

# Diné bi Olta or School of the Navajos: Educational Experiments at Rough Rock Demonstration School, 1966...1970

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## I INTRODUCTION

The Diné bi olta or "school of the Navajos," the Rough Rock Demonstration School, was established in 1966 in the isolated community of Rough Rock, Arizona. At that time, it was the only school that was honored by the Navajos with the name meaning "the school of the Navajos." For more than a century, there were three types of schools for the education of Indian children: missionary schools, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) schools, and public schools. How these schools are perceived by the Navajos can be illustrated by the names in the Navajo language for these different types of schools. In Navajo, missionary schools are called Eneishoodi bi olta. This means "the school of those who drag their clothes," a reference to the robes worn by the first Franciscan priests who came to the reservation. BIA schools are called Washingdoon bi olta, which means "Washington's school," and public schools are called Beligaana bi olta, meaning "Little white man's school."

What is connoted by the different names for the schools? Why was Rough Rock Demonstration School, in the 1960s, the only school hon-

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ored with the name “the school of the Navajos”? In this paper, I will first review the historical background leading up to the establishment of the school, focusing on changes in Indian education at the national level in the late 1960s. The scope will then be narrowed down to innovative educational experiments at the small community on the Navajo reservation called Rough Rock. There are many factors that may be associated with the innovations at Rough Rock, but this paper concentrates on three clusters of those factors: organizational change, curricula reform, and community development. This paper seeks to describe the process of creating “the school of the Navajos” at Rough Rock that contributed to the change in perception by Navajo people toward schools in general. Thus, the thrust of this paper is to determine the historical significance of Rough Rock Demonstration School by focusing on its formative years from 1966 to 1970.

Major studies concerning the Navajos began with anthropological research undertaken jointly as governmental projects. *The Navaho*, co-authored by Clyde Kluckhohn and Dorothea Leighton and published in 1946, is a general sociocultural account of the Navajos, which spearheaded anthropological interest in Navajo culture in the 1940s and 1950s. In contrast to anthropologists, interest in American Indian history was discouraged in the training of American historians until the late 1950s. As Wilcomb E. Washburn and Robert F. Berkhofer, Jr., noted historians, said, the history of American Indians used to be regarded as a marginal topic of conventional history at best, and even considered not a part of American history. The distance between anthropologists and historians has been narrowed, as is well illuminated in the articles that have appeared in *Ethnohistory*, a quarterly journal issued by the American Society for Ethnohistory. At present, despite the wealth of literature concerning the history of Indian affairs in general, relatively few surveys are available that focus exclusively on the history of Indian education. The first major work in this regard is Margaret Connell Szasz’s *Education and the American Indian: The Road to Self-Determination Since 1928*. Covering only briefly a crucial period of change in the 1960s, it nevertheless remains a competent overview of the history of Indian education.<sup>2</sup>

From the late 1960s, Indian education became a major concern of the educational press, which carried an increasing number of scholarly studies on the topic related to bilingual and bicultural programs. Featuring sociopsychological data culled from their previous govern-

mental research, *To Live on This Earth: American Indian Education* by Estelle Fuchs and Robert J. Havighurst provides a well-documented analysis of contemporary educational problems facing the indigenous population nationwide. It is supplemented by a number of surveys by educators and educational researchers devoted to, in this particular case, Navajo education. Based on his profound experiences as an educator and administrator at Navajo schools, Robert A. Roessel, Jr. wrote widely on Rough Rock School and Navajo education, including *Navajo Education in Action: The Rough Rock Demonstration School* and *Navajo Education, 1948–1978: Its Progress and Its Problems*. Teresa L. McCarty’s unpublished doctoral dissertation, “Bilingual-Bicultural Education in a Navajo Community,” thoroughly focuses on the transition of language and cultural programs at the Rough Rock Demonstration School.<sup>3</sup>

There remains, however, a continuing need to update and include native interpretations of events in the history of Indian education in the post World War II era. Consequently, my paper will draw on contemporary works that appeared in the 1960s and 1970s to supplement the scholarly works. Of special note are the voluminous Congressional hearings and research, which remain the most complete documents on oral testimonies provided by tribal representatives.

## II EDUCATIONAL REFORMS IN THE 1960s–1970s

### 1. The Influence of World War II on Navajo Education

Even before the 1960s, when reforms of Indian education gained momentum on a nationwide scale, many Indian leaders had emphasized a need for better schooling. World War II in particular made them realize that formal education was a matter of survival. As three-fourths of the out-of-school Indian children, nationwide, resided in the Navajo reservation in the mid 1940s, a demand for formal education was understandably greater among the Navajos than almost any other tribe. In 1945 there were approximately 20,400 Navajo children between the ages of 6 and 18, of which only about 6,000 were in school.<sup>4</sup> This is mainly due to the relative isolation of the reservation which resulted in limited contact with the dominant society before World War II. As Navajo culture then remained comparatively intact, traditional childrearing practices—raising the next generation not through

formal educational institutions but in kinship-based alliances—were applied to children out of school. Shepherding was the foundation of instruction to form children socially even after its economic value dwindled.<sup>5</sup>

A changing economy, due in part to the livestock reduction program in the 1930s, overgrazing, and the experiences of young Navajos in the military service and defense works during the war accounted for an increase in demands among Navajos for formal education, one that would provide Navajos with new skills and professions. By the mid 1930s, the increased population on the reservation was no longer supported exclusively by the traditional activities of shepherding and farming. During the war, approximately 10,000 Navajos found jobs in the defense industry, which led to an unprecedented flow of population out of the reservation. While 3,300 Navajo men, including those who served as code talkers, were in the military service before the war ended, many were rejected and discharged because of illiteracy in English. Selective Service records then reported that 88 percent out of a total of 4,000 male Navajos between the ages of 18 and 35 were illiterate. More importantly, as the result of inadequate elementary schooling, many Navajo veterans were unable to benefit from the privileges granted in the GI Bill of Rights, which enlarged educational opportunities for the veterans after the war.<sup>6</sup>

In 1946, a delegation of Navajos raised these serious problems and claimed a right for adequate schooling in Washington, D.C. At a Senate hearing, Chee Dodge, Chairman of the Navajo Tribal Council (the governing body of the tribe), first referred to the Treaty of 1868 whereby the U.S. Government agreed to provide a house and an English teacher for every 30 children of school age. Dodge insisted that this provision of the treaty be fulfilled; otherwise, the Navajos would remain unable to “compete with the outside world off the reservation.” Since the Navajos could no longer rely solely on the traditional economy of stock raising for a living, they urgently needed, in the unanimous opinion of the delegates, to acquire a command of English and new skills through schooling.<sup>7</sup>

The Bureau of Indian Affairs then introduced several educational programs geared to young out-of-school Navajos. These included the Special Navajo Educational Program started in 1946 and the Navajo Emergency Education Program in 1954. These federal programs led to expansion of school facilities and an increase in student enrollment. In

the process of implementing these programs, the Navajo Education Committee—appointed by the Tribal Chairman from the Tribal Council members—gained broad experience in coordinating these programs with the federal government. In addition, foresighted members of the Tribal Council established a college scholarship in 1953 by setting aside revenue from the oil field on the reservation. These federal programs and Navajo leadership laid the foundations for educational reforms on the Navajo reservation in the mid 1960s, thereby enabling the Navajos to set a precedent for operating their own schools.

