

Research Misconduct is in the Eye of the Beholder

Part I

The national public outcry about Ward Churchill's statements regarding some of the 9/11 victims being akin to "little Eichmanns," and the subsequent firing of Churchill from his position as a tenured professor at the University of Colorado raises many important ethical, journalistic, scholarly, political, historical, constitutional and identity issues.

At the outset of this essay, I would like to try to make it clear what I am **not** going to address or argue in this essay, as well as what I am going to try to address or argue in this essay. It is clear from my first experience in publishing an op-ed on the Churchill firing (insidehighered.com, 7/30), readers have definite expectations of what they expect an author to address in writing about this case, and many readers seem frustrated and angry if an author tries to re-direct their attention to what they and many others have not previously considered about the issues relating to and underlying the firing of Professor Churchill.

First, I am not writing to defend the person Ward Churchill. Given a fair and open debate or forum, he is more than competent to defend himself. I have never met him or corresponded with him, and I am not part of his solidarity group. Second, I am not addressing the validity or appropriateness of his statement making a strained analogy between some of the victims of 9/11 and Adolf Eichmann. I also do not think that statement was the motivation for his dismissal, nor do I think his alleged research misconduct was the motivation for his firing. The 9/11 statement, however, worked remarkably effective as an accessory to his firing.

Third, I am not writing this essay to defend Churchill's scholarship. Professor Tom Mayer of the UC Sociology department, a committee of self-appointed scholars, other scholars working individually, and Churchill himself have all defended his scholarship, and I particularly recommend Tom Mayer's essays for your consideration in that regard (<http://garywitherspoon.com/TomMayerEssayone.pdf>). Answering the voluminous allegations about Churchill's scholarship is somewhat similar to answering the question: "Have you quit beating your wife?" I say that because it frames the discussion in a box that suits and benefits his accusers, and distracts attention from what I consider to be the most important aspects of this case, and

the ones that are being swept under the rug by this diversionary tactic that focuses on “research misconduct.” Fourth, I am not going to dig deeply into the validity of Churchill’s claim to American Indian ancestry. His claim to that Indian ancestry is not essential to my perspective or argument.

What I am going to address is the history behind this firing, the motivations for and the fairness of the firing, and the relationship this firing has to the search for truth and perspective with regard to the European invasion of the Americas and the resulting denial of what other scholars, as well as myself, have called the American Holocaust. Most importantly, I am also going to focus in Part II on the achievements and contributions of Indigenous Americans that have been ignored by or have been censored in the writing of Eurocentric American history. This is what I see as the core issues or factors that motivated this firing, and there is a long (going back to the 1860s) and a short (going back to the 1980s) history about this in Colorado, and that relevant history has been obscured in the media coverage of this case and the discussion of the events leading up to this firing.

Let me start with the cloud of unfairness that engulfs this firing. The fairness of the review of his scholarship in terms of the lack of representation of people in his field, and the fairness of the selection process of those appointed to review his case both raise serious questions about its legitimacy. Two professors, Bruce E. Johansen, Frederick W. Kayser Professor of Communications and Native American Studies at the University of Nebraska at Omaha, and Robert A. Williams, professor of law and American Indian studies at the University of Arizona, were apparently intimidated into resigning by persons and forces outside the University.

Colorado resident Jim Paine, who runs a Web site called www.PirateBallerina.com, spearheaded an effort to have these two members of the committee resign by claiming, along with others external to UC, that they could not be relied upon to be fair and objective. A sample from this website shows this: “The work of Vine Deloria, of Bruce Johansen, of Winona LaDuke, of Robert A. Williams, Jr.—activists all, Churchill supporters all—the work of all of these is hopelessly intertwined and interdependent, each providing rationale for the others’ theses. Churchill [cites](#) Deloria, [who cites](#) Johansen, [who cites](#) Williams, [who cites](#) Churchill (and [here](#)—twice).” * But what happens when just one of those sources is shown to be irrelevant, or worse, false? How much of what presently constitutes the field of Ethnic Studies will have to be reconstructed from the ground up?” He obviously has a

bigger agenda than just getting rid of Churchill.

<http://www.pirateballerina.com/blog/entry.php?id=238>

The previous President of UC, Elizabeth Hoffman, negotiated an early retirement package for Churchill to prevent a case that might result in trampling on free speech and in weakening the protection tenure provides for that free speech. The fact that her negotiated settlement was politically rejected, resulting in her resignation, is also troubling. While still president, she had this to say in a speech to faculty on March 4, 2005: “University of Colorado President Elizabeth Hoffman said it’s a dangerous time for academic freedom. ‘Hoffman warned faculty members during a passionate speech Thursday about what she called ‘a new McCarthyism.’ Hoffman said she’s concerned that critics going after controversial professor Ward Churchill now feel ‘empowered.’”

www.thedenverchannel.com/news/4253331/detail.html The fact that after her resignation, Hoffman was replaced by Hank Brown, who seems to have been given the political charge to fire Churchill under the guise of legitimacy regardless of the cost to tenure and academic freedom, also raises serious questions of fairness.

The fact that of the five member investigative committee, only one of its members recommended firing, and three of the five members on the Appeals Committee recommended only one-year suspensions, also raises issues of fairness. Despite not having a majority on either committee, Brown unequivocally recommended firing. It appears that the newly hired President was operating under a mandate to carry out what looks like a political lynching. The fact that President Brown wrote an editorial in the Wall Street Journal a few days after the firing, justifying the firing and seemingly taking a sense of pride and glee in it, also raises questions. The editorial’s primary argument was that the university must be held accountable to the wishes and views of its supporters, the taxpayers and the voluntary donors. He forgets that the university is also financially supported by its students who are paying huge amounts of tuition. The students at UC voted Churchill as the best teacher on campus, though the University has refused to give him the award.

The questioning of the validity of Churchill’s claim to Indian ancestry has also clouded the discussion and fairness of these proceedings. Churchill says he is 1/16 Cherokee. After reviewing his case for Cherokee ancestry in 1994, the United Keetoowah Band of Cherokees enrolled him as an associate member, a designation used for those who have proof of Cherokee ancestry but who are less than 1/4

Cherokee. I have not investigated this issue, so I rely on the band's decision and on the fact that the investigating committee at CU decided not to pursue allegations that his claim to Indian ancestry was fraudulent.

According to AIM leader Russell Means, a long-term friend with whom Churchill once shared his family documents, "Not only does Ward have Indian ancestry, he has more proof of it than I do."

(<http://www.americanindianmovement.org/papers/struggle.html>) My purpose here is not to investigate his genealogy, but rather to examine the reasons for why he is under attack and why he was fired. I am pursuing this path of analysis because I think those reasons have serious implications for academic freedom, historical accuracy and Indigenous justice in a diverse society.

