culture*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1996), 12.

⁹ *Red Power: The American Indians Fight for Freedom*, 2nd ed., edited by Alvin Josephy Jr., Joane Nagel, and Troy Johnson, (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1999).

A smaller number of authors have also written about women in particular. The vast majority of texts have been biographical sketches. *Sifters: Native American Women's Lives* edited by Theda Perdue chronologically charts the participation of American Indian women in traditional and post-traditional tribal society.¹⁰ Perdue contributes a piece of scholarship missing from American Indian women's history and illustrates the changing role for women in American Indian society from the eighteenth through the twentieth century.¹¹ Clara Sue Kidwell has written extensively about American Indian women leaders. In comparison to Perdue, Kidwell has written about women in the late nineteenth century in a comprehensive chronology. Kidwell and Perdue have both written on the lack of female autonomy in American Indian societies in the twentieth century as an imposition of Euro-American gender norms in the nineteenth century, charting the diminishing rights of women in regard to property, political office, and cultural traditions.¹²

There are also additional historians of American Indian women, but in relation to the effects of colonization on their role in American Indian society and in activism. Devon Abbot Mihesuah contributes a compilation of literature review, research on colonialism, and further research on its effects on activism. Mihesuah examines the dilemma that American Indian women face in choosing between their gender or their ethnicity, and the difficulty they face when they attempt to balance both parts of their identity in their activism. Mihesuah conducts a historical review of American Indian women's role in traditional society and then their changing role in modernity as a result of colonization. She concludes that Native women can address tribal and gender concerns in the same instance, and that women have devised their own unique form

¹⁰ Post-traditional society is defined as the modern reservation era beginning in the late nineteenth to early twentieth century and extending to present day.

¹¹ Few primary sources document the participation of American Indian women; resources in this area are extremely limited.

¹² In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century American Indian women were symbolically stripped of all rights to negotiate agreements, own land, and participate in tribal government. Women had previously held an important place in tribal governance, with most of these new social norms being imposed by Anglo-Americans applying their own male dominant cultural norms to American Indian society.

of activism.¹³ Karen Anderson provides a more comprehensive study of American Indian history in relation to the role of women in her work *Changing Woman: A History of Racial Ethnic Women in Modern America*. She first examines the internal cultural conflict that American Indian women have faced as a result of colonization. For instance, whether it was their loss of voice in diplomatic matters or their role as caretakers for the tribe and the land. Anderson illustrates how American Indian women were forced from their traditional tribal roles and were expected to adhere to Euro-American gender norms. She then covers modern Indian policy and resulting activism from the Indian New Deal to Red Power. Anderson argues that Native women learned to re-create distinctly western means of resistance to fight against gender and racial oppression, utilizing Euro-American practices and discourse to combat para-colonial impact, and ultimately carving out a niche to work within the establishment to alter it in their favor. Anderson and Mihesuah both work to highlight how Native women have been oppressed by colonization and the in turn how they fought against it.

Termination and Restoration is a popular field of study within American Indian policy histories. A number of articles and monographs have been written on the policy implications and effects of Termination and the process of Restoration. A majority of these studies have emphasized the centrality of Menominee Restoration, but have not covered it exclusively. The principal monographs pertaining to Termination and Restoration are *Termination and Relocation: Federal Indian Policy 1945-1960* by Donald Fixico, and *American Indian Nations From Termination to Restoration 1953-2006* by Roberta Ulrich. Fixico and Ulrich have contributed great introductory studies of Federal Indian Policy during the mid-twentieth century. Focusing on the specific motivations for Termination and Relocation policy, Fixico traces

¹³ Devon Abbott Mihesuah, *Indigenous American Women: Decolonization, Empowerment, Activism*. (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2003).

culturally ignorant leadership from World War II to postwar administrations.¹⁴ Ulrich admonishes the policymakers responsible for the disaster of Termination, chronicling the financial, cultural, and psychological costs paid by individual tribes and the national American Indian community.¹⁵

There is very little historical scholarship that emphasizes the struggle for Menominee Restoration. *Menominee DRUMS: Tribal Termination and Restoration, 1954-1974* by Nicholas C. Peroff, and *Freedom with Reservation* by Deborah Shames are the preeminent studies available on the role of DRUMS and the vital figures demanding tribal Restoration. Peroff's monograph is a singular work and contains essential statistical data, analysis of DRUMS in the media, and evaluation of Termination and Restoration policy. Peroff provides critical analysis of the political strategy executed by DRUMS, arguing that DRUMS' unceasing lobbying efforts for Restoration and utilization of multiple political resource channels helped to increase interest in the plight of the Menominee and ensure enactment of legislation. Shames 1972 work was written prior to Restoration of the Menominee tribe, and commissioned by the National Committee to Save the Menominee People and Forests. The tone is passionate, and Shames imparts a close personal narrative regarding essential figures such as Ada Deer, Jim White, and Sylvia Wilber. In addition, Shames includes first person interviews with DRUMS activists, of which many are women, allowing historians to comprehend the in-depth activist involvement of Menominee women. Shames' main objective is to garner sympathy for DRUMS activists and she argues that the path taken by DRUMS will eliminate many of the harsh conditions prevalent in Menominee County.

¹⁴ Donald Fixico, *Termination and Relocation: Federal Indian Policy, 1945 – 1960*, (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1986).

¹⁵ Roberta Ulrich, *American Indian Nations from Termination to Restoration, 1953 – 2006*, (Lincoln, NE: The University of Nebraska Press, 2010), 20, 241-245.

Young American Indian men have been the focal point of American Indian activism, overshadowing the contributions of women leaders, individual tribal groups, and smaller activist factions. Studying the Menominee, DRUMS, and women leaders such as Ada Deer, Sylvia Wilber, and Shirley Daly presents a unique opportunity to fill a gap in contemporary American Indian history, and to foster an appreciation for the diversity present in the history of American Indian activism.

Reflection of a National Picture

While the historical narrative of American Indian activism has dealt primarily with men, women have played a paramount role. In an article titled “American Indian Women: Activism in the 1960s and 1970s,” Donna Hightower Langston provides evidence suggesting that women held varied leadership roles.¹⁶ Langston argues that in more militant organizations such as AIM women brandished firearms and organized occupations. In addition, women such as Ladonna Harris, Ada Deer, and Wilma Mankiller adopted radical activism channeled through democratic means, seeking elected positions and legislative reform. The origins of this leadership can be traced to the role of elder women in tribal governance and social decision-making.¹⁷

Ladonna Harris was the wife of a U.S. Senator from Oklahoma.¹⁸ She influenced many of his political decisions, and aided women such as Ada Deer in lobbying efforts.¹⁹ Deer (one of the primary subjects of this research project) was elected to multiple tribal bodies including the Menominee Common Stock Voting Trust (MCSVT), and the Menominee Restoration Committee (MRC). Deer also testified to multiple congressional committees on the negative

¹⁶ Donna Hightower Langston, “American Indian Women's Activism in the 1960s and 1970s,” *Hypatia* 18, no. 2 (Spring 2003): 1, 10.1353/hyp.2003.0021, 127-129.

¹⁷ Shirley R Bysiewicz and Ruth E Van de Mark, “The Legal Status of the Dakota Indian Woman,” *American Indian Law Review*, Vol. 3, No. 3 (1975), pp. 255-312.

¹⁸ Peroff, 218; *Native American Women: A Biographic Dictionary*, 2nd ed. Ed. Gretchen M. Bataille, Lisa Laurie, “Ladonna Harris” Cynthia Kasee. New York, NY: Routledge, 2001. 129-130.

¹⁹ Peroff, 218.

effects of Termination and the necessity of tribal Restoration and protested the sale of Menominee lands. Wilma Mankiller was the first woman elected Chief of the Cherokee and was also an active member of AIM in the occupation of Alcatraz Island.²⁰ Overall, many American Indian women rose as leaders, choosing to engage in both a diplomatic and militant fashion to achieve activist goals, reestablishing the voices of women as essential to tribal governance and social structure.

The Women of DRUMS

DRUMS began as a group driven by the growing dissatisfaction of Menominee shareholders opposed to the sale of Menominee land. DRUMS was a unique group of activists, utilizing women in leadership roles at the grassroots level, and in the Restoration conversation.²¹ The female leadership of DRUMS, comprised primarily of Ada Deer, Sylvia Wilber, and Shirley Daly, encouraged Menominee institutions to support reform, testified to legislative bodies and wielded the power of democratically elected positions. Ada Deer was the most publicly notable female leader of the Menominee. Shirley Daly and Sylvia Wilber were also crucial leaders of DRUMS, but have garnered less attention nationally. As elected officials and editors of the DRUMS newsletter Wilber and Daly controlled the public image of DRUMS, were leaders of both the MRC and MEI, and participated in political decisions.²²

Ada Deer's role in the history of Menominee Restoration was that of lobbyist and elected official. Nicholas C. Peroff asserts, "Ada Deer waged a quiet but effective behind-the-scenes campaign to gain the confidence and support of important private-interest-group leaders, key

²⁰ Kasee, 129-130

²¹ Deborah Shames, *Freedom with Reservation*, (Madison, Wisconsin: National Committee to Save the Menominee People and Forest, 1972), 75-84, 91-93, 102.

²² Menominee Restoration Committee, *Who Represents the Menominee* (Keshena, WI: Menominee Collection on the Termination and Restoration Era, 1961-1973, 1975), 4-5; Shames, 86, 91-93.

state officials, members of Congress, and key personnel within the Nixon administration.”²³ In 1970, the traditional Menominee governing elite held nearly every position on the board of trustees for MEI, on the Menominee Common Stock Voting Trust (MCSVST) that appointed the trustees, and in most of Menominee county government.²⁴ By 1972, the Voting Trust was comprised of seven out of eleven DRUMS members including Ada Deer.²⁵ After extensive lobbying efforts on the part of Deer and other DRUMS leaders the Menominee Restoration Act of 1973 was passed and the tribe was tasked with electing the Menominee Restoration Committee (MRC).²⁶ Ada Deer was elected as the chairperson of the MRC in 1974 and was its main voice through 1976 upon her voluntary resignation.²⁷

Wilber and Daly were tasked with publishing and editing the DRUMS Newsletter, which helped readers to learn about new political strategies, developments, and events.²⁸ In addition, Wilber and Daly published letters written by Menominee people for publication in the newsletter, giving the movement an opportunity to grow at the grass roots level. Wilber, like Deer, held political office, both as the chairperson of the MEI board of trustees, and as a member of the MRC.²⁹ Wilber provided significant input on the original draft of the Restoration bill proposed by a general council composed of leaders of multiple tribes and law consultants.³⁰ Shirley Daly was elected to the MRC and to the MEI board of trustees. She was also invited to lobby for Restoration with Deer at the 1972 DNC and provided an important piece of testimony

²³ Peroff, 188.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Peroff, 189; “Elect Ada Deer President of Menominee Indian Trust,” *Capital Times Madison, Wisconsin*, December 20, 1971, accessed February 2, 2014, <http://content.mpl.org/cdm/singleitem/collection/cmnisc/id/3837/rec/1>.

²⁶ The Menominee Restoration Committee was in charge of implementing restoration to reservation status and was essentially the Menominee tribal government from 1975-1978.

²⁷ Menominee Restoration Committee, 4-6.

²⁸ Shames, 86.

²⁹ Menominee Restoration Committee, 4-6.

³⁰ Shames, 94-95.

in favor of the proposed Restoration bill.³¹ Shirley Daly pursued a vocal presence in the media, particularly during the fight for and the era of Restoration. She sparred with editors of local newspapers on the objective or not-so objective nature of their publication, and also engaged in correspondence both in and out of the public eye.

Women leaders were influential during Restoration. Out of nine seats on the MRC, women held five.³² The leadership of these women was challenged by traditional governing elite in the Menominee Indian Advisory Council (MIAC) and the Menominee People's Committee (MPC), and by a young male militant group, the Menominee Warrior Society (MWS).³³ Although many Menominee women and men had been activists, some felt that these three women were hoarding power and behaving as dictators.³⁴ Female DRUMS activists lost credibility with the community that lauded their efforts in passing the bill, but they publicly remained focused on committee duties, and continued to try and finish the work that their Restoration bill had begun.

Missing Historical Legacy

The women of DRUMS and the Menominee Nation, whether elite political strategists or grassroots participants have not received adequate historical attention in either women's history or American Indian history. Women's history has often focused on feminism and the changing autonomy of women. However, as Frederica Daly points out, indigenous women were not seeking gender recognition, but cultural recognition: "Indian women do not need liberation, they

³¹ Peroff, 203.

³² Menominee Restoration Committee, 5.

³³ Ibid, 2-3, 6-7. The Menominee governing elite were composed of male leaders whose family was relatively wealthy and involved in tribal politics over generations. The governing elite held decision-making power before and after Termination on the tribal council and as board members of MEI and MCVST. These tribal members were often accused of selling land, abusing assets, and corrupting policy for personal gain. MWS was composed of mostly young Menominee men. The MPC and MIAC were similarly composed of governing elite and male tribe members

³⁴ Ibid, 3-4; Libby R Tronnes, "Where is John Wayne": The Menominee Warriors Society, Indian Militancy, and Social Unrest during the Alexian Brothers Novitiate Takeover", *American Indian Quarterly* 26, no. 4 (Autumn 2002): 527-558. (accessed December 3, 2013, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4128502>), 526-528, 542.

have always been liberated within their tribal structure."³⁵ Women such as Shirley Daly, Silvia Wilbur, and Ada Deer were fighting to preserve their culture, and undertook leadership roles by political necessity and to fulfill tribal responsibility.

In turn, American Indian historians have neglected American Indian women. American Indian men, while just as deserving as women, have received the bulk of the recognition in the Red Power movement. Women leaders were as relevant as male leaders during this period, and added a unique and pertinent strategic asset to the Red Power movement. This project seeks to change the way historians construct the narrative of Red Power, to highlight the struggle of small activist groups such as DRUMS, and to write an important narrative of woman American Indian activists into histories of the period.

The chapters of this work are broken down in a relatively chronological manner, following the events of DRUMS' struggle for Restoration from the beginning of Termination up to the actual passing of the Menominee Restoration Act in 1973. Chapter one deals with a basic history of the Menominee tribe, Termination legislation, the effects of Termination legislation, and the governance of the Menominee tribe during this era. This chapter lays the groundwork for the emergence of DRUMS as an organization, and for the types of strategies that DRUMS activists employed from 1970 to 1973. Chapter two delves into the origins of DRUMS as an organization, what its membership and composition was like, and how the organization initially tried to combat the ills of Termination. This chapter focuses on Jim White, the President of DRUMS, as a crucial actor in formulating DRUMS' initial strategy, and the effects this initial strategy had on DRUMS' efforts in Menominee County. Chapter three includes the emergence of

³⁵ Frederica Daly, "Perspectives of Native American women on race and gender", In *Challenging racism and sexism*, ed. Ethel Tobach. (New York: The Feminist Press, 1994), 127-129, In Donna Hightower Langston, "American Indian Women: Activism in 1960s and 1970s", *Hypatia: Special Issue Indigenous Women in the Americas* 18, no. 2 124-132 (May 2003), accessed November 6, 2013.

Ada Deer in DRUMS and as a prominent voice, as well as the history behind her emergence as a leader. In this chapter, focus is placed on Deer as a specific and influential actor in the process leading up to Restoration. Additional focus is placed on her particular strategies of resistance and her associated motivations. Finally, Chapter four covers the period in which the Menominee Restoration Act was being drafted and lobbied for in Washington D.C. The focus of this chapter is Deer's involvement in this lobbying effort, but more importantly the emergence of her compatriots Shirley Daly and Sylvia Wilber. Daly and Wilber's contributions to this struggle are discussed, and some of the difficulty DRUMS faced in passing the Menominee Restoration Act is covered as well.

CHAPTER I: THE TERMINATION ERA AND STRUCTURE OF GOVERNANCE

The policy of Termination in the United States became popular among politicians and bureaucrats in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Many senators and congressmen believed the ward status of American Indians put a strain on the federal government and they sought to remedy this problem by severing all ties and responsibilities to American Indian tribes. The ward trust status of American Indians in relation to the federal government involved treaty obligations, federal benefits, federal control of certain tribal entities, governance, and an ultimate responsibility towards the wellbeing of the tribe. Termination was advocated by congress as a form of sovereignty for those tribes who were individually prosperous, and a way to get out from under federal control.³⁶ The senate and house committees on Indian Affairs and Interior and Insular Affairs targeted tribes with large pools of capital assets and a sustainable reservation economy. According to Nicholas C. Peroff, a well-recognized scholar of Termination and DRUMS, Menominee Termination “was intended as only one step in the eventual assimilation of all Indians in the United States.”³⁷ Roberta Ulrich, an expert on American Indian policy, labels Termination as “the post-World War II version of what had been the goal of European immigrants to the New World from the time the first of them settled on the Atlantic Coast: get rid of the Indians.”³⁸ Termination presented a red herring of sorts; it was advertised as a benevolent act freeing native peoples from the control of the U.S government, when in reality it was an assimilationist solution to the ‘Indian Problem.’³⁹

³⁶ Joane Nagel, *American Indian Ethnic Renewal: Red Power and the Resurgence of Identity and Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 214.

³⁷ Nicholas C. Peroff, *Menominee Drums: Tribal Termination and Restoration, 1954-1974* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1982), 76.

³⁸ Roberta Ulrich, *American Indian Nations from Termination to Restoration 1953-2006* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2010), 3.

³⁹ Ulrich, 10-11; Peroff, 76-78.

Contained in this chapter is a brief overview of the Menominee Tribe of Wisconsin, its history, the effects and consequences of Termination, and the Termination era governance structure of the tribe. These aspects of Menominee history provide insight into why activist organizations such as DRUMS arose in response to Termination. Historians, in particular Nicholas Peroff, provide an excellent overview and chronology of the events of Menominee Termination. Peroff's examination of Termination is particularly important in relation to his analysis of DRUMS, which is contradictory to the interpretation put forth in this research. Peroff's chronology of events is helpful and accurate, but at the time he conducted his research some source material was unavailable. Therefore, some of his interpretations are problematic and should be altered by examining newly catalogued and available sources.

The Menominee Indians of Wisconsin are the geographic region's longest running resident, "dating back archaeologically some 5,000 years or more."⁴⁰ Part of a segment of Algonquian speaking people occupying the Great Lakes area, the Menominee people numbered close to 5,000 prior to contact with Europeans in the 1600s.⁴¹ The area of land they occupied has been described at a size of around 9,500,000 acres. In comparison, that is the same size as the entire Upper Peninsula of the State of Michigan, and around five times the size of the State of Connecticut. Even in present day, one can travel to Menominee County and see segments of the land's former and current beauty. Adorned with lakes, grasslands, running streams, and lush green forests, with a quiet only experienced in such remote Great Lakes regions, one can imagine

⁴⁰ Deborah Shames, *Freedom with Reservation* (Madison, WI: National Committee to Save the Menominee People and Forests, 1972), 1.

⁴¹ Shames, 1; "The Effects of Termination on the Menominee: Testimony on Senate Concurrent Resolution 26," July 21, 1971, Ada Deer and DRUMS Members of the Menominee Tribe, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 17, Folder (Legislative Committee), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, (Keshena, WI), 3.

how plentiful game would have been for hunting and fishing, and how fertile the land would have been for cultivating.⁴²

Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the Menominee welcomed tribes that were moved westward. Their peaceful and accommodating nature was augmented by the fact that they never went to war against the U.S. The tribe traded and intermarried with migrating whites, and allowed tribes such as the Oneida from New York to settle and share land in what is the present day Green Bay area. Chief Oshkosh (1795-1858), perhaps the most well-known and influential Menominee leader prior to DRUMS, “remained astonishingly unantagonistic towards the white man.”⁴³ In the nineteenth century the Menominee people embraced peace with other Algonquian tribes such as the Ojibwa and Potawatomi, and even adopted similar religious practices referred to as the “Dream or Drum Dance” defined as “an inter-tribal religious movement originating among the eastern Dakotans.”⁴⁴ By 1848 the vast land heritage of the Menominee people was possessed by the United States. In 1854, Chief Oshkosh negotiated a reservation on what was their original homeland. According to Shames, they accepted this meager parcel of land to remain undisturbed by the increasing encroachment of whites, and in order to maintain their cultural practices and appreciation of their homeland in its natural state.⁴⁵

The Menominee adapted to changes over time, maintaining facets of their identity while parceling off portions of Euro-American culture that were helpful to their survival. Religiously, a large portion of the Menominee people converted to Roman Catholicism, but segments of the tribe sustained their traditional spirituality and rituals. Cultural changes occurred as a result of the fur trade and the reservation era, but Shames argues, “the Menominee as a whole have

⁴² Shames, 2; “The Effects of Termination on the Menominee”, 2.

⁴³ Shames, IX.

⁴⁴ Shames, 2.