In the short span of two decades after the war, the Navajos made a rapid transition from their traditional way of life to a new way of life based on a wage economy. It is important to note that, in this transitional period when Navajo leaders began to advocate adequate education, schooling could be nothing but foreign to Navajo culture as to how to educate future generations. A Navajo delegate to a House hearing in 1944 clarified that the Navajos needed to learn “the white man’s ways,” something outside of what they already had. Another even stated that teaching the Navajo language at school was unnecessary because it was not the main language in the country.<sup>8</sup> Schools were, for the Navajo leaders in the critical periods of the 1940s and 1950s, where children learned English and new skills in order to survive in a drastically changing economy. It is within this historical context that, in 1966, people at Rough Rock launched themselves on educational experiments to make a school identifiable to them.

## 2. Changes in Indian Education at the National Level: the 1960s–1970s

Scholars and Indian educators consider the late 1960s to the early 1970s to be a crucial period of change in the history of Indian education. Primarily as an offspring of the civil rights movement, educational reforms at that time gained momentum through the federal government’s willingness to tackle inequality and poverty in society.

If children retained a cultural background distinct from the dominant culture, equal opportunity in education seemed, in the 1960s, to demand more than equal treatment. Recognizing unique educational problems facing minority communities, Congress moved to promote new and experimental programs funded by the federal government. Several laws, such as the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, the Economic Opportunity Act, and the Bilingual Education Act of 1968, provided access to federal funding to launch new programs.

With the exception of Indian education, general schooling had been under the jurisdiction of state and local governments since the late nineteenth century onward. The federal initiative in educational reforms nationwide in the 1960s meant a distinct departure from conventional practices.

Although the passage of educational acts and the increase of educational opportunities for minority students were critical changes of the period, they did not necessarily by themselves solve unique problems facing the native population. In accord with these changes, the 1960s saw a surge of native voices demanding policy reforms in Indian affairs, including educational practices. For example, the American Indian Movement (AIM), a political organization founded in 1969, was initially very active in criticizing discriminatory educational practices in several western states. AIM gave its overall support to a law suit against the Minnesota Board of Education for the use of discriminatory history textbooks and helped to win the case.<sup>9</sup>

The upsurge of social movements and new debates over ethnic identity eventually focused attention on reforms in Indian education, followed by the publication of many studies on the issue, which in turn resulted in the passage of comprehensive educational legislation. In 1966, one study, commonly called the Coleman Report, revealed several problems regarding Indian education:

Dropout rates are twice the national average.

The Indian child falls progressively further behind the longer he stays in school.

Indian children in the 12th grade have the poorest self-concept of all minority groups tested. These children often abandon their own pride and their own purpose and leave school to confront a society in which they have been offered neither a place nor a hope. And the consequence of this inadequate education is a life of despair and of hopelessness.

The average Indian income is \$1,500 – 75 percent below the national average.

His unemployment rate is 10 times the national average.

He lives 10 years less than average American.<sup>10</sup>

These statistics from the Coleman Report attracted the attention of senators, even though one study questioned the objectivity in the report's analysis of students' self-esteem by stating "[i]t would seem that a competent scientific study of the self-concept of Indian students would hardly take the data from the Coleman study as a valid report

on Indian high school students.”<sup>11</sup> According to Senator Robert F. Kennedy (Democrat-New York), the status of Indian education described in the Coleman Report represented “a national tragedy and a national disgrace.” Convinced that effective education lay at the heart of any lasting solution, Senators Kennedy and Paul J. Fannin (D-Arizona) took the initiative by establishing a special subcommittee on Indian education under the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare. The subcommittee, chaired first by Robert Kennedy and, after his death, by Senator Edward M. Kennedy (D-Massachusetts), spent two years in examining “the unique educational needs of the American Indians and as a result create the legislation to bring the Indian the advantages the Federal government has historically promised.” Seven volumes of hearing reports and five committee prints were distilled into the subcommittee’s final report, *Indian Education: A National Tragedy—A National Challenge*, commonly called the Kennedy Report.<sup>12</sup>

Under the strong leadership of these senators, the 1970s saw the enactment of precedent-shattering laws affecting Indian education. Examples include the Indian Education Act of 1972 and the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975. These laws authorized “self-determination” by Indian people, meaning the maximum involvement of Indians in the development and implementation of federal programs affecting them.

In fact, the 1970s was a decade of substantial gains for Indian education, especially in terms of secondary and post-secondary schooling. The most significant achievement of the period was the increased enrollment in secondary schooling. Statistics show that 22 percent of all Indians aged 25 and over completed high school in 1970, compared to 55.5 percent of the same age group in 1980. Although there remained a large gap between whites and Indians pursuing college education, the percentage of Indian college graduates doubled between 1970 and 1980 from 3.8 percent to 7.7 percent.<sup>13</sup>

### III EDUCATIONAL EXPERIMENTS AT ROUGH ROCK

#### 1. From Lukachukai to Rough Rock

In August 1964, Congress enacted the Economic Opportunity Act, which was instrumental in providing funds for demonstration projects

in underdeveloped areas. The implication of the act lay in its emphasis on the maximum feasible involvement of the community members concerned. Parallel with the enactment, several Navajo leaders were discussing the problems and needs of Indian education. As recognized by these leaders, particular issues required special attention and improvement. These included meaningful local school boards, cultural identification, community development, and native language learning. In 1965, the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) approved a demonstration proposal submitted by those Navajo leaders and granted \$214,300 to the Navajo tribe. A school at Lukachukai, located east of Rough Rock, was chosen for the project. In this proposal, the BIA would continue to provide funds for general school operation, while the OEO would fund experimental projects. But, to borrow the words of Robert Roessel Jr., the first director of Rough Rock Demonstration School, "a two-headed horse rarely wins a race," and the two-headed administration failed within a year.<sup>14</sup> The failure of the Lukachukai project illustrated the kinds of administrative changes necessary to achieve maximum involvement of the community members.

