

Shocks to the Navajo (Diné) Political System: Resiliency of traditional Diné institutions in the face of colonial interaction (Contact to 1923).

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Abstract

Did colonial activity purge Diné (Navajo) governance of traditional institutions? Navajo Nation and its governance are here today. “Peoplehood” explains why colonialism failed to, generally, destroy traditional Diné institutions of governance (Holm, Pearson, and Chavis 2003). Punctuated equilibrium model (or PEM) explains the relationship between shocking events and loss of governing institutions. Historically impactful events are used as a data set. Each event is ranked for a relative level of shock to the Diné. A test is devised, based on Qualitative Comparative Analysis, to consider the causal impact of four colonial strategies on the elimination of traditional Diné institutions of governance. Interestingly, between contact and 1923, the impact was minimal. Only one institution of Diné governance, the Naachid, was halted. Hence, the history of colonial interaction is more complex than past research has indicated. Contemporary Native Nations, and Navajo Nation, should be more cognizant of specific colonial activity lest such activity emerge today leading to further erosion of remaining aspects of Indigenous sovereignty.

Introduction

Diné (Navajo) knowledge holders say that there is no need to protect knowledge with laws and such. Diné knowledge takes care of itself. This research takes some initial steps toward explaining why and how Diné knowledge takes care of itself. This is a complex set of connections going on in non-linear ways. I offer Peoplehood as the root of knowledge preservation. If knowledge is in the land, the ceremonies, the language, and in the sacred history, then it will take more than one approach to eliminate it. Our specific knowledge of interest is the *Naachid* or a Diné ceremony used in decision making based on the idea that some *Naat’áanii* or leaders had peace way knowledge and war way knowledge. The idea was to maintain a balance with 12 peace and 12 war leaders (Austin 2009, 12). *Naachid* knowledge, then, is in the ceremony, the language, the history, and the land of the Diné. A typical assumption is that these ceremonies go away when the last elder that knows about them “walks on”. This research will grapple with how the shock of war with the United States (U.S.) could have worked to dislodge *Naachid* processes. Rather than focus solely on case study evidence, this research will attempt to tie events in Diné history to evidence that shocks in the timeline interaction history (not sacred history) conspired to motivate *Naat’áanii* to voluntarily obscure the *Naachid*. The toughest part of following this research is testing the idea that knowledge takes care of itself.

Realizing that “assumption” is a dirty word, this research must acknowledge and be transparent about assumptions going forward. Hence, this research assumes that the *Naachid* is, at least, an institution of pre-contact Diné state governance. However, I acknowledge that the *Naachid* is much more than just a state institution. The research will use a formal method of comparative research tying events, as conditions, to the ‘loss’ or dormancy of the *Naachid*. The utility of this type of research is to forecast future threats to any Indigenous knowledge so long as we see the conditions before they are about to harm contemporary knowledge applications.

This paper will explore why knowledge, as seen through Diné institutions, survive colonial onslaught. Next, it will explain how Diné institutions may be tested. Did colonial pressure cause Diné institutions to stop operating? Third, the test will link events in colonial interaction history to losing Diné institutions such as the *Naachid*. The research discusses the implications of forecasting future shocks while highlighting the rarity of past events that forced Diné leaders to stop carrying out the *Naachid* in the first place.

What is a Diné institution of governance? Consider the following definition that utilizes an institutional perspective as a guide:

A perspective that sees political interaction as depending on actors pursuing actions that are compatible with their interests and that are constrained by the structure of the situation in which they find themselves, especially the structure of political institutions. (Bueno De Mesquita 2009, 434).

The institutional perspective describes characteristics of Diné institutions. Diné institutions are guiding contemporary domestic and international interaction across Diné and non-Diné political actors. Evidence of behavioral guidance comes from many places. Examples include corporate interests, local, county, and state interaction, federal interaction, and international interactions on Navajo Land. Thus, Diné institutions not only offer guidance but also prevent self and special interest from dominating the interaction process to varying degrees. This is not to say that self-interest is non-existent. Rather, at worst, institutions force actors to covertly cater to their self-interest; at best, they force actors to overtly pursue the interest of the Navajo Nation. (We should not assume that Navajo Nation possess a singular interest—just as we would not assume this to be true of any contemporary nation). Hence, we may define Diné institutions as any aspect of contemporary Diné governance that guides and constrains interaction between Diné actors and other Diné and non-Diné actors. Given this definition, our attention should focus on the guidance/constraint mechanism (institutions) and events (as characterized by the culmination of interaction). Remember, too, that some cultures will imbed their institutions in their geography.

Why Indigenous Institutions Survive Catastrophic Events

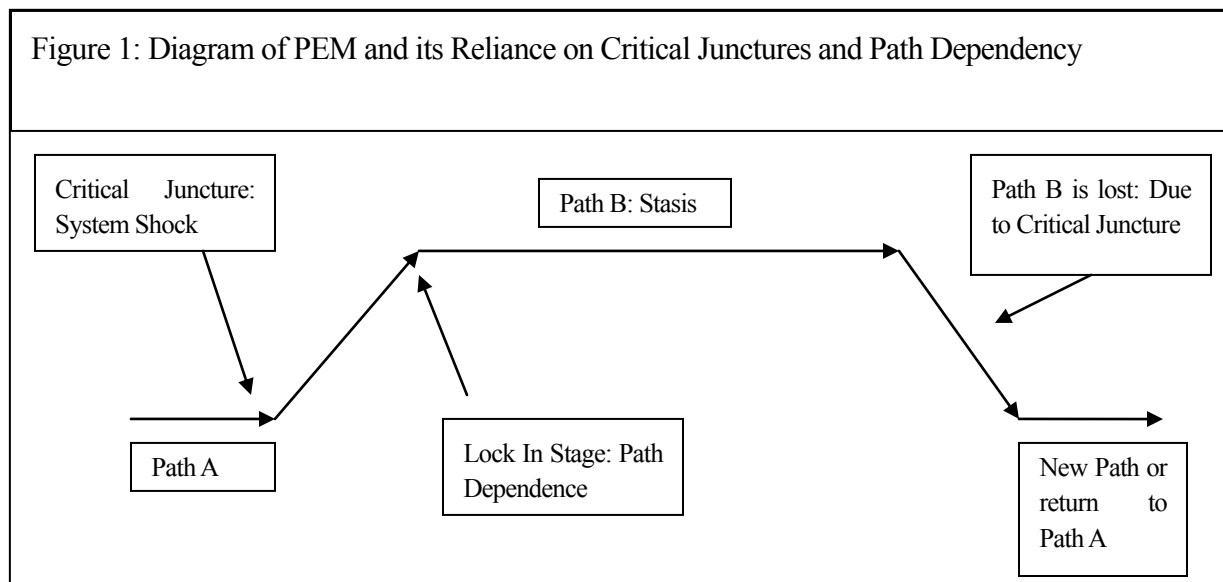
It is no secret that Indigenous lands were massively appropriated during early American colonial history (Getches, Wilkinson, Williams, and Fletcher 2011). The tools necessary for understanding and improving Indigenous governance must step away from the “official” narrative of the colonizer (Smith 2012). The “history” of Indian law and policy is not only a history: it is a story of self-interested polities interacting with other actors and shaping Indigenous institutions to maximize extraction via exploitation. Interaction is the key to colonial extraction via existing institutions and changing or destroying institutions that limit colonial extraction (Mahoney 2010). The fact that Indigenous institutions have survived this long deserves attention.