⁴⁵ Shames, 2.

consistently drawn together as one people whenever threats arose concerning their remaining homeland.”⁴⁶ Deer and other members of DRUMS have emphasized how important land was, and still is, to the Menominee people in preserving traditional culture: “Deeply attached to their ancient lands, our ancestors resisted the efforts of the federal government to resettle them west of the Mississippi.”⁴⁷ Additionally, the timber industry adopted by the Menominee in the nineteenth century illustrates the importance of land to the tribe’s culture, even in the face of a Euro-American economic imposition. While timber provided an important resource to the Menominee, both economically and culturally, they avoided over-harvesting at all costs by employing a sustained-yield philosophy, which restored all that was taken from nature. This system continued throughout the Termination era.⁴⁸

From 1854 when the reservation was established, until Termination in 1954, the Menominee occupied the role of ward and the federal government the role of trust. The Menominee often avoided federal changes in Indian policy that wreaked havoc upon other American Indian communities, in part because the tribe was committed to preserving their land and culture, and also due to the tribe’s relative economic prosperity. Ada Deer notes in her testimony that the Menominee:

resented a lack of meaningful self-government. Unlike other tribes, the Menominee rejected in the latter part of the nineteenth century BIA attempts to submit them to the government policy of allotment – an ‘experiment’ that imposed private property ownership on Indians ... by which Indians lost nearly 90,000,000 acres of their lands in 50 years.⁴⁹

As a result of the Menominee tribe’s ability to resist some intentionally and unintentionally harmful policies, their reservation prospered more so than others, and the potential to preserve

⁴⁶ Shames, 3.

⁴⁷ “The Effects of Termination on the Menominee”, 4.

⁴⁸ Shames, 3.

⁴⁹ “The Effects of Termination on the Menominee”, 4.

the land so crucial to their identity remained consistent in a period when it diminished for so many other American Indians.⁵⁰ However, this prosperity hurt the Menominee in unforeseen ways, making them prime targets for Termination. Deborah Shames summarizes this unfortunate turn appropriately writing:

Thus, in 1951, the Menominee, through their own perseverance and effort, had a tribally held reservation with rich timber resources and vistas of scenic beauty, their own community facilities, and a local industry providing the people with employment. Furthermore, they had capital for improving their situation economically coupled with the informative experience ... to stimulate work toward greater self-determination ... The once useless wilderness the Menominee had accepted in order to be left in peace had become valuable to the white man after all.⁵¹

The history of the Menominee people reflects the encroachment of Euro-American colonialism, which has become the dominant paradigm in native studies and in particular the discourse of American Indian activist groups. From the point of first contact the indigenous people of North America have been subjected to the imposition of Euro-American cultural, economic, social, and political norms. While the Menominee are an exception to many of the violent atrocities committed by whites, and have been able to avoid some of the assimilationist policies of the United States, their tribal structures endured the same type of alteration as every other indigenous group. They were either forced into a new religion, or re-educated by religious institutions and converted as children. Their land and hunting rights slowly diminished over time and their natural resources were tainted or given to white settlers. Finally, the tribe's governance structure was altered. In every facet of life they faced Euro-American influence, and were forced to adapt their choices to a cultural paradigm not their own. This is particularly important in

⁵⁰ During the late nineteenth and early twentieth century the U.S. government attempted to impose individual property ownership on many American Indian tribes through policies such as the Dawes Allotment Act. Many American Indians did not understand the value of their land and therefore traded or sold it for next to nothing, resulting in a vast loss in lands held by indigenous people in the United States. The Menominee did not go along with these policies and therefore avoided this issue.

⁵¹ Shames, 4.

considering the effects of Termination and the response to the elimination of their legal identity as American Indians. M. Annette Jaimes asserts that colonialism “has played a prominent role in bringing about their [American Indians] generalized psychic disempowerment.”⁵²

The initial proposal for Menominee Termination was written as a legislative initiative to remove restrictions on the assets of individual members of the tribe and transfer responsibility over things such as healthcare, forestry, and education to a tribal governing body.⁵³ As Peroff notes, there was a group of Menominee governing elite that had rapidly assimilated in the twentieth century, which although a minority among the tribe, held many positions of power, and was the primary public voice for the tribe in communications with government officials.⁵⁴ This small minority of elites skewed the perception of the federal government in relation to the Menominee tribe, causing officials to believe all Menominee people were acculturated and affluent. Peroff asserts:

The Menominee elite, before termination, shared a consensus on societal values; however, that consensus was based upon a middle-class white American model rather than on the traditional society of the Menominee Indians ... Although Menominee elite did not desire Termination, they were left with little choice, and had far less to lose than non-elite members of the tribe.⁵⁵

This false perception led the House and Senate Committees on Interior and Insular Affairs to make incorrect assumptions about other aspects of the tribe’s financial security and structure.

By the 1950s the Menominee tribe possessed a large set of natural resources, particularly harvestable timber. The Department of the Interior investigated the sustainability of these natural

⁵² M. Annette Jaimes, “Federal Indian Identification Policy: A Usurpation of Indigenous Sovereignty in North America,” in *The State of Native America: Genocide, Colonization, and Resistance*, ed. M. Annette Jaimes (Boston, MA: South End Press, Race and Resistance Series, 1992), 135-136.

⁵³ Nagel, 214-215.

⁵⁴ Peroff, 28. Peroff and Ulrich both refer to a distinct level of Menominee representative in an elite political class. These members of the tribe were economically wealthy in comparison to the average Menominee and held multiple positions of political, social, and economic power on the reservation. These few sets of families composed the multi-faceted leadership of the tribe for a few generations.

⁵⁵ Peroff, 33.

assets and declared that the Menominee tribe's timber was not only conservable, but also profitable.⁵⁶ The relatively modern industrial sawmill on the Menominee Reservation, which employed many members of the tribe, augmented the timber. Although the tribe possessed vast resources and had a seemingly stable economy, there were underlying issues that the federal government ignored. When compared with the surrounding community, the Menominee people earned, on average, eighty-two cents on the dollar. There were medical and social concerns, such as a high infant mortality rate; and almost one-third of the Menominee population received public assistance, a much larger per capita rate than the rest of Wisconsin.⁵⁷ It should also be noted that a vast majority of Menominee did not desire Termination, and that few members of the tribe even fully comprehended the implications of such a policy.⁵⁸ As Deer states in testimony given to the Senate Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs in 1971: "Termination represented a gigantic and revolutionary forced change in the traditional Menominee way of life ... The truth is that we Menominee never wanted such changes imposed upon us, any more than you would want an Indian way of life imposed upon you."⁵⁹ Despite these negative implications, it was determined that the Menominee tribe possessed adequate assets and the stability to have its trusteeship with the federal government terminated.⁶⁰

The Menominee Termination Act was passed in June of 1954, but it was not fully implemented until 1961. Ada Deer argues, "the second phase of our termination consisted in our belated preparation of our termination plan and final congressional approval."⁶¹ The Menominee governing elite wrote the final termination plan. The State of Wisconsin and the Menominee

⁵⁶ Peroff, 43; Ulrich 25.

⁵⁷ Peroff, 46.

⁵⁸ Shames, 10-11. Shame's book was commissioned by the National Committee to Save the Menominee People and Forests, which was composed of some members of DRUMS. Her summarization is twofold, first that it was not the idea of the tribe, and second that it was a clear inevitability.

⁵⁹ "The Effects of Termination on the Menominee", 12.

⁶⁰ Ulrich; 25-27; Peroff, 45, 46.

⁶¹ "The Effects of Termination on the Menominee", 9.

Governing elite opposed termination, and both had done their best to delay its implementation.⁶² However, the federal government's new policy moved forward at a rapid pace, the state and the governing elite were forced to adapt the policy of Termination to fit their needs.⁶³ According to Peroff, this created an opportunity for Menominee governing elite "to protect [their] status and power within the Menominee community."⁶⁴ The period from 1954 to 1961 allowed these governing elites to create the structure of the system to be implemented, and determine how assets such as land, timber, and the sawmill were to be controlled. By 1958, "90 of 500 Menominee families had at least one member in an important reservation position ... nearly all the governing elites belonged to the same families."⁶⁵ Deer notes in her testimony that the Menominee people voted in favor of converting to a county as a final measure "in order to preserve our tribal identity and gain a favorable tax status."⁶⁶ The primary objective of the federal government in this intermediate period between the passage of legislation and its implementation was to move the process along quickly and ensure as little financial waste as possible.

The turmoil created by the implementation of Termination legislation also created factions throughout the tribe.⁶⁷ The divide between governing elites and non-elites was of greatest importance. Other divisions arose as well. Up to eight different divisions plagued the tribe from 1954 to 1961 and subsequently onward; this included Menominee living on and off the reservation, and young Menominee radicals versus old Menominee men.⁶⁸ The political rights of these non-elites were drastically diminished during this period as well, as leaders in

⁶² Ulrich, 36.

⁶³ "The Effects of Termination on the Menominee", 10.

⁶⁴ Peroff, 78-80.

⁶⁵ Ibid, 98.

⁶⁶ The Effects of Termination on the Menominee, 10.

⁶⁷ Ulrich, 35.

⁶⁸ Peroff, 98-100.

elected positions essentially sought to protect their own interests and the assets of the tribe first, and the members of the tribe second. A strong push for the liquidation of assets into the pockets of each individual Menominee was strongly advocated by some non-elites in response to this leadership failure.

The Menominee faced tough decisions in relation to their future governance and asset management. Ultimately, the state of Wisconsin and the tribe approved the “ownership of assets by the Menominees with management provided under a private-trust agreement.”⁶⁹ Two privatized tribal entities were created, Menominee Enterprises Incorporated (MEI) and the Menominee Common Stock and Voting Trust (MCSVT or Voting Trust). The Voting Trust was to be composed of four Menominee and three non-Menominee trustees, and was given the responsibility of controlling the tribe’s corporation. This governing body was to be elected by members of the tribe who were resultantly referred to as Menominee shareholders or stockholders. MEI was set up much like a corporation with a five-member board of directors controlling assets such as the Menominee sawmill and decisions on issues such as land sales.⁷⁰ The MEI board of directors was not directly elected by the Menominee people but rather appointed by the Voting Trust, with four of the five members required to be non-Menominee. Therefore, the Voting Trust was a group of indirect representatives holding the legal voting rights of the tribe, meaning all corporate decisions were approved through a two-thirds vote of the Voting Trust and not individual members of the tribe. The board of directors was also composed of a majority of non-Menominee people, which was controversial, but deemed by those overseeing the transfer to Termination as a measure protecting Menominee assets.⁷¹

⁶⁹ Ibid, 119.

⁷⁰ “The Effects of Termination on the Menominee”, 11.

⁷¹ Peroff, 120; “The Effects of Termination on the Menominee, 11.

The Menominee Indians of Wisconsin were given a new role as non-participatory constituents. Shareholders were issued voting-trust certificates in place of government benefits. Although not technically shares in the corporation, these certificates gave shareholders distinctly privatized benefits. The Voting Trust was given “327,000 shares of corporate stock valued at one dollar per share,” and the Menominee people received \$1,500 share payments.⁷² Payments based on the timber yield of the Menominee mill were converted into bonds and issued to each new shareholder as well. A few additional provisions were enacted limiting the number of shareholders and ‘protecting’ minors and ‘incompetents.’ Only those born during or prior to 1954 were considered shareholders and issued stock certificates.⁷³ Regardless of whether the Menominee were listed on the 1954 tribal roll or not, they were no longer legally American Indians in the eyes of the federal government. Finally, the First Wisconsin Trust Company was given the right to hold and vote “all voting certificates and income bonds of Menominee minors (youth under twenty-one) and incompetents.”⁷⁴ This left the First Wisconsin Trust Company with a controlling interest in corporate affairs.

Although the former Menominee reservation became a county, MEI and the Voting Trust held the political authority once held by the tribe’s governing body. The board of directors and board of trustees used this authority to hoard the power and limit the voice of the Menominee people. As Nicholas Peroff notes, “the average Menominee had only two ways of affecting corporate decisions: he [or she] could vote once a year for one member on the Voting Trust and once every ten years on the continued existence of the Voting Trust.”⁷⁵ The controlling interest

⁷² Peroff, 120; Ulrich, 39.

⁷³ “The Effects of Termination on the Menominee”, 11.

⁷⁴ Peroff, 121; “The Effects of Termination on the Menominee”, 11. It should be noted that the BIA determined who was incompetent or not. This resulted in a large group of Menominee adults who did not understand a privatized corporate structure to be declared incompetent.

⁷⁵ Peroff, 140.

possessed by the First Wisconsin Trust Company also severely limited the impact of individual Menominee voters. The First Wisconsin Trust Company could vote a majority of shares and outweigh the voice of the tribe. This reality prompted a low voter turnout in almost all Voting Trust elections from 1961 to 1970, allowing the First Wisconsin Trust Company and Menominee governing elite to remain in power for almost the entire Termination era.

The social and financial results of this structure, and the Termination policy in general, were disastrous. All areas of the Menominee community were affected. Education costs rose by around 239 percent, while state and federal government assistance grew by over \$19,000,000.⁷⁶ One quarter of residents in Menominee County received some sort of public assistance and the same amount had no form of health coverage. Menominee County ranked lowest in both family income and unemployment rate for the state of Wisconsin. Women and young people had a particularly difficult time finding work. In testimony to the Senate, Deer highlighted the fact that “lack of employment opportunities, combined with our [Menominee] high birthrate, forced nearly 50 percent of our county residents to go on welfare in 1968.”⁷⁷ Educated members of the tribe moved away from the county and toward more urban areas, resulting in a terrible brain drain for the community. Healthcare costs from 1962 to 1970 rose by 833 percent.⁷⁸ The tribe’s liquid assets, which had previously been protected by the federal government, plummeted due to unexpected costs associated with the conversion from public to private economic structure. The conditions in Menominee County under the direction of MEI and the Voting Trust were bleak, a result of the drastic underestimation of the tribe’s wealth, poor understanding of private economic systems, and overvaluation of natural resources.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ Peroff, 132.

⁷⁷ “The Effects of Termination on the Menominee”, 17; Ulrich, 41-42.

⁷⁸ Peroff, 130-132.

⁷⁹ Ulrich, 39-40; Peroff, 130-132.

The cultural implications of the Menominee Termination Act were additionally catastrophic. Dr. Verna Fowler, who is presently the president of the College of Menominee Nation, recalls what it felt like when the process of Termination began in 1953, she was in the fifth grade: “we were told we were not Indian. I remember being in Chicago and told I was not an Indian. I was numb. It was like I had lost my identity.”⁸⁰ Deborah Shames utilizes quotes directly from Menominee people to construct a picture of the cultural eradication and spiritual deconstruction of Termination in *Freedom with Reservation*. All of these Menominee were interviewed anonymously and their narratives are included in a section titled “The People Speak.” One member of the tribe stated in regards to hunting, “Was hunting rabbits a couple years back when I found 2 deer left dead behind a pile of weeds piled high as that oak tree ... Only white people would do that. Didn’t even use the deer for food.”⁸¹ Another Menominee lamented the loss of abundant natural resources crucial to the tribe’s fishing and hunting practices:

There was a big crane left here a couple years back that had an oil spill. All that oil ran into the lake and nearby spring, and they were spoiled. Indians can’t go fishing no-where no more - they tell us we need permits. I used to hunt there, too, for deer and bear, but they ain’t around no more. Used to be lots of muskrat and otter and beavers here, too.⁸²

Termination allowed outsiders to encroach upon Menominee land and spiritual sites as well:

There was once a fireplace on what is now called Legend Lake that Menominees have known for at least 800 years. An archaeologist came here to study it a few years back and collected sacs full of pottery to carbon test how old the site was ... The archaeologist also pointed to an Indian burial mound nearby and told us we should mark it off, so people would know it’s a sacred and important historical

⁸⁰ Interview with Verna Fowler, in Roberta Ulrich, *American Indian Nations from Termination to Restoration 1953-2006* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2010), 28.

⁸¹ Interview with Unknown Menominee, in Deborah Shames, *Freedom With Reservation* (Madison, WI: The National Committee to Save the Menominee People and Forests, 1972), 5.

⁸² Interview with Unknown Menominee, in Deborah Shames, *Freedom With Reservation* (Madison, WI: The National Committee to Save the Menominee People and Forests, 1972), 6.

place ... before I could do anything about it, that man came in and bulldozed the whole thing.⁸³

Deer's testimony to the Senate was perhaps the first time any person in authority paid attention to the actual effects of Termination in a cultural and spiritual sense, as Deer exclaimed, "Congress expected us to replace our Indian way of life with a complicated corporate style of living. Congress expected immediate Menominee assimilation of non-Indian culture, values, and life styles."⁸⁴ In her concluding remarks she states, "The Menominee cannot escape forever the destructive psychological effects of living in destitution. The pride and self-image of the Menominee is threatened by poverty and lack of self-determination."⁸⁵

The Termination era structure provided the Menominee with no direct political voice in tribal matters, essentially privatizing what had been a community for centuries. It allowed a small group of Menominee and non-Menominee to control the tribe's assets, including land, without being directly elected by the Menominee people. Ultimately, it limited the tribe's ability to effectively preserve Menominee culture, by stripping them of their legal identity as American Indians and their right to protect their ancestral lands. The Menominee Termination bill was a poorly thought-out and ill-executed piece of para-colonial legislation.⁸⁶ The average Menominee, in particular those with traditional backgrounds, was never given a voice in the matter. However, these were the members of the tribe that suffered most.

⁸³ Interview with Unknown Menominee, in Deborah Shames, *Freedom With Reservation* (Madison, WI: The National Committee to Save the Menominee People and Forests, 1972), 5.

⁸⁴ "The Effects of Termination on the Menominee", 12.

⁸⁵ Ibid, 27.

⁸⁶ Malea Powell et al., *Our Story Begins Here: Constellating Cultural Rhetorics* (Not Applicable: Enculturation, 2014), 1, accessed February 10, 2015, <http://www.enculturation.net/node/6079>. The term para-colonial has arisen in multiple pieces of scholarship. In this research the term para-colonial is used as defined in a cultural rhetorics performance enacted by The Cultural Rhetorics Theory Lab: "the terms 'neo-colonial' and 'para-colonial' are used to draw attention to the continuing status of colonial occupation in settler colonial places like the Americas." To simplify their definition: para-colonial impact results when the dominant society or settler asserts contemporary influence over multiple realms of life for colonized populations. This includes but is not limited to economics, culture, land, and politics. In the case of this research, it is the on-going influence of the dominant society over some or all aspects of the life-ways of indigenous people.

Finding an applicable theory or frame of analysis for the Termination era and the Menominee response is complicated. The past colonialist practices of the United States, and its para-colonial attitude in the twentieth century, stripped indigenous peoples of their right to land, language, religion, and sovereignty. Taiaiake Alfred and Jeff Corntassel in their article “Being Indigenous: Resurgences Against Contemporary Colonialism” argue that colonial governments not only deprive indigenous peoples of key facets of their culture, but the state also imposes its own conception of indigenous identity onto colonized peoples. The state provides the illusion of cultural autonomy through benevolent policies, but does not let indigenous people forget they are conquered and not empowered by these imposed cultural norms.⁸⁷ Para-colonialism also causes any indigenous group to make certain concessions in order to accomplish imperative objectives and physical survival:

It must be understood that the aboriginalist assault takes place in a politico-economic context of historic and on-going dispossession and of contemporary deprivation and poverty; this is a context in which Indigenous peoples are forced by the compelling needs of physical survival to cooperate individually and collectively with the state authorities to ensure their physical survival.⁸⁸

Therefore, the Menominee, upon realizing the detrimental effects of Termination, decided to give precedent to economic, political, and physical survival, and were forced to make cultural survival secondary.

Alfred and Corntassel also assert that every tribe, every group, and every organization faces distinct colonizing practices and therefore must make distinct choices in relation to survival, “There is no concise and neat model of resurgence in this way of approaching decolonization and the regeneration of our peoples ... *being Indigenous* means thinking,

⁸⁷ Taiaiake Alfred and Jeff Corntassel, “Being Indigenous: Resurgences Against Contemporary Colonialism,” *Government and Opposition* 40, no. 4 (September 2005): 597-614, accessed December 5, 2014, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1477-7053.2005.00166.x>, 598.

⁸⁸ Alfred and Corntassel, 599.

speaking, and acting, with the conscious intent of regenerating one's indigeneity.”⁸⁹ The Termination conversation, and the analysis of responses by the Menominee and DRUMS, should reflect this reality. The imposition of Euro-American cultural norms forced tribes affected by Termination to weigh physical survival against cultural preservation, shaping the way activists groups formulated their strategic choices. Organizations and tribes fighting this policy were forced to adapt to a non-Indigenous governing paradigm. Thus, a measured response utilizing diplomatic channels arose to contrast the brash and militant style of AIM, with groups such as DRUMS at the forefront.

⁸⁹ Alfred and Corntassel, 612, 614.