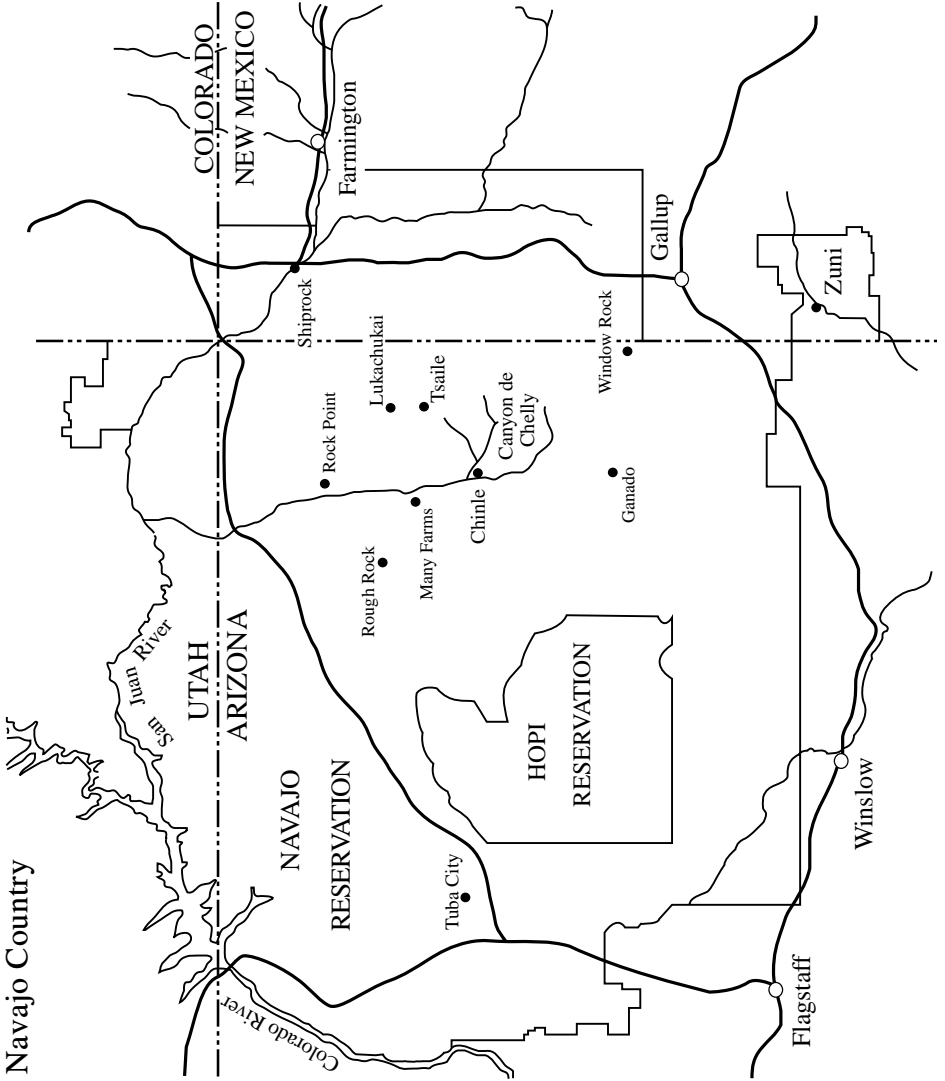
As the Lukachukai school was about to revert to a regular BIA school, the BIA happened to be completing a new school building at Rough Rock. Given the cooperation among Navajo leaders, the BIA, and the OEO, the time was ripe to try another experiment based on the lessons learned at Lukachukai. The BIA turned over both the school building and funds, which had been appropriated to operate the school as a BIA facility, to the Navajo tribe.

Rough Rock Demonstration School began operation on July 1, 1966. Initially, the school offered grades 1 through 6. It added the 7th grade in 1967 and a high school in 1974. Rough Rock School was built to serve students from the immediate area; however, due to defective road conditions, it was impossible to operate the school as a day school. Of an enrollment of 317 children, 266 were boarding students, ranging in age from 6 through 16 in 1968. Many children enrolled in the first year came from Navajo-speaking families and had never attended school before. As an isolated and impoverished community of 1,200 persons, Rough Rock was separated from the nearest hard-surfaced road by approximately 25 kilometers of unpaved roads. Most residences in the community did not have the basic amenities of running water and electricity.<sup>15</sup>

The seemingly moderate project at Rough Rock immediately



Map: Navajo Country



attracted nationwide attention as a revolutionary experiment in Indian education. During its first year and a half, the school hosted more than 12,000 visitors from 42 states and 8 foreign countries, including representatives from 86 Indian tribes. Dillon Platero, the second director of the school, recalled “it was as if we were in a fish bowl.”<sup>16</sup>

## 2. The First Contract School: Organizational Changes

When one sees the surprising publicity for such a small and remote school, the natural question to ask is what kind of experiments Rough Rock School attempted to carry out. With respect to school administration, Rough Rock School took new and concrete steps to maximize local voices in its operation. Unlike the Lukachukai school, Rough Rock School established DINE, a private, non-profit organization composed of Navajo leaders, responsible for receiving and disbursing the initial funds from the OEO and the BIA. DINE is the acronym for “Demonstration in Navajo Education,” and at the same time, it means, in the Navajo language, “the People” or “the Navajos.”<sup>17</sup> The first Board of Directors for DINE consisted of three leading Navajos, Allen D. Yazzie, Gun Gorman, and Ned Hatathli. The first director of the school was Robert Roessel, Jr., who was married to a Navajo and had been devoted to Navajo education since the early 1950s. The School Board then appointed Dillon Platero, former chairman of the Navajo Education Committee, as director in July 1969. With Navajo leaders in the top administrative positions, DINE was expected to provide the more flexible organizational structure indispensable for maximizing community involvement.

More importantly, Rough Rock School Board was different from those that existed in other schools with a substantial Indian enrollment. Elected by the community members at a chapter meeting in June 1966, the five members of the Board were all Navajos.<sup>18</sup> The Board also retained substantial power in the operation of the school, subject only to the authority of the directors of DINE.

Only two of the first Board members had received any formal education, whereas none of the other members had received a single day of formal education. Only one member, the president, spoke English. Yet, they were typical Navajos in their middle age with regard to their educational background and language use. A study indicated that, as of 1959, 37 percent of the residents in the Many Farms and Rough Rock area were English speakers. The majority of them fell into the 14 to 29

years of age category. Such information indicated that the younger generation was more often exposed to English in educational and work situations.<sup>19</sup> In spite of their lack of formal education, considered essential in the mainstream society, the Board members challenged the norm and took the responsibility for promoting experiments with wisdom and insight. Of special significance was the conducting of Board meetings in the Navajo language which enabled community members to identify the school as theirs.

Since Rough Rock School was separate from the BIA school system, the community enjoyed more freedom in the election of School Board members and the hiring of teachers and staff members. Since Civil Service requirements did not apply to Rough Rock School, the Board and community were not bound by its rules, which required for the Board members a specified period of formal education and, in the case of a teaching position, training in education or relatively high scores on national teaching tests. In 1968, of 82 full-time staff members at the school, 60 of them were Navajos. Many community members, who could not be hired at other schools because of a lack of high school diplomas and English proficiency, were employed in various positions. These positions included dormitory aids, janitors, and trainees.<sup>20</sup> At Lukachukai, the Civil Service requirements had proved a barrier, preventing the local School Board from functioning as the community members wished. Rough Rock School had learned an important lesson from the failure of Lukachukai.

The unique experiment at Rough Rock created a new administrative arrangement based on a contract between the tribe and the BIA. The founding of Rough Rock meant that a fourth type, a contract school, was added to the existing types of schools for the native population: mission schools, BIA schools, and public schools.<sup>21</sup>

### 3. The School of the Navajos: Innovation in the Classroom

The organizational changes that brought about a new type of school did not automatically create a new learning environment in the classroom. Rather, they served as a means to attain other objectives. John Dick, a member of the School Board, explained Rough Rock's educational goals in 1967:

We want to find ourselves to renew our acquaintance with ourselves. And this is what we are trying to do here. We want the English and the Navajo cultures to be combined. The teaching of both cultures has been

a major concern and purpose of this board in its role as the controlling and policy-making group of the school.

