

CONTENTS

Preface: Some Stories	xi
Introduction	1
Goals	4
Definition of Terms	5
Charting Possible Paths	5
Outline of Chapters	7
The Problem of Tradition	9
The Problem of Land	10
Chapter 1	
Making It a Good Idea: Difficult but Necessary Problems in Generating Academic Native American Philosophy	13
Three Sets of Problems	17
Problems of Conquest	21
Problems of Identity	26
Problems of Translation	33
Conclusion	36

Chapter 2	Generating Academic Native American Philosophy:	
	A Method	39
	Intellectual Sovereignty	39
	Possible Methods	42
	Question of Sources	47
	The Method of Recurrent Themes	49
	Generative Statements, Questions, and Herds	55
	Addressing the Problems	58
Chapter 3	Is Questioning Everything Questionable?	67
	Introduction	67
	Philosophy as the Asking of Questions	69
	Native Intellectuals and Leaders Critique Questions	71
	Analysis, Like Questions, Is Nontraditional	75
	Contradiction: Indian Questioning	78
	Alternate Explanations	85
	The Question of Wisdom	92
Chapter 4	When God Was a Woman: Centering Women in	
	Academic Native American Philosophy	99
	Introduction	99
	Centering Women	103
	The Rationale	104
	Traditional Centering of Women	105
	When God Was a Woman . . .	109
	Balance	114
	The Problem of Violence	118
	Whose Violent Tradition?	119
	Indigenous Feminisms	123
	Conclusion: The Creation of a Truly Critical Indigenous	
	Philosophy	131
Chapter 5	Sovereign Thought: Generating Academic Native	
	American Philosophy from Recurrent Themes: Land,	
	Words, Interconnectedness	135
	Introduction	135
	RT1: The Importance of Land, Place and Space	136
	Land Is Important Because It Is a Source of	
	Indian Identity	137

Land Is Important Because It Is Sacred and Is the Source of Ceremony	140
Land Is Important Because It Is the Source of Origin Stories	143
Land and Responsibility	145
Land as Source of Philosophy	148
Land Is Important Because She Is Our Mother	150
RT2: Importance of Words and Stories	155
Stories and Storytelling Are Central to Native American Culture	155
Stories Are Sources of Knowledge	157
Stories Are Linked to Identity	159
Stories Are Important Because They Are Linked to Land and Place	161
Stories and Spoken Words Have Power	162
Spoken Oaths, Treaties, and Sovereignty	166
Superiority of the Oral Tradition	168
RT3: Interconnectedness	169
Interconnectedness Is Important Because We Are All Related	169
Interconnectedness Is Important Because We Are All Interdependent	172
Interconnectedness and Animals	176
Interconnected Knowledges	179
Ontological Intimacy	182
Individuals and Responsibility	183
Interrelatedness and Sovereignty	188
Chapter 6 Recurrent Themes: Aliveness, Balance, Respect, and Purpose	191
RT4: The Aliveness of all Beings	192
Energy, Spirit, Aliveness	193
Aliveness, Choice, Agency, Wisdom	196
Aliveness and Purpose	200
Aliveness and Hierarchies of Being	204
Aliveness and Co-creation	208
RT5: The Importance of Respecting All Life	210
Respecting the Earth	212
Humans Respecting Animals and Plants	216

Humans Respecting One Another	218
RT6: The Importance of Balance and Reciprocity	222
Balance and Harmony	224
Balance and Reciprocity	227
Ecologic Balance	229
Balance Is Important for Health and Healing	231
Balance between the Sexes	233
Justice as Balance	238
Modern Manifestations of Imbalance	241
RT7: Purpose	245
Knowing One's Purpose Is Important for Living One's Life	246
Animals and Plants and Purpose	248
Purpose Is Important for Ceremonies	249
Purpose and Leadership Choices	250
Purpose and Individual Responsibility	251
 Chapter 7 Recurrent Themes: Knowledge, Responsibility, Humility, Mystery	 253
Introduction	253
RT8: The Importance of Humility	254
Humility Is Essential to Gaining Knowledge	254
Humility Is Essential to Leadership	255
Humility Is Important for Insuring Equality	257
Humility Important for Ceremonies	259
Humility and Interconnectedness	260
RT9: The Importance of Mystery	261
The Great Mystery and the Sacred	262
Mystery, Humility, and Respect	264
Mystery and Knowledge	265
Women and Mystery	267
RT10: Knowledge and Responsibility	268
Knowledge Is Dangerous	271
Knowledge Is Contextual	274
Knowledge Is a Gift	278
Knowledge and Relationships	279
Knowledge and Animals	285
Knowledge and Identity	288

CONTENTS

ix

Conclusion	289
Part II: Categories of Thought	295
Philosophy of Balance	296
Philosophy of Story	296
Philosophy of the Spoken Word (Orality?)	297
Philosophy of Land	297
Wisdom Studies	298
Holistic Categories of Knowledge	298
Acknowledgements	301
Bibliography	305
Index	317