The major reason for the Churchill firing was not because he is an Indian, was not even because of his 9/11 statement and was certainly not because of his alleged research misconduct; his job came under attack because of his protests of the the genocide of Indian people and because of the denial of the American Holocaust in American history and in the contemporary Euroamerican mind-set. There are two rather obvious but usually overlooked reasons that support this thesis. First, look at the titles of some of his books: (1) **Indians are Us? Culture and Genocide in Native North America**, (2) **Struggle for the Land: Indigenous Resistance to Genocide, Ecocide and Expropriation in Contemporary North America**, (3) **Kill the Indian, Save the Man: The Genocidal Impact of American Indian Residential Schools**, and (4) **A Little Matter of Genocide: Holocaust and Denial in the Americas**. Second, the attack on Churchill's job began immediately after his acquittal for his participation in protests against Columbus Day parades in Denver.

Churchill is not the only scholar or activist to write about these topics, but he has been the most prolific in addressing these subjects. Similarly, Churchill was only one of eight principal defendants and 243 total defendants in the January, 2005 trial of Columbus Day protesters in Denver, but he was one of the most visible of these protesters. Certainly it was his remarks about 9/11 victims that made him the most vulnerable target among the Columbus Day protesters. But this vulnerability, however, should not keep us from seeing the deeper motivation and the local context for the attack on Churchill. In Colorado the right wing backlash movement is especially focused on silencing voices of Indigenous protest and dissent. This is

because there is an horrific history of Indigenous repression and genocide in Colorado. I will have more to say on this topic later in this essay.

The decision to fire Churchill was also clouded by editorials in most of the local press calling for his firing, and by the fact that both houses of the state legislature voted overwhelmingly to demand his firing. An education professor at the press conference held by supporters of Churchill after his firing said that UC is complaining that many contributors to the University have withheld donations until he was fired. If CU is concerned about loss of voluntary donations, then that also puts a cloud over the fairness of this decision. UC should not seek or accept, much less cater to, donations that impose such a narrow political agenda. Catering to the political agenda and personnel demands of donors would be a more egregious example of the lack of academic and research integrity than anything of which Churchill has been accused. Moreover, the firing of Professor Churchill for alleged research misconduct ignored evidence to the contrary provided by professors who know his work best, ignored evidence from a committee of scholars who found the investigating committee itself guilty of research misconduct, and ignored all Indigenous evidence and perspectives.

I cannot fully address or resolve all of the issues of fairness discussed herein, but I easily conclude that **there is an enormous cloud of unfairness that engulfs this firing**. I have only been able to follow this matter from a distance and have no direct connection to any of the participants, other than having been a resident of Ignacio, Colorado (home of the Southern Ute Nation) before 1988 and having been involved in a family cattle business in Colorado for many years. The issues of fairness will hopefully be addressed in the upcoming law suit filed by Churchill's attorney.

What I think I do know something about is how the attack on Churchill's job and the review of his scholarship illustrate a pervasive Eurocentric bias in academia, in the press, in the Euroamerican public and especially in the writing and teaching of American history. During my 37 years of experience as a professor in academia, I have never found those who write Eurocentric history, starting with Columbus discovering America, being investigated for writing false history or for research misconduct because they ignored evidence that did not support their arguments, as the inquisition accused Churchill of doing with regard to his allegations that US agents deliberately distributed small pox infected blankets to Indians from 1837-40. De-

voting 44 pages to this one small event which Churchill refers to in just three paragraphs should tell us something about the centrality of the genocide issue to this firing, and about the motivation of the firing as part of a process to denying the American Holocaust.

The scholars and journalists who perpetuate the Eurocentric biases presented as American history are not being investigated for their research misconduct, and are not being fired from their teaching positions. And I am not asking for them to be subjected to this kind of an inquisition. I just want a fair chance for those of us who challenge Eurocentric history to be able to do so with the freedom of speech that the constitution is supposed to provide and with the protection of our jobs that tenure is supposed to provide.

Research misconduct is in the eye of the beholder. Euroamerican teachers and scholars have taught and written for several centuries that Columbus discovered America. That is a more profound and easily provable case of research misconduct than anything of which Churchill has been accused. The Indigenous peoples of the Americas have been here at least 13,000 years according to archaeological findings, and much longer than that according to recent DNA research. This Columbus lie, which is at the foundation of Eurocentric American history, dehumanizes all those who are now called American Indians; i.e., only humans can discover something. Discovery was not just a honorary award. In the “Age of Discovery” according to self-serving Eurocentric proclamations, discovery entitled one to possession and ownership. Everyone who has perpetuated the Columbus myth over the years should be found guilty of deceit, research misconduct and racism, according to the standards followed by the investigating committee.

The 1987 edition of the standard American history textbook, *American History: A Survey*, was written by three well-known historians: Current, Williams and Brinkley. It begins by saying, “For thousands of centuries - centuries in which human races were evolving, forming communities and building the beginnings of national civilizations in Africa, Asia and Europe - the continents we know as the Americas stood empty of mankind and its works” The book informed its readers that American history “is the story of the creation of a civilization where none existed.” (Quoted in “1491” by Mann, *Atlantic Monthly*, March 2002, p. 48) Now that is a very egregious form of “research misconduct.” That statement denies the

humanity of the Indigenous peoples of the Americas, and serves only to continue to misinform and to indoctrinate students in Eurocentric lies. Why isn't an investigating committee being set up to ascertain whether these authors have adequate and accurate sources on which to make their claims?

The investigating committee should have read the 2005 national best selling book *1491* by Charles Mann for a thorough critique of the statements quoted in *American History: A Survey*, and for extensive support for Churchill's arguments about the history of the Americas. Summarizing research and writing over the last 30-40 years, Mann shows that in 1491 the population of the Americas surpassed that of Europe, that American cities such as Tenochtitlan were larger than any found in Europe and, unlike European cities, had running water, beautiful botanical gardens and clean streets. I would add that to my knowledge no jails have found in 1491 Indigenous America, while the US today has the highest rate of incarceration of any modern nation (over 2 million). The earliest American cities were thriving before the Egyptians built their pyramids, and the feats of Indigenous American agriculture were unparalleled anywhere else. The journal *Science* recently pronounced the development of corn from its ancient grass ancestors as probably the greatest botanical achievement of genetic engineering in human history. Corn was developed Indigenous Americans over many many centuries of careful selection and breeding to develop it to what it is today from its grass ancestor. It out produces the grains developed in the middle east by 10 to 30 times, and can be raised in a multiplicity of climates and elevations.

The European invasion of the Americas reduced an Indigenous population estimated by many scholars at nearly 100 million or more by 90-95 percent. UC Berkeley researchers Cook and Borah spent decades reconstructing the aboriginal population of central Mexico where they determined the population to have been 25.2 million before Cortez's invasion (*The Indian Population of Central Mexico*, 1963; also in Mann 2005, p.130). Just 100 years later in 1623 only 700,000 had survived the Spanish conquest which destroyed not only millions of people but



amazing architecture, art, culture and science, burning nearly all the books in their extensive libraries. The population figures above represent a 97% loss in population. The highly regarded historian Richard White (previously at UW and now at Berkeley) has described the results of the invasion of Indigenous America as “the greatest human catastrophe in the history of the planet” (interview in the 1993 Discovery documentary *How the West was Lost*).