Peoplehood offers a more complete explanation for resiliency. It explains that a distinct people exist if they have, or had, four characteristics. The characteristics are place/territory, ceremony cycle, language, and sacred history. No one aspect of peoplehood is more important than the other (Holm, Pearson, and Chavis 2003; Lerma 2012, 2008). U.S policy or military strategy often formed the basis for an attack (event) upon an Indigenous nation. Therefore, the attack only targeted one or maybe two Peoplehood characteristics at a time. Typically, only the most visible aspects, such as the land and the ceremonies, are attacked. When land and ceremonies are under attack, for example, Indigenous peoples may still go into their homes and speak their language and retell their sacred histories. Hence, peoplehood theoretically explains why Indigenous cultures continue to exist today. Absent a systematic genocide, chances are that a people may be able to reflect on their own land and ceremonies if they continue to speak their language and take their sacred histories seriously. Peoplehood can explain how Indigenous and Diné institutions, including governance or leadership, survived colonial onslaughts. To be clear, I assume that Indigenous institutions are a part of the overall culture but this research will refer to them as separate or compartmentalized. This does not mean they should be compartmentalized. This is done to ease us into explanations for why the institutions remain. These institutions sustained tremendous shocks during times of war and other early colonial interaction.

To explain how shocks work, we can explore the punctuated equilibrium model (or PEM). PEM, applied to public policy research, explains how institutions are lost. Social science PEM applications include research on public policy formation and rivalries (Deihl and Goertz 2000). PEM can help us understand the events (biological, public policy, or Indigenous institutional survival) most relevant to the current research.

PEM is characterized by identifying two key framing mechanisms: “a critical juncture” and “a path dependency”. Depicted in Figure 1, PEM assumes that a “shock” to the political Indigenous system opens up an opportunity for several options to occur. The shock is also known as a critical juncture—where several policy options become available in the aftermath of the political shock. Several paths are chosen, but resource investment in one path creates “sunk costs” or the allocation of resources into building an infrastructure in support of a single path. Hence, it becomes more difficult as time and resources are sunk into a single path to change to other paths. This phenomenon of “path dependency” explains why a system of governance can be unforgiving and inefficient or otherwise negative yet

persists. There are too many powerful and invested entities (individuals, corporations, and so forth) to allow for a path change (Collier and Collier 1991; Pierson 2004; Mahoney 2003). Going forward, PEM and shock will be used interchangeably. Using PEM, it is now (hopefully) easier to explain the connection between the arrival of non-Indigenous peoples or ‘colonial actors’ and the emergence of contemporary Diné governance.¹



Contemporary Diné governance did not arrive by accident. Many would argue that it is the legacy of centuries of federal Indian policy (Getches, Wilkinson, Williams, and Fletcher, 2011). Referring to Figure 1, it is now possible to consider “Path A” as the pre-contact Diné governance or *Naat’áahji* (Deloria 2006; Benally 2006; Holm, Pearson, and Chavis 2003). The “critical juncture” or “system shock” was, for example, a war, a treaty, or an act of removal. All Indigenous peoples had a traditional homeland. The Diné continue to govern over a diminished portion of their traditional homeland today. Peoplehood suggests this homeland is tied to a Diné sacred history and ceremony cycle such as *Diné Bi Behaz’áanii* (1 N.N.C. §§ 201-206). Diné philosophy heavily relies on spaces of homeland or *Diné Bikéyah* and ceremonies related to *Naat’áahji*. Diné ceremonies, while much more massive, were once well imbedded and accepted methods of leading. Upon interaction with various colonial actors, there was an eventual dislodging of *Diné Bi Behaz’áanii*. Many competing interests leading to the contemporary Navajo Nation Council replaced it. While all of this detail deserves much more attention,

¹ Ideal types are perfect and, therefore, cannot exist in the real world. There is room for the ideal type in normative theoretical research that discusses where policy should or ought to be “0” or where policy should not or ought not be “1”. Of course, normative policy discussions as depicted here assume that contemporary policy makers want as little change as possible to Diné governance and that the entire elimination of Diné governance is not desired. An infinite range of possible shock values exists between the value of 0 and 1. Hence, events are ranked relative to one another and in between the value of 0 and 1. The above methodological approaches come from various sources and culminate here to best frame the Diné colonial experience (Goertz 2006; Ragin 1987, 2000, 2008; Ragin and Becker 1992; Ragin, Drass, and Davey 2006; Sartori 1970).

readers are encouraged to explore the history elsewhere (Wilkins 2003). Our debate here is whether replacing equates with elimination of *Diné Bi Behaz'áanii* practices.

This research will link aspects of peoplehood, especially ceremony, to *Diné Bi Behaz'áanii* related to leadership. One overt limiting assumption is that this research can only explore *Diné Bi Behaz'áanii* as an institution of Diné governance. While it is possible to explore *Diné Bi Behaz'áanii* on countless other levels, the author is merely qualified to look at this as an institution of leadership. Does PEM explain shocks that would dislodge *Diné Bi Behaz'áanii*? This research will explore a limited history of Diné interaction with the U.S. This interaction will highlight some patterns of U.S. warfare directed at the Diné and many other Indigenous nations. These conditions are 1. open warfare, 2. removal, 3. inability or unwillingness to honor treaty obligations, and 4. destruction of Diné political economy. When the U.S. attempts all four of these activities, does it lead to the dormancy of *Diné Bi Behaz'áanii*? More specifically, did these activities lead the Diné to deliberately place the *Naachid* into a state of dormancy? If so, Diné leaders of the late 1880's deserve much more credit. How much agency did they exercise as leaders? Testing the history of this interaction between 1861 and 1880 will determine if these conditions of war matter.