CHAPTER II: THE EMERGENCE AND MISSTEPS OF DRUMS

On a typical summer afternoon in Central Wisconsin, members of the Menominee Tribe can usually enjoy the lush green of the forest or the clear blue of a nearby lake. Such an atmosphere was not unheard of in the summer of 1970, but residents found a new addition to this familiar scene: protestors picketing the development of their natural resources into tourist attractions. The protestors were members of an upstart activist organization called Determination and Rights for Unity of Menominee Shareholders (DRUMS). This group of young activists was emerging in response to almost ten years of Termination, seeking to provide a voice for their people in their tribal affairs.

DRUMS' emergence was a result of the limited and easily corruptible political structure of Menominee Enterprises Incorporated (MEI) and the Menominee Common Stock and Voting Trust (MCSVTV or Voting Trust), as well as the injustices of Termination policy. A completely accurate picture of the organization's founding is hard to construct. Accounts by leaders and members differ in their description of whether the organization was based out of Chicago or Milwaukee. Documents from the early meetings and correspondence between leaders also fail to clearly define DRUMS' origins. However, through membership records and news articles it can be inferred that the group was a small amalgam of mostly young educated members of the Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin. Initial membership numbers are difficult to determine as well, but can be estimated at a few dozen at most.⁹⁰ Records from the Keshena-Neopit chapter of DRUMS indicate there were at least fifty-one enrolled members, twenty-eight of whom were women.⁹¹ The tone of the group and the composition of its early membership reflected this

⁹⁰ *Notes submitted by Nancy Oestreich Lurie*, April 30, 1970, Joseph Preloznik Papers, College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, Keshena, WI, Digital Archive.

⁹¹ *Memberships in the Menominee County Chapters*, DRUMS, September 18, 1970, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 20, Folder (DRUMS Correspondence 1970), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, Keshena, WI; The

young urban constituency; the first meetings held in rural Menominee County did not occur until two to three months after the group's formation. Menominee youth living in cities were angry about the sale of their land and believed their tribe's very identity was being siphoned away for increased revenue and tourist development. These attitudes are reflected in DRUMS' early activities and in their initial strategies, reflecting the militant tactics of organizations such as AIM.⁹²

The group most likely had its first organized meetings in the urban centers of the Midwest such as Milwaukee and Chicago, and then spread to the rural areas of central Wisconsin where the Menominee Reservation was formerly located.⁹³ These meetings occurred in the waning months of 1969 and the beginning of 1970. A few families such as the Deer's and the Otradovec's organized members of the tribe to address pressing issues in Menominee County, and to see if there was anything they could do to alter the governance structure of MEI in a more democratic manner.⁹⁴ Joseph Preloznik of Wisconsin Judicare was invited to these sessions to provide legal advice and to examine the governance structure to help the group determine a course of action. The reversal of Termination, or what became known as Restoration, either was not discussed, and if so, it was not viewed as a realistic possibility. DRUMS' leaders believed

unique demographic of activist women is certainly striking but not surprising. Menominee women engaged in activist movements in the early twentieth century with unfettered enthusiasm. The *Menominee League of Women Voters* provides just one historical example of female Menominee activism prior to 1970. The Menominee League of Women Voters were involved in amending a bill relating to the distribution of Menominee land in the 1920s. The group was lead by three women: Lily Oshkosh, Rhoda House, and Susan Corn, "who had organized to become a political force to advocate on behalf of tribal interests." This group and the women who preceded the women of DRUMS were exemplary activists for Menominee interests and democracy. See, David R.M. Beck, *The Struggle for Self-Determination: History of the Menominee Indians Since 1854*. Louise S. Spindler, "Menominee Women and Culture Change," *American Anthropological Association* 64, no. 1, part 2, memoir 91, (February 1962).

⁹² Peroff, 176.

⁹³ Deborah Shames, *Freedom with Reservation* (Madison: WI, National Committee to Save the Menominee People and Forests, 1972), 69-74. Early meeting minute notes as well as some correspondence and interviews done by Ada Deer, Connie Deer, and other members align with Shames' and Peroff's analysis of DRUMS' origins.

⁹⁴ Ada Deer, interview by Carly Wieman and Felicia Krejci, in *Native Nations of Wisconsin: Sharing Their History, Culture, and Traditions*, edited by D.C. Everest Area Schools (Schofield, WI: D.C. Everest Area Schools Publications, 2009), 114-116; Peroff, 176-178.

that they could best affect change at a local level, even though many of its members were not actually residents of Menominee County.⁹⁵

DRUMS' presence in Menominee County was not prominent until the summer of 1970, even though some members were spreading their message as early as March or May. The summer was the perfect time for DRUMS to emerge in resistance to MEI for two reasons. First, the annual shareholders meeting of the MCSVT and MEI was scheduled for December 1970, where Menominee shareholders would have the opportunity to dissolve the Voting Trust through a majority vote of 51% in favor of abolishment. This afforded the organization a few months to formulate a strategy and enact a campaign. Second, the pool of potential shareholders was larger than ever before because more Menominee were reaching adulthood and thus given voting control of their shares. Thus, throughout 1970 and early 1971, DRUMS undertook a campaign to collect shareholder's votes in favor of abolishing the Voting Trust. The ultimate goal of eliminating the Voting Trust from the structure of MEI would allow Menominee shareholders to directly elect their representatives to MEI, rather than having them appointed by members of the Voting Trust. DRUMS believed this would lessen corruption and ensure that ethical board members opposed to selling tribal lands would get elected. The organization's leaders ultimately believed abolishing the Voting Trust was the first step towards recovery from Termination.

The strategy DRUMS employed was part protest and part promotional distribution. The group organized its public demonstrations at sites important to MEI. This served a few purposes; it halted or at least disrupted the sale of land and encroachment by the dominant society; it raised awareness to potential voters; it informed Menominee shareholders of DRUMS' purpose as an organization and resulted in the recruitment of many new members; finally, it made MEI treat DRUMS as a serious threat, even if the corporation tried to diminish DRUMS' validity. In order

⁹⁵ Shames, 85.

to sway voters and to collect proxy votes for those who could not attend the meeting, DRUMS started publishing press releases and a newsletter, which spread information to shareholders about the ballot issues and also presented a way to collect proxies. DRUMS' members could legally cast the proxy ballots that shareholders sent through newsletter mailers, thus increasing the chances of success for the organization's objectives.⁹⁶

While DRUMS was outwardly unified in its strategic choices, its objectives, and in its own press releases and newsletters, under the surface, the organization was not cohesive; its membership possessed a wide range of skills, but little experience in waging a campaign. There was a large contingent of leaders that could be classified as 'emergent leaders' within DRUMS, including Shirley Daly, the Deer family, Tom Matchoma, Lloyd Powless, Jim White, Sylvia Wilber, and others, and the organization's message was consequently fragmented by these multiple leaders.⁹⁷ In addition, the political strategy it employed was not chosen for any strategic reason, but was simply modeled after other successful forms of activism from the previous decade.⁹⁸ As a result of DRUMS' inexperience, the organization became politically isolated.

⁹⁶ Marie Anne Jaimes Guerrero, "Civil Rights versus Sovereignty: Native American Women in Life and Land Struggles," in *Feminist Genealogies, Colonial Legacies, Democratic Futures* eds. M. Jacqui Alexander and Chandra Talpade Mohanty (New York, NY: Routledge Publishing, 1997), 102-103. Avoiding a para-colonial or western lens in certain facets is crucial, but in some ways impossible. These organizations were meant to rejuvenate indigeneity, but were forced to adhere to dominant forms of resistance, even when adapted in a uniquely indigenous manner. Activism in the form of protest, electoral resistance, and civil disobedience were a direct response to oppression, but were an indirect form of imposition. This is not to say that American Indian activist organizations do not attempt to form a uniquely indigenous activist paradigm, but that the entire basis for such a paradigm is rooted in a western practice and therefore can never be fully separated as distinctly indigenous. First, because as Marie Anne Jaimes Guerrero and other de-colonialist scholars argue "Unlike other racially subordinated groups, whose relationship to the American state have been defined largely by forced exclusion, the relationship of native peoples have been predicated on practices of forced inclusion." Second, "colonizing practices ... themselves prefigure the kinds of resistance that native women [and men] employ." Therefore, native peoples are opposing a governance structure that would have never been encountered in traditional indigenous societies, they are forced to be captives of this society, and they are then required to use forms of resistance traditional native peoples never employed in order to achieve success.

⁹⁷ Deborah Shames, *Freedom with Reservation* (Madison, WI: National Committee to Save the Menominee People and Forests, 1972), 74-75.

⁹⁸ Joane Nagel, *American Indian Ethnic Renewal: Red Power and the Resurgence of Identity and Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 163, 165, 167. Joane Nagel provides context for why DRUMS initially chose a strategy of public demonstration. Nagel argues that Red Power activists in the late 1960s and early 1970s adapted

There was a vacuum between potential adherents, Menominee governing elite, and DRUMS; in fact, some Menominee viewed DRUMS as an antagonist.⁹⁹

The examination of DRUMS' campaign strategy and its employment of protest tactics should begin with an analysis of its most prominent and vocal leader. Multiple members of DRUMS consistently voiced their opinion and proposed solutions, however, the public voice for DRUMS' campaign was the President of the Chicago Chapter and President of DRUMS as a whole, Jim White.¹⁰⁰ Peroff characterizes the leader's personality; "Jim White provided the flamboyant leadership and inflammatory rhetoric necessary to maintain the enthusiastic support of the followers of DRUMS within the tribe and also of reporters interested in newsworthy stories."¹⁰¹ In an interview contained in Deborah Shames' *Freedom With Reservation*, Jim White described DRUMS as "a 'radical' and 'dissident' group" representing "the only type of group

the tactics of African-American civil rights groups in a distinctly Indian way by protesting to "draw attention to American Indian historical and contemporary grievances ... [such as] unsettled land claims ... [and] U.S. failure to recognize cultural and social rights." She also asserts that those of urban origin attached themselves to their individual tribe, a key distinction to the larger movement for African-American civil rights.

⁹⁹ Peroff, 178, 189. Peroff's treatment of DRUMS as an organization is the most complete in existence, and the only one that considers the entire span of the fight for Restoration. However, his conclusions and interpretation of DRUMS' activism simply misconstrues details because of missing and newly available source materials. Peroff overestimates the effectiveness of DRUMS' initial strategy and the cohesiveness of the organization as a whole. First, he combines DRUMS' initial efforts of public demonstration and informational distribution in the proxy fight, with later attempts to lobby state and federal support behind the Menominee tribe as if they were part of a joint strategy. Peroff makes this previous assertion alongside an additional claim that "DRUMS decided ... to pursue a set of indirect strategies designed to overthrow governing elites in MEI and in county government and gain a controlling influence over Menominee affairs." These two tactics not only arose at different time periods, but as a result of different circumstances and distinct leadership patterns. DRUMS did not attempt to overthrow governing elites in MEI and gain a controlling influence over Menominee affairs until their proxy fight fell short in April of 1971. The same can be said for lobbying efforts at the state and federal level occurring months later in July, but more realistically this took form as a legitimate strategy in 1972 when DRUMS gained a governing majority. Peroff also downplays the importance of the proxy fight to the formulation of DRUMS' strategic choices and the composition of its leadership moving forward. He conceives the adaptation that followed the failure of the proxy fight as a clear and cohesive choice on the part of the entire organization, and does not acknowledge specific changes in political strategy as well as the specific organizational leaders who enacted these changes and contributed to their success. Peroff's coverage of DRUMS severely underestimates the value that failure brings to social movement organizations. His formulation of DRUMS as an organization with a linear strategy and a clear and cohesive leadership simply does not take into account the fluid composition and adaptation that occurs on a daily basis within social movement organizations.

¹⁰⁰ A few examples include DRUMS members such as John Gauthier, Shirley Daly, Laurel Otradovec, and Sylvia Wilber. John Gauthier in particular denounced the taxation of the bonds and stock certificates being held by the First Wisconsin Trust Company and was very vocal about potential solutions.

¹⁰¹ Peroff, 188.

action to which the establishment would respond.”¹⁰² White also, possibly unintentionally, acknowledged one of the faults of employing protest as a strategy of resistance in Menominee County, “They reacted with fear and the usual reactionary response of calling us outside agitators.”¹⁰³

Focusing largely on localized issues and taking an antagonistic role, White continually demonized the leaders of MEI and the Voting Trust and drew a staunch line between friend and foe. In a DRUMS press release, White and other DRUMS leaders wrote, “DRUMS is asking that you submit a proxy AGAINST THE CONTINUATION OF THE VOTING TRUST. IF YOU DO NOTHING THIS IS CONSIDERED A VOTE IN FAVOR OF CONTINUING THE VOTING TRUST.”¹⁰⁴ The brash rhetoric, although particularly effective in drawing media attention and maintaining existing support, actually worked against DRUMS, by alienating moderate Menominee shareholders. This attitude also transferred through into public demonstrations, with many activists attacking officials of MEI, in particular George Kenote the chairman of the Voting Trust: “Kenote labors under an unquenchable and insatiable ego that drives him relentlessly in his domineering, dictatorial, highly resented activities in forcing the Menominee to succumb to his power of control.”¹⁰⁵ The staunch factionalism DRUMS employed through the attitude of Jim White not only limited their strategic choices, but it also trapped them into a one-sided message, which was foreign to the less vocal portion of Menominee shareholders.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰² Interview with Jim White, in Deborah Shames, *Freedom With Reservation* (Madison, WI: The National Committee to Save the Menominee People and Forests, 1972), 76.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ *DRUMS Press Release: Dear Fellow Menominee and Stockholder*, James A. White, Laurel Otradovec, Thomas Matchoma, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 20, Folder (Press Releases), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, Keshena, WI.

¹⁰⁵ “Kenote Finally Finds His Own Level,” Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 26, Folder (Community Correspondence, Articles, and Publications), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, Keshena, WI.

¹⁰⁶ *Letter to Joseph Preloznik*, Jim White, Chicago, April 19, 1970.

An additional source of leadership came from lawyer Joseph Preloznik, the director of Wisconsin Judicare. He was instrumental during DRUMS' campaign for the proxy fight. Preloznik fought injunctions against the organization, and aided DRUMS in court cases on matters of land and political rights for the Menominee people. He helped DRUMS to understand the structure of MEI and the Voting Trust and counseled them many times on strategic choices. Preloznik's role in the proxy fight and DRUMS' political activism cannot be overstated, but the initial perception of his actions also contributed to the negative image DRUMS garnered. MEI contributed to this by attempting to portray Preloznik in a bad light, stating he would abandon DRUMS at the first opportunity, and that he was meddling in Indian Affairs that were none of his business.¹⁰⁷ He was also accused of utilizing his federally funded Judicare program to circumvent federal Indian policy.¹⁰⁸ The casting of Preloznik as an outsider with ulterior motives was relatively successful. MEI published press releases in relation to Preloznik's involvement with DRUMS that resonated with the Menominee constituency's fear of outsiders, leading them to question the reasoning behind DRUMS' agenda and their public demonstrations.¹⁰⁹

DRUMS' first public protest was conducted in July of 1970. A group totaling between fifty and 150 people picketed the offices of development firm N.E. Isaacson. The firm had made an agreement with MEI to develop a series of artificial lakes called "Lakes of the Menominee" in Menominee County. Plots along the lake were then to be sold as an effort to enhance the tourist economy of Menominee County. The protestors alleged that MEI entered into the agreement illegally and unethically, stating MEI did not have the right or privilege to sell Menominee lands

¹⁰⁷ "Judicare Won't Dump Menominee," Unknown Date, Green Bay Press-Gazette, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 26, Preloznik Judicare Articles, College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, Keshena, WI.

¹⁰⁸ "Menominee Official Critical of Judicare," September 13, 1970, The Milwaukee Journal, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 26, Preloznik Judicare Articles, College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, Keshena, WI.

¹⁰⁹ George Kenote sent a series of letters to Menominee Shareholders that generally disparaged DRUMS and Preloznik. Editorials and other correspondence show that there was at least a small portion of shareholders that were alienated or simply did not support DRUMS.

to non-Menominee. In retaliation, MEI served seven of the DRUMS protestors with court summons as a scare tactic and show of political force. The corporation also released a statement on the protests, "This extreme situation has been brought about by various dissident groups from within and without the County. The 'dissidents' have had demonstrations and have made it clear that they intend to have more."¹¹⁰ Local newspapers noted, "the protests have been at least partially successful in disrupting the lake lot sales," as N.E. Isaacson suspended its work on the land plots.¹¹¹

Further demonstrations were conducted in the fall, with DRUMS organizing rallies against the Legend Lake project in August, September, and October. DRUMS held these rallies in the face of potential aggression from local law enforcement and a temporary injunction barring public demonstration.¹¹² Despite the legal roadblocks DRUMS continued to protest, and promoted its efforts behind influential Native American Singer Buffy Saint Marie. The rally involving Saint Marie proved to be the most publicly noticed, drawing significant local media attention to their campaign. Two hundred protestors picketed the office from which plots of land were being sold, and another 250 people joined later in the day to hear Buffy Saint Marie sing and speak.¹¹³ DRUMS utilized public demonstrations as an effective means of disrupting the affairs of MEI, while the organization continued to gain supporters and create awareness for the

¹¹⁰ "Lake of the Menominees Project Advertisement," Shawano Evening Leader, July 9, 1970, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 26, Folder (Nature Study MEIA), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, Keshena, WI.

¹¹¹ "Menominee Seven' Await Hearings: Indians protest artificial lake," Ron Legro, Daily Cardinal, Madison: University of Wisconsin, July 15, 1970, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 26, Folder (Newspaper Clippings), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, Keshena, WI.

¹¹² "Charges Against Seven Persons Are Dismissed," Shawano Evening Leader, August 18, 1970. Joseph Preloznik Papers, College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, Digital Archive. DRUMS filed multiple complaints with courts in Wisconsin detailing police harassment and abuse. In addition, in August 18 of 1970 seven members of DRUMS were exonerated on charges of disorderly conduct for the protests conducted in July of 1970. Six of the seven facing charges were women protestors.

¹¹³ "200 Indians Picket Office Selling Lots Around Lake," Associated Press, Capital Times, Madison, October 19, 1970, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 26, Folder (Legend Lake Articles and Advertisements), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, Keshena, WI.

cause. Moreover, the local press took notice, and although some portrayed DRUMS in a negative light, others considered it to be a group with positive objectives and valid motivations.

During the late summer, while protests were underway, DRUMS was also undertaking the informational facet of its campaign by sending out letters, publishing press releases and its newsletter, and holding informational meetings. The press releases sent out and drafted by DRUMS were primarily informative, but also candid. Some included charts showing the effect of abolishing the Voting Trust on the corporate structure of MEI. Others illustrated how the change in the corporate structure would positively affect the Menominee people's ability to express their needs and opinions. These pieces contained political cartoons aimed at casting DRUMS as a hero and MEI as a villain. Sending their own releases ensured that at least local shareholders would have knowledge of the proxy fight, while providing them with legitimate information regarding its motivations. In relation to the informational facet of DRUMS' campaign, the limited communicative resources available in rural Wisconsin made disseminating information to elites and shareholders outside of Menominee County difficult, which severely limited the resource pool the organization could utilize.

The resource mobilization model proposed by social movement theorists such as J. Craig Jenkins, and Charles Tilly, provides a substantive mode of analysis for the emergence of DRUMS and the potential pitfalls of the strategy it employed.¹¹⁴ Jenkins asserts, "the outcomes of challenges depend not only on strategic choices but also on the stance of political elites and

¹¹⁴ Alfred and Cornthassel, 614; When social movement theory is utilized in this research it is to interpret the distinct workings of the organization and not the motivations of the native peoples behind the inner-workings. Alfred and Cornthassel have argued it is not the means by which resurgence is enacted, but that it is intended to revitalize indigeneity and is in promotion of cultural autonomy and sovereignty. DRUMS was a social movement organization adhering to activist practices that cannot be defined as distinctly indigenous. DRUMS and even more militant organizations such as the American Indian Movement (AIM) navigated para-colonialist channels and re-created means of resistance provided by the dominant society. A definitive native paradigm by which to examine the strategies of native activist groups has yet to be created, and therefore historians examining this complicated set of historical actors must intertwine theories based in indigenous and non-indigenous forms of resistance.

the support/opposition of established interest organizations and other movements.”¹¹⁵ Without the support of those in influential positions, strategic choices have little to no bearing on success. Jenkins also notes, “Movements must ... walk the fine line between outlandishness (which alienates third parties but secures coverage) and conventionality (which may be persuasive but is ignored by the media).”¹¹⁶ Therefore, activist organizations that do not evaluate their constituency’s composition prior to employing relatively radical tactics can alienate potential adherents. Tilly’s conception aligns with Jenkins’, who asserts that relationships with those in positions of power provide the greatest access to the polity, and the least chance of repression for a movement’s objectives. Additionally, Tilly believes social movements are political contenders that either successfully or unsuccessfully deploy resources through prescribed channels or through irregular means. The employment of irregular means of collective action can illicit an undesirable response from the polity and may lead to a lack of legitimacy and additional repression.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁵ J. Craig Jenkins, “Resource Mobilization Theory and the Study of Social Movements,” *Annual Review of Sociology* 9 (1983): 527-53, accessed October 29, 2014, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2946077>, 543. Further discussion on colonialism and its influences on American Indian activist strategies can be found in the following sources. See, Marie Anne Jaimes Guerrero, “Civil Rights versus Sovereignty: Native American Women in Life and Land Struggles,” in *Feminist Genealogies, Colonial Legacies, Democratic Futures* eds. M. Jacqui Alexander and Chandra Talpade Mohanty (New York, NY: Routledge Publishing, 1997); *The Politics of Indigeneity: Dialogues and Reflections on Indigenous Activism*, eds. Sita Venkateswar and Emma Hughes (London: Zed Books, 2011); *The State of Native America: Genocide, Colonization, and Resistance*, ed. M. Annette Jaimes (Boston: South End Press, Race and Resistance Series, 1992); Nancy Oestreich Lurie, “Ada Deer: Champion of Tribal Sovereignty,” in *Sifters: Native American Women’s Lives* ed. Theda Perdue (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).