Most people think the Churchill problem began with the cancellation of his speech in February, 2005 at Hamilton College after it was shown that he had written that some of the victims of 9/11 were not entirely innocent (CIA agents housed in the building and some technocrats of Western militarism and financial imperialism according to Churchill’s clarification of what he meant in a later press release) and were instead akin to “little Eichmanns.”

The truth about the beginnings of the Churchill controversy is that it culminates from a long history of struggles over Indigenous genocide and protests of that genocide in Colorado (and elsewhere), a history that in Colorado goes all the way back to the Sand Creek Massacre of 1864. The most immediate predecessor to the national public attack on Churchill for his 9/11 victim analogy was the 2004 Columbus Day Parade protest in Denver by AIM, other American Indians, progressive Italians and non-Indian sympathizers. Around 250 protesters were arrested in October, 2004 for disrupting that parade. The aftermath of this protest is in Brenda Norrell’s report on the trial that took place in January, 2005. At the time she was a correspondent for *Indian Country Today*. I am going to re-print the whole article here because it is so relevant and so important an accurate understanding of the Churchill firing, and its relevance has been deliberately ignored in the press coverage of the Churchill firing.

Columbus Day protesters victorious in court

Posted: January 31, 2005

by: Brenda Norrell / Indian Country Today

DENVER - The Denver City Attorney dropped charges against protesters who blocked the Columbus Day Parade, after eight organizers argued that the celebra-

tion of Columbus represents hate speech and encourages the theft of land and loss of language and culture in Indian country.

“Our acquittal last week and the dismissals today are a great victory for historical accuracy and for the power of our spiritual ways - both the pipe and the drum were present in the courtroom and I believe that our trial was the first time in history that the AIM song was sung in open court,” co-organizer Glenn Morris told Indian Country Today on Jan. 23.

“It was amazing. This set of developments is a total surrender by the City of Denver, and a complete vindication of our confrontation of the hate speech that is embodied in Columbus celebrations,” Morris said.

“The trial was also a powerful consciousness-raising tool that the legacy of Columbus is alive and well in the theft of Shoshone treaty territories in Nevada, the trust fund thefts, the continuing destruction of Indian languages, culture and young people’s lives - all of that was offered as evidence in our case.”

Morris is an attorney, chair of the Political Science department at the University of Colorado at Denver and member of the leadership of the American Indian Movement in Colorado. Morris was in the group of eight protesters acquitted. The group included professors, an Italian activist and a Denver reverend, arrested along with more than 230 others, blocking the Sons of Italy Columbus Day Parade in downtown Denver on Oct. 9, 2004.

Before the acquittal of the eight protesters, defendants said a Denver prosecutor insulted and demeaned Indian sacred ways when he compared their sacred pipe to a baloney sandwich.

Two defendants asked to testify truthfully while holding an unlit ceremonial pipe. Assistant City Attorney Robert Reynolds responded and told the three judges hearing pretrial motions, “They can place their hands on a ham sandwich or baloney sandwich as long as they tell the truth. It doesn’t matter to me.”

Defense attorney David Lane told the judges that Reynolds' remark was "exceedingly offensive and insensitive." Lane said the comment reflected "the city's general attitude toward their culture."

Following the acquittals of the eight organizers, City Attorney Cole Finegan dropped the charges against the other 230 protesters. Finegan said he believed there was no reasonable chance for convictions.

Finegan said Denver County judges ruled that Denver's loitering ordinance cannot be used to prosecute the protesters, even though protesters "deliberately disrupted the Columbus Day parade."

"Those judges also granted the protesters' legal motions to suppress evidence that would have aided the prosecution's case. Those rulings resulted in the dismissal of several cases prior to trial."

"Based upon these decisions and the jury decision last Thursday [Jan. 20] to acquit eight of the defendants despite our strong belief that we proved our case, I have concluded that our office should not continue these prosecutions. After reviewing the facts and the rulings to date, and knowing that the facts will be substantially the same in each case, I do not believe that we have a reasonable likelihood of conviction."

However, Finegan announced that his office would draft ordinances, modeled upon the state laws that make it illegal to disrupt a lawful assembly and to obstruct a highway or a passageway. "We hope that these new ordinances will better protect the First Amendment rights of both parade participants and protesters."

Following the rulings, defendants said the leading newspapers in Denver reflected the anti-Indian sentiment in their opinion articles, siding with the Italian American promoters of the Columbus Day parade.

Denver Post columnist Ed Quillen said Denver police acted correctly when they arrested the protesters. In his column on Jan. 25 titled "These are civil rights?", Quillen disagreed with the defendants and said that Columbus Day parade does not

represent hate speech. Further, he said the government does not have an obligation to suppress hate speech.

“We have the right to march in parades to celebrate Martin Luther King or Nathan Bedford Forrest, to honor Sitting Bull or George Armstrong Custer, and we have the right to stand on the sidelines and heckle the paraders.” Quillen said the defense attorneys should not have portrayed their clients as “heroic defenders of civil rights.”

The Rocky Mountain News editorial on Jan. 22 was titled “Intimidation law sadly misused.” The newspaper disagreed with the defense argument that the parade was a form of ethnic intimidation.

Ethnic intimidation is illegal under Colorado law and protesters argued they had a public duty to stop the parade and prevent an illegal act. The newspaper said defendants argued that “participants knew Columbus represents a fearful symbol of violence and oppression to Native Americans, and an incitement against their welfare.”

The Rocky Mountain News, among the corporations protested as unjust in previous Columbus Day protests, criticized the outcome of the arrests in reference to the ethnic intimidation law.

The newspaper editorial said: “Whatever the constitutionality of the law, however, it is a sad day for free speech when a jury signals there is no First Amendment right to hold an unmolested parade in Denver.”

Meanwhile, defendants said the eight on trial were among 239 human rights activists arrested for “protesting a celebration of genocide initiator Christopher Columbus.”

During the trial of the eight organizers, as part of the jury selection process, the court sustained two objections by the defenders challenging the city’s exercise of two preemptory challenges. This was based upon the city being unable to articulate a valid non-race-based reason for removing a Hispanic juror as well as a woman of American Indian heritage.

“In essence, in a trial where race and ethnicity is paramount and at issue, the city of Denver chose to attempt to remove potential jurors based on racial grounds, contrary to law,” said Mark Brandes, one of the co-councils for the 239 defendants.

Defendants said the disturbing initial action by the city and disturbing comparison of American Indian’s sacred pipe to a baloney sandwich, intensified their concerns that the city’s zealous prosecution was racially motivated.

The eight defendants acquitted were Ward Churchill, chairman of the ethnic studies department at Colorado University in Boulder and member of Colorado AIM; Glenn Morris, Shawnee, Colorado AIM; Troylynn Yellow Wood, Cheyenne/Lakota, Colorado AIM; Nita Gonzales, Escuela Tlatelolco; Rev. Reginald Holmes, Greater Denver Ministerial Alliance; Glenn Spagnuola, Italian-American activist; Prof. Natsu Saito, Georgia State Law School and LeRoy Lemos, community activist.

During the protest organized by the Transform Columbus Day movement, Western Shoshone Carrie Dann and other protesters said Columbus’ arrival initiated the genocide of indigenous people.

Meanwhile, Italian American parade participants said they were honoring an explorer as well as their own Italian heritage.