Methodology: Testing Diné Institutions

As stated earlier, Peoplehood explains why some Indigenous institutions survive. PEM explains why some institutions (generally) go dormant. Together, they create a framework for reassessing the history of Diné governance. However, applying this framework requires some simplifying assumptions. First, traditional and contemporary Diné governance are expressed, at the very least, through institutions of governance. Second, interactions between the Diné and colonial actors are events. Third, some of those events are shocks to Diné institutions of governance. Finally, there are at least two outcomes to shocks: institutions survive (possibly modified) or institutions go dormant. After we test the history of Diné governance with the Peoplehood and PEM framework, two aspects of Diné governance will become clearer:

1. Few Diné institutions were eliminated solely based on colonial actor interaction between contact and about 1923 and
2. Diné institutions that “seem” to be gone may actually be suspended. In other words, some Diné institutions that seem to have disappeared may, in fact, remain dormant today because traditional Diné leaders (between about 1860 and 1880) decided to strategically obscure them.

The technical steps for the test are as follows. First cases (events) are identified as relevant to potential institutional dormancy. Secondly, our goals involve the inductive theory that PEM explains shocks and is tested based on the events in history. Third, I wish to focus on how these historic events (or shocks) are theoretically tied to the outcome that the *Naachid* has gone dormant. Fourth, the historic events (as shocks) are first “calibrated” using a continuum and tested to discover if they are necessary to witness the potential outcome that the *Naachid* goes dormant. This informal tie may exist in historic research

but it will be formally tied here. Fifth, this research is situated in a place slightly more general than a case study orientation. This is useful if other Indigenous nations wish to explore how the necessary events identified here might play a role in their own history of dormant traditional leadership institutions. Finally, the potential for forecasting future shocks to Indian country may involve one of the conditions (events) in modified form (Ragin and Rubinson 2011).

Table 1 is a product of step 1 in Ragin and Rubinson (2011). I have identified the “cases” or events that are relevant to the question about *Naachid* dormancy. Each of these events represent a level of intersubjective shock as identified by Diné leaders. Ragin states that “cases” can be dealt with as members of a category (Ragin 2008). Our category is shock. A 1 would be a total shock that dislodges the institution (*Naachid*). If one event could be tied to a shock that directly leads to the loss of the *Naachid*, I could just write a case study of that one event and the research would be complete. Hence, we must re-think how shocks are measured. Ideally, we would go ask *Naat’áanii* how impactful these shocks were to their ability to govern based on *Diné Bi Behaz’áanii*. Since all of these leaders have passed on, a survey is not possible. In the absence of a survey is case study research on these events (Denetdale 2008, 2007; Bighorse, Bighorse, and Bennett 1990; Wilkins 2013). These case studies heavily informed my own rating (shock calibration) of these events as shocks ranging from 0 to 1 if 0 means no shock was felt and 1 means a single event lead to the loss of the *Naachid*. The events are listed in table 1 along with qualitative outcomes, and potential shock ratings. These ratings are based on the case study research of Denetdale, Bighorse and Bennett and Wilkins. In other words, calibration is based on reading these case studies. I do not purport to be the definitive voice on the shock values. I merely purport that the values are generally correct relative to other similar shock values.

| | Event | Outcome | Shock Rating |
|----|-----------------------------------|---|--------------|
| 1 | Contact of 1583 | None | .01 |
| 2 | Treaty of 1706 | Diné (and other tribes) work to drive out Spain | .17 |
| 3 | Treaty of 1786 | Diné allow Spain to occupy New Mexico area | .36 |
| 4 | Treaty of 1805 | Cease fire due to 100 Diné killed in fighting | .23 |
| 5 | Treaty of 1819 | Cease fire due to losses (Spanish and Diné) | .09 |
| 6 | Mexico Declares Independence 1821 | None | .01 |
| 7 | Treaty of 1822 | Encourages European Warfare | .05 |
| 8 | Treaty of 1823 | Encourages slave trade/political economic interaction | .08 |
| 9 | Treaty of 1824 | Not known (lost to time) | .01 |
| 10 | Treaty of 1835 | Not known (lost to time) | .01 |
| 11 | Treaty of 1839 | Offset kidnap of Diné women for a time | .12 |
| 12 | Treaty of 1841 | Cease fire to recover from war/slave raids/etc | .07 |
| 13 | Treaty of 1841 II | Not known (lost to time) | .01 |
| 14 | Treaty of 1841 III | Not known (lost to time) | .01 |
| 15 | Treaty of 1844 | Cease war/encourage free trade | .05 |