¹¹⁶ Jenkins, 546.

¹¹⁷ Tilly, 1978, 125-133; Fay G. Cohen, *Treaties On Trial: The Continuing Controversy Over Northwest Indian Fishing Rights* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1986), 75-76. This type of duality typically eluded DRUMS in its infancy, but the success of this type of strategy can be illustrated in particular through the fish-in movements in the Northwest. In her monograph *Treaties on Trial: The Continuing Controversy over Northwest Indian Fishing Rights*, Fay G. Cohen argues that the effectiveness of occupations on fishing grounds were augmented by legal action. By gathering the support of legitimate political authorities such as the American Friends Service Committee, the American Civil Liberties Union, the Native American Rights Fund, lawyers from prominent private practices and law schools, and other public foundations, Northwest tribes were able to alter the conversation in their favor, at least on the federal level. She illustrates that utilizing these channels of activism were particularly effective because these authorities were receptive to indigenous issues and adhered to the new federal policy paradigm of self-determination and sovereignty. These groups used means familiar to the dominant society to achieve indigenous goals.

Thus, DRUMS initial campaign strategy, although successful in garnering adherents, was problematic in terms of long-term success for a few reasons. As a challenger to the established polity the group utilized “irregular means” by “applying resources to the government and to members of the polity which are rarely used in those relationships.”¹¹⁸ Activist mobilization was foreign to Menominee shareholders and even more so to the Menominee governing elite. As Deborah Shames argues, these authoritative political elites were met with little public resistance during the transition to Termination and were surely not familiar with their constituents’ outward declaration of opinion. Throughout the Termination era those Menominee in opposition to MEI utilized petition and other legal actions in attempts to circumvent the corporation’s authority.¹¹⁹ The means of public demonstration DRUMS utilized was brash, vocal, and outside the realm of diplomatic oriented mobilization known to the Menominee political elite. These public demonstrations also struck segments of the shareholding population as a campaign influenced by outside sources. The staunch ideological line struck by DRUMS did not resonate particularly well with all Menominee shareholders, and alienated a segment significant enough to consider their strategic choices faulted. MEI and local/regional government officials perceived the organization as a minority faction of political dissidents and therefore sought to repress their vocalizations.¹²⁰ As Jenkins has argued, relationships with those in power are the most critical to the success of a social movement organization and can even override well-intended strategic

¹¹⁸ Tilly, 1978, 151-152.

¹¹⁹ Shames, 71-72.

¹²⁰ Statements made by George Kenote in a 1963 newspaper article illustrate this point. Kenote states that he does not approve of African-American activist mobilization and that he hopes that American Indians will not join in this type of activity. His statements are generally harsh, and racist to the modern eye, but they are a result of the resentful belief that other races and ethnicities are given preferential treatment over American Indians.

choices. Thus, the governing elites were able to misconstrue DRUMS' message to potential adherents, making it difficult to unify the quantity of shareholders needed for the proxy fight.¹²¹

The differing effect that DRUMS' public demonstrations and vocalization of claims had on the part of Menominee shareholders and the governing elite can be illustrated through multiple editorials and press releases drafted by both sides of the ongoing debate. These demonstrate the mixed response and DRUMS' misunderstanding of the desires and receptiveness of those residing on the reservation. In a release to shareholders, MEI stated "DRUMS has used slick advertising gimmicks, picketing, harassment, demagoguery, and a host of lawsuits against the company to mislead people as to the true facts and create a lot of bad feelings between Menominees."¹²² Many on either side of the struggle communicated through news editorials. For instance, a person calling themselves "A Protester of the Protesters" stated "I am a resident of Menominee County who is getting rather tired of seeing articles in the news media almost daily concerning ... the dissidents and their protest marches designed to show the supposed disenchantment ... on the part of the majority of the Menominee people." This commenter goes on to say:

¹²¹ Nagel, 170. The mischaracterization of DRUMS as a group of 'outsiders' and 'dissidents' aligns with the urban/reservation divide present in American Indian communities at the time. Joane Nagel argues that reservation communities felt ambivalent "toward local protests organized by urban Indian groups." The rise in antagonism between those of urban and reservation backgrounds had much to do with the fact that urban Indians often misunderstood the issues that were important to those on the reservation. Another unfortunate circumstance was that urban activists, even when acknowledging and fighting the pertinent issues to the reservation, did not adequately communicate why the means by which they were attempting to remedy problems was the right way to take action. This is true of DRUMS' initial campaign efforts. A consensus among the members of the Menominee tribe existed in regards to the necessity for changes to MEI, but DRUMS could not fully capitalize on this consensus for two reasons. First, the irregular means of public demonstration confused, angered, and ultimately alienated certain Menominee in a similar way to Termination. Second, the proxy fight and subsequent dissolution of MEI was too closely related to the confusing way Termination was promoted as a pathway to sovereignty in the 1950s. Authority figures had placed ballots in front of members of the tribe in the past, telling them Termination was the only path of survival. For the proxy fight, the Menominee were given ballots, but unsure for what they were actually voting, and eliminating tribal governance had backfired on the tribe in the past to a catastrophic extent.

¹²² "Questions and Answers About Whether the Voting Trust Should be Continued," 1970, Menominee Enterprises Incorporated, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 9, Folder (Media Clippings – Publicity/Propaganda), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, Keshena, WI.

I am not saying these people should not protest. What I am saying is ... let's see something in the news media which shows that this is not the opinion of everyone in Menominee County; that there are those who, although they do not like to see their land sold, are willing to concede that we have to do something to get money into our county.¹²³

An unknown author responded with an editorial of their own:

I would like to say to Mr. or Mrs. Protester ... With the Menominee Indians there is no such thing as the silent majority. Either you are on one side or the other. There is no in between in a matter such as this. As for the news media ... I have yet to see in any of the papers that I have read or any TV news programs stating that were the majority.¹²⁴

This debate highlights the mentality embodied by many Menominee during the Termination era that worked against DRUMS' tactics. The "Protestor of the Protestors" was reflecting years of para-colonial impact by espousing physical survival over cultural autonomy. As Alfred and Corntassel have contended, subjugation necessitates choices on the part of the colonized as to what is worth preserving for survival. In the past the Menominee had made multiple concessions, with the largest compromise occurring through Termination. The sheer economic, political, and social deprivation present in Menominee County over the decade of Termination had left the members of the tribe with little hope, and almost no willingness to resist. The ill reception of DRUMS' campaign tactics was partially a result of this impact.

The media coverage that DRUMS' campaign attracted, while sometimes positive, often contributed to this unpredictable reception of DRUMS' irregular tactics, perpetuated the misconception of reservation attitudes, and compounded the divide between survival and autonomy. The relationships that DRUMS formed and the opportunities to communicate its

¹²³ "People's Forum – Legend Lake Marchers Don't Represent All Menominees," September 13, 1970, 'A Protester of the Protesters', Green Bay Press-Gazette, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 26, Folder (Community Correspondence, Articles, and Publications), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, Keshena, WI.

¹²⁴ "People's Forum – Warns Menominees," September 17, 1970, Unknown Author, Green Bay Press-Gazette, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 26, Folder (Community Correspondence, Articles, and Publications), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, Keshena, WI.

collective claims were most often through the media.¹²⁵ Local coverage of DRUMS reached its constituency, but most likely did nothing to convince political elites of DRUMS' role as political representative or to sway moderate shareholders in DRUMS' favor. News stories often focused on the attitudes and not the specific actions or motivations of the organization. If the media did focus on the organization's actions it was often framed negatively, making the already unfavorable political environment even more acrimonious.¹²⁶

Employing influential persons to spread its message only compounded the issue among skeptics. While persons such as Buffy Saint Marie and Vine Deloria legitimately believed in DRUMS' cause, political elites only used their support to repress DRUMS even further. In a press release to shareholders, George Kenote wrote, "DRUMS, Judicare, and Vista are using people like Buffy St-Marie, Vine Deloria, and others, to try to bolster their propaganda. They are outsiders and do not know what the real Menominee problems are – and they do not know the solutions."¹²⁷ DRUMS' inability to garner coverage from larger news sources kept their audience limited and therefore allowed MEI to validate its opposition to the organization and confuse a captive constituency with emotional claims. It played upon the urban/reservation cultural divide, and made it more difficult for DRUMS to convince potential adherents of its legitimacy as a

¹²⁵ Jenkins, 546; Nagel 167-168. J. Craig Jenkins notes: "Because mass media coverage is decisive in informing *elites* and mass publics about movement actions as well as in forming the morale and self-image of movement activists, the mass media are important actors in political conflicts ... Moreover, news coverage is often unsuitable for movement proselytizing. News stories emphasize action rather than context, leaving readers ignorant of the causes and goals of the movement. In the long run, media-based mobilization is a weak substitute for more direct methods." Joane Nagel also argues that media coverage was particularly important to Red Power organizations in educating the public, broadcasting grievances and injustice, and in communicating the new effective changes in political repertoire and issues of contention to other activists.

¹²⁶ See, A Channel 11 Editorial chiding members of DRUMS for interfering with lake development and improving the county's tax base. A newspaper article published by the Appleton Post-Crescent in July of 1970 was titled "Irate Indians to Seek Changes." This article takes a generally neutral approach to reporting actions, but it displays the type of ineffectual media coverage Jenkins highlights in his analysis.

¹²⁷ "An Information Bulletin For All Menominees," March 9, 1971, George Kenote, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 9, Folder (1970 Media Clippings – Publicity/Propaganda), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, Keshena, WI.

group fighting for cultural autonomy and sovereignty. This was additionally impacted by the fear of further deprivation on the part of Menominee shareholders.

The personal accounts of a few grassroots activists impart an understanding of the struggle they undertook to convince Menominee shareholders not only to vote, but also to vote in favor of DRUMS' agenda. Their comments also reveal the grassroots nature of the proxy fight, going from house to house and person to person. Frieda Bergeron recollected the difficult and long process in her interview with Deborah Shames saying, "A lot of people were hard to convince ... I had to be able to explain the situation so that people would understand what they were signing ... even if I spent the whole afternoon with them, and they decided to vote with the trust."¹²⁸ Louise Kitchkume, an active grassroots member of DRUMS from its inception recalled:

Oh I used to talk to those people who were hesitant about signing. They'd stand there quietly thinking and I'd be wishing inside, they'd hurry up so I could move on to someone else. But we had to be patient, explain things, answer questions, and assure people who were afraid of losing their jobs that everything would be alright.¹²⁹

The grassroots aspect of DRUMS' campaign took a far less antagonistic tone, and illustrates the intent of the organization. Even still, it is evident that convincing Menominee shareholders that dissolving their governing body was an arduous task.

The difficulty in amassing elite and shareholding support behind the proxy fight was compounded by another obstacle. DRUMS had to garner enough votes to offset the shares that could be voted by the First Wisconsin Trust Company. The influence of the bank had waned in the years leading up to 1970. Minors were gaining access to their stock certificates and voting rights more than ever before. The First Wisconsin Trust Company had held the shares of all

¹²⁸ Interview with Frieda Bergeron, in Deborah Shames, *Freedom With Reservation* (Madison, WI: The National Committee to Save the Menominee People and Forests, 1972), 81-82.

¹²⁹ Interview with Louise Kitchkume, in Deborah Shames, *Freedom With Reservation* (Madison, WI: The national Committee to Save the Menominee People and Forests, 1972), 82.

Menominee minors since the beginning of Termination and had voted the majority of shares in every Voting Trust election or referendum since 1961. The bank had also sided with government elites in elections and many other matters. In every election leading up to 1970 no “individual Menominee vote exceeded [twenty-four] percent of the eligible individual votes.”¹³⁰ Therefore, DRUMS faced a problem of poor individual voter turnout, competition against a large entity able to vote with a single-minded purpose, and a limited timeframe in which to garner the appropriate number of votes. DRUMS relied heavily on their lawyer Joseph Preloznik to ensure that their proxy vote format was valid, as leaders in the group knew that without legally binding votes they could not hope to succeed. If even a small portion of the shareholders did not side with DRUMS, the organization was likely to see its efforts fall short.¹³¹

Despite the obstacles DRUMS’ faced in its proxy fight, an opportunity arose to supplement DRUMS’ campaign and to favorably alter a different aspect of the political landscape in DRUMS’ favor. On November 7 at a meeting of the Voting Trust, the trustees voted unanimously to expand its membership from seven to eleven.¹³² The Trust also chose to elect only enrolled Menominee Indians and to shorten the terms of its trustees. As a result, at the upcoming annual shareholders meeting not one, but five trustees were to be elected. Jim White received letters urging him to run candidates for the five open seats in the upcoming election. What emerged was a viable contingency plan if the proxy fight were to fail. As a local media source in Neopit, Wisconsin noted, “[if] the effort to abolish the voting trust fails, DRUMS and

¹³⁰ *Report to House Committee on Appropriations and the House Interior and Insular Affairs Committee: Section IV Menominee Enterprises, Incorporated (MEI)*, 1971, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 19, Folder (BIA), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, Keshena, WI.

¹³¹ MEI board members accused Preloznik of creating illegal proxies, and at one point the court evidently ruled they needed revision. However, this is the sole reason why Preloznik was needed, to ensure that DRUMS’ proxies were legal and countable.

¹³² *Menominee Common Stock and Voting Trust: Meeting Minutes*, Menominee Enterprises Incorporated, November 7, 1970, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 2, Folder 3a, College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, Keshena, WI, 1-4.

its allies have been at work to put up a slate of candidates for the ... new trustee posts.”¹³³

DRUMS constructed a list of viable candidates and began campaigning, albeit moderately, for election to the Voting Trust.¹³⁴

It should be noted that while White was in favor of organizing in support of these candidates, he was almost as inflexible regarding the effectiveness of this strategic opportunity as he was toward moderate Menominee shareholders who did not agree with DRUMS’ tactics. Drafted primarily by White and the other chapter presidents, a DRUMS press release reads, “DRUMS wants control of the Enterprise back in the hands of ALL Menominee where it belongs. But the only way we can accomplish this is to eliminate the Voting Trust. Adding a few more Menominee on the Voting Trust is not enough for Menominee.” White’s influence on DRUMS made the organization rigid and unwilling to forego familiar tactics such as demonstration for more effective diplomatic means such as elected office. This rigidity was partially shaped by the inexperience of the organization, and its leaders’ naïveté regarding alternative forms of action.¹³⁵

The Voting Trust expansion, while favorable in terms of the new electoral opportunities, worked against DRUMS proxy fight in other ways. Conservative and moderate Menominee still believed that despite the immediate shortcomings of MEI, staying the course was the best option,

¹³³ “Indian Factions Gather Strength,” December 1970, Unknown News Source, Neopit, WI, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 26, Folder (DRUMS Articles and Documents), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, Keshena, WI.

¹³⁴ *Letter Regarding Election to DRUMS Chapter Presidents*, David J. Ross.

¹³⁵ Tilly, 1978, 155. As Tilly argues, organizations with a rigid-repertoire rarely deviate from means familiar to them, and express an innate bias to tactics that have succeeded in previous forms. Tilly recognizes that rigid-repertoire groups are just as likely to be unorganized as organized, but he does not adequately note that the experience factoring into the use of certain tactics is important. He claims that entrenched and experienced organizations fall into patterns of familiarity, while unorganized rigid-repertoire groups simply do not deviate from their tactics because they know no other way to execute their strategy. Therefore, inexperience works against the organization’s rigidity. Tilly additionally highlights that it often takes a crisis or a breaking point for innovation to take place in these types of situations.

disagreeing with DRUMS' disruption of the status quo. Once again, members of the community made their wishes known through editorials in local newspapers:

We need the Voting Trust for many reasons. There are some people who have tried to make you fearful and doubtful of yourselves ... You, the Menominee people, should be in the 'driver's seat,' not some outsider putting ideas in your head. The Voting Trust is being enlarged to give us a louder voice and better control over our affairs. This is the right way to improve our situation, elect people to the Voting Trust who are acting [on] our behalf, not those who advocate violence, lawsuits, etc.¹³⁶

DRUMS had built a strong base of followers through its campaign of public demonstrations and distribution of information. However, it simply could not appeal to the entire mass of shareholders. In a newspaper article titled "Indians Divided in Dispute Between DRUMS, Enterprises," writer Patrick O'Donahue attempted to interview Menominee shareholders to "Find out if the wind is blowing towards 'Enterprises' or towards 'DRUMS'."¹³⁷ O'Donahue concluded that there was no definitive answer, and that the tribe was generally divided.

DRUMS took as much advantage of the Voting Trust amendment as possible, filing a lawsuit to postpone the annual shareholders meeting scheduled for December. DRUMS alleged that "the voting trustees made substantial changes in the trust agreement without the approval of the stockholders ... changing the trust agreement to eliminate non-Menominees and adding four members to the seven member board of trustees."¹³⁸ DRUMS also sought to "restrain the First Wisconsin Trust Company from casting votes it [held] for 18, 19, and 20 year old Menominees,

¹³⁶ "People's Forum – Best Menominee Bet: Enlarge Voting Trust," December 2, 1970, Appleton Post-Crescent, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 26, Folder (Community Correspondence Articles and Publications), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, Keshena, WI.

¹³⁷ "Indians Divided in Dispute Between DRUMS, Enterprises," Unknown Date, Patrick O'Donahue, Green Bay Press-Gazette, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 26, Folder (Nature Study Sanctuary, MEI Articles and Publications, Visitors Destination Center), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, Keshena, WI.

¹³⁸ "Suit Seeks to Block Menominee Vote," Special Correspondence, Milwaukee Journal, December 1970, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 26, Folder (DRUMS Articles and Documents), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, Keshena, WI; "Injunction Delays Vote on Menominee Trust," Appleton Post-Crescent, December 1970, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 26, Folder (DRUMS Articles and Documents), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, Keshena, WI.

whose stock the trust company [held] in trust.”¹³⁹ The latter portion of the lawsuit provided hope that DRUMS could supplant the shareholding power of the First Wisconsin Trust Company, and presented an opportunity to increase the pool of its potential adherents.¹⁴⁰ Employees of MEI such as Atlee Dodge even accused DRUMS of such an action stating, “The amendment actually met many of the objections to the Trust that DRUMS has made in the past. Apparently, DRUMS just wants the Trust to look bad.”¹⁴¹ The postponement also allowed DRUMS more time to campaign for the proxy fight; time it desperately needed for success.

On December 11, Judge James A. Martineau ruled in favor of DRUMS, postponing the annual shareholders meeting until April 3, 1971, which in turn postponed the proxy vote and trustee election. Martineau highlighted four issues that needed to be resolved during a supplemental hearing:

What should be done about the rights of approximately 550 shareholders who have ... not been notified by mail of the upcoming elections; What should be done about the votes of deceased Menominee; What about the rights of 18, 19, and 20-year old Menominee shareholders to vote their own shares; and finally Who should run the elections and how should the elections be handled to assure each Menominee shareholder a chance to vote?¹⁴²

In March, Martineau ruled on each matter: (1) the Voting Trust was valid and the First Wisconsin Trust Company was “entitled to vote the shares of minors 18 to 21 years of age”; (2) a form of notice suggested by Trustees was valid; (3) the shares of the deceased would not be counted; (4) Judge Elton J. Morrison would preside over the election; (5) the amendment

¹³⁹ “Suit Seeks to Block Menominee Vote.”

¹⁴⁰ It should be noted that DRUMS did want voting rights to become available for Menominee shareholders ages 18 to 21. However, filing this suit met both the goal of returning the voting rights, and increasing their chances in the proxy fight.

¹⁴¹ *Let's Work Together*, Atlee Dodge: MEI Director of Public Relations, March 1970, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 9, Folder (1970 Media Clippings – Publicity/propaganda), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, Keshena, WI.