Denver prosecutors have had difficulty convicting protesters arrested during previous parades as well. Four were acquitted in April 1992 for blocking the 1991 parade. After those acquittals, organizers of the parade canceled the 1992 event. It lay dormant until 2000 when it was revived by Sons of Italy-New Generation. In 2000, 139 protesters were arrested, but the cases against them were all dismissed.”
<http://indiancountry.com/content.cfm?id=1096410265>

The national publicity regarding Churchill’s statement, written 3 1/2 years earlier and generally ignored until the trial of the Columbus Day protesters, was generated immediately after the acquittal on January 20. This publicity began around January 26 just prior to a planned speech at Hamilton College on February 3, 2005. The acquittal on January 20 was followed by an intense backlash in the Colorado

media and in some parts of the Euroamerican public in Colorado, and was further inflamed by two radio talk show hosts and by reports on Fox News.

Absent from the national publicity about Churchill generated by the ring wing press and picked up unknowingly by mainstream and even left wing media outlets is the story of Colorado AIM's protest and acquittal, including Churchill, of the Columbus Day parade and the Convoy of Conquest that celebrated Indigenous genocide in Colorado and elsewhere. It was their victory in court that angered their right wing opponents and led to the anti-Churchill media blitz. Why was the press so oblivious to this? Why is Euroamerica in denial of the American Holocaust? Why is Indigenous oral history and experience not given any credibility in Euroamerican investigating committees? That oral history is expressed in Buffy Sainte-Marie's historical, poetic and musical account of the terror committed against Indigenous peoples in her song/poem "My Country Tis of Thy People You're Dying." This was written and sung when Churchill was barely a teenager. Watch and listen to her 1960s performance of this song/poem on the Rainbow Quest TV program, now posted on You Tube at:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tl08n8_b3Sw Churchill did not invent the history of small pox invested blankets; it was a part of Indigenous oral history for a century before Churchill was born.

Buffy Sainte-Marie was also sanctioned and silenced by Presidents Johnson and Nixon (<http://bsnorrell.tripod.com/id99.html>), but has received numerous honors and awards from Canada, France and the Queen of England, while being ignored and treated as an outcast in many parts and circles of the US. She was selected by the United Nations to be the Indigenous person to proclaim 1993 as the United Nation's Year of the Indigenous People, a year in which the rights and abuses of Indigenous people would be given attention. The mistreatment of Indigenous people throughout the world by the national and colonial governments who have subjected and abused them and committed genocide against them was the focus of that year. The 1993 timing likely corresponds with the discussion of the 500 year memorial of the greatest human tragedy in the history of the planet inflicted upon an estimated 100 million Indigenous Americans as a result of the invasions of the Europeans.

Below are the connections that clearly link in the eyes of Colorado's American Indian community the acquittal of the protesters to the distribution of Churchill's 2001 essay to the national media, and then to the calls for the Churchill's firing. These assertions are made in letters to the editors of various local Colorado papers by members of AIM, but most of them were not accepted for publication by any of the local papers to which they were sent. These letters were printed on Colorado AIM's monthly weblog on its website. These letters, written during the immediate aftermath of the acquittal of the protesters, clearly indicate how AIM members perceived the link between the acquittal of the protesters and the call for Churchill's termination. The bolding of phrases and paragraphs in the letters and articles below is mine, and done to call attention to certain points I deem important in the buildup to this firing.

To the Editor:

Considering the uproar over Ward Churchill's essay on 9/11, it is very instructive that almost nowhere have I read anything that considers some basic points:

What is the larger context of the remarks and the reaction to them? Why is this only coming up now, years after the essay was written? Why is it that the dominant culture can and does say many things that are disrespectful, ignorant, and even dangerous, with no outcry, but if an Indigenous person says something challenging, there are repercussions? Why is it that some people cannot disagree with another person respectfully, without calling for his dismissal from the University?

This essay has been available since 9/11/2001. Can the fact that this controversy is erupting now have anything to do with the victory that Ward Churchill and 239 others had last week with the acquittals and dismissals of charges against those protesting the celebration of genocide posing as 'Columbus Day'? Go to www.transformcolumbusday.org or coloradoaim.org for more information.

It doesn't have to be difficult to disagree with someone's words and still maintain respect for the writer and his work. I don't personally agree with calling

victims of the 9/11 attacks ‘little Eichmanns’, but if one reads the entire essay, there is much more nuance and many valid points that are being ignored. Additionally, Ward Churchill’s books, such as “A Little Matter of Genocide”, should be required reading for anyone in this country whose ancestors came from elsewhere. To try to dismiss a writer as prolific, authoritative, and eloquent as Ward over one comment suggests an organized campaign to discredit not only him, but his ideas, something that should be anathema at a university.

Sincerely, Ellen Klaver

Other letters written by AIM members to local papers were also posted on AIM’s website at the time, and make the same connection between the acquittal and the demand for the firing of Churchill:

Friday, January 28, 2005

Brace Yourselves

First, this call goes out to all AIM members and our allies in the Denver area. At 3 PM today, Friday, January 28th, the Kaplis and Silverman radio show (KHOW in Denver) will be attacking one of our Colorado AIM members, Ward Churchill. We must not stand by while this happens. Anyone who can get to Boulder should show up at the Alferd Packer grill in the University Memorial Center at the CU Boulder campus to confront this attack on us.

One question to ask Silverman and Kaplis is: where did the current story about Ward’s 9-11 essay originate? Is it merely a coincidence that local white media commentators (including Kaplis and Silverman) were condemning our acquittals in the Columbus Day trials when suddenly an “exposé” about a three year-old essay rises to the surface? Did this happen by chance? I don’t think so. It is part of a pattern in the local media that when AIM is successful politically or legally -- as in the recent dismissal or acquittal of 243 Columbus resister’s cases--then they begin their personal attacks on specific AIM members, and our allies. People should brace themselves for expanded attacks on all of the defenders who were acquitted, and we should all be prepared to respond with strength, resolve and integrity.

All of these attacks by privileged, white columnists (Bob Ewegen - Denver Post, Vince Carroll - Rocky Mountain News, Mike Rosen - Rocky Mountain News, Ed Quillen - Denver Post, David Harsanyi - Denver Post) reflect their fear that our successes spell the demise of their power. Well, they are correct -- their days of unfettered celebration of anti-Indian icons, who have carried out the destruction of our people, are over. Our efforts have shaken powerful people from their seats of comfort. We must keep it up, and we must remember why we are doing this -- for the ideological and physical liberation of our homeland. Resist ever, surrender never.

Saturday, January 29, 2005

Letter to editor-not published-from LJ

The letter below was sent to the Denver Post, RMN, and the Boulder Weekly.

WHITE MALE HYSTERIA

The absolutely abysmal white male hysteria spewing forth from the editorial pages of Denver's papers lately leaves one to conclude that the dismissal of the 239 anti-Columbus Day defenders' cases must have seriously hit these sideline commentators in their racist pride.

Their hypocritical position on the Columbus Day parade is comparable to a group of white-robed priests writing in the editorial pages about their First Amendment right to continue viewing child pornography, while the victims of their sexual predation take to the streets to protest outside their archdioceses as witnesses to these priests' heinous crimes.