| | | | |
|----|---|--|-----|
| 16 | U.S. takes southwest | None | .01 |
| 17 | Treaty of 1846 | None | .01 |
| 18 | Treaty of 1848 | None | .01 |
| 19 | Treaty of 1849 | War, slave raids, killing of Naat'áanii, and resentment | .14 |
| 20 | Treaty of 1851 | 1849 treaty replayed with other Diné | .1 |
| 21 | Treaty of 1855 | Split approach (peace Naat'áanii sign/war Naat'áanii not) | .32 |
| 22 | Armistice of 1858 | Cease fire to prepare for peace negotiations/animals killed | .4 |
| 23 | Treaty of 1858 | Eastern boundary set. Legal authority of the U.S. imposed east of the boundary | .24 |
| 24 | Treaty of 1861 | War continues | .65 |
| 25 | Hwéeldi 1864 | Walk to Bosque Redondo | .77 |
| 26 | 1864-68 | Carson extermination at Canyon De Chelly. Some Diné walk away from Bosque Redondo; others stay and starve. United States gives up on Bosque Redondo experiment and allows remaining Diné to walk home | .74 |
| 27 | Treaty of 1868 | Diné homeland returned to Diné. Remaining people return home. Naachid suspended indefinitely | .61 |
| 28 | Fall 1868 | Blessing Way at Window Rock. Domestic governance resumed and groups go in four directions – basis for contemporary agency system – note lack of “protection way” ceremony | .3 |
| 29 | Congressional act of 1869 | 1868 treaty generally acknowledged (assimilation period begins) | .28 |
| 30 | 1878-1884 | Reservation expanded since Diné returned to homeland outside U.S. reservation boundaries listed in 1868 treaty | .13 |
| 31 | 1878-1910 Indian Agent Appointments | “Traditional” leaders (Naat'áanii) age and are replaced by new leaders chosen by BIA Indian Agents. New leaders chosen as outlined by Federal Indian Policy of assimilation | .42 |
| 32 | 1884 Police Chief Appointment | Chee Dodge replaces Manuelito – Bilingual mixed blood replaces legendary war leader | .19 |
| 33 | 1901-1911 Agencies Formally Established | Four directions formally acknowledged and a fifth central agency is set up | .11 |
| 34 | 1921 Oil Discovered | Corporations take notice of Shiprock Agency since oil is discovered. They lease land on Navajo Nation allowing for more corporate interaction with less oversight by the Navajos | .32 |
| 35 | 1922 Business Council Formed | Distribution of revenue simplified so that fewer Navajos needed to agree to lease land for the purpose of extracting oil. Corporations allowed easier access to oil deposits for less than fair market | .41 |

| | | | |
|----|--|--|-----|
| | | value | |
| 36 | 1/3/1923 Business Council modifications | Navajos take more control over land leases for purposes of oil extraction. U.S. government approval forced into the model | .3 |
| 37 | 1/24/1923 Business Council modifications | Business Council Expands scope of operation and becomes the Navajo Tribal Council – an overarching Federal system of governance encompassing all five agencies | .27 |

What is included and excluded from table 1 remains debatable; not everyone will be satisfied with the current approach. Nonetheless, the period of contact up until the formation of the Navajo Nation (Tribal) Council in 1923 contain the greatest series of Diné institution shocks. Other shocks to the system certainly existed in the pre-contact era such as “Separation of Sexes” (Benally 2006), and shocks exist in the post-1923 era as well such as Sheep Reduction and the Window Rock riots and Council Reduction (Wilkins 2013). My original data set of shock events, however, is limited in time so I must exclude anything after 1923. These other shocks, while important, are beyond the scope of this research and assuredly warrant future attention. Between 1583 and 1923 colonial attempts to destroy Diné institutions of governance had largely failed. Again, this should link back to two issues: 1. PEM explains how the shocks work and the case study research by Denetdale, Bighorse and Bennett, and Wilkins can be further explored for details of these shocks independent of this research. 2. Diné organic attachment via *Diné Bi Behaz'áanii* explain why the shocks forced Diné leaders to put the *Naachid* into a dormant state.

Table 1 depicts events between the first non-Indigenous contact in 1583 and the formation of the contemporary Diné government in 1923 The list of events is more or less comprehensive and based on the case studies of Denetdale, Bighorse and Bennet and Wilkins. In other words, table 1 lists events typically addressed by non-Navajo oriented history texts. The list is supplemented with Diné accounts of their own history to elaborate on interactions with colonial actors. The outcome column depicts a brief interpretation of the event—strictly framed as the Diné interpretation and impact experience. The outcome can be considered subjective because the following events are necessarily derivative of such interpretation. This is the fourth step of tying historic events to shocks identified in step three (Ragin and Rubinson 2011).

Impact of events on Diné institutions

The purpose of assigning a value to events is to see if these events stand out from the family of events impacting Diné history. QCA is just one formal method of selecting cases for future research. Table 1 is a relative scale of shock experienced by the Diné after an event occurs. This is the calibration step discussed by methodology research (Ragin and Rubinson 2011). At the risk of being redundant, a rating of 0 indicates that there is no impact, but does establish the boundary for impact. On the opposite extreme, a shock rating of “1” denotes the greatest possible shock and impact surrounding an event. Such an event may be so impactful that it eliminates the *Naachid*. Alternatively, a shock rating of 1 may indicate a transformation to such a degree that the *Naachid* no longer can be considered the same as it

was before the event. Including an event that ranks 1 should give us great caution. See Figure 2 for a visual depiction of the shock continuum.²

