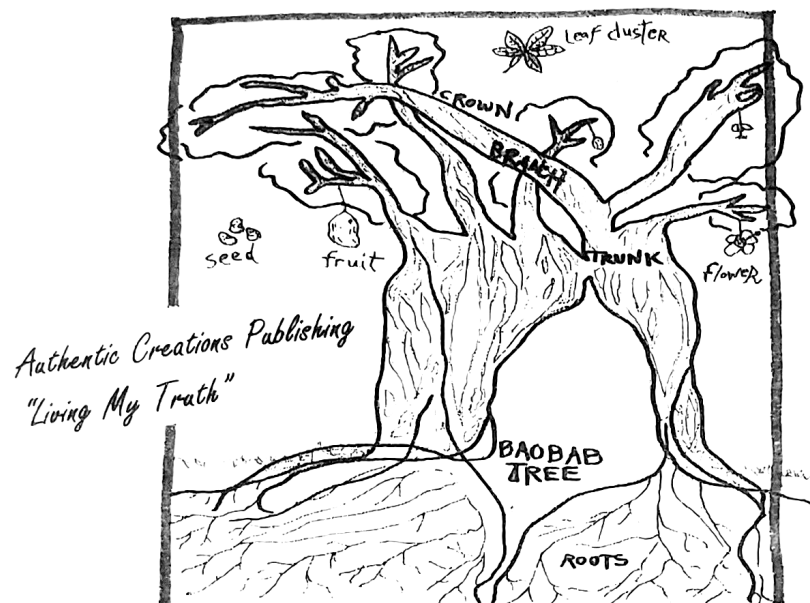


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the  
NATURE

culture ARTS MEDIA EVENTS

COMMENTS

Love Letters to

**NETWORK**

CONTRIBUTORS

*literature@riseup.net*



Katherine Smith  
yimisheye.

# BUILD TOGETHER

*Behind the Scenes*

WRITING CURATION  
BY: kuwa jasiri

RESEARCH

Consulting

BY: Diné Peoples

ILLUSTRATIONS  
FROM VARIOUS PUBLICATIONS

Authentic Creations is a grassroots group spreading the wisdom of Seeds through tending the wounds of marginalized communities, and their land with our programs since 2011.

Paypal.me/ArtisticApothecary  
We are able to freely offer these programs to the Diné Nation because of donations from people like you. To donate visit: [https://cash.me/\\$TyombeHallman](https://cash.me/$TyombeHallman)  
ArtisticApothecary.wordpress.com

SUPPORTING A DIVERSE NETWORK

OF GRASSROOTS Magick

INSPIRED BY: Salina Begay.

every word that these survivors of the white invasion and occupation are sharing with you.

Many things have changed since they started desecrating this mountain. So please hear us and let the Mountain be. I ask you please to listen to those who are trying to protect the mountain, and to protect the water up on Black Mesa, making efforts to protect our land, our culture."

## Essential TOOLS

Dr. Robert W.

Young, a Navajo language scholar and author of *The Navajo Language Colloquial Dictionary*, describes the positive changes in the Indian

T'áá Kééh danihiKéyah!  
Teesto Diné BiKéyah Committee

Katherine Smith: An Elder Matriarch Of The Big Mountain Resistance Statement to United Nations 1996

Navajo Elder Served Notice That Rebuilding Ceremonial Lodge Is "Illegal" By: Sheepdog Nation

Statement Of Navajo Elder, And Relocation Resister Pauline Whitesinger Translation By: Owen Johnson

Sheepdog Nation - [sheepdognationrocks.blogspot.com](http://sheepdognationrocks.blogspot.com)

see Benedek, Emily. *The Wind Won't Know Me: A History of the Navajo-Hopi Land Dispute*. New York, Random House, Inc.; 1992, pp. 12-13.

see Brugge, David M. *The Navajo-Hopi Land Dispute: An American Tragedy*. Albuquerque, NM, The University of New Mexico Press, 1994, pp. 136-140.

organizations out there, Black Mesa Trust and Tó Nizhóni Aní.

the Save the Peaks Coalition, The Black Mesa Water Coalition, and the Haskell College anti-Roads campaign on the website. [www.blackmesawatercoalition.org](http://www.blackmesawatercoalition.org)

the office (the Big Mountain Legal Defense/Offense Committee Office) in Flagstaff.

Little Colorado River Watershed Chapters Association  
Black Mesa Indigenous Support  
<https://supportblackmesa.org/background/>  
Seed Lending Library

kuwa jasiri Tyombe Indomela  
(that one/this one)  
Founder of Authentic Creations



Painting by: Victoria Coe

As a defender of Natural Beauty, kuwa jasiri educates the world about the need for pristineness including ancient lifeways while engaging in Seed Restoration Initiatives. This one is passionate about telling the story of the Dine' Peoples in all their glory, and that one routinely engages in supporting the Diné Nation since 2012. This ones writings can be found in 13 distros, and 3 publications across Turtle Island. This one is currently co-creating, and visioning up the Age of Harmony while touring the wildlands of Iñupiat Territory. To keep up with this one, subscribe to their Moonly Newsletter via email, [literature@riseup.net](mailto:literature@riseup.net)



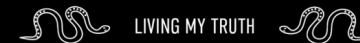
Éí daats'í óolyé, t'óó  
hoł hodiilkq.

He realized, as do the current Resisters to relocation, that if the Dineh's Church and Altar can be destroyed, so could everyone else's.  
—Roberta Blackgoat

On the ancestral lands of the Diné, the people refer to themselves as Nihokaa' Dine'é or the Earth Surface People. The Diné people who live on top of Black Mesa see themselves as caretakers of the land—a responsibility, ordered by ceremony, requires them to respect the land and each other.