Nice imperialist try guys, but the people who are the victims of genocide and racist hate speech are the

ones who get to make the decisions about what behavior is harmful to them and when and how the predators who wield extraordinary power over their lands and lives will be confronted . When the victims are satisfied that justice has been done, then and only then will there be peace in this community.

Lauranna Johnson
Denver, Colorado

http://www.coloradoaim.org/blog/2005_01_01_coloradoaim_archive.html

The commentary on the AIM website regarding local newspaper reports calling for condemnation and possible termination of Churchill is printed below:

It's obvious that this column - and today's self righteous indignation by the usual reactionary suspects - was motivated by the acquittal of Ward as one of the 8 defenders in last weeks trial.

Colorado State Representative, Bob Beauprez, saw an opportunity to score political points with his conservative base and demand that Ward not only apologize, but resign as well.

Really, if apologies are to be issued, Bob Beauprez should issue an apology to the Indigenous Peoples who were massacred and driven out of the State of Colorado so that he could sit around and hypocritically condemn an American Indian. I suggest that people call Beauprez's office, at 303-940-5821, and urge him to issue a formal statement, apologizing for benefitting from the murder of Indigenous Peoples.

Also, 2 radio talk show jocks have been urging that people sign an online petition calling for the termination of Ward from the University of Colorado. They say that his essay is inciteful and is not protected as free speech. They also claim that, as taxpayers, they do not want their tax dollars going towards a person whose speech they don't agree with.

And yet, last week, these 2 same guys were arguing that celebrating an indian killer and African slave trader was not inciteful (to them, of course) and that we should just accept it. They also said it didn't matter that taxpayer money (over a million as estimated by the RMNJ) be spent sanctioning the Columbus Day Convoy of Conquest because you couldn't put a price tag on free speech. Now they are arguing that taxpayers money shouldn't be put towards Ward, via CU, because they don't like his criticism of U.S foreign and domestic policy.

What happened to Freedom of Speech and the lectures about tolerating the views of someone that you did not agree with? What happened to the admonishments about accepting unpopular views and battling ideas and speech with opposing ideas and speech. Could it be that these people are merely hypocrites who are even more intolerant than the people they criticize? I think we all know the answer to those questions.

The source for all of the above quotes and reports is at

http://www.coloradoaim.org/blog/2005_01_01_coloradoaim_archive.html

This was an intense time in Denver and in Boulder. The call for Churchill's firing, the distribution of Churchill's essay to the national press and the cancellation of his speech at Hamilton College were all precipitated by the Columbus Day Convoy of Conquest parade, followed by the arrest of 243 protesters, and the acquittal of the 8 principal protesters.

Just prior to the **2005** Columbus Day parade in Denver, Denver's ABC affiliate channel 7 reported: "Last year's parade resulted in the arrest of about 240 people for disruption. Eight protest leaders including, Churchill, were acquitted in a January trial in Denver County Court. Charges against all remaining defendants were then dismissed." Then the station added that "Two new city ordinances will be in place for this year's parade that city officials said should result in more successful prosecutions for disrupting permitted events." In the same report, Channel 7 said "Churchill ignited a firestorm with an essay comparing some World Trade Center victims to Adolf Eichmann, one of the Nazis who orchestrated the Holocaust. . . **After the university determined he couldn't be fired for his essay, an investigation was launched into allegations involving plagiarism, misuse of**

others' work and falsification and fabrication.”

(<http://www.thedenverchannel.com/news/5059750/detail.html>)

The above acknowledgment by Channel 7 news in 2006 describes the next to the last link in a very clear chain of events that ran from the protest of the Convoy of Conquest in October, 2004 to the investigation of Churchill's scholarship, and then finally to his firing on July 24, 2007!

Those arrested at the parade were protesting the celebration of the genocide of Indigenous people perpetrated by Columbus and those who followed him. The arrival and return of Columbus, and the horrendous genocide that he himself began is recorded by the Catholic priest Las Casas who personally observed it. Two million Taino in what we now call the Dominican Republic were exterminated after they could not or would not continue to provide slave labor to the Spanish in mining gold and other Spanish pursuits. This failure to enslave the Indigenous people and their suicides and genocide led to the bringing of slaves from Africa to the Americas to replace them. For an Indigenous American, this Columbus Day parade was akin in offense to the feelings Jewish people would have if someone wanted to celebrate the beginning of the Holocaust with a downtown parade. The Columbus Day protests in Denver go back in the 1980s and the parade was finally discontinued in 1991, but it was re-started after cultural conservatives felt empowered during the campaign of George Bush for President.

AIM and some progressive Italians and other non-Indians have formed a Transform Columbus Day movement to make it a Celebration of Italian-American Culture, which AIM said it would be



happy to support and foster. AIM leader Glen Morris says that AIM supports the celebration and respect for all ethnic groups, but does not support the use of Columbus as means of celebrating the genocide of one group by another. Below is the text of a radio discussion of the issue on Democracy Now:

Amy Goodman: “The first state commemoration of Columbus Day was in Colorado and when our “Breaking the Sound Barrier” tour visited the state earlier this month - I sat down with two activists who were working to transform the holiday. Glenn Morris is a member of the Leadership Council of the American Indian Movement of Colorado, an Attorney and Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Colorado at Denver. Glenn Spagnuolo is a member of Transform Columbus Day Alliance and the Director of PITCH - Progressive Italians Transforming the Columbus Day Holiday.

- **AMY GOODMAN:** Glenn Spagnuolo, you’re director of PITCH, Progressive Italians Transforming the Columbus Day Holiday. How did this holiday begin in Denver in 1907?
- **GLENN SPAGNUOLO:** Well, it actually started down in Pueblo, if I’m correct, and when it got started -- it’s really changed from the beginning to what it is now. Now, you have Italians who have latched onto this holiday, saying that this is a celebration of their Italian pride and a celebration of Christian ethics. And the more I looked at it, the more I learned that that’s not really the truth. This is just propaganda, used as tool to support the white privilege that they get from the oppression of Native Americans and the colonization of America.
- Back in Italy, where my family came from, Columbus isn’t celebrated as a national hero. In Genoa . . . he’s viewed as the scoundrel that he is.
- And then, being raised as a Catholic and looking at Christian ethics, there’s nothing that Columbus did when he came here that supported any kind of Christian moral background. I mean, he stole. He murdered. He was greed, raped people. I mean, it was ridiculous. So, to see them now say that this is a celebration of Italian pride or of Christian ethics, it’s a false assertion, and it’s really used to support, like I said, colonialism, the exploitation of this

country from its indigenous population, and to continue the view of white privilege that exists here in the United States.

“But this parade, this is hate speech, plain and simple. This is not a parade. It’s a “convoy of conquest,” as we call it, and I think that some of the members of the Sons of Italy who put this parade on are really not supporting Italian values, but are really trying instead to push an agenda. I mean, a lot of the issues that you see today, dealing with immigration, for instance, are connected directly to this parade. And the Sons of Italy realize that. Many of the members of the Sons of Italy are the same people who came out and protested the immigration marches that took place here. They had made the connection between the celebration of the colonization of this country and the oppression of the minorities here. And I think that all the other groups should look at that and make the same connections themselves.