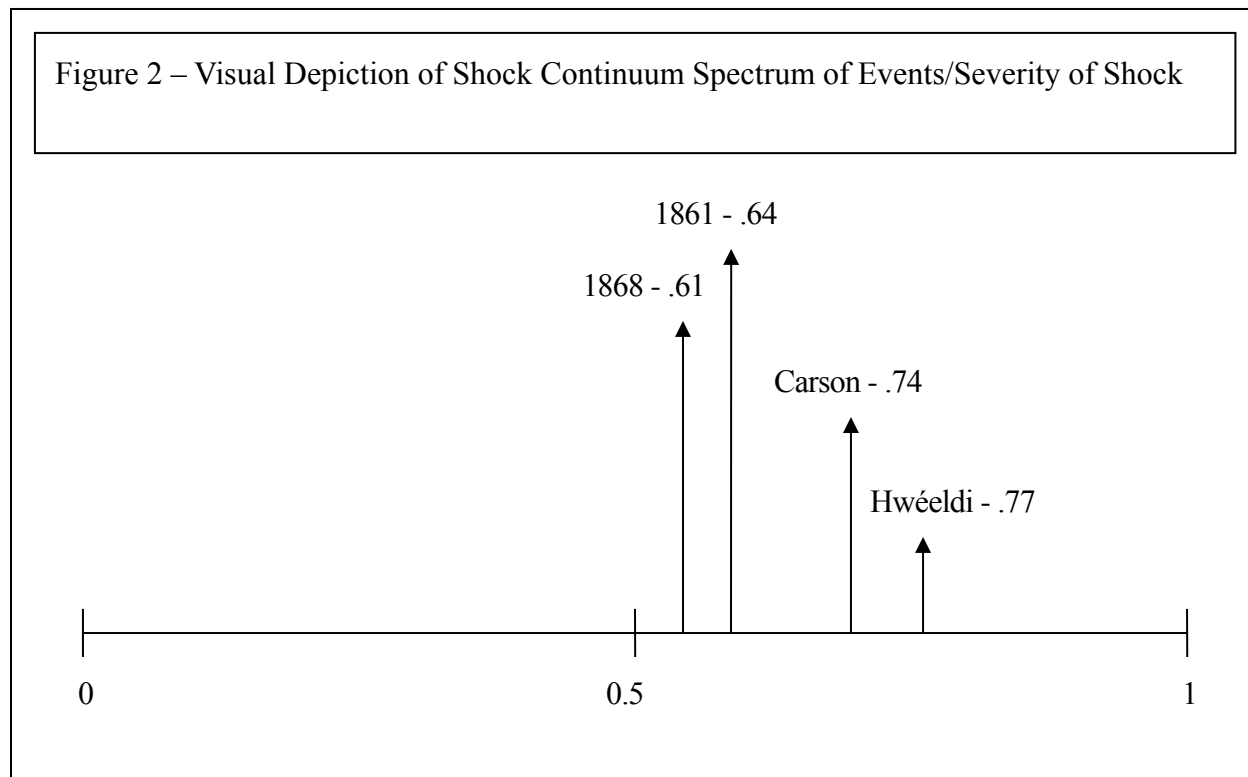


Figure 2 shows a spectrum of events impacting Diné institutions. The poles have been established by reordering the events in Table 1 along a shock continuum. Any event ranked 0 is not relevant to Diné institutions. Any event ranked 1 is so fantastic that it is improbable—if not impossible—that it ever occurred (since Diné institutions survived). The scale of shock is, perhaps, subjective in that the shock is based on the Diné perception of the event. The events with high shock ratings, however, are objective in that they warrant major attention as evidenced by acts of war or treaty negotiations. Each event is assigned a number in the order of time in which the event occurred. In this way, all of the events can be placed on the continuum of shocks.

² For an example of a “1” event involving non-Diné, there is evidence of California tribes that were outright victims of extermination at the hands of settlers. The European settlers encountered small bands of Indigenous men near the California coast and the Indigenous men were killed in the initial battle. The Indigenous women and children remained in the village waiting for word from the men regarding the new arrivals. With no word from their men, the women and children either waited or realized that something horrible had happened and fled to other villages. Many were seized upon by settlers and killed (Bordewich 1996; Trafzer and Hyer 1999; Heizer 1993). This type of event would rank at .95 since it catastrophically impacted the tribe and, by extension, governing institutions. Since there never was an event like the one just described for the Diné as a whole, one cannot hastily rank The Long Walk as 1.

The most outstanding events have had the most impact and warrant a starting point. The most impactful event from Figure 2 is The Long Walk or *Hwéeldi*. Yet, even this event is not a 1 on the scale of impact.³ Presuming The Long Walk was the most shocking event in the history of Diné institutions, the event may rank .77. On the other end of the spectrum are events with minimal impact. Some events are simply not well understood. Missing information is treated as having little to no impact. Should more evidence emerge during the course of future research raise the impact of events ranked low here, the overall analysis could change. This contingency is not new to historical research and welcomed to gather a more complete account of interaction. These events with limited documentation must be assigned a rating of .01. The history of such occurrences seems to manifest little, if any, coercive impact on the Diné. Low ranking events may be worth reconsideration to see how relevant they really are to the Diné. In other words, these events probably mattered much more to colonial actors than they did to anyone else.⁴

Figure 3 is a collection of descriptive statistics based on Diné historical events. There are a number of events recorded by non-Navajo historians, which had little to no impact on Diné institutions. It is worth noting that only two events get above a .6 ranking and only four events go beyond .5. The majority of the events are in the left or low-impact end of Figure 3. Again, all of this calibration is heavily informed by case study historical research by Denetdale, Wilkins, and Bighorse and Bennet.

The bar on the far left represents 10 events that had very little impact on the Diné. This assumption could be impacted should research on these events come to light. The bar second to the left represents the Treaty of 1822 and the Treaty of 1844. The next bar represents the Treaty of 1841. Next is the Treaty of 1823, the Treaty of 1819, the Treaty of 1841, the emergence of the agency system, the Treaty of 1839, the collective expansion of the reservation via executive orders, and the Treaty of 1849. These cases may be of least interest to Diné scholars or could require case study that would reinterpret their salience.

Continuing with the single events, and about one third of the way between least impactful and mid-impactful events, are the appointment of Chee Dodge and the Treaty of 1805. Next are the Treaty of 1858, the Business Council modifications of January 23, 1923, recognition of the Treaty of 1868, and the Blessing Way Ceremony of 1868 at Window Rock. Each of these events represents a marginal

³ More information on calibrating concept continuum scales can be found in Ragin (Ragin 2008).

⁴ See Correll (1979) for thousands of pages of evidence including primary documents from the U.S. Army documenting day-to-day events during the Carson Campaign. For example, Carson reported on August 19, 1863, that he had destroyed about 50 acres of corn. The original Correll collection is housed at the Navajo Nation Museum Archive in Window Rock, Navajo Nation. It is emerging today that this destruction of the Navajo political economy, further exacerbated by the Livestock Reduction, can be linked to contemporary food desert conditions on Navajo Nation today (Bailey and Bailey 1999; Eldridge et al 2014).

increase in level of shock. These could easily be future research case studies or we could always go back to look at past case study research.

The January 3, 1923 Business Council modifications rank next. Two events, the Treaty of 1855 and the oil discovery of 1921, follow. The Treaty of 1786 comes next. Slightly more shocking is the Armistice of 1858. These events are followed by the formation of the 1922 Business Council and the replacement of the pre-1868 leaders. Note the gap in the graph here possibly indicates a shock level tipping point. This tipping point could also warrant further research. The fact that this tipping point emerged lends some credence to the shock continuum calibration. The four most shocking events are the Treaty of 1868, the Treaty of 1861, the Carson Campaign, and The Long Walk. There is little debate on these most shocking events. We know they happened and we know they impacted Diné institutions specifically and life in general. The calibration process is another indication that these cases matter. While it was not necessary to calibrate these events in order to draw this conclusion, calibration did illuminate the shock tipping point and gave some impetus to dismiss other events that non-Navajo historians may claim are impactful. The data warrants further contemplation of the four most shocking events.