# Authentic Creations PROGRAMS

Authentic Creations



LIVING MY TRUTH



## Cultural Seed Drive

Requesting Seeds native to west Africa, the Caribbean & the Diné Nation for People of Heritage (of Color)

To donate, contact us:

<https://ArtisticApothecary.wordpress.com/contact/>



*Diné: Our Survival Is Bound To Theirs* is a curated collection of articles and other resources combined to tell the story of the Diné/Dineh/Navajo people and their ongoing resistance to preserve their culture and way of life. These traditional people live in northeast "Arizona". Learn their stories of resistance against industry and government. Moving and raw, this is a reminder of how our survival is intertwined.

potent  
**CONTENT** and \*warnings\*

Table of Contents: Introduction, Language, Part Of Creation Story, Way Of Living, Resistance Against Industry/Government, Concerns Of The People, Support Needed To Revive A Nation

- suicide \*Page 14\* -

Diné Bizaad (traditional language) Glossary

## Dedication

Most of our core leaders are now gone. However the work that they've done on behalf of the sacred sites continues each day as we live there. We don't really have a lot of choice

Tell my friends and those who will understand my struggle what has been done to me recently



Lyla June Discography

From the Heart of Diné Nation:

Traditional Songs of the Navajo  
by Lillian Ashley and Lena Hardy Sweethearts

Language of Page Numbers

Diné Bizaad

We Create Opportunity:

MAY YOUR  
SEASON  
BE full of

**bright ideas**

**Dine'/Dineh/Navajo Literature/Resources**  
clippings within this zine  
Proclamation of Big Mountain Dineh Nation Declaration Of Independence 10/28/1979

Dineh Religion Will Not Accept Relocation By: Roberta Blackgoat

1986 Interview With Roberta Blackgoat, Dine' Elder By: Winona LaDuke. Women Of Power Magazine #4 1986

04/29/2003 Statement By: Pauline Whitesinger

1985 Statement By: Roberta Blackgoat, Big Mountain Matriarch

The Black Mesa Syndrome: Indian Lands, Black Gold By: Judith Nies Orion Summer 1998

First Peoples New Directions In Indigenous Studies.  
Translation By: Malcom D. Benally. The University Of Arizona Press

**Indigenous Action Media**

Bitter Water: Dine' Oral Histories of Navajo-Hopi Land Dispute

From 1943 to 1957, a monthly newspaper, *Adahoonilgii*.

Sheepherders Almanac Zine

Dine' Bahane'. Paul Zolbrod. Lapahie.com

To Never Be Seen Again By: Malcom D. Benally. Threshold Special Edition Winter 1997

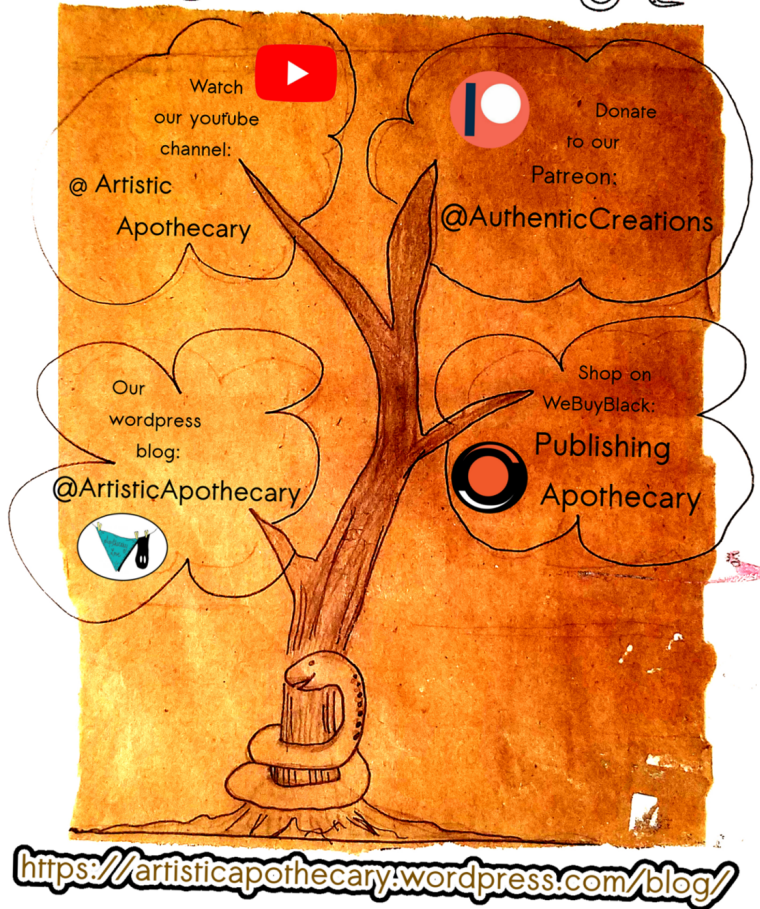
Transcripts From A Forum On Black Mesa By: Black Mesa Indigenous Support, and Sheepdog Nation

"Corporate Globalization's Impact on Indigenous Cultural Survival"



# Authentic Creations

LIVING MY TRUTH



Thank you for the gift of you showing up this lifeline.

## INTRODUCTION

# Katherine Smith

## An elder matriarch of the Big Mountain Resistance

I am Edge Water clan, Tabaahi, born for Apache clan, Chishi.