- **GLENN MORRIS:** The point about protesting Columbus Day and the holiday is not so much about Columbus, the man, or about parades -- we all like parades -- or holidays. The point is really about the legacy of Columbus. And from the American Indian Movement of Colorado’s perspective, and for many indigenous peoples’ perspectives, what’s important is the way in which the United States continues to celebrate this legacy of colonialism and imperialism. And that’s embodied in federal Indian law. The Doctrine of Discovery was institutionalized in 1823 in the Supreme Court case of *Johnson v. McIntosh*, where John Marshall uses -- fabricates the Doctrine of Discovery to justify the diminishment of Indian title to the Americas.
- **AMY GOODMAN:** Explain, not in legalese. What do you mean, the Doctrine of Discovery?
- **GLENN MORRIS:** Essentially, what Marshall says in *Johnson v. McIntosh* is that by virtue of the arrival of Christian civilization, the right of native peoples to their traditional homelands and territories is diminished, because of the blessings that Christian civilization have brought to the western hemisphere. And that opinion is the foundation for federal Indian law in the United States that continues to be enforced day after day after day ’til 2006.

- We have a case in Nevada right now with the Western Shoshones, in which the title to their land was considered to be extinguished under this Doctrine of Discovery -- not in 1823, not in 1890 -- in the 1980s, and it continues to the present, to the point where the United Nations, the Committee on the Elimination of the Racial Discrimination and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, have said that through this Doctrine of Discovery, the application of the Doctrine of Discovery, the United States has been involved in gross violations of fundamental human rights.
- Now, the United States, of course, continues to ignore those decisions, but in addition to that, this Doctrine of Discovery and the principles of federal Indian law have been exported from the United States to be applied in Canada, in Australia, in New Zealand, in other English common law countries, like India and Kenya and South Africa. And so, this is not merely a discussion about a parade or about a holiday to a long-dead historical figure. This is about a legacy that continues to drive imperialism today.
- And we see that embodied in the Bush administration. I don't know if you've read Robert Kaplan's book, *Imperial Grunts*, but Kaplan, who is a favorite of the Bush administration, and reportedly Bush read the book, *Imperial Grunts*. And in the book, Kaplan admits that today the United States continues to fight the Indian wars in Iraq, in Afghanistan, in the Philippines, in Colombia, where they continue to call any territory that is not under the control of the U.S. military "Indian country." That is, it needs to be subdued, it needs to be civilized. This war, this clash of civilizations, so-called clash of civilizations that's going on in the world today, it's not new. That was a war that was being fought in this area right here where we're sitting for many generations, in order to bring the heathen territories into the civilized Christian fold. So that's really what we're talking about, is beginning to address the ideology that drove the Indian wars, and the line can be traced continuously from October 12, 1492, to the present.
- So, what we're saying from the American Indian Movement of Colorado, from the Transform Columbus Day Alliance, is that we can create a different future. And that's what we intend to do in the streets of Denver, is to begin a movement that says: this country needs to re-examine its history; it needs to

report that history differently to its children; it needs to impart certain values and moral traditions to succeeding generations, that it's not okay to go to someone else's country and steal it and kill them and engage in genocide.

The characterization that the hate speech paraders are the Italian community, I think, is a mistake. I think in the protests that we've had in the past, frankly, we've had more members of the Italian community protesting the parade than have been in the parade. And so, I think in these kinds of discussions, language becomes extremely important. And so, when the characterization is that the Italian community supports the parade, I think part of that is generational. I think that certainly younger Italian Americans feel no particular allegiance to Christopher Columbus or to the ideology of Columbus or invasion. So I hope that we can make that clear. And we encourage Italian Americans from across the country, across the world, in fact -- in fact, we have Italians from Italy who have vehemently expressed their opposition to the Columbus Day celebration in the United States. So I'd like to dispel that fallacy, that this is somehow some monolithic position within the Italian American community. Or that this is an Indian versus Italian conflict, because it's not. It's about people of goodwill who want to convert racism into anti-racism, and so that really is the essence of it.

<http://www.democracynow.org/article.pl?sid=06/10/06/1350258>

It should be pointed out here that in the early 1860s Cheyenne leader Black Kettle had been invited to Fort Lyon in Colorado to negotiate a peace with the the US. He did so, ceding much of Cheyenne territory to the US and agreeing to live south of Sand Creek. The Cheyenne were given a US flag that they were told they should raise whenever threatened and no one would attack them. In November, 1864, the Reverend Colonel Chivington led 800 troops of Colorado territorial militia in an unprovoked attack on a sleeping village of mostly women and children at Sand Creek (the younger men were on a hunting trip), The villagers raised the US flag as a sign of peace, but Chivington wanted genocide, massacring the village of 53 older men and 110 women and children, mutilating the bodies of the Cheyenne villagers. They took Cheyenne scalps and body parts, including genitalia, back to Denver, marching down the streets with Indian body parts and genitalia held up on sticks, celebrating their genocidal trophies and their evidence that Indians would

never again be able to reproduce (Dee Brown, *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*, 1970, pp. 74-102).

In 1864 just after the attack, the **Rocky Mountain News**, one of the Denver papers that convicted Churchill in the press and called for his termination, described the massacre of 110 women and children and 53 older men by 800 Colorado volunteers as “Among the brilliant feats of arms in Indian warfare, the recent campaign of our Colorado volunteers will stand in history with few rivals, and none to exceed it in final results. . . Among the killed were all the Cheyenne chiefs, Black Kettle, White Antelope, Little Robe, Left Hand, Knock Knee, One Eye, and another, name unknown. Not a single prominent man of the tribe remains, and the tribe itself is almost annihilated. . . All acquitted themselves well, and Colorado soldiers have again covered themselves with glory.” History has shown the **Rocky Mountain News** account of this massacre to be a gross case of research and journalistic misconduct.

(<http://www.pbs.org/weta/thewest/resources/archives/four/sandcrk.htm>)

Former Sen. Ben Nighthorse Campbell called Sand Creek “one of the most disgraceful moments of American history.” “Sand Creek, historians say, explains a cartographic oddity: why eastern Colorado once teemed with Indians but now has no Indian reservation. Studying the killings as “ethnic cleansing” helps students understand atrocities elsewhere in the world, says Thomas Noel, a University of Colorado history professor.”

(<http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~jbloom/race/nativams/colo-mas.htm>) A video commentary on Sand Creek that includes a statement by Professor Noel can be found on You Tube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NS3DEuZzcM8>. The attack was celebrated in Colorado, but soon condemned throughout the nation. Congressional investigations were conducted, and individual soldiers wrote letters and accounts which described the massacre and mutilation of the victims. The massacre was condemned by President Lincoln, but no one was ever held accountable, and Chivington refused to apologize to the end of his life.”