¹⁴² *DRUMS Press Release: Message on Postponed Election*, Joseph Preloznik Papers, College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, Digital Archive.

enlarging the Voting Trust was legal.¹⁴³ DRUMS' efforts to increase its potential constituency and its chances in the proxy fight ultimately failed. DRUMS had not yet proven its position as a well-meaning organization. Although politically crippling for shareholders, the legality of the First Wisconsin Trust Company's role in the shareholding structure was never really in question. The entrenched legalize upon which MEI had structured the privatized trust agreement was essentially impenetrable. Upon examining the facts at hand, despite his likely curiosity on the intent of this group of activists, Martineau essentially had no choice in legally "protecting" the shareholders.

The shareholders meeting took place as planned in April, and the votes were tallied for the matters of continuing the Voting Trust and the Trustee Election. In regards to abolishing the Voting Trust, the meeting was a significant defeat. DRUMS' proxy format was confusing to some Menominee who had submitted multiple proxies for both MEI and DRUMS, which convoluted the final count. Additionally, the First Wisconsin Trust Company wielded its influence, submitting over 48,000 votes against abolishing the Voting Trust. Ballot counters determined that the efforts of DRUMS had fallen short by around 30,000 to 50,000 votes.¹⁴⁴ If minors could have voted their shares the outcome might have been different, however, DRUMS' tactics had not resonated with a large enough segment of the available pool of shareholders or elites to convince them to abolish the Voting Trust.

There were small victories for members of DRUMS to rally around. The Menominee shareholders had clearly received word of the annual meeting and proxy vote through DRUMS' public demonstrations and related local media coverage. The meeting in April had the largest individual Menominee vote total of any election since the beginning of the Termination era, with

¹⁴³ *Let's Work Together*, Atlee Dodge.

¹⁴⁴ "Menominee Indian Voting Trust Continues," Shawano Evening Leader, April 1971, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 26, Folder (DRUMS Restoration Clippings), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, Keshena, WI.

eighty-one percent of the votes cast by members of the tribe rather than the First Wisconsin Trust Company. The turnout was an increase of fifty-nine percent from the previous election turnout of only seven percent. Although DRUMS was defeated in its proxy fight, the high turnout contributed to the election of two DRUMS members to the Voting Trust. The elected trustees were Ada Deer and Georgianna Ignace, who reflected the large contingent of women activists in the organization. The election of DRUMS trustees highlights the fact that individual shareholders believed in DRUMS' message and wanted change, but were unsure of the effects of the proxy fight on their community. The election of candidates occupied a middle ground between DRUMS' insistent one-track solution, and the shareholders' desire for change. Thus, DRUMS' failure was not a result of its objectives, but rather its strategy.¹⁴⁵

DRUMS responded to its failures with an immediate backlash to the Voting Trust count. Some members protested and sued for a recount of the votes and subsequently had an injunction levied against their efforts by Judge Martineau. Many were barred from further demonstration under threat of contempt of court. Even so, the leaders of DRUMS such as Jim White and Laurel Otradovec continued the campaign of public demonstrations as they had planned previously:

demonstrations [against the sale of land] are recommended to continue even if we [DRUMS] are successful in eliminating the voting trust. If DRUMS is successful in getting control of the Enterprises this still would not negate the contract with the partnership, and we would therefore encourage the demonstrations to continue in order to stop the sale of our land.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁵ "Menominee Decision: Voting Trust Stays."

¹⁴⁶ *DRUMS Policy Committee Meeting: Response from Chicago*, James A. White, Gwendolyn D. White, Joan Harte, February 2, 1971, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 21, Folder (Menominee County Chapter Miscellaneous), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, Keshena, WI.

Newly elected trustee Ada Deer responded differently, stating her election and the turnout at the shareholders meeting was a “very significant victory,” and that her group “drew a majority and brought out the heaviest vote ever in a tribal election.”¹⁴⁷

By April 1971, DRUMS’ missteps as a newly formed organization had garnered mixed results. It was clear that the group’s message had resonated with a segment of unsatisfied shareholders, but not with Menominee governing elites. Additionally, DRUMS was now well known among local media outlets as a newsworthy organization. While publicly vocal leaders such as Jim White did not necessarily view the annual shareholders meeting and election of trustees as a success, other less vocal leaders such as Ada Deer saw an opportunity to adapt and reshape not only DRUMS’ image, but also its strategy. The failure of the proxy fight was a breaking point, prompting some in the organization to adapt to unfamiliar tactics in order to be successful. The proxy fight failure was also a turning point in DRUMS’ leadership. Although White had emerged as a public leader, behind the scenes it was less clear. White’s leadership was both admirable and well intentioned, but the strategies he formulated were not the appropriate response to the legal action of Termination. As elected officials, the new DRUMS trustees were presented with a regular and accepted means of mobilization, and a position of authority enabling them to act as intermediaries between the constituency and governing elite. The elected trustees could re-construct the power provided by elected corporate office to strike a victory for indigenous activism from within the para-colonial establishment. To some members of DRUMS, any future attempts to restructure MEI from the exterior were futile. The realization that DRUMS needed to adopt a new set of strategic choices and tactics was cemented in the minds of many emerging activists.

¹⁴⁷ “Menominee Decision: Voting Trust Stays,” Cliff Miller, Appleton Post-Crescent, April 4, 1971, Joseph Preloznik Papers. Box 26, Folder (Drums Restoration Clippings), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, Keshena, WI.

CHAPTER III: ADAPTING STRATEGY AND PROVIDING A VOICE

Sitting in an office somewhere on the University of Wisconsin campus or in a DRUMS office in Menominee County, DRUMS trustee Ada Deer begins striking the keys of her typewriter. She is writing letters to people throughout Wisconsin and the rest of the United States, telling them of the plight of the Menominee people. As early as March 1970, Deer had undertaken this kind of connection-generating activity on behalf of DRUMS. Deer was working behind the scenes to gather support for the organization's cause, gaining a reputation founded through inter-organizational linkages, political representation, and activism executed through diplomatic channels.

Deer's prominence as a diplomat began prior to her involvement as an activist. Clara Sue Kidwell claims that Deer had participated in attention grabbing activities at the local, regional, and national level, such as serving on the board of directors for the Girl Scouts of America and the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare's Urban Indian Task Force. Well-known American Indian activists such as LaDonna Harris had even "invited her to serve on the AIO [Americans for Indian Opportunity] board of directors."¹⁴⁸ Her time spent with non-Indian task forces and in the non-Indian world made her a valuable voice for indigenous issues among political elites, and developed her ability to re-construct Euro-American methods such as lobbying to benefit indigenous issues.¹⁴⁹

At the beginning of DRUMS' activity in Menominee County Ada Deer resided in Milwaukee. She was one of the founding members of DRUMS and helped to orchestrate the organization's development in Menominee County. Deer was not particularly vocal during her early months as a member and founder of DRUMS. This can be attributed to her activities as the

¹⁴⁸ Clara Sue Kidwell, "Ada Deer: Menominee," in *The New Warriors: Native American Leaders since 1900*, ed. R. David Edmunds (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2001), 247.

¹⁴⁹ Kidwell, 246-249.

leader of the Upward Bound program and because she was attending law school, which also impeded her ability to attend meetings and participate in DRUMS' early activities.¹⁵⁰ Deer noted the difficulty that law school presented as she became more involved in the organization's activities, and she eventually decided to leave law school to focus on DRUMS: "We started getting publicity, so, long story short I dropped out of law school and said Okay, I'll do this, I'll go to Washington D.C. and lobby."¹⁵¹ Law and social work had a particular influence on Deer's philosophy, and her time in college altered the way she viewed herself in relation to her people. A University of Wisconsin professor suggested that her skill set matched that of a diplomat stating, "You'd make a good one. You'd impress people of other countries. You're a true example of American democracy. Indians are the original Americans. And you are proof that there are opportunities here for people who recognize them."¹⁵² Deer wrote in regards to becoming a social work major, "Dr. Perlman's remark changed my whole perspective on myself ... I recalled what I'd once felt about wanting to help people ... perhaps I could help others just as much. Especially Indians."¹⁵³

Deer's passion for aiding her people also had origins in her childhood. Her mother, who was not of American Indian heritage, drove her to improve the condition of her people from an early age. In an interview conducted for a statewide study of indigenous peoples, Deer stated "I remember early in my life my mother would say, 'Ada Deer you are an Indian and you were put

¹⁵⁰ Upward Bound is a program providing assistance to high school students who may not otherwise be able to attend an institution of higher education. In 1970 Ada Deer was the Director of the Upward Bound program at Wisconsin State University.

¹⁵¹ Ada Deer, interview by Carly Wieman and Felicia Krejci, in *Native Nations of Wisconsin: Sharing Their History, Culture, and Traditions*, edited by D.C. Everest Area Schools (Schofield, WI: D.C. Everest Area Schools Publications, 2009), 117.

¹⁵² Ada Deer, *Speaking Out* (Chicago, IL: Childrens Press, 1970), 40.

¹⁵³ *Ibid*, 42.

on this planet for a purpose' ... She knew what she was doing and she gave me this idea, when I was quite young, that I was an Indian and that I was here to help my people."¹⁵⁴

Finally, Ada Deer was inspired by the traditional leadership roles of native women historically and contemporarily. Devon Abbott Mihesuah argues in her work *Indigenous American Women: Decolonization, Empowerment, Activism*, "Native women leaders point to their tribal religions and traditions as inspiration and justification for their positions as leaders."¹⁵⁵ M. Annette Jaimes and Theresa Halsey assert, "More important than their direct participation in military activities was native women's role in making key decisions, not only about matters of peace and war, but in all other aspects of socioeconomic existence."¹⁵⁶ They also claim that native culture was and still is the main realm of influence for indigenous women, occupying an important spiritual position. Native women have always been targeted by the dominant society because of their importance to indigenous communities, and have been forced to re-construct para-colonial methods to their advantage and in the interest of the survival of their culture and themselves.¹⁵⁷ Although these are only a few examples of the type of leadership that might have inspired Deer, they exemplify the mixture of both indigenous and non-indigenous influences on her distinct activist tendencies and her role within DRUMS.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁴ Ada Deer Interview, 113.

¹⁵⁵ Devon Abbott Mihesuah, *Indigenous American Women: Decolonization, Empowerment, Activism* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2003), 143. In traditional indigenous societies women participated in diplomatic affairs, possessed land rights, and oversaw decision-making. Although there is plenty of evidence regarding matrilineal societies, native women also often took on intermediary leadership roles rather than roles considered by colonizers as positions of political authority, i.e. a formal title.

¹⁵⁶ M. Annette Jaimes and Theresa Halsey, "American Indian Women: At the Center of Indigenous Resistance in North America, in *The State of Native America: Genocide, Colonization, and Resistance*, ed. M. Annette Jaimes (Boston: South End Press, Race and Resistance Series, 1992), 316.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid, 319.

¹⁵⁸ Donna Hightower Langston, "American Indian Women's Activism in the 1960s and 1970s," *Hypatia* 18, no. 2 (Spring 2003): 114-32, accessed December 10, 2014, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3811016>, 128-130; Devon Abbot Mihesuah, *Indigenous American Women: Decolonization, Empowerment, Activism* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2003), 161; "We Shall Endure: Women," April 28, 1974, Sandra Shackelford, Appleton Post-Crescent, Ada Deer Papers, Box 1, Folder 1, University of Wisconsin Green Bay Archives and Area Research Center, (Green Bay, WI). One must gain an understanding of the dilemma that faces Native women activists regarding civil rights, tribal

Early on, Deer exhibited a particular affinity for constructing resource channels. She was one of the first people to organize the chapter in Milwaukee and to organize meetings between the two chapters.¹⁵⁹ Deer was also instrumental in involving Preloznik in DRUMS' activism:

Well I got really mad when I found out what they were doing: they were selling our land and white people were moving in. Lots of other people didn't know what to do so I called up a lawyer. He was an OEO (Office of Economic Opportunity, War on Poverty Programs) lawyer ... He was the director of Judicare and I told him I was interested in learning about this, that I was a Menominee, so he was kind of curious.¹⁶⁰

Deer also acknowledges the importance of other members of DRUMS in its early days stating "There were several of us that assumed leadership early on, including Mr. Lloyd Powless from Milwaukee, James and Gwen White from Chicago, Joan Cashina Hart from Chicago ... It was a real grassroots movement of people."¹⁶¹ What she does not note is the general prominence of these people in the public eye of Menominee County (in particular Jim White) compared to her behind-the-scenes leadership role. As in her activism, Deer takes an even-handed approach regarding her involvement in DRUMS: "I want to emphasize that it [Termination] was a tribal issue, and a tribal effort, there wasn't just Ada Deer. There were other important people that had

sovereignty, and gender oppression, and the means by which they mediate this difficulty. Not unlike other women of ethnic minority heritage, Native women activists were tasked with finding their place during the upheaval of the 1960s and 1970s. Some scholars such as Donna Hightower Langston have argued that Native women activists have shunned feminism and gendered issues for issues of tribal sovereignty because feminism is in and of itself a para-colonialist construction that oppresses indigenous rhetoric and encourages assimilation. Other scholars such as Devon Abbott Mihesuah argue that Native women activists "must figure out how to address tribal concerns at the same time that we face important issues that concern Native women. This is not easy." Ada Deer's stance on her role as a leader in the struggle for Restoration was that she is "a Menominee, a woman, an American ... in that order." According to an interview conducted by the Appleton Post-Crescent, Deer "set aside long-range goals for immediate concerns ... to work with her people ... She's a woman who never stopped being angry at injustice." Therefore, it can be argued that although there seems to be a choice between tribal and gender rights, they can be highlighted at the same instance, but not always in the same context. Although Deer was fighting for gender rights, she put rhetoric on hold to ensure Restoration was at the forefront.

¹⁵⁹ Notes submitted by Nancy Oestreich Lurie.

¹⁶⁰ Ada Deer Interview, 115.

¹⁶¹ Ada Deer Interview, 117.

their roles.”¹⁶² This egalitarian attitude is what made Deer’s influence on DRUMS’ successful in comparison to the stance taken by other members of DRUMS.

Deer resisted Termination primarily by attempting to infiltrate the communicative channels of the para-colonial society’s polity, writing letters and forming contacts, lobbying with political elites and making public appearances. She formed linkages, utilizing a “western” diplomatic paradigm, ultimately re-constructing these tactics as a form of resistance. In the earliest days of DRUMS’ work, Deer wrote letters to prominent people involved in American Indian Affairs. These people were primarily leaders of church groups that had contacts in segments of the American Indian communities in the Midwest, particularly Chicago. Her goal in writing this correspondence was to organize a meeting at the American Indian Center of Chicago and to have these leaders disseminate information about the meeting through their organization’s channels. Many of the letters follow similar form with Deer writing:

I am writing to request your assistance in publicizing a meeting for the Menominee Indians ... You may be aware of the many problems confronting the Menominees since termination ... We have a lawyer, Mr. Joseph Preloznik, executive director of Wisconsin Judicare working on the case ... We wish to inform and involve all interested Menominees.¹⁶³

These first letters illustrate Deer’s talent for expanding resources. For example, at the end of each letter Deer states, “We would appreciate your broadcasting the meeting.”¹⁶⁴ She wanted to use the communication channels of larger and more established organizations to legitimize DRUMS’ work and expand their audience. She garnered support to legitimize her group, and she

¹⁶² Ada Deer Interview, 116.

¹⁶³ “Letter to Ricard Reese: News Director WJJD Chicago,” March 5, 1970, Ada Deer, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 20, Folder (Drums Correspondence 1970), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, (Keshena, WI).

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

obtained resources directly. In a letter to Reverend Peter Powell of Chicago, Deer notes, “We would appreciate a list of the names, addresses, and telephones of all Menominees you have.”¹⁶⁵

Another crucial detail to glean from these letters is the way Deer portrayed herself and other figures involved in early mobilization. In most of the letters she describes her educational and professional background, noting her degrees in social work and her enrollment in law school. Some letters are signed, “Ada E. Deer, Director, Upward Bound Program.”¹⁶⁶ She was attempting to characterize herself and her organization as a legitimate group composed of educated and determined individuals. For instance, in a letter to Mr. Robert Rietz, Executive Director of the American Indian Center in Chicago. Deer describes Preloznik as “a lawyer who is currently the executive director of Wisconsin Judicare in Madison.”¹⁶⁷ In another instance, she writes, “My sister Connie, who is a senior at the University of Wisconsin in Madison will attend the meeting.”¹⁶⁸ It is clear Deer understood the importance of first impressions when forming connections with other organizations, and she used education and title as the easiest way to frame political legitimacy, particularly to those with elite influence within well-established organizations and the government.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁵ “Letter to Reverend Peter Powell: St Augustine Center Chicago,” March 5, 1970, Ada Deer, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 20, Folder (DRUMS Correspondence 1970), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, (Keshena, WI).

¹⁶⁶ “Letter to Mr. Bill Dodds: United Auto Workers Washington D.C.,” April 14, 1970, Ada Deer, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 20, Folder (DRUMS Correspondence 1970), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, (Keshena, WI).

¹⁶⁷ “Letter to Mr. Robert Rietz: Executive Director American Indian Center of Chicago,” March 5, 1970, Ada Deer, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 20, Folder (DRUMS Correspondence 1970), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, (Keshena, WI).

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Joane Nagel, *American Indian Ethnic Renewal: Red Power and the Resurgence of Identity and Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 167. Deer’s intermediary leadership fostered through inter-organizational linkages can also be compared to and contrasted with the linkage forming activities of AIM. According to Joane Nagel, the American Indian Movement and activists associated with Red Power navigated the inter-organizational channels of urban Indian communities by utilizing churches, community centers, and cultural destinations. Deer’s strategy was similarly formulated, but was concentrated more so in non-Indian channels such as congress, political action groups, and university commissions. AIM also took advantage of media coverage in the same way that Deer began employing the media as a combative tool. By 1972, Deer’s voice and the voice of her adherents could be heard and read in the media not only locally and regionally, but nationally.

Deer also attempted to seek election to the Voting Trust as a means of gaining legitimacy. For instance, in May of 1970 Deer attended a meeting of the Voting Trust seeking to fill a vacancy. At the meeting, she summarized her education and qualifications and delivered her platform: advocating for more direct decisions from shareholders and more employment opportunities. Deer lost her bid to fill this vacancy by a large margin. Deer never explicitly stated that she disagreed with DRUMS initial campaign strategy, but her actions show that she at least recognized an alternate means of action. She was continually absent from DRUMS' public demonstrations and meetings, because of her schooling, and yet she continued to seek election and engage in correspondence throughout the proxy fight campaign, eventually achieving her goal of elected office in April 1971.

After she was elected to the Voting Trust in April 1971, Ada Deer began working immediately to utilize her new office. Upon assuming trusteeship Deer delivered testimony to the Senate Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs regarding "The Effects of Termination on the Menominee" in July 1971. This was the first real opportunity to provide a national platform for the Menominee people. Nicholas Peroff aptly describes this success by writing, "The official contacts and private pledges of support she gained were to become particularly valuable in the subsequent drive by DRUMS to gain national support for the reversal of Menominee Termination."¹⁷⁰ Peroff attributes the opportunity for a lobbying platform to the entire organization by writing, "the value of *lobbying efforts by DRUMS* became apparent when a delegation headed by Ada Deer was allowed to testify."¹⁷¹ It is clear when examining Deer's continued correspondence with congressman following the testimony, and by reviewing her actions prior to the testimony, that Deer should receive a large amount credit as a primary

¹⁷⁰ Peroff, 189.

¹⁷¹ Peroff, 188.

architect of these initial lobbying efforts. According to Deborah Shames “Early in July [1971], Ada was contacted by a staff member of the U.S. Senate Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs who invited DRUMS representatives to give testimony.”¹⁷² Therefore, Deer was their primary contact within DRUMS, and the point of linkage for the organization to gain the legitimacy needed. Deer’s testimony highlighted the ills of Termination, and explained DRUMS’ proposed solution to Termination. This included a list of objectives that were strikingly different from those originally noted in 1970, propelling the organization in a new direction, towards reversal of Termination through legislation.¹⁷³

Prior to Deer’s testimony, DRUMS and the Menominee did not have a significant legislative channel to express grievances or to have their voice heard. Few Menominee or members of DRUMS believed that Restoration of the federal relationship between the Menominee and the federal government was possible. Elected office and the correspondence leading to the senate testimony adjusted their belief in the possibility of legislation as a solution to the problems of the Menominee. Leaders, including the emergent Deer, reevaluated the effectiveness of their initial campaign strategy and the new resources elected office provided. Their proxy fight campaign was successful in many aspects, especially in creating awareness

¹⁷² Deborah Shames, *Freedom With Reservation* (Madison: The National Committee to Save The Menominee People and Forests, 1972), 85-86.

¹⁷³ *The Effects of Termination on the Menominee: Testimony on Senate Concurrent Resolution 26*, Ada Deer, Laurel Otradovec, Lloyd Powless, James White, Georgianna Ignace, July 21, 1971, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 17, Folder (Legislative Committee), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, (Keshena, WI), 24-32.