MILTON NEEZ, Tuba City  
LAWRENCE ALTISI  
RENA BABBITT LANE, NAANA

Yá'ánáánát'éeḥ, sítsoóké.  
Yá'át'éeḥ, shidó'áts'físigo hadeesdzih.  
LEONARD BENALLY  
Ya'at'eeh.

KLEE BENALLY

Yá'át'éeḥ altáhasiilgóó. Shí éí Klee Benally yinishyé.  
Tó dích'íinii bá shishchífn. Naakai dine'é dashináí. Dził  
íjiiindéé naashá, Kínáánídi shihooghan.

The land of Big Mountain is located on top of Black Mesa, Arizona on the Navajo Reservation. Big Mountain is a beautiful piece of land that is defined by vast open valleys, forest hills, traditional hogans built of red earth, and ruins of many ancient ceremonies that have taken place throughout the centuries. The Diné are traditional, Indigenous people who have defined the land on top of Black Mesa through many centuries of ceremony, the storytelling of legends, and by their ancestors who are buried within the sacred ground of Mother Earth.

A Complex system of clan relations weaves the people of Big Mountain together and defines their ceremonial life and how their history is told. The clan system, the legends, ceremony, and their way of life determines how they are connected to the land individually. Some examples of their clan names (among many others) are: Bitter Water Clan, Red Streak Running into the Water clan, Near to the Water, Tobacco People, The Red House clan, and Walks Around You clan.

## LANGUAGE OF THE PEOPLE

The Diné language is as rich and intricate as the clan system is in its connection to the land and the people. For example, when a Diné names a flower, they say "chí'ilátaḥ hózhóón" or "A plant from which there is beauty" and when hungry they say "dichxin shiniilhi" or "Hunger is hurting me."

01-t'ááráí

The way the Diné language is spoken helps remind the Diné people that the relationship of the active forces in nature is as much a part of them as the hair that grows out of their head. Through storytelling of legends, the practice of ceremonies, sacred unwritten laws exist inside of the hogan, within the Diné language, as well as within the landscape. In this way, it is the laws and oral traditions that are handed down from elders which help the Diné people remain in balance with Mother Earth and themselves as a community. Now, with the constant advances of modern society, the Diné people are in a position to pick and choose societies' advances carefully and name them into their reality, belief systems, and cultural practices in their unique Diné language, the language of ceremony and of the earth.

#### DINÉ PHILOSOPHY AND THE HOGAN

The basis of the Diné religion is the Beauty Way or Blessingway and its meanings cannot be found in books or in a single conversation, but in the everyday business of life of a Diné. Beauty is to be sought out and revered in every facet of their lives. A traditional hogan is the basis of the sayings "Sa'anaaghei Bik'eh Hozho" or "long life and happiness" and "Hozhoogo Naashaadoo" or "I Will Walk in Beauty." The hogan was first mentioned in the Creation Myth and it is believed to have first been erected by the Holy People from the Underworld (Our Friends—The Navajos 126). When the hogan was first built, for good blessings, a white shell was put at the bottom of the southeast pole, a turquoise one in the southwest, an abalone on the northwest, and coal on the northeast side of the hogan as an offering to the four sacred mountains (Our Friends—The Navajos 126).

Three hundred seventy three Blessingway songs which are called Hózhóóí (Beautyway) songs were sung over the hogan by the Holy People all in one night for blessings and good luck (Our Friends—The Navajos 127). Once a hogan is constructed, it is rarely moved or destroyed; except when a family member died within its confines was the hogan abandoned. The doorway of the hogan must face east in order to welcome the dawn each morning and the east entrance symbolizes rebirth everytime one exits the hogan at the break of dawn.



02 - naaki



future, "someday we will start to have strong people again, strong womenfolks."

She also wonders if those who have been taken will someday be free, someday free to return to your homeland.

... Diné Bizaad ... slash over vowel = hightone  
oo = ohh

Yá'át'ééh ~ hello, good Aoo' ~ yes Bááh ~ bread  
Nda'ga ~ no dibé' ~ sheep shi ~ me, my  
na'nishkaad ~ I herd sheep Tsin ~ tree  
chizh ~ wood ni ~ you(rs) tó ~ water  
másání ~ grandmother Adin ~ gone  
Kojí ~ right here cheii ~ grandfather  
háájí ~ where? nléijí ~ over there  
neezgai ~ it hurts K'ad ~ now  
há'át'ísha neezgai ~ what hurts you?  
siláo ~ police, ranger Tyin' ~ let's go  
Klaycha'a'i ~ dog tóko'i ~ lantern  
Da'ohsá ~ time to eat Ko ~ fire  
Htola ~ I do not know Deeh ~ tea  
Doo yá' ashóo da ~ bad, broken  
attiin ~ road Hanishchaad ~ carding wool  
Azee' ~ medicine gad ~ Juniper tree  
Nadáá ~ corn Nizhoni ~ nice, pretty

FROM [SUPPORTBLACKMESA.ORG/DINE-BIZAAD](http://SUPPORTBLACKMESA.ORG/DINE-BIZAAD)  
19 - náháást'éí'áadah

18 - tseebi' áadah

As grandma

Rena says, "Kóhoot'éego át'é sha'áchíní. T'áá hazhó'ó baa ntsidaahkees. Ts'idá yéigo baa ákodaohsin. Índa kóóní nihináál ch'íhoot'áa náada'iyoolmiih ha'ní, yéigo sodadootzin, índa t'áá yeigo ádaah't'í."