(<http://www.colorado.edu/csilw/sandcreek.htm>)

One of the participants in this massacre was David Nichols who was honored by the University of Colorado by having a dormitory on campus named after him. In the 1980s First Nations students at UC protested this name, and the name was

eventually changed in 1989 to Cheyenne Arapaho Hall. The Sand Creek Historic Site was established as a memorial to the victims of Sand Creek in April, 2007.

This local history is relevant to an understanding of how American Indians in Colorado perceive and react to Columbus Day parades in the streets of Denver, but it also informs us regarding Euroamericans reactions to First American hostility to those parades and to the writings of liberal professors like Churchill who appear to them to be denigrating Euroamericans, their heroes and their ancestors. Borrowing from Churchill's title "some people push back," Churchill has discovered that Colorado is another place where "some people push back." In fact most people have a limited tolerance to what they perceive as attacks on them, including denigrating and demonizing their culture, their history and their leaders and heroes.

The intensity of the interactions and the disparity in the world views and views of American history are reflected in the events that occurred immediately after the 2004 Columbus Day protesters were acquitted in January of 2005. The discussion below comes from the Colorado American Indian Movement website at http://www.coloradoaim.org/blog/2005_01_01_coloradoaim_archive.html

Sunday, January 30, 2005

Report about KHOW show last Friday

On Friday afternoon (Jan 28) KHOW's "Caplis and Silverman Show" did a live broadcast from the University of Colorado at Boulder. "The Caplis and Silverman Show" is a 4 hour, weekday, call-in program. Their stated purpose for being on the campus was to seek the termination of Professor Ward Churchill.

Both men, one an avowed Republican and the other a former state Prosecutor, had spent the previous week stoking outrage among their fans against the Indigenous Peoples and their allies who were either acquitted or had their charges dismissed. Those charges stemmed from their efforts to confront the **Convoy of Conquest** which rolls through the streets of Denver to celebrate Christopher Columbus.

Though neither of them had been to the trial, they portrayed the acquittals of the first 8 defenders as a case of jury nullification. They based their opinions on a re-

mark that the jury foreman made to a local reporter. When asked about it while appearing on their program, the jury foreman explained the other factors that went into his decision, not just the evidence of ethnic intimidation. That clarification seemed to be an obstacle in advancing their agenda so it was an explanation they chose to ignore- instead choosing to stick to the “ethnic intimidation” line in order to whip up more antagonism against the Indigenous Peoples and allies who were acquitted.

Neither of the 2 talk show jocks would permit callers to discuss the genocide that Columbus was personally responsible for. Their position was that the first amendment protected the Convoy organizers right to celebrate the genocide of Indigenous Peoples. If Indian people took offense, then they should stop being so sensitive because “freedom of speech” was guaranteed to everyone, no matter how offensive their words, and once you started censoring one person where do you draw the line?

When told that celebrating the man and colonialism (as the convoy organizers have admitted to) incited a strong negative reaction among Indigenous Peoples and damaged their children as well, both talk show jocks claimed that it was not incitement. Caplis and Silverman dismissed the idea that Indigenous Peoples had a reason to confront the **Convoy of Conquest**. Take one more look at their pictures and determine if there might be some reason for them to deny that the celebration of genocide against Indigenous Peoples should offend anyone, even Indigenous Peoples themselves. Better yet, see if you notice any distinguishing characteristics that bestow upon them (in their minds at least) the moral authority to determine what is offensive and who is allowed to be offended.

“The Caplis and Silverman Show” began broadcasting from the Alfred Packer Grill at 3 p.m. On hand to greet them were about 80 supporters of Ward Churchill. There to support Caplis and Silverman were 3 men in their 50’s and about 5 College Republicans. **The College Republicans had a table with a petition to fire Ward Churchill** (presumably, all 8 Caplis and Silverman supporters signed it).. Behind their table was a sign that read “Fire the Auschwitz Loving Lunatic!!.”

When presented with ideas they did not agree with, they would hang up on the callers. When guests held opposing views, they had their microphones cut off. It

was petulant behavior from 2 men who had been claiming that “freedom of speech” was paramount in their lives. Their actions were more like those of spoiled little boys than of the thoughtful prognosticators they pretend to be.

During Friday’s program, Silverman claimed that prior to September 11, 2001, the largest act of mass homicide that had taken place in America was when Timothy McVeigh blew up the Alfred Murrah Building. What was revealing in that statement was that Silverman doesn’t know anything about the policies of the United States government that resulted in massacres of Indigenous Peoples that surpass that of Timothy McVeigh. In fact, David Stannard has listed at least 250 nations of Indigenous Peoples who have been completely exterminated on these lands. None of this knowledge has managed to find it’s way into Silverman’s knowledge of this land.

Driving back to Denver, we heard the final caller to “The Caplis and Silverman Show.” He was “Bob from Hawaii.” He identified himself as an American Indian and a military veteran. Bob reminded Caplis and Silverman that the Indigenous Peoples of the Americas had been fighting terrorism since 1492. Caplis and Silverman responded in the predictable way.

They hung up on him.

Next October, these 2 talk show jocks will once again use their show to champion the Convoy of Conquest and denounce Indigenous Peoples and their allies for opposing it on the grounds that “freedom of speech” should reign supreme. In the meanwhile, **they will be doing their best to get Ward Churchill fired. . .**

Posted by Colorado AIM @ 3:28 PM

http://www.coloradoaim.org/blog/2005_01_01_coloradoaim_archive.html

While the two talk show hosts mentioned above might have a different account of the events described on the AIM website, the above description does speak to the intensity of the interaction, and to the agenda of these two talk show hosts as it was perceived and understood by the American Indians who observed it that day.

In his essay, Churchill properly asks us to try to empathize with Arab nations and Muslim peoples who feel they have been ravaged and demonized by US policy, at-

titudes and actions. I think we also need to empathize with the Euroamerican residents of Colorado. To use the Sand Creek incident as an example of a broader pattern, the Euroamerican people of Colorado have stood by and in some cases endorsed having their history revised, and the names of many of their places, buildings and streets changed. From their perspective, they have also seen their ancestors, once honored and respected, become shamed and humiliated.

As a kind of unspoken atonement for the Sand Creek massacre, citizens of Colorado elected Ben Campbell, who is a descendent of the Northern Cheyenne, to the state legislature, to congress and then to the senate, and he had longer hair than Churchill. Campbell it appears, maybe like Churchill, choose to emphasize the Indian in his ancestry: “Ben Nighthorse Campbell’s Native American ethnicity was a major aspect of his persona, something he was known widely for. This ethnicity, however, was in large part a personal choice on his part, as much as a result of actual blood or heritage. Campbell likely had more Portuguese blood than Native American blood, and he was the first U.S. Senator of Portuguese descent, but that fact was usually forgotten against the backdrop of his “more American” (and more Coloradoan) story of Indian ancestry.”

http://www.adherents.com/people/pc/Ben_Nighthorse_Campbell.html

Campbell’s mother was Portuguese and his father, Albert Valdez Campbell, was of multiple ethnic descent, including European, Hispanic, Apache, Pueblo and Cheyenne. Apparently, at least until 2004, it is was alright to choose to be American Indian in Colorado among one’s other ancestries. When coming up for re-election in 2004, however, Campbell was accused by political opponents and the press of being only 1/8 or 1/16 Indian. <http://www.indianz.com/News/archive/000395.asp> These attacks are inaccurate and misleading because, although he was less than 1/2 Cheyenne, he was more than 1/8 Indian if his non-Cheyenne but other Indian ancestors are counted, which they should be.