Anita Pfeiffer, then principal of the school, apparently shared this goal, stating “the best part about this school is that the children are learning who they are.”<sup>22</sup> In short, the school sought to realize a “both-and” approach which held that both Indian and Anglo ways should be taught. The Indian child would accordingly develop a positive identity while learning to live and work in the mainstream culture. This approach differed entirely from the prevalent “either-or” approach, which meant that one should forsake one’s culture and traditions in favor of the way of life of the dominant society.<sup>23</sup>

This new approach at Rough Rock also contributed to a change in attitudes toward schools on the part of the Navajos. Historically, the concept of schooling was foreign to most native cultures, as was the case with Navajo culture. Since the 1880s when the federal boarding school system was introduced, a school was nothing but the product of Euro-American tradition, ignoring existing patterns of native child-rearing. Indian students were often punished if they spoke their native languages at school. Wade Hadley, former president of the Rough Rock School Board, remembered that “[w]e were punished if they caught us talking Navajo. There was yellow laundry soap which was used to wash our mouths out if we spoke Navajo.” The comments of a Navajo employee at Rough Rock showed that many students consequently suffered from low self-esteem:

When I went to school I was punished when I spoke Navajo. So I became ashamed that I was Navajo. On questionnaires where they asked if you spoke English at home I always said I did although it was not true. I did this because I was ashamed of who I was.<sup>24</sup>

It was therefore impossible for many Navajos to identify such foreign institutions as their schools. Viewed against a history of the Navajos’ distrust of schools, Rough Rock School represented a major breakthrough in Indian education. It did so by providing a learning environment that incorporated Navajo language and culture. Ned Hatathli, treasurer of DINE, said with conviction, “it is here at the Rough Rock school that we are reviving our knowledge and culture.”<sup>25</sup> At Rough Rock School, people were confident in calling it the school of the Navajos.

A change in the philosophy of education culminated in tentative

yet concrete bilingual and bicultural instruction in the classroom. For instance, the 1st graders, only one of whom had a command of English, received language instruction in the following way. The teachers divided one classroom into two sections, and children were told to speak in Navajo on one side of the room and in English on the other. The Navajo area had books in Navajo and objects with which they were familiar, while the English area had books in English and things that reminded them of learning a new culture and language. Teachers went back and forth between the two areas to teach each language. At the end of the year, the room was no longer divided and children could choose which language they would use.<sup>26</sup>

The regular schedule of language instruction was designed to offer four hours of spoken and written Navajo and two hours of spoken English from kindergarten to the 2nd grade, followed by two hours of spoken and written Navajo and four hours of spoken and written English in grades 3 to 9. Portions of regular classes such as arithmetic and social studies were also held in Navajo on an experimental basis. Besides cultural references within language instruction, Navajo culture was implemented on a trial basis in social studies, art, home economics, and science courses. As for the lower three grades and pre-school sections, 20 minutes of class were set aside daily and 30 minutes in grades 3 through 6 for cultural identification lessons. The lessons covered Navajo history, traditional ceremonies, tribal government, and biographies of successful Navajos.<sup>27</sup>

Implementing such an innovative “both-and” approach, however, proved difficult because there were few textbooks, teacher guides, and workbooks on Navajo culture suitable for a classroom setting. In spite of financial difficulties, in March 1967, the Navajo Curriculum Center was thus established. The principal functions of the center for the year 1968–69 included producing curriculum materials based on Navajo culture and heritage, providing technical assistance to any school willing to implement a Navajo social studies program, and serving as a repository for resource information and data on Navajo history and culture. Initially, the center was dedicated to publishing seven books for Navajo children such as *Black Mountain Boy*, *Grandfather Stories of the Navahos*, and *Navaho Biographies*.<sup>28</sup> In this book project, local Navajo people were involved in the whole process of publication from initial interviewing to translating, illustrating, and evaluating materials.

#### 4. The Community School: Economic Development

Conceived of as a community school serving not only children but also adults, the school was intended to provide needed services for the whole community. A school laundromat project illustrates its community development orientation. In the 1960s, most BIA boarding schools contracted with outside laundry firms in “border” towns adjacent to the reservation such as Gallup and Farmington to provide linen services for dormitories. At Rough Rock, by purchasing washing machines and placing them in the dormitory, the school gave employment to unskilled local residents who were hired to do the laundry. The laundry appliances were also made available to the community. As most residents in those days hauled water from five miles away and had no artificial light at home, except for kerosene lamps and light given off by the stove, the project had more significance than one might expect.<sup>29</sup> Other projects included basic English and arithmetic programs geared to the adults, an arts and craft program, and a Navajo mental health project.

The Rough Rock community was regarded as a lower-income area in comparison to other sections on the reservation. A survey reported that incomes for the families in the Many Farms and Rough Rock area appeared to be far lower than that for the Navajo reservation as a whole (\$586 per annum compared to \$2,335). Given the economic situation, the School Board had a strong interest in community development. Robert Roessel, Jr., as an experienced school administrator, once proposed that the school should pay its employees at least as much as other BIA schools did in order to secure capable staff members. The Board members including John Dick declined the proposal and decided to pay half as much and hire twice as many workers. Later, Roessel admitted that their decision served best the needs of the community. It turned out that the school enjoyed twice as many supporting voices from the community. In the fiscal year of 1967, school-related jobs raised annual per capita income more than twofold, from approximately \$85 to \$214.<sup>30</sup>

## VI THE IMPACT OF EDUCATIONAL EXPERIMENTS

### 1. Pros and Cons Surrounding Rough Rock School

As is true for any educational experiment, there were pros and cons

concerning Rough Rock School. Some Navajos were critical of inadequate instruction in Navajo culture and language. A memo to all school staff members issued by the School Board in November 1967 clarifies their disappointment. It stated “[w]e were both shocked and dismayed to hear the reports that our children in Phase I (lower elementary grades) are not receiving instruction in Navajo culture.” The Board asserted that both Navajo language and culture be taught every day of the school week.<sup>31</sup>

Some critics, on the other hand, questioned the validity of Rough Rock’s culture and language instruction. Donald Erickson of the University of Chicago pointed out that “a surprising number of unlettered parents complained that the school was devoting too much attention to Navajo culture” at the expense of skills the children would later need to secure employment.<sup>32</sup> Erickson conducted research on Rough Rock School from September 1968 to April 1969. As the final report of his research was submitted to the Office of Economic Opportunity, the school’s major funding source, it stirred controversy among the Navajos. Although it recommended continuance of the OEO funding, the underlying tone of the report was rather negative. It stated that Rough Rock’s lofty ideals and publicity tended to overshadow its weaknesses and obscure its accountability, that its highly advertised bilingual and bicultural programs were less effective than similar instruction offered at Rock Point BIA School—a school operated within the traditional bureaucratic structure without the liberal funding Rough Rock enjoyed—on the Navajo reservation, and that similar innovations were occurring within the existing organizational structure.<sup>33</sup>

An article in the *Navajo Times* described Erickson’s report as “a blanket indictment.” When asked for comments on the report, Campbell Pfeiffer, a former staff member of the school, questioned the objectivity of Erickson’s fieldwork methodology. It seemed that Erickson almost urged people to gossip about other people by focusing too intently on negative and personal problems. As for bilingual and bicultural programs, Anita Pfeiffer commented that because of their cumulative nature, one could not evaluate any bilingual and bicultural programs until students completed at least the 7th grade. Erickson’s study appeared in 1969, only three years after the foundation of the school. “We need to believe in bicultural education, and be patient,” she added.<sup>34</sup>

In response to the critical study on Rough Rock, the Rough Rock School Board sent a telegram to the OEO, denouncing the biased interpretation of observations by the principal investigator. Then the Board requested that four prominent Navajo leaders evaluate the school. The Board expected constructive and straightforward suggestions and comments instead of "some high sounding mishmash of research terms that do nothing but add further confusion." After the investigation, Navajo evaluators affirmed the significance of the school as a catalyst for further educational reforms and the importance of local control with continued federal funding. At the same time, they recommended that the coordination among subjects and between grade levels be improved, especially in the bilingual and bicultural areas. Interestingly enough, their evaluations considered the happiness of the students, which was a vague but crucial indicator of success of the school. Navajo evaluators observed that the children enrolled in Rough Rock Demonstration School enjoyed their environment, which enhanced their motivation to learn.<sup>35</sup> This evaluation implies that the level of success should be measured in a subjective manner in addition to an objective one such as test scores.