Roughly,

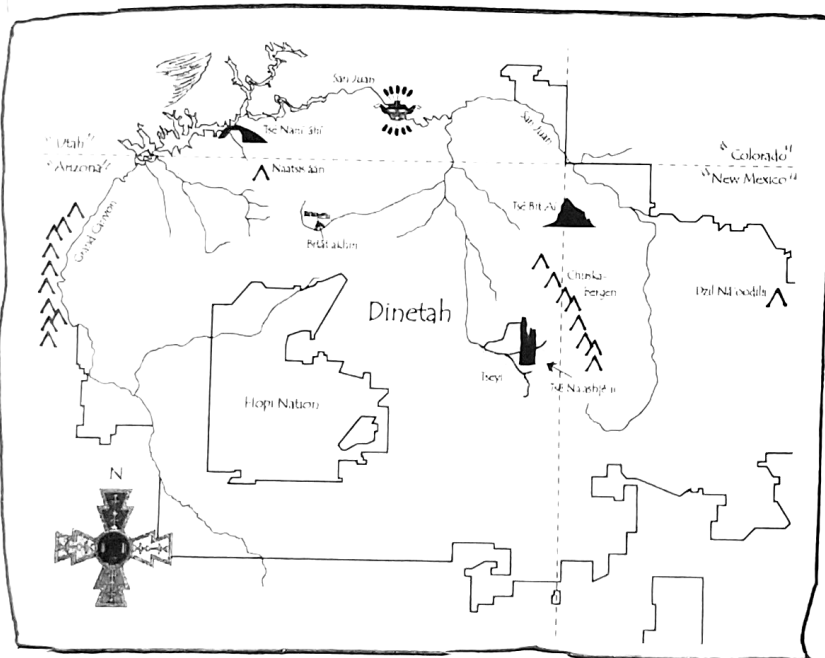
"This is how it is, my children.

You need to think about it very carefully.

You need to realize it fully and totally.

You need to make an offering and pray about it as hard as you can.

And then you need to *do it*."



And a big THANK YOU to all supporters for the work that you do. My traditional way is that you do not clap for a speaker so just wave your hands like this. If you clap it will dissipate all the good things that have been provided and built up. So I thank you again, my children."

Ahehee!!!



A traditional Diné elder, Roberta Blackgoat talks about the significance of the traditional Diné hogan:

Even if we live by ourselves, we have many relatives. The water, and the stirring stick, corn mush, ashes, the pottery—that is the family. The fireplace and the hairbrush—we have songs and prayers to constantly remind us of these things. That's just sitting in the hogan. We feel protected. It is the mother. (Parlow 49).

Based on the significance of the hogan, many stories, prayers, songs, and beliefs exist. Based on the construction of the hogan, many relations are established with the world in general. The hogan is a foundation in which all Navajo ceremonies take place, stories and teachings are handed down. The significance of the hogan is best described dialectically in the "Chief Hogan Song," which goes:

Of origins I have full knowledge.

Of earth's origins I have full knowledge.

Of plant's origins I have full knowledge.

Of various fabric's origins I have full knowledge.

Now of long life's, now of happiness's origin I have full knowledge. ... (Wyman 112-13).

In order to honor their ancestors, Diné people need to continue to live on the land in Big Mountain.



this mountain here, Dook'o'oshíid. the San Francisco Mts. Look

The San Francisco Peaks is one of four sacred mountains for our people. Actually, one of six, one of the four cardinal mountains. And it was explained to me by my grandmother that in the center of these four cardinal mountains is the Altar, where the patient sits to receive the medicine. That altar is Black Mesa. This is the only inheritance that our ancestors left us.

03 - táá'

make offerings to the Mountain. That we call her our Mother. And also, she represents the Mother Earth. This rain, the moisture for the earth, for the land, we need to all see, be on the same level, realize that we all need Her. We all live on top of Her. Underneath Her. That She nourishes us, all of us. She does not discriminate. She provides everything for all of us. All the rain drops and all the rain is provided for everybody. And then in turn, we live off that nourishment. We grow crops. We gather medicines from this. And some day, all our children will be needing all these resources, all these connections, to the Mountain.

At birth our children are made part of the Earth by burial of their umbilical cords. At death they are returned to the Earth in a traditional way. Between those times Diné pray at established sites within their customary use area. The ceremonies-Puberty, Blessing Way, Yei Bi Chei, and many others, which insure our health and place in creation, are performed in this same region. Sacred springs and offering points, as well as the location of ceremonial plants, are also contained here.

Hello, my name is Ineai Begay. I come from a community on the reservation called Shonto, which is just off of Black Mesa. It is actually the place where the N-aquifer replenishes. I grew up

At 68, Roberta Blackgoat looks into an uncertain future as (at right) three of her children, Betty Sargent (left), Sheila Keith Blackgoat and Danny Blackgoat, face with varying success the stresses of adapting to life in Flagstaff.



04 - dīī

So I have sheepherders and other types of helpers come and stay with me sometimes. Some of them work very hard to learn the life out here and some stay with me all winter long. Right now i am looking at another summer alone and I wish it were not so. I am inviting you supporters to come and help me with the work here and to keep in the way of the BIA. Bring whatever strange foods you eat and I will sample it for you. Some of it I even like. And you are welcome to eat Navajo food at my table. A lot of people have said a lot of stuff about Big Mountain over the years and i think most of it is lies.

Come out and see for yourself.