In 1992 the Columbus Day parade in Denver was discontinued as a result of Indigenous protests. The issue was especially hot then because some people were pushing for a big 500 year celebration all across America, but Indigenous protests rightly muted those celebrations virtually everywhere. That muting of the celebration and the denigrating revelations of the impacts of the European invasion of the Americas spawned added hostility toward American Indians in many places and

among many people. Other non-Indians became more empathetic and sensitive to the Indigenous experience of an American Holocaust that cost possibly 100 million deaths and a 90-95% drop in population as a result of the European invasion. For oral reports of Sand Creek from the descendants of a few survivors, the reader is directed to the You Tube video at

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-eZh5VOvYDY&mode=related&search=>.

These are the kinds of oral history reports that are missing in the analysis of Churchill's claim of small pox infested blankets that are so handily ignored by the descendants of the perpetrators in the history written by the scribes of the conquerors and the thieves.

A backlash by Euroamerican residents of Colorado was beginning in the 1980s, picked up some steam in the 1990s, and really exploded after the election of George Bush. The cultural conservatives wanted a halt to historical revisionism, and they found a sympathetic and supportive press and political environment. They went from a defensive posture to an active and rather effective offensive posture. The Columbus Day parade was re-started. The Colorado press hounded Campbell out of office by "exposing" small scale corruption in his senate staff (I cannot speak to the validity of those allegations, but he was no longer treated as untouchable), and by the allegations of his opponents and others that his claim his to Indian ancestry was either minimal or fraudulent.

Then in 2004 the Columbus Day protesters were no longer tolerated, and were instead arrested and tried in court. They were acquitted of any wrong doing, and that is when the backlash that had become an offensive circulated media copies of Churchill's statement comparing some 9/11 victims to "little Eichmanns." And now, rather than exorcising the ghosts of genocide from the halls of the University of Colorado, Churchill has been exorcised from those halls.

Commentators often call these the culture wars. Colorado is on the front lines of the culture wars, being roughly equally divided between blue and red, left and right. This is also true of Arizona, New Mexico, Nevada, North Dakota and Montana, and seems to be beginning in Idaho, South Dakota and Nebraska, and may even spread to Utah where the right has previously been predominant. Nevertheless, opposition to Indian issues and rights can often be used to unite the vast Euroamerican majorities in these states, as the Churchill case has done initially in

Colorado. But the pendulum is shifting from right to left in these states, and the Intermountain West may be the key battleground of the next presidential election.

It is my hope these so-called culture wars are the struggles and pains of a social and cultural transformation that will eventually transform the United States from a predominantly exclusionary, Eurocentric, Christian dominated society that is either openly hostile to others or just tolerates the muted existence of minority peoples and religions, including the Godless, to a pluralistic, inclusionary society that truly honors, respects and includes peoples of all color, ethnicity, gender and religion, as well as the non-religious. America has gone through these painful struggles before, and a lot of lives have been lost in the process. America went from a nation that either tolerated or endorsed slavery to one that exorcised slavery, but left the residue of exclusion in the forms of segregation and injustice. Through the civil rights movement of which I was apart, America very grudgingly and painfully reduced segregation and many injustices to the descendants of slaves. The next step is full inclusion and justice for all.

Regardless of the morality of the issues of social justice and pluralistic inclusion, statistics suggest that this needs to happen. Euroamericans will soon be a minority in the population as well. The recognition of this reality is weighing heavy on the minds of Euroamericans, although it is rarely publicly acknowledged. It is a big underlying factor in the backlash movement. That is why there is so much anger being directed at the so-called illegal aliens. It seems strange to me that people whose ancestry goes back in this land possibly 50,000 years should be called illegal aliens by those whose ancestors only arrived here as illegal aliens only a few centuries ago. But such are the dynamics and ironies of the culture wars.

If a society is going to be truly pluralistic and inclusionary, it is going to have to have a history that is pluralistic and inclusionary. That is why these battles are being fought over history, and it is why many people and groups feel improperly excluded from full citizenship in a society that excludes them from their proper places in that society's history. It is also why those in the position of a ruling majority want to continue the exclusionary history that keeps them empowered. In Part II of this essay, I will cover four areas briefly that represent significant achievements and contributions of Indigenous Americans that have been ignored or excluded from Eurocentric American history. I also want to say that the achieve-

ments of the First Peoples of this land are not the only achievements that have been ignored or excluded from the male-centered, Eurocentric American and world history.

Speaking of cultural warriors, let us return to Churchill. When the backlash movement discovered that it would be difficult to fire Churchill on the grounds of his unpopular essay, they went after his scholarship, looking for something they could call “research misconduct.” Forty-four pages in the “official investigation” (or shall we call it an inquisition) are devoted to trying to disprove Churchill’s contention that US agents deliberately gave Indians small pox invested blankets in 1837-1840, while this represents only three paragraphs in any of Churchill’s 12 books and represents less than a thousandth of one percent of the genocide inflicted on Indigenous peoples. This attack on his position is all done from Eurocentric perspectives and biases, totally discounting Indigenous perspectives and oral traditions. Yet universities like UC hypocritically claim to support and cherish diversity and dissent while denying validity to non-Euroamerican perspectives and traditions. What they really want is people of color to re-affirm their Eurocentric biases and paradigms. Anything that is truly diverse and different is usually rejected and ruled invalid.

Those who deny or ignore the American Holocaust are not being investigated. The protestations of UC about preserving academic and research integrity ring hollow. Their finding of research misconduct in this case is in the eye of the beholder. My accusations of research misconduct in this essay are in my eyes as well. I see the world and American history through my eyes; Hank Brown sees it through his eyes; Ward Churchill sees it through his eyes. The university is supposed to be a place where these different views intersect to provide students and the public with the information and perspectives from which to arrive at a more enlightened society and a more informed electorate in a democracy. **It is a given in this discussion that some views will be wrong, all views will be biased, and the most informed view probably will not be the most popular one.**

Obviously everyone and every view cannot be represented at the university, but Ward Churchill’s hard-earned degrees, his outstanding record of teaching, his voluminous publication record that includes 12 books, and his promotion to tenure and full professor should not be tossed aside because of his efforts to expose the

American Holocaust, or by political judgments regarding the popularity of a few of his statements that have been taken out of context and misrepresented. This is particularly troubling because he represents a point of view on America and American history that has been largely excluded from the discussion, and that is a major reason why the information I discuss in Part II has been excluded from or ignored in the writing and teaching of Eurocentric American history.

Most people are not aware of the real origin and underlying issue that led to this firing. The press has done the public a great disservice in this case. I think history will eventually show that the **The Rocky Mountain News** account of the Churchill firing is as inaccurate as their 1864 story about the heroic deeds of the Colorado militia clothing themselves in glory at Sand Creek.

Gary Witherspoon, Professor
Anthropology and American Indian Studies
University of Washington