The Board and staff members of Rough Rock School were not disturbed by Erickson's report since they were confident about controlling their own school. Dillon Platero affirmed that he believed in what he was doing as director of the school. Negative evaluations in the future, however, seemed likely to disrupt the operation of experimental projects. Consequently, the Board had forbidden future evaluations until 1975 when federal legislation made school evaluation a requisite for contract schools.<sup>36</sup>

## 2. The Significance of Rough Rock Demonstration School

The ongoing controversy over Rough Rock School illuminates how difficult it is to determine whether educational programs are adequate, successful, or efficient. It also sheds light on the question of objective evaluation on any discussion of Indian affairs. Estelle Fuchs and Robert J. Havighurst related their experiences as researchers for a major study on Indian education funded by the U.S. Office of Education:

Objectivity is peculiarly hard to achieve in relation to Indian affairs, because knowledgeable people generally believe that Indians have been mistreated by the dominant American society, and we are under moral obligation to make up as far as possible for past mistakes and mistreat-



ment. The authors of this book share this belief.<sup>37</sup>

Leslie Marmon Silko, a distinguished Laguna Pueblo author, articulated the passion involved in Indian issues:

Most Americans, while they may not know much about Indian cultures or Indian treaty rights, tend to harbor a special sentiment for American Indians that is not held for other minority groups in America.<sup>38</sup>

These statements suggest that issues of Indian education are of an emotionally compelling nature and that political and economic conditions of the dominant society can have a direct influence on such a single educational institution as Rough Rock School.

Moreover, the special relationship between Indian tribes and the federal government accounts for the intrinsic complexity of Indian affairs, entailing Indian collective rights (treaty rights) such as water and fishing rights, tribal land ownership, and inherent sovereignty over certain tribal affairs. Dennis Banks, a co-founder of AIM, characterized the treaty rights by stating that the ultimate goal of AIM was to assert not the civil rights but Indian treaty rights.<sup>39</sup> It is certain that AIM was inspired by the civil rights movement led initially by prominent Black leaders. However, a disparity in causes stemming from the two distinct rights was getting wider, rather than narrowing, in the 1970s among those minority leaders.

While it is this complicated backdrop against which the innovations at Rough Rock must be viewed, the controversy over the school did not in itself eclipse the importance of its educational experiments. What, then, is the significance of Rough Rock School? Dillon Platero answered the question this way: "It is simple. The Navajos run their own school." Rough Rock School sought to realize the fundamental thesis of local control; that is, the Indian people themselves were best able to determine the content and direction of education for their children. The leaders at Rough Rock took the responsibility of making decisions and asserted "the right to be wrong" as a part of the learning process indispensable to any experimental project. It also proved the capacity of Navajo leadership regardless of the lack of formal education. The school inspired a sense of belonging and pride: they had a School Board that "decides what it wants for their children," claimed Dillon Platero in 1969. "We feel this makes our school quite different from the other schools." In a 1976 interview, one high school student observed, "I like this school because Navajo people are running it. If

something is wrong you can go up to them without being ashamed.”<sup>40</sup> In this respect, Rough Rock School was the first school of the Navajos, breaking down a psychological barrier between a community and a school. Even Donald Erickson, the prominent critic of the school, admitted this effect by indicating “when asked to name the two most important Navajo leaders in the community, fifty percent of Rough Rock parents mentioned the school board members, as compared with five percent or less in other communities.”<sup>41</sup>

At the administrative level, Rough Rock School influenced the course of Indian education not only by creating a model for future contract schools but also by serving as a catalyst for innovation for existing BIA and public schools. After Rough Rock School laid the administrative foundation for receiving direct funding through contracts, several other communities began to negotiate for similar arrangements. By 1977, twenty seven schools were contracted to Indian groups for operation. It should be noted, however, that no unanimity exists among various tribes concerning which type of schools is best suitable for their community. White Mountain Apaches, for instance, preferred their school to remain under the auspices of the BIA than to become a contract school.<sup>42</sup>

Meanwhile, in 1968, the Navajo Tribal Council established the Navajo Community College, the first tribal college in the U.S., with Robert Roessel, Jr. as president. He was soon succeeded by Ned Hatathli, a former member of the Board of Directors of Rough Rock School.<sup>43</sup> It shows that many of today’s Navajo educators gained first-hand experience and confidence at Rough Rock School. Later on, the Navajo Community College Act of 1971 and the Tribally Controlled Community College Assistance Act of 1978 were enacted, providing funds for the college and other similar institutions.

Even within the existing administrative structure, innovations at Rough Rock were instrumental in accelerating several experiments among other schools. In 1960, Rock Point BIA School on the Navajo reservation, while far less publicized nationally than Rough Rock School, launched a modest English as a Second Language program. The principal of Rock Point School commented that the existence of Rough Rock School extended Rock Point’s freedom to experiment within the structure of the BIA.<sup>44</sup>

Rough Rock School elicited considerable support from Congress, particularly from the Senate. The graduation address at the end of the

1968-69 school year was given by Senator Edward Kennedy. President Richard Nixon also turned his attention to Rough Rock School. In his Special Message to Congress on Indian Affairs on July 8, 1970, President Nixon observed that the Rough Rock School was a notable example of "local Indian control."<sup>45</sup> These events symbolized the exceptionally favorable political climate Rough Rock enjoyed in its early years. Many national studies and official statements on Indian affairs repeatedly mentioned that Rough Rock School had set a precedent for local community control of schooling.

The area of economic development, however, became problematic as liberal federal grants gradually decreased. Erickson's report attributed the initial success of Rough Rock's community development programs to their total dependency on rather precarious funds from outside sources. It stated that "few people would doubt, demonstration or not, that using federal funds to create rotating employment opportunities for at least 50 percent of family breadwinners (a very conservative estimate at Rough Rock) would contribute considerably to the well being of an impoverished community."<sup>46</sup> A similar criticism is that costs on a per-pupil basis are higher at Rough Rock than those at other BIA and public schools.