1 – Restore all Menominee to their legal status as American Indians, thereby entitling them to all the government services and benefits available to Indians;

2 – Reopen the Menominee tribal rolls, so that Menominee Indians born since 1954 can be legally recognized as Menominee, and regain their rightful share of tribal assets;

3 – Dissolve MEI and restore all its remaining assets to the status of tribal property, to be held in trust by the federal government;

4 – Purchase all Menominee land lost as the result of termination and restore it to the Menominee tribe;

5 – Award compensation to the Menominee tribe for the damages it suffered under termination; and

6 – Establish an economic development program among the Menominee attack the principal causes of our present poverty.

among shareholders, however, The First Wisconsin Trust Company and Menominee political authorities simply wielded too much shareholding power. Shames asserts that “a majority of the Menominee people supported DRUMS; and it was evident that only such a profound and radical change as reversal of termination could prevent further dissipation of assets and dispersion of the people.”¹⁷⁴ Peroff discusses DRUMS’ response to their defeat in the proxy fight very briefly, “When that effort [proxy fight] failed, DRUMS adopted a new strategy. DRUMS candidates ran for positions on the trust as vacancies became available. The new strategy was a spectacular success.”¹⁷⁵ Deer, the first DRUMS member elected to office, utilized the regular channels available to elected officials of MEI in order to circumvent previous barricades to the success of Restoration. This included a plan to form connections with high-ranking political contacts in the same way she had prior to the proxy fight by communicating directly with legislators, support organizations, and other activists, gaining written and private verbal endorsement and aid.

A mere two months following Ada Deer’s election to the Voting Trust, DRUMS began to alter its strategic choices and objectives behind a message better fitting its new representative role, or the group also had its first opportunity to communicate with the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs for the first time. Deer had been quietly mobilizing behind her new resources and political contacts for months. She was trusted by her constituents and respected by those in positions of political authority, making her a bridge between the two as no DRUMS leader had been in the past. Her emergence as an organizational leader in DRUMS and MEI gave legitimacy to both organizations in the eyes of national legislators, as well.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁴ Shames, 85.

¹⁷⁵ Peroff, 189.

¹⁷⁶ *Letter from Richard Dodge: Chairman of the Board of Directors (MEI)*, Richard Dodge, December 29, 1971, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 22, Folder (Ada Deer Materials for JFP), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, (Keshena, WI). Correspondence between Deer and Richard Dodge (Chairman of MEI Board of Directors) indicate that Deer continued to take positions on Restoration legislation in contrast to DRUMS, as she did when the organization first began its campaign: “In reviewing your letter to Stockholders dated December 21st, I

Ada Deer continued to regularly utilize the advantages of elected office and her abilities as a bridge leader to form inter-organizational linkages, capitalize on newly available resources, and draw regional media attention from urban areas such as Madison, Green Bay, Chicago, and Minneapolis.¹⁷⁷ Deer corresponded with influential persons on a routine basis, again employing title in order to legitimize her position. Some of the persons she wrote to included, Alvin Josephy (a noted American Indian historian and lobbyist), congressmen such as Gaylord Nelson and William Proxmire, Burke Marshall a professor from Yale Law School, and the National Action Committee, a noted political action group. Deer viewed this inter-organizational correspondence as a way to create a web of resources throughout the country, including financial backers, legal counselors, and public sponsors. Most of her letters provided information on the plight of the Menominee and ways in which the reader could help. She also expressed hope that in the future their awareness would lead to additional avenues of support.

For instance, in her letter to Alvin Josephy she wrote, “Do you know of any rich eastern ‘fat cats’ that wish to assist a true self-help Indian group.”¹⁷⁸ Deer realized that without financial backing DRUMS’ lobbying efforts in the future were in jeopardy. In another letter, Deer provided information to the Ethnic and Minority Study Center at the University of Wisconsin

find your statement ‘Legislation to repeal termination will be introduced in late January’ is unfounded, and completely out of your authority as Chairman of voting trust. The trustees have not taken a position on final drafting of legislation, prior to its introduction. The Drums have not taken a final position, and Menominee Enterprises, Inc. has not voted on any final legislation ... No matter what your personal feelings are, you have the rest of the tribe to consider.” Although DRUMS’ position was presented as a collective drafting of new objectives, and leaders such as Jim White and Laurel Otradovec were still the most vocal of DRUMS’ members, Deer continually operated in contradiction to the organization, altering its message without superseding the group’s unity.

¹⁷⁷ Belinda Robnett, “African-American Women in the Civil Rights Movement, 1954-1965: Gender, Leadership, and Micromobilization,” *American Journal of Sociology* (1996): 1, 0002-9602/96/10106-0005, 1661, 1664.

¹⁷⁸ *Letter to Alvin Josephy: Editor American Heritage Publishing Company*, Ada Deer, October 28, 1971, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 20, Folder (Ada Deer Correspondence), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, (Keshena, WI).

and suggested the materials be “distributed to interested people.”¹⁷⁹ This illustrates her understanding that university campuses and urban areas might house a number of potential supporters. In writing to Veda Stone (a noted American Indian activist), Deer highlighted the success of the March for Justice, but likewise appealed for letters of support directed towards Governor Lucey, to augment current outreach initiatives.¹⁸⁰

It is apparent that Deer intended to utilize these organizational linkages to mobilize and develop resources, but she also sought to expand her web of contacts. As an example, her correspondence with Burke Marshall was recommended by another contact, Dr. Gary Orfield of Princeton University, who knew Marshall was interested in Indian Affairs. She wrote to Marshall for advice on potential “political, legal, and economical structures [that] could be developed should termination be repealed.”¹⁸¹ She additionally addressed letters to pools of potentially interested parties who worked within the same organization. This was an effective tactic with congressman in particular.¹⁸² In a few instances she used correspondence as a tool to repudiate political authorities that ignored or disregarded DRUMS’ newfound political legitimacy. Writing to Senator Henry Jackson, Deer stated:

I was distressed to read in the recent press reports that you had stated that you had received no requests from the Menominee Tribe regarding termination. May I call your attention to the Testimony that I presented on behalf of DRUMS on July 21,

¹⁷⁹ *Letter to Mr. Norman Lederer: University of Wisconsin Ethnic and Minority Study Center*, Ada Deer, October 25, 1971, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 20, Folder (Ada Deer Correspondence), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, (Keshena, WI).

¹⁸⁰ *Letter to Mrs. Veda Stone*, Ada Deer, October 21, 1971, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 20, Folder (Ada Deer Correspondence), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, (Keshena, WI).

¹⁸¹ *Letter to Burke Marshall: Yale Law School*, Ada Deer, October 28, 1971, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 20, Folder (Ada Deer Correspondence), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, (Keshena, WI).

¹⁸² At the College of Menominee Nation Special Collections Archive there was a collection of letters saved by Joseph Preloznik. There is a total of around twenty-five letters of correspondence dated 1971, to and from Ada Deer to individuals in both influential and ordinary stations in life. Some of these letters are from workers. Another is from a little girl in Indianapolis who was inspired by Ada Deer’s work. In late 1971, Ada Deer was corresponding with congressman and other influential persons, and she had truly began to utilize correspondence as a legitimate means of lobbying influential, established, and grassroots people to her cause. The letters from the congressman indicate that they had either spoken about Ada Deer’s letters in person, or that their offices were exchanging correspondence regarding their reaction to the aforementioned letters.

1971, to your committee. We have done so much to call attention to our problems and have taken strong positions indicating what should be done to correct the many injustices inflicted upon us by termination. In view of the repudiation of the termination policy by President Nixon in his message of July 8, 1970, and also in view of the disastrous consequences for our tribe, I urge your committee to ... assist us in our efforts to repeal termination.¹⁸³

This type of correspondence both encouraged communication between DRUMS and influential authorities, but also served as a means to persuade senators of the possibility of Restoration legislation.¹⁸⁴

Supporters began writing to Ada Deer as well. Between October and November, letters written to Deer multiplied. Men who worked at the Menominee mill asked Deer to help them obtain sustainable jobs. Representatives of university commissions engaged in correspondence with Deer to obtain reliable information on the situation in Menominee County. Congressman took notice of the plight of the Menominee and reached out to DRUMS for the first time. Deer created a national audience for Menominee issues by eschewing the irregular means of collective action employed by DRUMS prior to her election. She capitalized on her role as a bridge leader between constituency and polity, and efficiently augmented her organization's resources by constructing linkages with political elites who then formed new linkages to the benefit of DRUMS' agenda.¹⁸⁵

The social movement theory of J. Craig Jenkins and Charles Tilly influenced this analysis of Deer's work in DRUMS. The irregular means utilized by DRUMS and the group's inability to garner support from those in positions of power and on the reservation are particularly important.

In contrast to the rest of the organization, Deer utilized regular and accepted means of

¹⁸³ "Letter to Senator Jackson: Senate Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs," November 3, 1971, Ada Deer, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 21, Folder (DRUMS Meeting Minutes and Meeting Council Minutes), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, (Keshena, WI).

¹⁸⁴ "Menominee Attack Federal Termination Policy," July 22, 1971, The Milwaukee Journal, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 17, Folder (News Coverage DRUMS Testimony), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, (Keshena, WI).

¹⁸⁵ "Menominee Attack Federal Termination Policy."

communicating with the westernized polity such as correspondence, lobbying, and seeking election. In his theory of inter-organizational linkages, Adrian F. Aveni prescribes to the theories of Tilly and Jenkins as discussed in the previous chapter, but he also states:

Both inter-organizational and organization/public linkages are ... of great consequence to organizations. They have impacts upon internal processes and structures. Linkages also are of vital significance for the resources mobilization process. They are the vehicle through which organizations obtain necessary resources. The presence of only a few linkages is likely to mean little organizational development and may mean decline.¹⁸⁶

Aveni argues, without the addition of proper organizational leadership to enact these linkages, social movement organizations cannot mobilize their resources to gain political legitimacy.¹⁸⁷

Deer emerged as DRUMS' organizational leader, forming connections with people, both influential and ordinary, who were interested in aiding the Menominee and could provide valuable resources.

Belinda Robnett's work on women in social movement organizations, whom she terms as bridge leaders, provides insight into Deer's alteration of the organization's message:

An intermediate layer of leadership is critical to micromobilization of a social movement. This intermediate layer provides a bridge (1) between the social movement organization(s) and potential adherents and constituents, (2) between prefigurative and strategic politics, and (3) between potential leaders and those already predisposed to movement activity ... Moreover, bridge leaders and followers may eventually amplify, extend, and transform the message of the movement so that it is no longer in congruence with that of the formal leaders.¹⁸⁸

The latter point regarding the transformation of an organization's message coincides with

Aveni's linkage theory and its ultimate effects: "the development of linkages for the purposes of acquiring resources *also* will have effects, some of which may be unintended, upon other

¹⁸⁶ Adrian F. Aveni, "Organizational Linkages and Resource Mobilization: The Significance of Linkage Strength and Breadth," *Sociological Quarterly* 9, no. 2 (March 1978): 185-202, accessed October 29, 2014, 10.1111/j.1533-8525.1978.tb01164.x, 186.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid, 187.

¹⁸⁸ Robnett, 1661, 1664.

organizational processes as well as the structure of the organization.”¹⁸⁹ While Robnett’s analysis applies to African-American women in civil rights organizations it can also be applied to Deer’s emerging role in DRUMS and the alteration of its objectives. White was the organization’s message-forming leader until Deer’s election to the Voting Trust. Afterward, Deer’s diplomatic strategy overtook his message-forming influence, reshaping DRUMS as an organization.

DRUMS leaders such as White continued to utilize militant tactics, operating in contrast to Deer and her diplomatic efforts. However, the public demonstrations enacted by these activists had slightly changed in tone as well. A major demonstration was organized for October called the ‘Menominee March for Justice’ in which members of DRUMS, led by president Jim White, marched from Keshena to Madison. Unlike previous demonstrations, this march was aimed at a politically influential regional audience:

The march to meet with the governor [is] the second phase of our campaign for human rights and justice ... If nothing can be achieved on the local level where we have concentrated our efforts, perhaps the governor of the state of Wisconsin in whose jurisdiction this oppression, swindling, discrimination, fraud, and blatant and arrogant violations of laws are being perpetrated can help in correcting these wrongs.¹⁹⁰

DRUMS’ more militant leaders had transferred attention away from dismantling MEI, and became more focused on forming linkages with political elites such as Governor Lucey as a result of Deer’s growing influence. DRUMS’ public demonstration failed to earn the organization an official meeting with Lucey, but did garner significant attention from regional and national political authorities such as state representatives, congressmen, and lobbyists.¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁹ Aveni, 186.

¹⁹⁰ “Menominees Start Long Hike to Capitol,” *Appleton Post-Crescent*, October 1971, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 20, Folder (March For Justice News), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, (Keshena, WI).

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.* The Menominee March for Justice motives are evidenced both by multiple press releases and minutes regarding DRUMS intentions to picket the DNR for allowing the process of altering Menominee land and waters and to meet with Governor Lucey regarding Restoration. There are also many newspaper articles from the regional base of Northeastern and Central Wisconsin (Green Bay, Shawano, Appleton, Madison, etc.), which proves DRUMS was forming a larger regional base at this time.

Deer's continued formation of political linkages between DRUMS, the mass public, and authoritative figures led to new modes of success. Governor Lucey (who months earlier did not meet with picketing DRUMS members) agreed to meet with DRUMS and MEI in December 1971 to discuss a solution to the problems in Menominee County. Ada Deer's correspondence played a large role in orchestrating this gathering.¹⁹² She had mobilized people within her own resource channels to correspond with Lucey regarding their endorsement of DRUMS as a legitimate political contender. At this meeting, Restoration through legislation was stated as their primary goal. The parties also expressed intent to "Restructure MEI more democratically."¹⁹³ DRUMS and MEI worked together, partially because of the influence of DRUMS trustees, and partially because the Menominee within MEI desired a better system of government. The parties agreed the problems of Menominee County would not be solved by individual reform, but by reforming the entire structure of the Menominee Tribe of Wisconsin and its relationship with the state and federal government.

At the annual shareholders meeting in December 1971, four DRUMS candidates were elected to the Voting Trust: Ada Deer, Georgiana Ignace, Carol Dodge, and John Gauthier. The organization did not yet have majority control over MEI, but wielded significant influence among Menominee shareholders. Deer's plea to the Menominee people to reelect her to the Voting Trust strikes at the heart of the changing organization and her desire to serve as a link between polity and public:

¹⁹² Multiple instances of correspondence with Governor Lucey exist, and an additional letter to a group of congressmen suggests Deer was instrumental in at least organizing the meeting for all parties involved.

¹⁹³ *Night Letter to Statesmen: Regarding Meeting with Governor Lucey*, Ada Deer, November 11, 1971, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 20, Folder (Ada Deer Correspondence), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, (Keshena, WI); This letter was addressed to Senators Gaylord Nelson, William Proxmire, Henry Jackson; Congressmen David Obey, Robert Kastenmeier; and Commissioner Louis R. Bruce. These are some of the congressmen and senators who would eventually help to draft and introduce the Restoration bill, and who had been corresponding with Deer throughout 1971.

I am in favor of an immediate reforming of the Voting Trust. In the past the Voting Trust has conducted its business behind closed doors, and has not involved the Menominee people in its decisions. These undemocratic actions must cease ... I firmly believe that the Trustees are not dictators, but rather that they are servants. As Trustee, I will attempt to serve you, not tell you what to do.¹⁹⁴

Deer was nominated by seven votes to three as the president of the Voting Trust, sealing her place as a leader among the Menominee people and DRUMS. She immediately took action to ensure the reform of MEI she promised her constituents, by requesting the resignation of the Director of MEI (who had been involved in unethical land sales) through a vote of the Trust. She also continued to stress the importance of Restoration legislation in letters to shareholders. The board of MEI was not pleased by this action.¹⁹⁵ In an article published by the *Madison Capital Times*, Deer commented on her new leadership role, “This means that I have an opportunity to alter the direction of the Indian tribes ... The rest of the country is watching what happens here.”¹⁹⁶

The news media began to portray Deer as not only the leader of DRUMS but also the individual leader of Menominee lobbying efforts:

Her efforts to reverse the devastating effects of termination ... began about two years ago, when she joined other dissidents in founding Determination of Rights and Unity of Menominee Stockholders (DRUMS) ... She won a position on the MEI board a year ago, and early this month she led a four-member DRUMS slate that swamped ‘establishment’ candidates for open positions on the 11-member body.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁴ *Statement for Ada Deer*, Ada Deer, 1971, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 20, Folder (Press Releases), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, (Keshena, WI), 1-3.

¹⁹⁵ *Letter from Atlee Dodge: Resource and Business Development (MEI)*, Atlee Dodge, September 14, 1971, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 20, Folder (Ada Deer Correspondence), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, (Keshena, WI); *Letter from Richard Dodge: Chairman of the Board of Directors (MEI)*, Richard Dodge, December 29, 1971, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 22, Folder (Ada Deer Materials for JFP), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, (Keshena, WI); *Letter to Gordon A. Rubolz: Director of Menominee Enterprises Request for Resignation*, Ada Deer, December 27, 1971, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 22, Folder (Ada Deer Materials for JFP), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, (Keshena, WI).

¹⁹⁶ “Ada Deer: A New Hope for the Menominees,” December 27, 1971, Nancy Heinberg: Madison Capital Times, Ada Deer Papers, Box 1, Folder 1, University of Wisconsin Green Bay Area Research Center, (Green Bay, WI).

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

Deer, surprisingly encouraged her casting as the leader of the Menominee commenting, “People say of termination that it’s really too bad, but nobody wants to take initiative ... I wish our congressional delegation would take a more affirmative position, I’m really disappointed at this point at the apparent response of their aides.”¹⁹⁸ She goes on to say, “One of the satisfactions that I have seen in my life is the result of what I’ve done as an individual, you start a process. You become part of a group, and then the whole group becomes aware and informed.”¹⁹⁹ Deer evidently realized her influence was growing not only with DRUMS but also with her people, and she even suggested it was her initiative that allowed them to become enlightened to the realistic possibility of Restoration legislation, and the means by which to achieve such a feat. Nancy Oestreich Lurie, a personal friend of Deer and an active Native Studies scholar, summarizes Deer’s impact on the alteration of DRUMS’ strategy best by writing:

Ada Deer’s leadership dramatically changed the lives of all Menominees ... a non-Indian mother, a college education, and even long residence away from the Menominee reservation made her no less a Menominee. Taking skills she learned from her mother and honed in the non-Indian world, Ada confronted the leadership of her tribe, powerful political and economic interests in Wisconsin, and ultimately the Congress of the United States to defend the rights of her people ... Her ability to use the leadership and organizational styles of the non-Indian world helped the Menominees win a significant victory in the twentieth century.²⁰⁰

Deer’s activism was based upon her recognition of the accepted means of resistance and discourse within the para-colonial society’s polity, and her re-construction of these means to the advantage of DRUMS. While she did not intend to supplant the leadership of DRUMS, she began to do so inadvertently. Deer utilized skills honed from her experience in a non-Indian environment, re-creating Euro-American discourse and practices of resistance as a strategy of

¹⁹⁸ “Ada Deer: A New Hope for the Menominees.”

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰⁰ Nancy Oestreich Lurie, “Ada Deer: Champion of Tribal Sovereignty,” in *Sifters: Native American Women’s Lives*, ed. Theda Perdue (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 240.

survivance against her people's oppressors.²⁰¹ She focused on physical survival and economic freedom for her people as the first step to achieving cultural independence. Deer infiltrated the establishment through election. She then cast herself and DRUMS as legitimate political forces. As Aveni notes in his analysis of inter-organizational linkages, "Movement organizations are formed to promote (or inhibit) change so they invariably encounter opposition. In order to survive under opposition they must be able to defend themselves and/or receive protection from others. This requires they be seen as legitimate at least by some sectors of the society."²⁰² None of these aforementioned tactics would have been successful without Deer's ability to gain endorsement and support from outside organizations of Native and non-Native origin. Her distinctly diplomatic methods presented an alternative to the dominant narrative of militant activism in the Red Power movement by advocating alternative means of achieving movement objectives. Although the missteps of DRUMS' proxy fight were the spark that caused a drastic change of direction, Deer's early, behind-the-scenes formation of inter-organizational linkages was the beginning of this evolution. Deborah Shames summarizes Deer's activities by writing, "Ada's speaking engagements, letters to official Washington representatives and their aides, long distance phone calls, and repeated trips to Washington and around the country, ... proved an effective, if somewhat hectic, means of corralling national support."²⁰³

Deer's re-construction of para-colonial means of resistance was not distinctly indigenous and at the same time it was not distinctly western in origin. Deer's re-construction of diplomacy,

²⁰¹ Gerald Vizenor, *Manifest Manners: Postindian Warriors of Survivance* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1994). Vizenor was the post-modern scholar who coined the term "survivance" in relation to the past, present, and future struggles of indigenous people. One can infer that it is the combination of survival and resistance on the part of indigenous people. Survivance is the continuation of tribal practices and identity, the deliberate efforts enacted by indigenous people to ensure the survival of themselves and their culture, and the forms of "resistance" that they employ to ensure survival. Resistance can be any number of things, including a simple advocacy for cultural preservation in the face of oppression by western society.