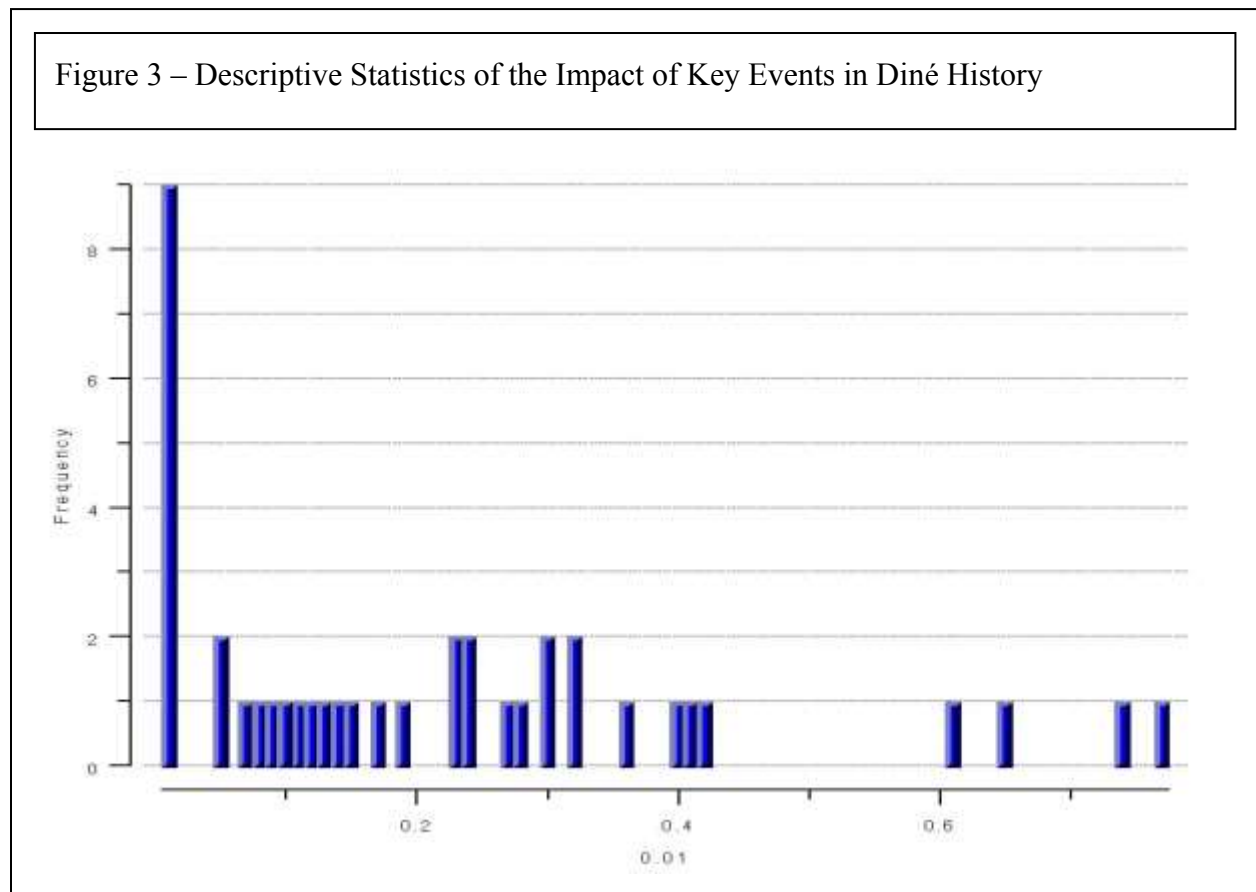


Table 2 shows the distribution of event frequency and the relative shock value of the individual events. There are a total of 41 events. The distribution of events, based on relative shock to Diné institutions, is

in line with the concept of Peoplehood forecasts. Peoplehood suggests that attacking one aspect, such as land, should have limited impact on Indigenous organic ties to their homeland (Holm, Pearson, Chavis 2003). This idea is also consistent with PEM. Perhaps a sufficient shock to Indigenous peoples must involve more than one aspect of their Peoplehood. The majority of events, although qualitatively horrific, had little collective impact on the viability of Diné institutions in general.

| Table 2 – Distribution of Event Frequency and Relative Shock Value* | | | |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|--|
| Event Frequency | Lower Shock Range | Upper Shock Range | |
| 15 | .0 | .09 | |
| 8 | .1 | .19 | |
| 6 | .2 | .29 | |
| 4 | .3 | .39 | |
| 3 | .4 | .49 | |
| 0 | .5 | .59 | |
| 2 | .6 | .69 | |
| 2 | .7 | .79 | |
| 0 | .8 | 1.0 | |
| *where “0” represents virtually no impact and where “1” represents extreme impact to the point of dormancy or annihilation | | | |

Table 3 depicts how events impacted Diné institutions. The first column (far left) indicates the relative shock levels to Diné institutions of governance. The second column represents the survival of institutions. The third column represents Diné institutions that stopped operating. Based on the historical record, there is only one instance of a Diné institution halting. According to most accounts, the *Naachid* was last held prior to The Long Walk (Austin 2009, Wilkins 1987). There are no other events that indicate a Diné institution ceased to operate. This is the first hard evidence that colonial attacks on Diné Peoplehood have failed to erase their institutions. But this is not to say that Diné institutions have not been modified. This preliminary conclusion can be pursued further with even more interesting interpretations.

| Table 3 – Two by Two Table of Institutional Impact of Events on Diné Governance | | |
|---|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| | Institutions Survive | Institutions Go Dormant/Cease |
| Shock less than .59 | 37 | 0 |
| Shock more than .6 | 4 | 1 |

There are certain conditions that result in only one event in Diné history where an institution ceased operation. Note how at least one of these identified conditions did appear in most, but not all, events

listed in Table 4. Part of the puzzle is to determine if any of these conditions, by themselves or in some combination, could lead to the loss of an institution such as the *Naachid*. The conditions that all appear in concert with the loss of Diné institutions are:

- A. Forced removal
- B. Active warfare
- C. Impact on a nation's political economy
- D. Ineffective treaty/reservation confinement (commitment problems)

Explicit definitions help explain these four conditions:

A) *Forced removal* is overt attempts by a colonial actor to remove an Indigenous actor from their traditional homeland. An example of forced removal involves the colonial actor designating a relocation area and forcing Indigenous peoples to march to the relocation area. *Hwéeldi* is the forced removal event for the Diné.