Although Rough Rock did rely on remarkably generous financial support, these assumptions overlook two critical points. First, Rough Rock School operates non-educational programs including a sewer system, fire department, and housing. At other BIA and public schools, the expenses involved in these programs, if any, are charged to accounts that are not for education. The second point has to do with treaty rights. With no local tax base, schools under the jurisdiction of the BIA are mostly dependent on federal funds. Therefore, in the case of Indian education, local control over education "does not mean complete local financing of that education," said Dillon Platero. This is not contradictory, in the opinion of Navajo leaders, because the Treaty of 1868 clearly states a federal obligation to provide Navajo children with a formal education.<sup>47</sup>

Curriculum reforms turned out to be controversial as well. A feasibility study conducted in 1976 by a private consultant confirmed several problems on curriculum development at Rough Rock School. It concluded that the school lacked well-defined policies, procedures, and written guidelines pertaining to coordination among the grades and with the community.<sup>48</sup> It implies that, after a decade of operation,

Rough Rock School was still struggling with the difficult task of making two antithetical goals compatible.

As far as its early years are concerned, the whole community, except for one or two families, supported Navajo culture and language instruction. Many students as well as staff members appreciated the opportunity to learn about their own culture and language at school. In a 1977 interview, one high school student commented, "I like to learn Navajo language and culture at school because it is my heritage. Perhaps your parents don't know it all and besides it's good to get a different point of view." A Navajo administrator articulated:

English was forced into my mouth without any respect to my own language. Even today I see many Navajo kids who have lost or never had their culture. When I came to Rough Rock I saw them teaching Navajo culture and language. That was when I woke up. This is what I missed and what I had been searching for.<sup>49</sup>

Rough Rock's efforts to integrate Navajo culture into its regular curriculum must be regarded as a landmark in Indian education. Most educational programs, however, lacked systematic provision and long-term coordination. Many teachers, being uncertain of how to use new materials, failed to utilize the materials developed at the Navajo Curriculum Center. It reveals the fact that curriculum development was, to a considerable extent, beyond the control of an individual school, for it requires consistency of funding and personnel.

## V CONCLUSION

Historically, schools responsible for the education of Indian children had been based on the mainstream ideas of what constituted formal education. The concept of schooling itself was not only foreign to most native people, regardless of the diversity of cultures, but also contradictory to existing native childrearing practices. This is not to suggest that Indian leaders never acknowledged the value of formal education. In the case of the Navajos, World War II as well as a changing economy on the reservation in the 1930s made Navajo leaders turn to formal education. In the 1940s, they had no choice but to regard schools as foreign agents not of their making where their children were supposed to learn new skills including the English language ability.

The late 1960s was a crucial period for educational innovations

nationwide. The emergence of ethnic identity served as a stimulus to reforms making schools accountable to political and social pressures from various cultural groups. It is in this supportive climate for educational reforms at the national level, together with tireless efforts by local people, that a small community called Rough Rock was able to launch into unprecedented educational experiments. Local people called the school *Diné bi olta*, meaning the school of the Navajos. It was indicative of a new perception on the part of the Navajos toward schooling.

The significance of Rough Rock School lies in the fact that it was the first Indian-controlled educational experiment. Viewed from Washington in the 1960s, Rough Rock School might be considered as an ideal political showcase, for it followed the dominant trends of the period. Criticism of Rough Rock from certain educators and researchers, on the other hand, tended to be severe and occasionally even emotional. In spite of all this, from native perspectives, the implication of Rough Rock School is clear: however controversial and imperfect, it was the process of making a once foreign institution meaningful and accountable to them in economic, political, and cultural terms.

The innovations at Rough Rock School also inspired similar educational experiments in other Indian communities elsewhere, which eventually culminated in legislative and administrative changes directly affecting Indian education in the 1970s. Rough Rock School also afforded an opportunity for local people to exercise leadership in operating their own school. More Navajos held top administrative positions in 1976: of the top nine positions including Director and Principals, seven were filled by Navajos and one by a Hopi. More than 60 percent of the teaching positions were held by Navajos. Many of the former students later returned to the school as fully certified teachers, administrators, and supportive staff members.<sup>50</sup>

Given the impact of Rough Rock School, one might want to address the problem of what kept a Rough Rock School from emerging in the past. It is beyond the scope of this essay to explore this question. Suffice it to say that the federal initiative in the educational reforms in the 1960s facilitated the local control of schooling in the area of Indian education. With the exception of Indian education, a tradition of local control has been deeply rooted in American educational life. In contrast, the assumption of federal policy in Indian education was previ-

ously characterized by paternalism over every aspect of school operation. In view of this, Rough Rock School was the first school to be run by a locally elected governing board which had the right and responsibility to make decisions concerning school policy and administration. Too often there is a disparity between legislation and the actual reforms; however, the financial aid made available through the OEO and other educational laws such as the Bilingual Education Act were indeed a significant contribution to make Rough Rock School experiments possible. These changes were initially made through events outside the reservation such as the civil rights movement followed by federal initiatives. Yet, one needs to be aware of inherent collective rights to account for Indian affairs in such a way as to understand the fundamental issues unique to Native Americans.

Also, there remains serious questions native educators confront today: on what aspects of culture are the curricula based? How can one balance the two major educational goals of instilling in Indian children a sense of identity as individuals with distinct cultural backgrounds and providing them with skills to cope with the world beyond the reservation? There is no consensus among the Navajos on this matter, for they, like other groups, are not monolithic in social, cultural, and economic terms. The fact is that there are some people, both Navajos and non-Navajos, who consider Navajo culture and language as an obstacle to success. They assert that "the school must not waste its time teaching these because the key to success is the ability to compete with the white man on his own terms and in his own way." The opposite position on cultural instruction often stemmed from the same experiences in the past. While many Navajos value Navajo language and culture instruction at schools, some insist that "education should be all *bilagaana*," which means "the white man's way." The contradictory responses among people often frustrate teachers and staff members at schools. A staff member at Rough Rock explained the situation as follows: the past experience of being punished for speaking Navajo "put a latch in your mind against your culture. You say, 'I don't want to go back to that!' That's what we've got to deal with, when your own people are against this bilingual-bicultural philosophy."<sup>51</sup> There is also a controversy over the content of cultural instruction. Some people believe a certain element of culture, in particular of a religious nature, should not be taught at school.

Undoubtedly, the case presented here is very much in progress,

with many issues yet to be resolved, and Indian education at present faces many challenges and difficulties. After thirty years of operation, Rough Rock School is not immune to problems commonly shared by on- and off-reservation schools: inconsistent federal funding, high teacher and staff turnover, high drop-out rates, and alcohol and other substance-related problems among students. Navajo culture and language instruction is still controversial as well. Navajo studies is regrettably no longer at the core of the school's curriculum regardless of support from many parents and students.<sup>52</sup>

Such a lack of direction is felt to be disheartening in view of the enthusiasm and integrity commonly shared among people involved in the earlier experiments. The school's financial condition has deteriorated mainly because of economic and political changes at the national level. In this respect, the Kennedy Report had foresight in predicting future situations. It observed in 1969:

We are shocked at what we discovered.

Others before us were shocked. They recommended and made changes. Others after us will likely be shocked, too—despite our recommendations and efforts at reform. For there is so much to do—wrong to right, omissions to fill, untruths to correct—that our own recommendations, concerned as they are with education alone, need supplementation across the whole board of Indian life.<sup>53</sup>

Nevertheless, the past two decades have seen further involvement of native leaders in federal Indian affairs and an unprecedented cooperation among the indigenous peoples of the world. The cooperative networking among indigenous people on a global scale has provided more versatile perspectives on similar problems confronting them. In 1983, for instance, collaboration took place between the Kamehameha Early Education Program (KEEP), created in Hawaii in 1970, and Rough Rock Demonstration School. It sought to apply the Kamehameha program to Navajo children who were culturally different from native Hawaiians but had similar academic difficulties. The KEEP/Rough Rock experiment was shared with educators and administrators from other indigenous communities worldwide at the World Indigenous Peoples Conference on Education held in Albuquerque, New Mexico in June 1996.