²⁰² Aveni, 188.

²⁰³ Deborah Shames, *Freedom With Reservation* (Madison: The National Committee to Save the Menominee People and Forests, 1972), 98.

and more importantly legal action as a means of resistance to Termination, was a response to the legal action enacted against DRUMS in the form of Termination legislation. Termination was enacted “diplomatically” and behind-the-scenes (if at least poorly), and also in the legal realm, Deer therefore saw legal and diplomatic action in a behind-the-scenes manner as the appropriate response. Her actions can be considered a “re-construction” not because indigenous people do not enact legal action in their own society. In fact, they have and still do engage in diplomacy and politics based on their own tribal laws and culture. It is because Deer turned the rhetoric and legal action of the para-colonial society in favor of her people, instead of allowing this legal action based on the para-colonial society’s laws to oppress the Menominee and other indigenous people further. Deer’s actions were therefore a “re-construction” of the means enacted against the Menominee to change the terms of the conversation in their favor.

Deer also viewed Termination as single action, even though it had stood for a long period of time, thus devising reversal of Termination as the obvious reaction. Her choice of action also reflects the model presented to her by the role of women in indigenous societies over the past few centuries. Indigenous women are known to have taken a behind-the-scenes role in many communities, including the Menominee. However, this does not mean they were not leaders. In fact, indigenous women often held sway over important aspects of the community including diplomacy and politics. In addition, when looking at modern roles, indigenous women have often re-constructed the communicative channels of the para-colonial society to continue their diplomatic roles. Deer was continuing this legacy with a modern twist by lobbying in and out of congress and with influential institutions, and treating DRUMS as the tribe’s governing body.

Deer’s motivations and the value of her strategy should be contrasted alongside Jim White’s more brash and militant style of leadership. First, Jim White did not view Termination

as simply a single legal action. In fact, the legal aspects of Termination were of little concern to White. Instead, White most likely viewed Termination as yet another injustice in a series of injustices enacted upon his people. White's attitudes reflect those of many other indigenous men during the 1970s such as Russell Means and Dennis Banks. White was frustrated that his people continued to be stifled and oppressed, and he took a brash stance, believing that without this brashness his voice would not be heard. In the past, indigenous men had been stripped of their pride by the federal government. While indigenous men were warriors who provided for and defended the tribe, in modern day, indigenous men struggled to find work, were confined to a reservation, and were aggressively repressed until they felt deflated and defeated. White more than likely felt these feelings when he chose to use his brash tone. This crushing reality, in combination with White's view of Termination as one part of a series of events, is what made his response to para-colonial oppression different from Ada Deer's response.

Although Jim White's strategy caused missteps for DRUMS, and Deer's specific strategic choices proved to be more successful in this instance, one was not better than the other. In other words, Deer's diplomatic style was not the only legitimate form of resistance to ensure survivance, and White's form of resistance was not futile or inadequate. In the context of the struggle for Restoration, Deer simply employed a more applicable strategy. Because Termination was a legal action, and because reversal of Termination proved to be the ultimate course of action, Deer was able to use her diplomatic influence more effectively than White. Her viewpoint of Termination as a singular event, which was shaped by her gender role and her experience in the para-colonial world, helped her to make a more appropriate choice in regards to strategy. In turn, White's view of Termination as a part of a series of injustices led him to make a less

applicable choice, thus leading to Deer's emergence and success and White's missteps as discussed in Chapter two.

As a result, by the end of 1971 DRUMS had completely reshaped itself as an incorporated, trustworthy, and established organization of activists, forming ties with authoritative political figures and taking advantage of a political environment favorable to reform. Women continued to be counted as a major group of adherents, including active participants such as Shirley Daly, Sylvia Wilber, Sara Skubitz, Carol Dodge, Louise Kitchkume, Connie Deer, and Georgiana Ignace. Though other members continued to hold elected positions within DRUMS, Ada Deer was recognized as a primary leader to the public and those in the political elite. DRUMS, no longer politically isolated as a social movement organization, constructed an audience for the voice of the Menominee on a national level. This could not have been possible without Deer's emergence within the organization, the corporate structure of MEI, and ultimately the dominant polity, and her distinct ability to accumulate resources and then allocate them within para-colonial channels of political reform. Deer is not the sole individual responsible for DRUMS' successful creation of a Restoration platform. There were other people who mobilized the resources of their organizations in order to aid the Menominee activists and other members of DRUMS who made valuable contributions. It was her perceptive ability to influence these people to mobilize on DRUMS' behalf and the subsequent rapid expansion of the organization's available resources as a result of inter-organizational endorsement that allowed her to navigate the diplomatic channels of the dominant polity. The legitimate national platform for Restoration legislation as the spearhead of a new self-determining Indian policy was created in less than two years, in part because of Deer's unique vision.

CHAPTER IV: CONSTRUCTING LEADERSHIP, LIAISON, AND LEGISLATION

Ada Deer's influence on DRUMS cannot go unnoticed in the narrative of Restoration. Her re-construction of western diplomacy shaped DRUMS' message and strategy. However, there are two other women leaders whose contributions should be recognized. Shirley Daly and Sylvia Wilber were active participants in DRUMS' struggle for Restoration from the beginning; but after Deer's strategy created a national platform for DRUMS, Daly and Wilber rose to prominence by undertaking the same type of diplomatic activism. During 1972 and 1973 these three women leaders spearheaded DRUMS' lobbying and reform efforts nationally and in Menominee County. They continued to re-construct Euro-American discourse and para-colonial methods of resistance to ensure survivance, developing linkages until the struggle for Restoration became a reality.

Daly and Wilber, unlike Deer, were lifelong residents of the Menominee Reservation and Menominee County, and active members of the resident DRUMS' chapter. Daly was originally the Secretary of DRUMS and an editor and contributor to the monthly newsletter. Wilber mobilized as a mother of ten children, Treasurer of DRUMS, Chairman of the Tribal Joint Legislative Committee, and an editor of DRUMS' newsletter. The media, outside antagonists, and their own organization juxtaposed Wilber, Daly, and Deer as a three-headed leadership entity responsible for Restoration legislation. Facing requests for resignation and accusations of self-serving political monopolization, Deer, Wilber, and Daly took control of DRUMS, MEI, the Voting Trust, and the drive for Restoration legislation; challenging Euro-centric and male-

dominant views of American Indian activism, and the traditional Menominee understanding of leadership.²⁰⁴

The Menominee Restoration bill was first proposed in the spring of 1972, and was most simply a measure to revert the assets and land held by the Menominee people back into a ward-trust reservation status. Legally it would transfer all assets and land into the hands of the federal government, and it would organize a transitional governing body to enact Restoration of the tribe's relationship with the government. It would also set forth a plan to ensure a stable governance structure and the preservation of the tribe's current assets. Culturally, it would allow the Menominee people to identify themselves as American Indians, restoring both their identity and their ability to preserve important aspects of that identity, such as land. In addition, Menominee children born after 1954 that were not part of the tribal roll, or considered Menominee Indians, could register their identity as one of their own people. A written summary of the proposed Menominee Restoration Act, written on June 11, 1973, describes the bill's function, "The general goal of this bill can be stated simply: it is to restore the Menominee Tribe to substantially the same status which it had before the Tribe was terminated from all federal supervision and benefits."²⁰⁵ Deer emphasized the importance of the Menominee Restoration Act in testimony to congress:

passage of our proposed legislation to repeal the Act terminating federal supervision over the property and members of the Menominee Indian tribe of Wisconsin is vital to the survival of the Menominee Indians as a tribe ... Unless our restoration legislation is enacted, the Menominee people face total disaster – loss of tribal lands – tribal assets – tribal entity – and ultimate dispersal of Menominee people ... The Menominee people want to live on their tribal lands,

²⁰⁴ "Brief Biographies of DRUMS' Members Who Will Meet Senator Kennedy on May 6, 1972," 1972, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 20, Folder (Meeting Minutes), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, (Keshena, WI).

²⁰⁵ "Summary of Menominee Restoration Act," June 11, 1973, Unknown Author, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 19, Folder (Summary of Menominee Restoration Act) College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, (Keshena, WI).

develop their economic assets, maintain their Indian culture, and achieve self-determination and democratic tribal government. They can only achieve this continuing goal through restoration.²⁰⁶

Restoration was supposed to give the Menominee people a chance to survive as a community and preserve what was left of their culture.

The national platform created by Deer's political strategy expanded from 1972 to 1973, both as a result of her specific actions and also due to contributions made by Daly and Wilber. When the bill was introduced in 1972, many people thought it had little chance of passing, but Deer, Daly, and Wilber continued to struggle for their cause. Personal correspondence, speaking engagements, telephone calls, and closed-door meetings remained DRUMS primary mode of fostering inter-organizational ties, as Deer became the official legislative liaison in Washington D.C. and the unofficial leader of Menominee affairs in the view of outsiders. Beginning in 1972, the three-headed leadership of Deer, Daly, and Wilber garnered significant media attention, and the scrutiny of figures within groups such as AIM.

Deer's voice both publicly and behind-the-scenes was still the most recognized of DRUMS members. Countless letters to and from Deer, regarding the importance of Restoration legislation, exhibit her role at the forefront of developing legislation and garnering inter-organizational support from congressmen, American Indian interest groups and organizations, and Bureau of Indian Affairs officials. Deer received multiple letters from United States senators, such as one sent by William Proxmire: "It is a privilege for me to have this opportunity to assist the Menominee in their struggle for self-determination ... It was good of you to write and share the blessings of the Menominee people with me. I value the friendship of your

²⁰⁶ "A Case For Menominee Restoration: Testimony for Menominee Restoration Presented to the Senate Subcommittee on Indian Affairs," September 17, 1973, Ada Deer, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 19, Folder (Ada's Testimony), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, (Keshena, WI.).

people.”²⁰⁷ James Abourezk also wrote to Deer acknowledging her as the chief lobbyist and architect for Restoration legislation, and expressing his confidence in her ability to succeed: “I am confident that your ceaseless efforts and perseverance will produce the desired result of reinstating the Menominee people to their rightful status. I know that your determination and reluctance to be ‘pushed aside’ will long be remembered in the halls of Congress.”²⁰⁸ Deer’s correspondence regarding the potential aftermath of Restoration legislation also illustrates that between 1972 and 1973 Deer had become the chief liaison on all Menominee matters with many branches of the federal government. For example, the Acting Director for the Office of Indian Services wrote to Deer and stated confidently “If legislation is enacted restoring Federal recognition to the Menominee Tribe, the Bureau of Indian Affairs will make every effort to promptly resume rendering to the Menominee Tribe and the Menominee Indians every service it is authorized to extend to them.”²⁰⁹

Deer’s connection to these senators and government officials was fostered in part with the help of influential figures belonging to Indian organizations. In a letter from the National Committee to Save the Menominee People and Forests, Deer wrote to these influential Indian leaders regarding their potential support: “I am writing on behalf of the Menominee Indian Tribe to ask your tribe or organization for support of the Menominee Restoration Act ... This bill would effectively reverse termination and restore federal recognition to the Menominee Indian Tribe.” Deer emphasized the importance of this legislation not only to the Menominee, but also to all American Indians:

²⁰⁷ “Letter to Ada Deer from William Proxmire,” July 25, 1973, William Proxmire, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 19, Folder (MRC News Clippings), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, (Keshena, WI).

²⁰⁸ “Letter to Ada Deer from James Abourezk,” August 13, 1973, James Abourezk, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 19, Folder (Rhodes RNC), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, (Keshena, WI).

²⁰⁹ “Letter to Ada Deer from the Acting Director of the Office of Indian Services,” October 24, 1973, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 19, Folder (Correspondence with Interior), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, (Keshena, WI).

The challenge we face is great. Yet we Menominees are determined to retain our cultural heritage and tribal lands. Our actions in the months ahead will determine the quality of life for present and future generations of Menominee Indians and all other Native Americans. Therefore, you can understand why we have placed lobbying as Number One on our list of priorities.²¹⁰

Deer continued to meet with other Indian organizations to which she was writing. She accepted speaking engagements, which in turn fostered public and written endorsement of Deer, DRUMS, and Restoration legislation.²¹¹

From 1972 to 1973, Shirley Daly and Sylvia Wilber rose to prominence alongside Deer, employing this same type of diplomacy and electoral influence. By the end of 1972 DRUMS held a majority of the seats on the Menominee Common Stock and Voting Trust, and had appointed their own high-ranking officials within MEI. The organization used elected office as the primary means of resistance, supplanting the elites of MEI and altering the corporation's image and vision. Sylvia Wilber was appointed Chairman of the MEI Board of Director and also Chairman of the Joint Legislative Committee for the DRUMS delegation to congress. Her responsibilities included communicating the progress of Restoration to the Menominee people, and the various drafts of the bill.²¹²

Evidence that Wilber was utilizing diplomatic tactics and re-constructing Euro-American discourse as a form of resistance can be found by examining correspondence, news articles, and

²¹⁰ "Letter from National Committee to Save the Menominee People and Forests, Inc. to Indian Leaders," July 23, 1973, Ada Deer, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 19, Folder (Rhodes RNC), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, (Keshena, WI).

²¹¹ The National Council on Indian Opportunity passed a resolution that declared: "Whereas, Miss Ada Deer, Chairman of the Menominee Common Stock and Voting Trust, appeared before the officially called meeting of the Indian Members of the National Council on Indian Opportunity in Yakima, Washington, on July, 7, 1972 ... Be it resolved, that this organization hereby gives its active support to the passage of the Menominee Restoration Act ... the Executive Director of the NCIO is hereby instructed to pursue implementation of this resolution to the best of his ability." A similar resolution also exists from the Association on American Indian Affairs. When examining the available letters it becomes clear that Deer's position as Chairman of the MCSVT, her unique ability to garner endorsement and support, and her specific strategy to form a web of inter-organizational linkages throughout the nation created a large pool of resources and empowered her as the primary leader and voice for the Menominee people, not only regarding Restoration legislation, but on almost all matters.

²¹² "Letter to the Menominee: Menominee Restoration Act," March 4, 1972, Sylvia Wilber, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 17, Folder (MRA Presentation #3), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, (Keshena, WI).

her formal leadership positions within DRUMS from 1972 until the passage of legislation in 1973. When Wilber began to garner formal leadership positions in early 1972 she was not a vocal leader. However, by the summer she had begun to give interviews with the media, send press releases to shareholders, and undertake correspondence. In a letter from Native American Rights Fund representative Charles F. Wilkinson, Wilber was thanked for disseminating information on MEI's assets to aid in the transfer plan for Restoration legislation.²¹³ There are other pieces of correspondence involving Wilber that are missing her original letters, however, the key details can be disseminated from response letters like those from Wilkinson. Wilber's role in Restoration legislation was to provide information and cooperation as the new leader of MEI. This was crucial in the development of the plan to transfer Menominee assets from a private corporation back into the federal government's trust. Her role as a bridge leader allowed DRUMS to focus on national lobbying efforts, and work toward improving Menominee County. In an Interview done by the Shawano Evening Leader, Wilber disseminated important information on the assets of MEI and the tax situation of the corporation. Although she advocates for Restoration she notes that the reversion to reservation status should emphasize that the Menominee want "federal protection, but not federal domination."²¹⁴ Her consistent presence at the local level preserved DRUMS' role in Menominee County, and continued DRUMS' dominance in elected positions.

Daly's largest contribution to DRUMS' struggle for Restoration was more public than Wilber's. Daly was invited to the 1972 Democratic National Convention (DNC) as a minority delegate for the Menominee and as a member of DRUMS. At this convention Daly was given a

²¹³ "Letter to Sylvia Wilber from NARF," November 2, 1973, Charles F. Wilkinson, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 19, Folder (Correspondence with Interior), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, (Keshena, WI).

²¹⁴ "Restoration Act and MEI," December 5, 1973, Shawano Evening Leader, Joseph Preloznik Papers, College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, (Digital Archive).

platform in front of the whole of the Democratic Party. This would have included senators, representatives, lobbyists, financial backers, and other influential political elites. She utilized this opportunity to speak about the plight of her people, and the legislation and platform that had been introduced into the convention and Congress regarding Menominee Restoration:

I am a Menominee Indian and a delegate to this convention from Wisconsin. I am a landless Indian now as a result of legislation. I'm not even considered an Indian by law. Our land is not only being legislated away, but so apparently, are our lives. I am one of your terminated Indians ... in the last century, our Indian land was taken by settlers, soldiers, guns, and missionaries. Now, more subtle methods have been devised. It's being done by means of lawyers, land developers and legislation ... President Nixon has rejected the termination policy, in your support of the platform on the Rights of American Indians, you have joined him in opposing this genocidal policy ... We call on you, the party of the people, to right the wrongs that termination has already wreaked upon native peoples. We want you the delegates of the 1972 Democratic National Convention to vote Yes ... With your 'yes' vote on this matter, you will help to restore hope and self-determination to all American Indians."²¹⁵

Daly's speech is an excellent example of the kind of activism that the three leaders used, and also highlights that they had chosen to re-construct the means and discourse of the para-colonial society in their struggle to improve Indian policy. As Daly notes, legal action had been used to enact injustice upon their people, thus requiring DRUMS to re-construct legal action as a response. There is little evidence of Daly's undertaking of correspondence, however, she occupied formal positions to garner political legitimacy and continually voiced her support of Restoration and opposition to Termination. *The Green Bay Press-Gazette* published one of many interviews done with Daly after her speech. During the interview Daly stated, "The Menominee Restoration Act will put our land back under federal trust status ... We are going to stop this business of selling our land."²¹⁶ Daly went on to say, "there would be no turning of backs on the

²¹⁵ "Statement by Shirley A. Daly Before the Democratic National Convention," July 11, 1972, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 19, Folder (Rhodes RNC), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, (Keshena, WI).

²¹⁶ "Indian Delegate Smiles at Pale Face Politics," July 11, 1972, Green Bay Press-Gazette, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 19, Folder (MRC News Clippings), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, (Keshena, WI).

white man's politics."²¹⁷ In fall 1972 Daly climbed the ladder of DRUMS, replacing Jim White as President.

Belinda Robnett's conception of local women and movement organizations can be used to explain the emergence of Daly and Wilber as compatriots of Deer. Regarding the African-American civil rights movement Robnett states, "Bridge leaders within movement organizations were often assisted by women indigenous to the community of entry, who themselves would often become bridge movement organization leaders."²¹⁸ As a native of Menominee County, but an activist based out of Milwaukee, Deer needed the help of Daly and Wilber, who emerged as indigenous bridges to the community by adhering to her successful strategy. Robnett asserts that women did not organize as bridge leaders solely based on gender, but on opportunities denied to them, which forced them into those types of roles. Initially, Daly and Wilber were given titles, but as secretary and treasurer, which were relatively powerless positions within the organization. Upon linking with Deer, these women were afforded the opportunity to increasingly influential leadership roles. Finally, Robnett's conception of message formation by bridge leaders is important in evaluating the growing conflict between Deer, Daly, Wilber, and the rest of the organization's leaders over time. Robnett writes, "women as bridge leaders in the civil rights movement sometimes disagreed with the formal leadership. Conflicts arose of the desires of the participants and the decisions made by formal leaders."²¹⁹ This directly reflects DRUMS' strategic adaptation and the simultaneous development of DRUMS' connection-generating activities that were spearheaded by these three women. It also provides an explanation for the waning influence of leaders such as Jim White; as his presence within the existing historical

²¹⁷ Ibid.

²¹⁸ Robnett, 1683.

²¹⁹ Robnett, 1685.

documents decreases over the same period that the presence of these women in the documents increases.