And we know that our homeland is where our fathers are now dust, and our umbilical cords are part of that land. And they cannot deny us this. If there can be justice for people in Palestine, there can be justice for people in the HPL. Please support us in our struggle. We do not have a website. And please do not take advantage of us. Whether you go out and write grants, get equipment, saying that you're gonna help these people or this is theirs. And then put it out for sale, on your web page. We never hear back from you. Don't do this to us. We're already sick, we're already tired, we don't need more of that. Please understand that. Thank you.

Many many people across this country and even in this community claim to be helping us, but we don't really see anything. Other than hardship. And struggle. We don't have water. We don't have home improvement. So I would like to ask Black Mesa Indigenous Support group to focus on those non-signers, and do something for us for real. Don't just come out there once in a great while maybe once every two or three years and claim that you care. And then go back to your cities.

"Some of these lifestyles, they know conservation methods. And they look poor, they look primitive. But in reality they're the richest. Because they got family unit and they know how to make an honest day to day living."

17 - tsosts'idsáadah



# SOLIDARITY

Because now we're asking for solidarity, support from the people. So we can say 'enough!' to these things. And no more genocide. This is still going on out there. Ethnic cleansing. And the Navajo Tribal Council and the Hopi Tribal council, they're participating in these genocide. And they got blood stains on their hand, off the Black Mesa people here.

We're not here to dishearten people. We're here to communicate that we are all part of the solution in our choice to take action when we see this type of injustice happening....

I live by myself for the most part. And there is a lot of work here with no running water or electricity, herds of sheep, goats, cows and horses. Two cornfields. My children have relocated, mostly because they are ill with diabetes and have to go to dialysis in the cities. They live several hours drive from me in different directions. My grandkids, some of them are very capable helpers, but they have been harrassed and chased off by the rangers. So they don't stay very long.

we are in need of lookouts and security to defend our livelihood.

It is true what has been said. And so I ask also, How do we revive? How do we replace what we have lost, what has been taken from us? The wisdom, the knowledge? How can that be revived? I ask those questions.

There is an urgent call for on-land volunteer assistance at Black Mesa. This includes elder care, shepherding, repairing hogans and water catchments, hauling and chopping wood, etc. Come to our homes and you will see for yourself. But lets all understand that we all sleep every night on the same Mother Earth. And every day She nourishes us with plenty of food.

16 - hastā'áadah

**BLACK MESA is NOT BLACK and it is not a mesa.** It is four thousand square miles of ginger-colored plateau land in northern Arizona, a distinct elevated landmass the shape of a bears paw. On a map, the Black Mesa coal field looks like an inkblot on a Rorschach test, following the contours of the Pleistocene lake it once was. Over thousands of years the vigorous forests and plant life embraced by the lake decayed into a bog which in turn hardened to coal—some twenty-one billion tons of coal, the largest coal deposit in the United States.

for the holy people, a place to give offerings. And my grandma would tell me, 'someday in the future somebody might be coming along and tell then it belongs to them. When I was grown up a little more I remembered seeing the old grandmothers in the different families, they were telling us about the woman's mountain; at the time of the deep snow it would melt, in the spring, this mother mountain would be nourished, and the white clay and the red clay would come up. Those clays have been drained along with the water by the mine. When a woman was on her moon, came of age, this is part of it, the spring time was that process, the clay coming forth. The National Academy of Sciences conveniently call their land in Black Mesa, Arizona "a national sacrifice area" (Grinde and Johansen 119-128).

Until 1969, the coal lay untouched and so close to the surface that the walls of the dry washes glistened with seams of shiny black. With a long-term value estimated as high as \$100 billion, it lies completely under Indian reservation lands, for Black Mesa is also home to some sixteen thousand Navajos and eight thousand Hopis. Peabody Coal Company who

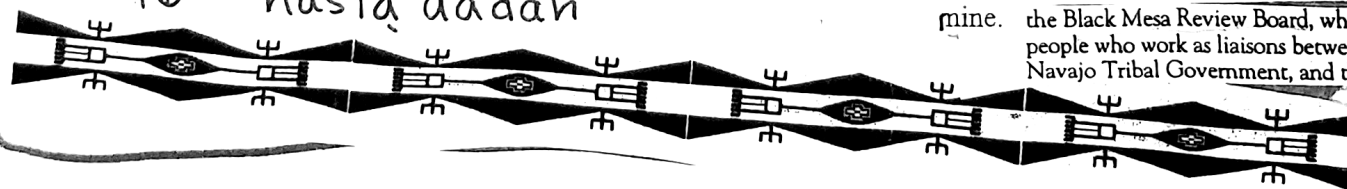
currently operates the largest strip mining operation in the country on top of Black Mesa, twenty-four miles from Big Mountain. to a pipe-slurry line that run 275 miles into the Mohave Power Plant in southeastern Nevada and to the Navajo Generating Station near Page, Arizona by an electric railroad (Callaway, Levy, Henderson 13).

Under the umbrella name WEST

(Western Energy Supply and Transmission)

The Navajo Nation government are supporting expansion of the mine. the Black Mesa Review Board, which is a group of locally elected people who work as liaisons between Peabody Coal Company, the Navajo Tribal Government, and the local community.