These changes were reflected in the final report of the Indian Nations at Risk Task Force chartered by the U.S. Department of Edu-

cation in 1990. Unlike the Kennedy Report, many members of this national study were Native Americans, headed by William G. Demmert, Jr., a prominent Indian educator at the time. Demmert and Terrel H. Bell, former U.S. Secretary of Education, elucidated the current situation in the final report:

The issues facing Native communities and Native education in the United States are similar to issues facing Native populations worldwide. In effectively responding to these issues, we can offer model solutions to a world that is becoming increasingly culturally diverse yet interdependent.<sup>54</sup>

By offering a concrete model for further constructive discussion and action in educational reforms, the educational experiment at Rough Rock School in the 1960s retains a considerable degree of significance that goes beyond national boundaries.

### NOTES

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to Professor Anita Pfeiffer and Dr. Margaret Connell Szasz of the University of New Mexico, under whose auspices I began my research on the School. I wish to thank Ms. Mary Alice Tsosie of the Center for Southwest Research of the University of New Mexico General Library, Dr. Robert A. Roessel, Jr. and Mr. Dillon Platero.

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, *Indian Education: Hearings before Special Subcommittee on Indian Education of the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare*, 90th Cong., 1st sess., 14 December 1968, 14. In 1967, for instance, the BIA schools nationwide enrolled approximately 36% of the Indian students while the public schools enrolled nearly 60% of those students.

<sup>2</sup> Clyde Kluckhohn and Dorothea Leighton, *The Navaho* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1946; reprint, 1974); Robert F. Berkhofer, Jr., "Cultural Pluralism Versus Ethnocentrism in the New Indian History," Wilcomb E. Washburn, "Distinguishing History from Moral Philosophy and Public Advocacy," in *The American Indian and the Problem of History*, ed. Calvin Martin (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 35, 91; and Margaret Connell Szasz, *Education and the American Indian: The Road to Self-Determination Since 1928* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1977). For discussions of the intersection of history and anthropology, see, for instance, William C. Sturtevant, "Anthropology, History, and Ethnohistory," *Ethnohistory* 13, no. 1-2 (1966): 1-51; Robert C. Euler, "Ethnohistory in the United States," *Ethnohistory* 19, no. 3 (1972): 201-7; and James Axtell, *The European and the Indian: Essays in the Ethnohistory of Colonial North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981), chap. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Estelle Fuchs and Robert J. Havighurst, *To Live on This Earth: American Indian Education* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1972; reprint, Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1983); Robert A. Roessel, Jr., *Navajo Education in Action: The*



*Rough Rock Demonstration School* (Chinle, Ariz.: Navajo Curriculum Center, Rough Rock Demonstration School, 1977); Robert A. Roessel, Jr., *Navajo Education, 1948–1978: Its Progress and Its Problems* (Rough Rock, Ariz.: Navajo Curriculum Center, Rough Rock Demonstration School, 1979); and Teresa L. McCarty, “Bilingual-Bicultural Education in a Navajo Community” (Ph.D. diss., Arizona State University, 1984).

<sup>4</sup> Robert W. Young, comp., *The Navajo Yearbook: 1951–1961: A Decade of Progress*, Report no. 8 (Window Rock, Ariz.: Navajo Agency, 1961), 356.

<sup>5</sup> For a discussion of the response of Navajo representatives to educational reforms in the 1930s–40s, see Mizuno Yumiko, “Ibunka toshiteno Gakko: Nyudiru-ki no Kyouikukaikaku to Nabahozoku” [Schools as Foreign Institutions: Reforms in Navajo Education in the New Deal Era], *Amerikashi-Kenkyu* [Studies of American History] 20 (1997): 58–74.

<sup>6</sup> L. Madison Coombs, *Doorway Toward The Light: The Story of the Special Navajo Education Program* (Lawrence, Kans.: Haskell Institute Publication Service, 1962), 5; “Resolution of Navajo Veterans of Foreign Wars and American Legion,” quoted in U.S. Congress, Senate, *Navajo Indian Education: Hearing before the Committee on Indian Affairs on S. J. Res. 79*, 79th Cong., 2d sess., 14 May 1946, 17.

<sup>7</sup> U.S. Congress, *Navajo Indian Education: Hearing*, 2, 3, 12, 15.

<sup>8</sup> U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Indian Affairs, *Investigate Indian Affairs: Hearings before a Subcommittee of the Committee on Indian Affairs*, pt. 3, 78th Cong., 2d sess., 14 November 1944, 864, 875.

<sup>9</sup> Morita Yuri, *Seinaru Tamashii: Gendai Amerika Indian Shidosha Denisu Bankusu wa Kataru* [A Sacred Soul: Dennis Banks, the Leader of AIM Speaks] (Tokyo: Asahi Shinbun Sha, 1989), 29, 133.

<sup>10</sup> James S. Coleman and others, *Equality of Educational Opportunity* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1966), quoted in U.S. Congress, *Indian Education: Hearings*, 5.

<sup>11</sup> Fuchs and Havighurst, *To Live*, 296.

<sup>12</sup> U.S. Congress, *Indian Education: Hearings*, 8, 9; U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, *Indian Education: A National Tragedy—A National Challenge*, Senate Report no. 501, 91st Cong., 1st sess., serial 12836–1, xi.

<sup>13</sup> C. Matthew Snipp, *American Indian: The First of This Land* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1989), 189–90.

<sup>14</sup> Roessel, *Navajo Education in Action*, 7, 8.

<sup>15</sup> Anita Pfeiffer, “Educational Innovation,” *Journal of American Indian Education* 7, no. 3 (May 1968): 24.

<sup>16</sup> Mr. Dillon Platero, interview by author, tape recording, Albuquerque, N. Mex., 14 October, 1996. Mr. Platero was deputy director of Rough Rock School from 1967 to 1968 and director from 1968 to 1973. He became director of the Division of Education of the Navajo Tribal Council and later joined the College of Education at the University of New Mexico in 1977.

<sup>17</sup> The nature of federal funding required a responsible corporation, in Rough Rock’s case, DINE. Later, in 1970, DINE went out of existence and the School Board became the legal contracting agency. Roessel, *Navajo Education in Action*, 28–9.

<sup>18</sup> A chapter is the local unit of Navajo tribal government and Rough Rock became the one hundredth chapter in February 1968. School Board membership was increased to seven in the fall of 1967. Broderick H. Johnson, *Navaho Education at Rough Rock* (Rough Rock, Ariz.: Rough Rock Demonstration School, D.I.N.E., Inc., 1968), 29.

<sup>19</sup> Tom Sasaki, “Socioeconomic Survey of the Many Farms and Rough Rock Navajos,” in Young, comp., *The Navajo Yearbook*, 106; Johnson, *Navaho Education*,

42.

<sup>20</sup> Johnson, *Navaho Education*, 38; Roessel, *Navajo Education in Action*, 10.