People inside DRUMS and from outside organizations resisted the leadership and tactics of these three leaders. In 1972 and 1973, Daly, and Wilber had consolidated power within DRUMS and in the national political scene. Jim White resigned in the fall of 1972 over a disagreement regarding the organization's objectives and tactics, believing the three women were unethically collaborating with para-colonial authorities and discarding militancy for a Euro-American discourse and form of activism.²²⁰ The American Indian Movement also became outspoken opponents of what they saw as assimilationist revisions to the Menominee Restoration Act and the employment of "un-Indian" tactics by these three women. They used these disagreements as reasoning to remove them from power within DRUMS and MEI. Menominee County members of AIM spoke out against the three women in the media on multiple occasions. John Perrote, the Chairman of the AIM chapter was perhaps the most vocal. In articles printed by both the *Shawano Evening Leader* and *The Green Bay Press-Gazette*, Perrote denounced the tactics of Deer, Daly, and Wilber, labeling their efforts, "political chicanery in its purest

²²⁰ President of DRUMS Jim White began to become alienated and disagreed with DRUMS' new activist style. In summarizing DRUMS' takeover of MEI's elected and appointed offices, Nancy Oestreich Lurie writes, "The result was that DRUMS took over MEI, and so MEI became dedicated to the repeal of termination ... As the action moved increasingly to Washington, however, DRUMS began showing signs of internal dissention, and its members polarized between White and Ada." Lurie continues the summation of this "growing rift in DRUMS" by recognizing that Deer's focus on Restoration legislation caused her to underestimate the dissention within the group. White did not agree with Deer's diplomatic tactics in pushing for Restoration, and although he agreed with the end goal, he believed Deer was sacrificing DRUMS' original purpose and meaning along the way. Jim White's resignation letter proves most illuminating, as he highlights multiple points of disagreement between himself and what he describes as a group that has "degenerated from leadership to dictatorship." Writing to lawyer Joseph Preloznik he states: On November 1, 1972, the DRUMS Council expelled me as Director and member ... It seems obvious from these actions that DRUMS has abandoned its original aims and goals. The above [points of disagreement] are just a few examples of the irresponsible and arbitrary action taken by the new council. If this is an indication of the trend in DRUMS for the future, I cannot remain as a nominal President only to be a figurehead.

form.”²²¹ AIM’s disagreement stemmed from what they viewed to be a compromising of the original drafts of the Menominee Restoration Act, which they thought was detrimental to Indian interests. Perrote stated, “The Froelich bill has an amendment which includes a provision that land would not be placed in trust for two years ... and a provision calling for some controls by the state on lakes and streams in the county.”²²² Regarding the leadership of Deer, Daly, and Wilber, Perrote commented, “Let it be known that National AIM headquarters will work for the removal of Ada Deer, Shirley [Daly] and Sylvia Wilber from their positions within the DRUMS and any position they hold anywhere in Menominee Indian tribal affairs.”²²³ Perrote addressed AIM’s support of the original draft of Restoration legislation claiming, “AIM support of DRUMS on the Restoration Act was true, but at that time DRUMS was in full support of the original Menominee Restoration Act ... We will strive to gain the justice that has been denied our Indian people.”²²⁴ Perrote also alludes to the rift within DRUMS created by the conflict between White and the three women, “Perrote claimed that many members previously associated with DRUMS were disgusted with the leadership of DRUMS and were joining AIM.”²²⁵

When asked about the criticism, Shirley Daly replied, “we have some people here – some men over 30, for example – who don’t approve of women holding positions of responsibility ... We are just looking for strong leadership, be it male or female.”²²⁶ Deer, Daly, and Wilber knew that the Menominee could not endure an extended period under Termination and survive. They

²²¹ “AIM Not Against DRUMS: Will Work To Oust Leaders,” June 19, 1973, Shawano Evening Leader, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 20, Folder (AIM News Clippings), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, (Keshena, WI).

²²² Ibid.

²²³ Ibid.

²²⁴ “3 Registrations From DRUMS Asked by AIM,” June 19, 1973, Green Bay Press-Gazette, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 20, Folder (AIM News Clippings), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, (Keshena, WI).

²²⁵ Ibid.

²²⁶ “Women Take Lead in Menominee Struggle,” November 11, 1973, The Milwaukee Journal, Ada Deer Papers, Box 1, Folder 1, University of Wisconsin Green Bay Archives and Area Research Center, (Green Bay, WI).

therefore compromised to ensure physical survival so that the fight for cultural autonomy and preservation could be continued at a later date.

The attempted removal of Deer, Daly, and Wilber so near to the passage of the Menominee Restoration Act reflects not only the somewhat chauvinist undertones of Red Power and civil rights movements in general, but it additionally highlights that the Menominee Restoration Act set a precedent for future Indian policy and the reversal of Termination. As Donna Hightower Langston notes, AIM had been “called on sexism” on multiple occasions, and Indian women had to struggle for their place alongside men in the fight for their people.²²⁷ AIM fought against compromise because they justifiably feared that placing land and assets in the trust of the federal government worked against self-determination. AIM could not condone the para-colonial, Euro-American, and “non-Indian” channels by which DRUMS lobbied for Restoration. The work being conducted directly contrasted AIM’s brash style of activism. AIM’s successes should not be diminished, but the vision of DRUMS’ female leadership illuminated a new path to self-determination, one that worked with the para-colonial establishment to counteract the negative policies of the past.

On December 22, 1973 the Menominee Restoration Act was passed and the transition from private tribal entity to federal ward status began. The strategy these women carried out was particularly effective because of changing public and congressional opinion in relation to American Indian policy, a favorable environment for reform-oriented politics, and a uniquely legitimized position of power and resources within multiple organizations. The allocation of resources resulting from this linkage-forming strategy supplanted DRUMS’ previous leadership and gave legislators confidence in the potential success of the organization’s goals, leading directly to the passage of the Menominee Restoration Act and an alteration of National Indian

²²⁷ Langston, 128.

Policy. The Menominee Restoration Act saved the Menominee from cultural genocide. As Clara Sue Kidwell aptly notes, “For the Menominees, the passage of the restoration bill was the first, not the final chapter.”²²⁸ The Menominee still had to fight to preserve their culture, but Restoration legislation had given them a chance that AIM’s tactical style might have never materialized.

Multiple prominent members of the American Indian community viewed the Restoration bill as a victory for self-determination, none more influential than Vine Deloria. When interviewed by the Milwaukee Journal, Deloria discussed the Restoration bill and declared it “the most constructive piece of legislation passed since the 1934 Indian Reorganization act ... The importance of the Menominee bill was that it was passed before the Menominees had lost their land.”²²⁹ Deloria continued by praising the entire organization of DRUMS in its re-construction of para-colonial means of resistance and discourse stating, “They proved that if you know what you are doing, you can make the system work for you.”²³⁰ He went on to acknowledge that AIM’s efforts had not achieved the impact of DRUMS and Menominee Restoration by commenting, “How much land did AIM get back? ... They (the Menominee) put rhetoric aside and rolled up their sleeves and started working and got their land back.”²³¹ The efforts of DRUMS had proven that the para-colonial establishment could be a means of positive change for indigenous people, and that it was possible for survivance to be achieved through the re-construction of the politics utilized by the para-colonial oppressor.

²²⁸ Kidwell, 251.

²²⁹ “New Life for the Menominees,” December 28, 1973, Edward H. Blackwell, The Milwaukee Journal, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 17, Folder (Revisions to Menominee Restoration Act), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, (Keshena, WI).

²³⁰ “New Life for the Menominees.”

²³¹ Ibid.

The bill passed in less than three years after the formation of DRUMS. It received widespread bipartisan support as evidenced by letters between Deer and other members of DRUMS with both Republicans and Democrats. Richard Nixon endorsed an end to Termination, guaranteeing the support of his party, while Democrats latched onto Restoration due to Daly's remarks at the 1972 DNC.²³² DRUMS worked to develop a viable plan to transfer Menominee assets to the federal government when the bill was passed, working with lawyers, representatives of the Native American Rights Fund, Indian and non-Indian organizations, and political leaders such as Ted Kennedy. The Restoration bill set up a pathway to democratic elections, the restructuring of Menominee County government, aid for the Menominee lumber mill, and preservation of the land and resources of the tribe.

The path to Restoration represents as significant a historical narrative as the actual passage of the bill. The struggles of Ada Deer, Sylvia Wilber, and Shirley Daly reflect the struggles of activist women from all ethnic backgrounds. They had to fight for their place in their own movement, prove their worth, and sometimes reach confrontation with the men in their organizations to gain recognition and affect change. These women adopted a strategy to circumvent the difficulties of navigating the male-dominant and anti-Indian channels of the para-colonial society, which directly contrasted AIM's historically recognized militancy. Their gender, while important to this narrative and in recognizing the contributions of women American Indian activists, is not the key fragment to glean from the history of the drive for Menominee Restoration; it is their strategy, their development as bridges between constituency

²³² "List of Sponsors for the Menominee Restoration Act: House of Representatives," May 1, 1973, National Committee to Save the Menominee People and Forests, Joseph Preloznik Papers, Box 19, Folder (Rhodes RNC), College of Menominee Nation Special Collections, (Keshena, WI). The House of Representative's introduction and passage of the bill had fourteen Democrats and six Republicans as sponsors from twelve different states, reflecting the wide reaching nature of the substantial political linkages the three women had created.

and elite on a local and national level, and most importantly, the actual positive physical, psychological, cultural, economic, political, and legal changes that their efforts enacted.

The emerging public voice of these three women engendered support for this diplomatic style of activism in the media. As a result, the media continuously contrasted them to other more militant American Indian activists and leaders.²³³ These articles also detail Deer's preference of activist tactics and specific worldview as well:

Among Indians, as among blacks, she said, people are divided roughly into four groups – the conservatives, the militants, the social reformers and, the largest number of all, the apathetic. She believes all methods can be used effectively, although she doesn't agree with some tactics used by some, but she prefers to operate through the legal system and considers herself a social reformer.²³⁴

Clara Sue Kidwell summarizes the contrast between DRUMS' utilization of Deer as a legislative liaison and the brash tactics of AIM:

Her leadership ... had strengthened her reputation as an effective Indian leader ... While others carried out dramatic demonstrations and confrontations in Wisconsin, Deer, who was polished, articulate, and persuasive, used her skills to persuade in the halls of Congress to further the Menominee Cause."²³⁵

Ada Deer, Shirley Daly, and Sylvia Wilber were only three of many women involved in DRUMS'. Deer has garnered the most attention from the public and historians for a few reasons. First, after the struggle for Restoration she remained in the public eye and involved in politics. Second, the existing source material relating to Deer's efforts, both secondary and primary, far outweighs what was preserved from Daly and Wilber. Finally, Deer played a much more prominent role in pushing legislation and creating the platform for Restoration during each stage of the process. These women leaders are positioned beside one another in almost all of the

²³³ "Menominee Indian Lobbyist Seeks Restoration of Federal Aid," March 21, 1973, Mary Jane Saunders, St. Paul Pioneer Press, Ada Deer Papers, Box 1, Folder 1, University of Wisconsin Green Bay Area Archive and Research Center, (Green Bay, WI).

²³⁴ Ibid.

²³⁵ Kidwell, 252.

existing sources leading up to and following Restoration, yet historians primarily highlight Deer's role in the process. While the focus on Deer is justifiable, Daly and Wilber should be afforded more attention as leaders of DRUMS' large contingent of women activists. All three held the highest titled leadership positions both formal and informal; they were the most publicly vocal women members of DRUMS; and they used the same set of tactics. Most importantly, for the aforementioned reasons they were juxtaposed by political opponents and especially the media as a three-headed leadership entity.²³⁶ Their actions and roles should at the very least be a part of the conversation.

DRUMS and its women leaders reversed nearly twenty years of harmful Termination legislation and strengthened the federal government's resolve to implement autonomous and self-determinant policies. Historians should continue to laud AIM for the awareness they spread, but future scholars should seek out these unique historical movements: Those that take form on the local and regional level, have a direct impact in the implementation of national change, contain historical actors that deviate from the norm and utilize strategies that directly contrast the dominant strains of activism. Historians of American Indian activism must realize the depth and breadth of activism that has been highlighted by African-American civil rights scholars. They must illustrate the entire spectrum of actors, events, strategies, etc. To fail to do so would be a significant loss to history.

²³⁶ "Women Take Lead in Menominee Struggle," November 11, 1973, The Milwaukee Journal, Ada Deer Papers, Box 1, Folder 1, University of Wisconsin Green Bay Area Archive and Research Center, (Green Bay, WI).

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION

Menominee Restoration carries significance for scholars from multiple disciplines. Whether it is social movement theorists, those in Native studies, or policy historians, there are bits and pieces that are relevant. However, as historians we must begin to emphasize the whole and not the parts that bring us benefit. We must be able to take our studies to a micro-level, examine unique qualities and then connect them to broader ideas that can adjust dominant narratives. This is particularly true of the Native studies discipline. Each tribe and person possesses a distinct identity, and has their own experiences, cultural heritage, and challenges that shape their decisions, actions, and ultimately their sense of self. When re-telling history as unique as the struggle for Menominee Restoration, we must utilize our strengths and maintain our interest in the nuances, but we can never validate losing a sense of what this history meant to those involved and why this history is resultantly relevant to academia and the public in the present.

For social movement theorists and American Indian historians, DRUMS' form of activism should be emphasized as a widespread strain of American Indian activism. Their struggle for Restoration is relevant to many scholars of federal tribal recognition and its effects on the entirety of Native America and individual tribes. However, it highlights a deeper battle for sovereignty, as well as the particular tools that small activist groups can utilize to gain greater self-determination. The examination of DRUMS' activism brings forward the necessity of physical survival over cultural autonomy that many American Indian tribes have faced in the twentieth century. It raises awareness that distinctly indigenous forms of resistance are existent and prevalent, and that methods that can be seen as "western" and influenced by para-colonial impact can be considered as such. DRUMS' story is unique for many reasons, but first and

foremost because the organization's women leaders re-constructed these Euro-American means; this is something that is far more widespread than many historians would believe or acknowledge. Whether this tactic was utilized intellectually, personally, or in direct action, since the time of first contact American Indians have executed the same type of struggle. This type of resistance should be a focus for future studies of multicultural activist movements, or as a guideline in understanding what situations necessitate indigenous resistance through a re-constructed western paradigm. Is it an individual factor? Does a movement organization have to exist for this form of resistance to arise? What reasoning forces indigenous and multicultural peoples to employ this form of resistance? Is it primarily motivated by physical survival? These are just a few of the questions that we must ask ourselves. I believe those in the historical discipline have neglected the validity of this form of resistance. Focusing research on individual activist movements and other aspects of the micro-level can help historians to better understand this form of re-constructed indigenous resistance.

The second conclusion that should be drawn from this study is the missing historical legacy of women from the Red Power narrative. While activists such as Anna Mae Picou-Aquash, Wilma Mankiller, and LaDonna Harris have gained some recognition in anthologies of multi-ethnic and indigenous women activists, there are far too few works focusing on their individual exploits and the inner-workings of their stories. In addition, there is also a void in the Red Power narrative for small, local, or issue-focused organizations that have a large contingent of female leadership. Historians of the African-American civil rights movement have recognized the involvement of women leaders, even if they did not achieve formal titled leadership positions. They have also emphasized their unique strategies of resistance and their associated motivations for employing these forms of resistance. Devon Abbott Mihesuah and Karen

Anderson have provided these types of studies, but yet again in anthological form, spanning large time periods and geographic locales. In order to truly grasp the unique motivations of indigenous and multicultural women in their forms of resistance, these scholars should dedicate larger amounts of space to more specific organizations, individuals, and time periods.

Taking this one step further into actual Red Power scholarship, Native Studies scholars and in particular political scientists, social movement theorists, and historians must begin to move away from the dominant narrative of AIM. While the precedent for studies more critical of AIM's leadership, chauvinistic tendencies, and specific activist strategy has been set, we must begin to tell the stories of the women involved in AIM and in other organizations. Again, it seems that Anna Mae Picou-Aquash is one of the only women recognized in the AIM narrative and rightly so, but there were other women elders, young women, wives, mothers, daughters, and sisters that became involved in AIM that were important actors whose role in the organization's activism has not been examined. Women such as Ada Deer, Sylvia Wilber, and Shirley Daly emerged during, before, and after AIM's eminent role in the Red Power movement, they fought for their specific tribes, community needs, and for the little things that it seems AIM often missed in their grandiose demonstrations. Our ability as scholars to cover the entire spectrum of American Indian activism and Red Power will be forever limited if we do not begin to examine the role of indigenous women in activism more actively going forward.

In relation to indigenous women's activism, DRUMS gives us the opportunity to illustrate a continual strategy of resistance employed by indigenous women. It allows us to see that the women of DRUMS were acting upon a model put forth by their ancestors, continuing the legacy of indigenous women in their tribe's affairs and in ensuring the cultural autonomy of their people. In the women of DRUMS, we see the emergence of a new strain of this continual

involvement in tribal activism by women, one that focused more highly on legislation, national and regional awareness, and linkage-forming activities with establishment organizations. We are able to understand the motivations of individual actors such as Ada Deer, and the outcomes of particular events such as the proxy fight. Perhaps most critically, we are afforded the opportunity to see the impact of women involved in Red Power that were not members of AIM, and were fighting for their individual tribe's needs as a way to enhance the condition of all American Indians.

In relation to the issue of strategic outcomes, we must focus our lens and seek to loosely define a spectrum of evaluation. There are many strains of success and failure in the story of Red Power and the Menominee struggle for Restoration. However, we should re-evaluate the militant tactics of AIM, and its overall impact on the legacy of Red Power and the changes in Indian policy in the 1970s. In order to discuss this impact, success and failure for American Indian activists groups should be at least fluidly defined. I argue that there are multiple forms of success for indigenous activism, all of which are valid, and all of which provide tangible or intangible benefit and carry differing weight in relation to the indigenous fight for self-determination and cultural autonomy. There is no real failure in terms of the actual actions taken by American Indian activist groups, only failure of objectives. Resistance in and of itself is a laudable action, and should never be considered a failure in practice. Conversely, there are dozens of ways to define success, but for the sake of scholarly argument and in relation to the significance of this study I will define two. First, there is symbolic success. This is a type of success that provides intangible benefits to those affected by the actions of individual activists and organizations. There is no concrete proof that the actions of activists actually made any difference, but ideologically, intellectually, culturally, and spiritually their actions have made a difference.

Second, there is direct success. This would be the achievement of a tangible change. Something such as a change in law, economic terms, and land. These are obviously very loose fitting definitions, but I believe they aid in conceptualizing the differences between groups such as AIM and DRUMS and their distinct historical legacies.

AIM's militant form of resistance primarily created symbolic success. It provided intangible benefits to the entire American Indian community. It raised their morale, revived traditional practices, validated the fight for cultural autonomy, and afforded a place for self-determination in the conversation. AIM's occupations and protests created the opportunity for American Indians to embrace their identity, their spirituality, and their traditional tribal practices. AIM also achieved direct success to a lesser extent. Their actions spurred policy changes on the national level, spread awareness regarding Native issues, and showed that indigenous peoples are not historical relics but present beings. However, this is where the focus on AIM and its militant tactics becomes problematic. AIM also garnered suspicion from the FBI and CIA, created some negative response to Native resistance, and perhaps most significantly did not achieve any major gains in relation to land, the most crucial asset to Native identity, self-determination, and cultural preservation. This is where a focus on smaller organizations becomes valuable. It paints a different picture of AIM, not as a villain in the story of Red Power, but as the model by which other organizations emerged and then altered the terms of indigenous resistance. AIM's contribution to self-determination is enormous, and should never be disregarded. However, in this present space of scholarly conversation and in the years to come, we should begin to illustrate organizations that gained life as a result of AIM and took a distinct direction in their resistance. We should examine the results of these movements, and the ultimate effects on self-determination and cultural autonomy.

DRUMS is one of these organizations, one that was able to alter AIM's model and achieve significant success in both symbolic and direct terms. DRUMS' linkage-forming activism and utilization of western methods created a piece of legislation in Restoration that directly altered federal Indian policy and created tangible changes for tribes such as the Menominee and the Klamath. It altered the federal government's attitude from assimilationism to self-determination, and it ensured the physical, economic, political, and cultural survival of the Menominee and other terminated tribes. DRUMS saved the land of the Menominee people, without which the aforementioned gains would be null and void. The organization also made great symbolic strides for their tribe as well. Restoration and the years leading up to its passage created a new sense of tribal pride among the Menominee people. DRUMS' struggle belonged to the entirety of the Menominee Nation, and it revived their psyche, spirituality, and cultural pride. Again, these tangible and intangible achievements should not be recognized as better than those of AIM, but distinct in the way they impacted indigenous forms of resistance and ability to fight for self-determination. DRUMS' form of activism created both tangible and intangible gains for the Menominee people and for the American Indian community. It garnered little negative attention and positive national recognition. Therefore, DRUMS and other smaller organizations should be considered as influential in the Red Power movement as AIM, and should be treated equally in scholarship on Red Power in the same manner I am advocating for American Indian women activists.

There were many challenges in writing this history. First, was in creating a clear picture of the complicated structure of the Menominee tribe and DRUMS. Second, was finding the correct terminology with which to describe the efforts and strategy of DRUMS. However, perhaps the most difficult task was maintaining a positive view of AIM and other militant

groups. I was forced to acknowledge my bias against militant movements, and was made aware of my preference for tangible gains. As a Native Studies scholar I hope that this work has reflected the lessons I have learned from this study, and also the lessons I hope to be learned by others. Indigenous men and women both deserve to be acknowledged for their own forms of activism. Every group both militant and non-militant should be considered valid. The gains of these organizations and activists both tangible and intangible have to be recognized in current and future scholarship. When I began writing this piece, I set out to prove that DRUMS was a more effective and righteous organization that had struck a greater blow for self-determination. Along the way I realized in both Native Studies and the historical discipline that placing events, actors, and achievements in concrete boxes and positioning them on tiers invalidates not only your work, but also the work of others. It limits the conclusions we can draw, and the stories we can tell. It is my hope that the few people who read this history of the women of DRUMS and the struggle for Menominee Restoration recognize the significant conclusions it represents for future scholarship, our impressions of Red Power, and the practices of current and future scholars.

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