05 - ashda'



Black Mesa. Just because the US can produce more energy here. The people were sacrificed. And to this day some of us are orphans out there. We lost our mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, relatives. And its still going on to this day. But we're saying, "enough!" to these things. In my time, I seen a lot of deaths out there. So yes, they sacrificed it. Poor people. And these are the indigenous people of Black Mesa. Just so some person in Los Angeles or Las Vegas or even the Phoenix valley here can have a air conditioning or electricity. And you see all those electric lights in Las Vegas or Laughlin, Nevada. That's our wealth, that is our product here. And I myself don't have a running water. But I'm not asking for it here. And I don't have electricity. We heard that they are in agreement with the coal company. This collusion will continue to affect the water. "For many years I have lived next to a big canyon. And in the bottom of the canyon there was a little stream that flowed year round. Now I take the sheep down there and there's nothing. Nothing's flowing anymore. Its' been like this for several years now. The seeps on the side of the cliffs have dried up. A lot of the natural springs too. There were places where you could go and just dig a few inches with your hands and water would start coming out. Now you go there and there's nothing, just a basin with dry clay. Where several years ago there was a clear blue pond, now there is a cracked, dry dirt. This is how we are seeing it and we are witnessing the effects of what the coal company is doing. Sinkholes. That's been verified by the scientists its because the waters been taken down too low."

To her people there the land is called *Dzit ljiin Asdzáá*, the dark mountain woman. This is how they know this land, the Black Mesa area. She is a great spirit, this is what she was told. Today she is also being disrespected with the coal mining operations up on top. Again they are taking a precious thing from her body, a sacred thing.

Éí dīi dzit nihináznílgíí ts'ídá  
ayóo adéínií'niłgo nihinázníł.

06-hastáá

Roberta Blackgoat



wants to hold on to it.

He wanders a lot. It has been mentioned how this relocation process affects peoples lives. It affects him. And also he is seeing the global situation where his nieces and nephews are on the front lines in Iraq right now, facing threats and he, at home here, at his hogan, faces threats. Is there any peaceful way? The concept of a war in Iraq and the idea of peace and freedom and liberation, and then here at home all that is being taken away from him. He wants you to understand some of the concrete connections. "So I guess that's what they mean when they say in the old days that you've been defeated, you've been conquered, your whole world has been leveled. That's kind of the way I feel in my life right now. Our lives have been leveled.

"I feel like I'm the only one that can speak the dine language. Our grandchildren and great grandchildren cannot give us answers when we talk to them. You ask them something and they just shrug their shoulders"

The language with which many of these elders speak reflects many generational teachings and belief systems through an oral tradition. With the language comes a unique dialectic sense of history, written not in books but in the heart and told through relations established from the intricate clan system and from ceremony. These traditional people demand a protection of their sacred lands, their burial sites, and wise stewardship of the land and its natural resources by the Navajo Nation leadership.

15-ashdla'adah

This is what can be expected if we allow the mining to continue. Eventually they will pull her heart out and that will of course kill her.

...Many years ago, we used to have a lot of firewood. Now roads are from every direction. Our firewood, our place where our firewood used to be, there's just now beer bottles, wine bottles, and trash. And we are totally being dumped on. That is what I believe. (Dalsin 55-57).

Stockpiles of coal catch on fire and sometimes the dust really affects us. When the wind direction blows the coal dust our way it really stinks. On a calm day, coal dust settles inside our house and on everything.

The workers have problems with their ears, loss of vision (blindness), and breathing problems. This is a big problem all the employees I work with discuss.

The public watering area has all the coal dust in there. When we haul water from there in barrels, fine dust gets in the barrels. We want these water sources tested. People living out here should at least get running water in their homes to eliminate particles getting into our water. When you see water, a puddle of water, coal dust settles at the bottom of that water. Our body is just like that water. Coal dust has gone into our system, and I am sure that coal dust remains in our system. (Dalsin 15).

People who don't speak English, they are in tears so often. They just destroy themselves; they get sick and lose their lives—just worrying about relocation.

You are just trying to rip these elders apart and think you can transplant them. Old roots—they won't grow again. They're just sitting on strange soil. They just go down, down and die.

walked out and went to another hogan that belonged to him and he hung himself. He put a post across the beams and he hung himself in the hogan.

He didn't go to school so he didn't speak English. He was killed by a car in 1966.



\*14\* -dii'ts'aadah

Can you provide these services?

I live here under Big Mountain. My ancestors have always been here from time immemorial. My grandmother and grandparents went to Fort Sumner on the Long Walk. Navajo people were put in death camps. By the government, US government here. This happened in the 1800's, 1860-1864. And after the peoples were released they said "no more" to these things. But this is not our law. We don't make these laws. The people that make these laws will usually be the first ones to violate them too. To this day there are only a very few people out there, only a handful, that are resisting. To oppression, from the US govt. here. And

stock reduction program. In 1887, over 75% of the Navajo people had sheep and livestock, and there were over a million animals on the reservation. The federal government came in and literally destroyed - left to rot, took them elsewhere, whatever - about one third of the livestock in the 1930's.

the Relocation Commission ordered that many of your sheep were to be taken away. This is called the 'starve or move choice', since sheep are your way of living. 1974, the US government passed PL 93-531. Under this law, the land was divided by an enormous barbed wire fence. The fence literally ripped through people's land. Dividing corrals from houses, bulldozers and fencing crews tore through religious sites, graves, trees—everything on the land. Those who live on the "wrong side of the fence"—10,000 Navajos and 1,000 Hopis face forced relocation—the deadline is July 8 of this year. The word is that the Hopi police, backed by a variety of federal agencies with eviction notices, will charge those who have not left with trespassing, arrests will follow—and who knows after that. We are fighting too against their fencing. The fencing hurts our Mother Earth. It's like pushing pins in her.