<sup>21</sup> It should be noted that there were several precedents of tribal schools. In the nineteenth century, the five main southeastern Indian tribes—the Cherokee, Creek, Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Seminole—developed school systems operated and financed by themselves. These tribal schools were abolished by the year 1906, when the state of Oklahoma was created and came under the control of the federal government. See Fuchs and Havighurst, *To Live*, 6–7.

<sup>22</sup> Broderick H. Johnson, ed., *Indian Community in Action* (Tempe, Ariz.: Bureau of Publications, Arizona State University, 1967), 85; Estelle Fuchs, “Learning to be Navaho-Americans: Innovation at Rough Rock,” *Saturday Review* 50 (16 September 1967): 99.

<sup>23</sup> U.S. Congress, *Indian Education: Hearings*, 15.

<sup>24</sup> Roessel, *Navajo Education in Action*, 39, 133. In the 1930s, under the leadership of John Collier as Commissioner, the BIA introduced several bicultural programs which reflected some aspects of native cultures and languages. Few Indians took the initiative in this reform, and it was phased out as the U.S. entered World War II. See Szasz, *Education and the American Indian*, chap. 5–7.

<sup>25</sup> Johnson, *Navaho Education*, 59.

<sup>26</sup> Ms. Anita Pfeiffer, interview by author, tape recording, Albuquerque, N. Mex., 9 November 1995. Ms. Pfeiffer worked at Rough Rock from 1966 to 1972 first as an elementary school teacher and then as principal. She later became the executive director of the Division of Education of the Navajo Tribal Council, and is currently on the faculty of the College of Education at the University of New Mexico.

<sup>27</sup> Fuchs and Havighurst, *To Live*, 209; Johnson, *Navaho Education*, 38; and Johnson, ed., *Indian Community*, 212.

<sup>28</sup> Gary Witherspoon, “Navaho Curriculum Center,” *Journal of American Indian Education* 7, no. 3 (May 1968): 39; Vada Carlson and Gary Witherspoon, *Black Mountain Boy: A Story of the Boyhood of John Honie* (Rough Rock, Ariz.: Navaho Curriculum Center, Rough Rock Demonstration School, 1968); Sydney M. Callaway, Gary Witherspoon, and others, *Grandfather Stories of the Navahos* (Rough Rock, Ariz.: Navaho Curriculum Center, Rough Rock Demonstration School, 1968); and Virginia Hoffman and Broderick H. Johnson, *Navajo Biographies* (Chinle, Ariz.: Rough Rock Demonstration School, 1970).

<sup>29</sup> Mr. Campbell Pfeiffer, interview by author, tape recording, Albuquerque, N. Mex., 9 November 1995; Donald Erickson and Henrietta Schwartz, “Community School at Rough Rock: An Evaluation for the Office of Economic Opportunity,” Document PB 184571, Springfield, Va.: U.S. Department of Commerce, 1969, 2.11. Mr. Pfeiffer worked for Rough Rock Demonstration School from 1966 to 1971 as adult educator and community developer.

<sup>30</sup> Sasaki, “Socioeconomic Survey,” 103; Dr. Robert A. Roessel, Jr., interview by author, tape recording, Tsaile, Ariz., 12 September 1996; and Teresa L. McCarty, “Bilingual-Bicultural Education,” 78.

<sup>31</sup> Roessel, *Navajo Education in Action*, 50.

<sup>32</sup> Donald Erickson, “Failure in Navaho Schooling,” *Parents’ Magazine* 45 (September 1970): 111; Donald Erickson, “Custer Did Die for Our Sins!,” *School Review* 79 (November 1970): 80.

<sup>33</sup> Erickson and Schwartz, “Community School,” 1.7, 9.4–5.

<sup>34</sup> Mr. Campbell Pfeiffer, interview by author; Ms. Anita Pfeiffer, interview by author.

<sup>35</sup> McCarty, "Bilingual-Bicultural Education," 94; John Y. Begaye, Samuel W. Billison, Herbert Blatchford, Sr., and Henry D. Gatewood II, *Navajo Evaluators Look At Rough Rock Demonstration School* (Chinle, Ariz.: Rough Rock Demonstration School, 1969), preface, 32–3.

<sup>36</sup> Roessel, *Navajo Education in Action*, 142; Mr. Dillon Platero, interview by author.

<sup>37</sup> Fuchs and Havighurst, *To Live*, 298.

<sup>38</sup> Alvin M. Josephy, Jr., *Now That The Buffalo's Gone*, 3d ed. (Norman, Okla.: University of Oklahoma Press, 1989), n.p.

<sup>39</sup> Morita, *Seinaru Tamashii*, 148.

<sup>40</sup> McCarty, "Bilingual-Bicultural Education," 83; Roessel, *Navajo Education in Action*, 134.

<sup>41</sup> Donald Erickson and Henrietta Schwartz, "What Rough Rock Demonstrates," *Integrated Education* 8 (March–April 1970), 29.

<sup>42</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, *Statistics Concerning Indian Education: Fiscal Year 1977* (Lawrence, Kans.: Haskell Indian Junior College Publication Service, 1977), 34; Fuchs and Havighurst, *To Live*, 319.

<sup>43</sup> The Navajo Community College, renamed as the *Diné* College in 1997, eventually was located in Tsaile, Arizona, and a number of branch campuses were scattered throughout the Navajo reservation. As of 1972, the Navajo Tribal Council had contributed over \$2 million and received no funds from the BIA. See Fuchs and Havighurst, *To Live*, 271.

<sup>44</sup> Erickson and Schwartz, "Community School," 9.1.

<sup>45</sup> *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Richard Nixon, Containing the Public Messages, Speeches, and Statements of the President* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1971), 213.

<sup>46</sup> Erickson and Schwartz, "Community School," 9.8.

<sup>47</sup> Roessel, *Navajo Education, 1948–1978*, 248; Roessel, *Navajo Education in Action*, 139. For excerpts of the treaty, see U.S. Congress, *Navajo Indian Education: Hearing*, 8–11; KC Publications, *Treaty Between the United States of America and the Navajo Tribe of Indians: With a Record of the Discussions that Led to Its Signing* (Las Vegas, Nev.: KC Publications, 1968).

<sup>48</sup> Richard F. Tonigan and others, *1976 Evaluation: Rough Rock Demonstration School, Rough Rock, Arizona* (Albuquerque: Richard F. Tonigan & Associates, Ltd., June 1976), 18, 25.

<sup>49</sup> Roessel, *Navajo Education in Action*, 133, 139.

<sup>50</sup> Roessel, *Navajo Education, 1948–1978*, 216, 221.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 210. McCarty, "Bilingual-Bicultural Education," 148–9.

<sup>52</sup> As of 1994–95, total enrollment from kindergarten to the 12th grade was 946, and the number of drop-out students was 287. See Rebecca L. Izzo, *Statistics on Navajo (DINE) Education 1994–1995* (n.p.: Navajo Division of Education, 1995), 123; Marley Shebala, "Protest at Rough Rock Continues," "Student Feeling Frustrated," "School Traffic Flow Stopped," *Navajo Times*, 25 April 1996, A1, 2, 8.

<sup>53</sup> U.S. Congress, *A National Tragedy*, xi.

<sup>54</sup> U.S. Department of Education, *Indian Nations At Risk: An Educational Strategy for Action: Final Report of the Indian Nations At Risk Task Force* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1991), v.