

**WAYS OF BEING IN THE WORLD:
AN INTRODUCTION TO
INDIGENOUS PHILOSOPHIES OF
TURTLE ISLAND**

Kelly Berry, Ed.D.

January 26, 2026

I WANT TO ASSIST THE NON-INDIGENOUS PROFESSOR OF PHILOSOPHY, ONE WHO MIGHT BE LOOKING TO INTRODUCE SOME DIVERSE CONTENT...

- As mentioned before, I grew up in ceremony; I grew up in the community; I grew up learning traditions, songs, dances, spiritual, and origin stories.
- I am familiar with how the land and stories are connected to one another.
- In the culture, we use “Being a Good Relative”

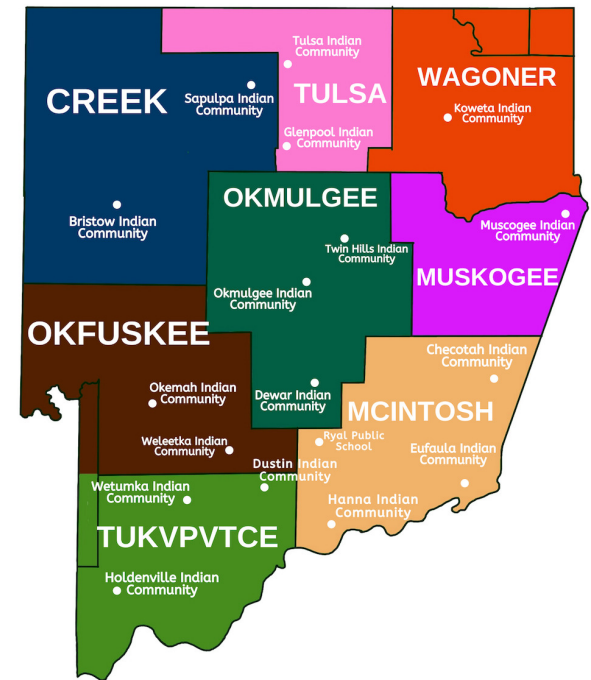
...THOSE WHO DUE TO COLONIALISM MIGHT NOT BE FAMILIAR WITH THE PHILOSOPHICAL THOUGHT OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLE.

- It is not uncommon to teach philosophy or in my case Education and marginalize or peripheralize Indigenous voices and perspectives
- It is not uncommon to not hear Indigenous peoples' stories as many of ours are verbal and passed down through generations.

AWAY FROM THE TEACHINGS AND COMMUNITY OF MY PEOPLE.

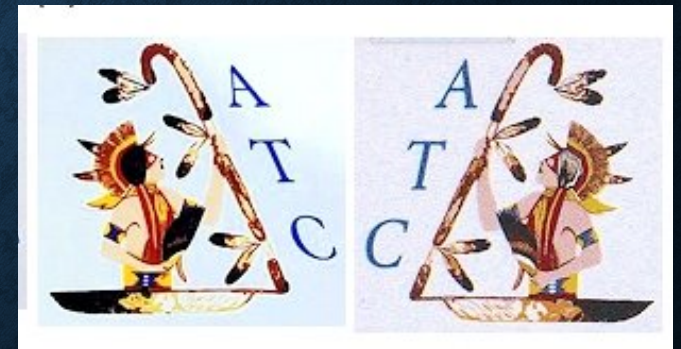
- In Indian Country – People tend to say “Disconnected from the tribe”
- Participated in stomp dances, language programs, involvement in dance grounds

Muscogee (Creek) Nation District Boundaries and Precincts



Also known as the Plains Apache

The Plains Apache language is a member of the Southern Athabaskan language family,



While many do have their certificate degree of Indian blood (Tribal citizen card) and get services from the tribe, many are still disconnected from the tribe.

Finding their Way Back. ---

Knowing the culture, knowing your history, knowing your ceremonies, songs, dances, learning the language

THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN PHILOSOPHY AS WELL AS THOSE ABLE TO TEACH SUCH COURSES IS QUITE SMALL.

- A lot of times, you will have non-Indigenous peoples conduct research and teach courses on Indigenous peoples and philosophies.
- A term you will hear in academia is **Ally**
- What does being an Indigenous Ally mean?

...AN AMBASSADOR OF SORTS

- Supposed to not only know about our own tribal nations but every tribal nation out there.
- Supposed to know about all Indigenous philosophical thoughts and Indigenous frameworks

INDIAN BOARDING SCHOOLS

Colonialism is responsible for so many struggling to find their way home and be accepted as a member and feeling lost through no fault of their own.

Indian boarding schools stripped Indigenous peoples of their language, traditions, ceremonies, which cause many who attended to boarding to forego their native language for English.

Students at Riverside Indian School relayed to me that their grandparents who attended boarding schools, forbade them speak their native languages growing up.

WHO WOULD NOT WANT TO HELP A FELLOW TRAVELER?

- Finding and connecting with other “Disconnected” tribal citizens, who lived away from teachings, community, and ceremony.
- I have taken upon myself to help these travelers in making connections with those in the community who can teach travelers in ways of there tribe.

...CREATED EXACTLY WHAT WAS INTENDED.

- In the Indigenous cultures, many say that Creator guides us in what we do or are doing. We do the work as what the Creator intended us to do.
- Whether the work is easy, difficult, or tedious, we say We are doing the work of and for the community.