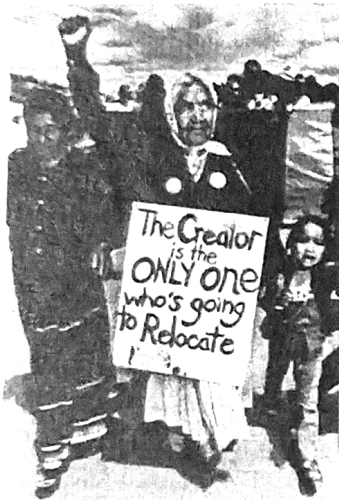
Act of Defiance  
Robert Blackgost, one of the most outspoken Mountain Navajos against forced relocation, cuts the barbed wire fence that the U.S. government put up to divide Navajo and Hopi lands. (SUNPhoto by Mary Tolan)

07 - tsost'id  
1974 - the largest removal of Indians in the United States since the 1880s.

Dook'o'skliid, the San Francisco Peaks, the plan by Snowbowl ski resort to begin using Flagstaff wastewater to make snow and the Forest Service approval of that plan was also well discussed.

There are many species of birds that land along the mountain. Some walk and graze there. Some crawl under the bushes. All of these will have to someday drink the water. If it is contaminated, that is what they will drink. The water will go into the ground and travel far. Someday we will start drinking it as well.

San Francisco Peak has a big scar on its back, a "ski-place". It hurts us. By executive order there is a red mark. This is a sacred medicine place. Medicine man sits on the west - patient to the east. This is where they are making coal mines. If this happens we have no place; east, west, to make our medicine. This mark place is our altar. We have no complaints; all we need is to protect it.



Áádóó dzilígíí, diné át'é, éí. Diyingo éí si'á. Doo éí t'óó dzil át'ée da. Doo éí t'óó baa honeeniidgo be'ádílááh biniyé si'áq da, éí.

This mountain, it is a person. It is sacred. It is not just a mountain. It does not exist for the purpose of entertainment.

And the Forest Service. They call themselves administrators of the forest. They do not know nothing about the forest. "What I have learned as an indigenous person is that we Indian people know about the forest. The ponderosa tree is very sacred to us. We know the stories about them. We have knowledge like this that has been given to us by our ancestors. The real administration of the forest is located in a prayer. It is in the practice of offering corn pollen for the use of even the tiniest piece of a ponderosa for ceremony. And in the sacred stones that we offer, this is what is called

"administration of the forest".

08-tseebíí

Sage Brush Springs is near the pipeline, when we took the sheep to be washed, there's a lot of healthy folks on horses and lots of sheep there between each herd. The valley there was covered with sheep and the people are rolling in the covered wagon. So the Tribal Government in Window Rock do not really support our efforts, or their People, and their struggle to stay on the land and maintain their culture. What they'd rather support is to exploit their own people, to exploit the Diné culture. To have song and dances, just to put on a show and say how great we Indians are. And they don't want to put a lot of effort into what we are facing out there."

All our votes cast for them have been votes cast for the loss of our water, our life, our land.

We have our own meetings from time to time as a community of relocation resisters. They seem to draw a lot of attention from the BIA, FBI, and "homeland security". But I still believe that we deserve to have such meetings and we will continue to organize them.

From the time that Peabody arrived, that's when the females started having problems with their kidneys, they don't reach into old age, they go into dialysis. I go in and see these people in the beds and get upset about it. I think about our female mountain. From where I stand now I want the mine to shut down totally, forever.

Mother Earth faces many problems today due to the pressures of progress. Within the Navajo Nation they are trying to build more power plants today. If you want to know what the coal fired power plants are doing to our people, all you have to do is go to any Indian Health Services clinic and see how many Dine and Hopi people have heart problems, or problems with their breathing. They're having a lot of surgeries on the heart. This is coming from the coal fired power plants. We have too many of them on the reservation already. But we have nothing which can replace those damaged hearts.

RB: The liver of the Earth is coal, the lung is uranium. In this way the Earth has parts of its body. Just like us. We can't leave her. She's in pain.

13-táá'ts'aadah

Earthquakes and tornadoes are her breath. She's breathing heavy. She's in pain; we need to protect our mother.



THE PEOPLE SPEAK

ROBERTA BLACKGOAT YINISHYE. I am Bitter Water, T'odich'iinii, and born for Salt clan, Ashiihi. I am from Big Mountain.

Yá'át'ééh t'áá anoltso. Shí t'éiyá Pauline Whitesinger dashijini, Tabahá nishkí dóó Chishí bá shishchíin. Akot'éo diné nishkí. Sáanii nishkí. Dikwiishkí shinaáhai sha'shin, doo shíł bééhozin da.

Daniel Benally: mineworker, and Elder LOUISE BENALLY

Alice Yazzie: Dine' women, mineworker Big Mountain

Mae Paulinos: Dine' resident Yá'at'eeh doo ahehee.

INEAI BEGAY, Black Mesa Water Coalition

Yá'át'ééh. Shí éí Ineai Begay dashijini. Táchiinii éí nishkí. Tó dích'iinii bá shishchíin. TohanaOdahm éí dashicheii dóó shinalí.

FREDERICK SHERMAN, Naasht'ezhi tábaahá, bf To'dích'iinii...Teacher of Environmental Science and Natural Resources at Crownpoint Institute of Technology.

I want to say that my ancestors have not come here recently. Myself, I was privileged to learn about the ancient ways and the Dine religion. This knowledge was not thought up recently, it goes back to the beginning of creation, to the very beginnings of when humans were allowed to live on this earth. This is my background.