B) *Active warfare* is an overt military campaign by a colonial actor against an Indigenous actor. An example of active warfare involves the occupation of land belonging to, or adjacent to, Indigenous peoples homelands for the purpose of extinguishing aboriginal title (Getches, Wilkinson, Williams, and Fletcher 2011, 71). The Kit Carson campaign against the Diné is one example of an active warfare event.

C) *Impact on a nation's political economy* is overt maneuvers by a colonial actor to cut off access of Indigenous actors to food and products. Today, we might call such activity an embargo. Carson's campaign into *Tsé yí* involved a "scorched earth" policy of burning cornfields and hooghans (home) to impact (destroy) the Diné political economy.⁵

D) *Commitment problems* are defined as the inability or unwillingness of colonial actors to honor treaty obligations. An example of commitment problems involves the inability of the United States to prevent settler encroachments on Indian lands. Another example involves the maldistribution of rations to families most friendly to colonial actor interests. The United States constantly instigated conflict with the Diné or, alternatively, was not capable of preventing conflicts of a personal nature from spilling over into warfare (Deloria and Wilkins 1999, 33). The U.S. also was not capable of committing to various treaties signed with the Diné as is evidenced by the failure of the U.S. Congress to ratify seven of nine international treaties with the Diné.

These are the four factors that lead to *Naachid* loss. The outcome, ceased institutional operation, may be represented by X. Hence, the following equation:

$$A + B + C + D = X$$

By negating even one of the conditions from A through D, Diné institutional resilience is more likely—in other words, the action will not stop a Diné institution from operating. For example, consider the

events that rank at .6 or higher on the scale of shock. These four events are the Treaty of 1861, The Long Walk, the 1864-68 Carson expedition in *Tsé yí* or Canyon de Chelly, and the Treaty of 1868. These events share some of the conditions that culminate in the stoppage of a Diné institution. These conditions might also be understood as a PEM shock. No other events exhibit conditions A through D. Forty events are depicted in Table 4, a truth table of all historically recorded Diné events from initial non-Indigenous contact to 1923. Each event is analyzed for the presence or absence of the 4 conditions listed above.

| Event | Condition A Removal | Condition B War | Condition C Economy | Condition D No Commitment | Outcome X Dormancy |
|-----------|------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | No | No | No | No | No |
| 2 | No | Yes | No | Yes | No |
| 3 | No | No | Yes | Yes | No |
| 4 | No | Yes | No | Yes | No |
| 5 | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | No |
| 6 | No | Yes | Yes | No | No |
| 7 | No | Yes | No | Yes | No |
| 8 | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | No |
| 9 | No Data | Lost | | | |
| 10 | No Data | Lost | | | |
| 11 | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | No |
| 12 | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | No |
| 13 | No Data | Lost | | | |
| 14 | No Data | Lost | | | |
| 15 | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | No |
| 16 | No | No | No | No | No |
| 17 | No | No | No | No | No |
| 18 | No | No | No | No | No |
| 19 | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | No |
| 20 | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | No |
| 21 | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | No |
| 22 | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | No |
| 23 | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | No |
| 24 | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | No |
| 25 | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| 26 | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | No |
| 27 | No | No | No | No | No |

| | | | | | |
|----|----|----|-----|----|----|
| 28 | No | No | No | No | No |
| 29 | No | No | No | No | No |
| 30 | No | No | Yes | No | No |
| 31 | No | No | Yes | No | No |
| 32 | No | No | No | No | No |
| 33 | No | No | No | No | No |
| 34 | No | No | Yes | No | No |
| 35 | No | No | No | No | No |
| 36 | No | No | Yes | No | No |
| 37 | No | No | Yes | No | No |

The most impactful events are highlighted in Table 4. Removing less “shocking” events yields a manageable view. A logical limiter involves focus on events with a .6 level of shock or higher. Perhaps an event ranked below .6 is not sufficient to shock the Diné system. Anything above is potentially capable of shocking the Diné system and dislodging them from their path. Table 5 represents events with .6 shock levels and higher. For both Tables 4 and 5, the first column represents the events (for Table 5, only events with shock values of more than .6). The subsequent columns from left to right are conditions present in the given events. The loss of an institution is presented by negating one of the conditions. These four “shocking” events deserve a bit more attention here. The 1861 treaty lacked the forced removal condition (A). When the Diné were within their Sacred Mountain boundaries, they had no reason to give up the *Naachid*. The Long Walk event did contain all four conditions leading to the suspension of the *Naachid*. The Carson campaign lacked the necessary enforcement of prior treaty guidelines (D). And the Treaty of 1868 event lacked three conditions: forced removal (A), active warfare (B) and destruction of political economy (C). However, the Treaty of 1868 was signed after the last known *Naachid* took place in 1859 (Austin 2009). Note the pattern of impact: negate one of the four conditions and the shock is not impactful enough to dislodge an institution such as the *Naachid*.

| Event | Condition A Removal | Condition B War | Condition C Economy | Condition D No Commitment | Outcome X Dormancy |
|-------|------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 25 | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | No |
| 26 | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| 27 | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | No |
| 28 | No | No | No | No | No |

Table 6 is a 2 by 2 table of causal conditions and outcomes. The conditions are based on a threshold rating of the event shocks equal to .6 or higher. Diné institutions cease when an event rating greater than .6 manifests. No losses of institutions appear below a rating of .6. Yet, even if the rating level is sufficiently high, it is not enough to prevent an institution from operating. The data suggests that all

four casual conditions must be present to be a shock to Diné institutions. Events must be sufficiently shocking, in terms of PEM, to the cultural system before the conditions necessary to eliminate an institution come into play. Perhaps a sufficient shock is one impacting some minimum number of Peoplehood traits but this conclusion should be further investigated as future research. Even when the shock value is high enough, all four conditions must be met or the institution will continue.

| Table 6. 2 by 2 Table of Conditions and Outcomes for Events with a Shock Rating of .6 or Higher | | |
|---|--|--------------------------------------|
| | Number of Conditions Absent (no shock) | Number of Conditions Present (shock) |
| Outcome Present | 3 | 1 |
| Outcome Absent | 0 | 0 |