When I was growing up I saw ~~women~~, all kinds of healthy womenfolks, even women that ~~were ninety~~ years old with hair just like white snow or white clay. And pushing the snow around, two feet of snow around ninety years old pushing the snow around with her cane to make a trail for the sheep so they can get back into the corral. Back in those days, nobody said, "this woman fell down and hurt herself". Women were strong." That's what she remembers. "You never heard about, 'this woman's on medication, the doctor told her to stay inside and be careful'. These were ninety year old women who'd never been to the western hospitals. Never been examined by a western doctor. They were pure, living in a pure life. This was before relocation. Life expectancy was very long. Life expectancy has been decreased. And this is what relocation has done to us."

12 - naakits'áadah

little ones learn to herd sheep and take care of the horses and the cornfield. We shear the sheep in the springtime and then save some wool to do the weaving, carding and spinning. We educate our kids to weave and herd sheep and ride horses. This is their education. They are given their ceremonial names and are taught to say prayers.

They learn to carry on for generations, in the Holy Way. "The kinship system was so strong. Now the land problem, the relocation problem has come about. And what is being said out there in the media, what is being put out to the public, is that the reason why this mine issue, the relocation is taking place is because the Hopis and the Navajos are fighting against each other. And the Government had to provide ~~them~~ land. We need to see that that's not so. And they're using it to cover up in order to attack us, when we are isolated. So this is what's happening. I ask you to see that, to understand

that. The Hopis and the Dine' have never had any problems over land. They have never had any problems over land issues.

"Under the relocation policy has also broken up the family structures. It doesn't provide a setting where we can give traditional teachings to our grandchildren. That connection has been severed through these relocation policies. One example is that our children have been taken away. through some wetlands near Haskell Indian Nations University which was started in 1884 as one of the assimilation boarding schools run by the BIA. It has since become a full four year University. The wetlands were at that time a place where kids could go and speak their language and practice their traditions, do their ceremonies without the fear of being beaten or whatever else was going on at the assimilation schools of those days. Through a series of shady events the land was transferred over to an entity that would begin building a superhighway through that area as part of the Rt 35 corridor which runs NAFTA trade from Mexico through all the way to Canada. You can imagine what 8 lanes of highway will do to the wetlands and wildlife there. These are symptoms of a culture that has no roots in any particular place.

09 - nahást'éí

## New funds are available

for people who will sign away their ancestral birthrights.

As a result, many of the young people have to look for employment with Peabody Coal Company or in the surrounding border towns like Tuba City, Pinon, Kayenta, Flagstaff, Winslow, Holbrook, or Window Rock. Instead of commuting up to 120 miles each day, some of the young people move to the cities and thus distance themselves from the land they depend on to sustain their way of life and their religion.

In Flagstaff, she relocated. She is having problems too.. She lost her home - it was a relocation home. She's having to work now just to pay the rent bills. They really got rushed on it - and now she just has to keep paying. She only got paid \$40,000 for her land, and then she got a relocation house that they said was worth \$82,000. Then she got a job. In the end she lost her house too. She wants to come home now.

RB: My youngest boy, Harry, he got drafted. I had to get all my lawyers to keep him from being drafted. I said, "I'll be all alone if you take all my children and send them away to fight our brothers over there. We need them here."

I want to have my children return, and let my grandchildren use this land after me. I want to have my children come back.

"this white government, their laws, it's a law that doesn't care about life. It affects life, instead of caring for life. It affects the old people, instead of making them live longer. It affects your dreams, instead of sleeping peacefully at night, and having your rest. So it affects everything in every

way. The relocation, the desecration of the Mountain here. The Mountains are important to the Dine people. When it's abused, that's abuse to our Prayers, our Way. Just as it has been said, they have been digging into our Sacred Medicine Bundles, our belief system. They're digging in there and disrupting the order of our Ways.

I want to say also this, that the worst of human existence could be approaching. Please realize this. Hard times may be coming for us. At the same time the BIA government does not show any compassion. Only inflicting us suffering and creating the pressures whereby

A group of 250 families resisted forced relocation and Public Law 93-531 and pressed many traditional elder Diné women in to political protest even though many of them do not speak English.<sup>1</sup>

Big Mountain

Many of us will die before we allow the profaning of what we know to be good, just, and holy. The Creator is the only one who is going to relocate us.

10 - neeznáá

is my mother, and that is why I will remain. I cannot just walk away from my mother. She is the one who will decide when it is time for me to return to her, this is when I will leave.

it's not a pleasant thing when you're under this policy and you want to forget it and just think about the good things but it's very very hard.

It would be easier if they send a big helicopter and drop bombs on us.

This story of the people of Big Mountain is a sad American tale of losses of freedom, culture, land, and identity. This is just the lowest. It is disrespect to many nations as well. A disrespect to the Indian Ways, their Songs. And also to the beauty of the land, the forests, the peacefulness of the woods and the environment. It's also harmful and destructive to the future and the Children. They deserve better So that's like a big crime, being committed upon us,

and yet we're being punished for who we are just because we want to live simply our way of life. There are not many of us left out there that are so-called 'resisters'. We're just simple human beings that try to live day-to-day based on our traditional philosophy. As we speak here now



T'áá nléí nlhe'ezis blyl' góne'é  
nda'ach'id, k'ad. Áadi, nléídi  
nihítádídíín siltsoozgo éí  
nda'niltso'go háádadiiltsoos.  
'Díí nlááhgóó ahidoolgáí'.

She feels that the government is digging in her medicine bundle. They're feeling around in there and they're pulling out certain things, they're pulling out the corn pollen, the most sacred offering thing that we have, and throwing it away, saying, "That is useless anymore, in this century. You guys don't need it, there's a better belief for you".

11 - ta'ts'áadah