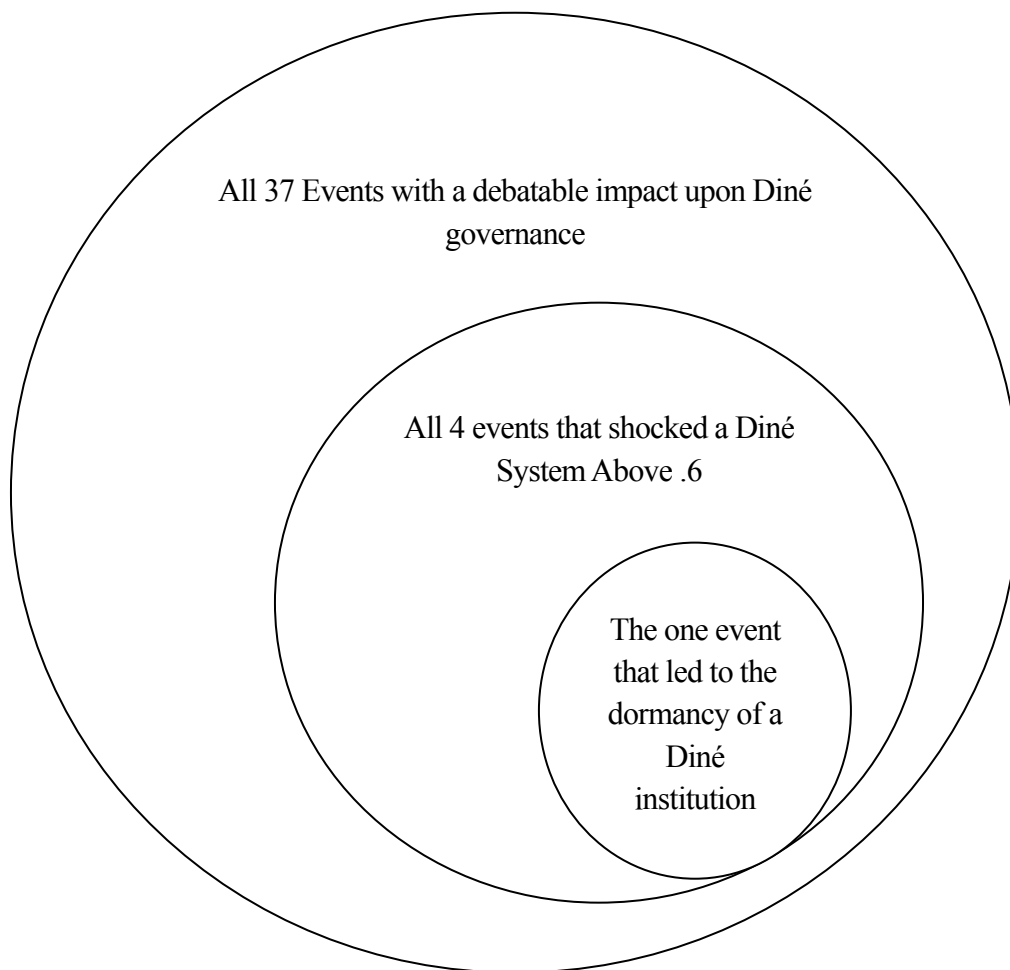
Resiliency in the Past and in the Future

Several causal mechanisms are at work in Diné governance history. Taking into account 500 years of colonial activity, there is a recipe that leads to Diné institutional dormancy. The relationship between events and impacts on institutions is quite drastic and clear. We can re-express the causal relationship using set theory in Figure 4.

Set theory is a method used to better understand the relationship between outcomes and causal conditions. These connections may remain obscured if we allow our histories or our other linguistic efforts to take charge of understanding the relationships. Of the 37 events mentioned by mainstream Diné history, only four events can be logically linked to Diné institutional dormancy. Of the four events, only one event can be traced to the dormancy of a Diné Institution of governance, the *Naachid*.

The most interesting result of the analysis, thus far, is that institutional dormancy is rare. This pattern is limited to a time between first contact with non-Indigenous peoples and 1923. But the research can be taken further. A part of the family of methodological approaches mentioned earlier includes fuzzy set analysis (Ragin 2008). The rare characteristics of the events and outcomes can be calculated to provide evidence that the events are in fact rare, thus demonstrating that colonial activity is futile when it comes to destroying institutions of Diné governance. Fuzzy set methodology holds that a “recipe” can be illuminated further. Hence, the previously identified four conditions must all be present in order for an institution of Diné governance to go dormant. These four conditions are enough to produce a shock that displaced the *Naachid*. These conditions [removal, war, economic impact, and commitment problems] were only present one time in the known history of colonial interaction with the Diné.

Figure 4 – A Set Theory Depiction of the Causal Mechanism at Work, which Leads to Dormancy in Diné Institutions of Governance



Looking at the coverage percentage of all the events in which all four conditions existed proves the rarity of Diné institutional dormancy. If we take the truth table (Table 4) and convert “yes” answers into 1 and the “no” answers into 0, we can test the consistency and coverage of the four conditions and their relationship to the outcome of institutional dormancy. The level of coverage is only .04 or 4 percent. Hence, 96 percent of the time there was no outcome that indicated an institutional shock had forced anything into dormancy. Dormancy is the most extreme outcome that can be measured.

Conclusion

Diné knowledge does, indeed, take care of itself. These early steps toward linking Peoplehood to resiliency certainly warrant more attention. Shocks to Diné and other indigenous ways of knowing and governing also warrant further investigation. The complexity of the links are certainly daunting but can

be further ascertained with future case study historical research. Four clear case study foci could emerge including other acts of forced removal, active warfare, destruction of political economy, and the inability or unwillingness to enforce treaty obligations either within a single Indigenous nation or across many and organized along time. These horrific shocks, however, can also be further linked to knowledge and dormancy through Peoplehood traits. Knowledge in the land, the ceremonies, the sacred histories, and the languages must be dislodged by some external shock before leaders might decide to internally put a ceremony into dormancy. These shocks rarely occur. The events involving Diné interaction have demonstrated that only once does the history substantiate the alleged loss of an institution called the *Naachid*. The consequences of this new information should allow future research to apply the event testing method to other tribal histories in search of conditions that culminated in institutional or ceremonial dormancy. Looking forward, it is also possible to observe current conditions. If observers notice the re-emergence of conditions, such as those listed here, it might be possible to mitigate dormancy if action is quickly pursued.

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