

# INDIGENOUS QUEENS

# DECOLONIZE DATA



Urban Indian  
Health Institute

A Division of the Seattle Indian Health Board



Buffalo Barbie (Navajo)

Cover (L to R): Buffalo Barbie (Navajo), Mellonie Moore (Navajo), Landa Lakes (Chickasaw), Sage Channell (Shawnee, Ponca, Otee & Lakota Sioux), Eartha Quake (Navajo)

## INDIGENOUS PEOPLES HAVE ALWAYS BEEN DATA STEWARDS.

We gathered, analyzed, and shared data to ensure the well-being of our people. These data practices were grounded in cultural values, including reciprocity, relationship, responsibility, and accountability. Our culturally-based methodologies sustained thriving communities for thousands of years until interrupted by colonialism.

## HARMFUL COLONIAL PRACTICES ARE EMBEDDED IN WESTERN DATA SYSTEMS.

Data is often gathered to show how badly off Native people are, perpetuating a deficit narrative that is widespread. Western research practices have routinely misidentified or undercounted us, making us invisible in the data UIHI defines this as data genocide. These data issues have allowed the U.S. federal government to avoid fulfilling treaty obligations, which include providing adequate healthcare.



Buffalo Barbie (Navajo)





Eartha Quake (Navajo)

Two Spirit relatives are sacred.  
IndigiQueer relatives are sacred. Our  
existence predates what is now known as  
the United States. Our cultures have long  
recognized and honored our important  
place within our societies. We are  
reclaiming our data, our stories, our joy,  
and our place within the circle.

**WITHOUT ACCURATE DATA, OUR  
COMMUNITIES HAVE STRUGGLED  
TO APPROPRIATELY REPRESENT  
OUR STRENGTHS**

and colonially created disparities in addition to limiting access to resources. Decades of systemic oppression and exclusion have also led many tribal communities and members to avoid participating in data collection.

Two Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and queer (2SLGBTQ+) relatives have been profoundly impacted by data genocide. Western methodologies have led to the non-inclusion of gender diversity, misgendering, deficit-based analysis, and more.

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# NATIVE PEOPLES HAVE LONG CALLED FOR ACCURATE AND FAIR REPRESENTATION.

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Now we are demanding **Indigenous Data Sovereignty**—the right of Indigenous Peoples and nations to govern data about their peoples, lands, and resources (Rainie, S. C., Rodriguez-Lonebear, D., & Martinez, A. (2017a). *Policy Brief: Indigenous Data Sovereignty in the United States.*)



Sage Channell (Shawnee, Ponca, Otoe & Lakota Sioux)

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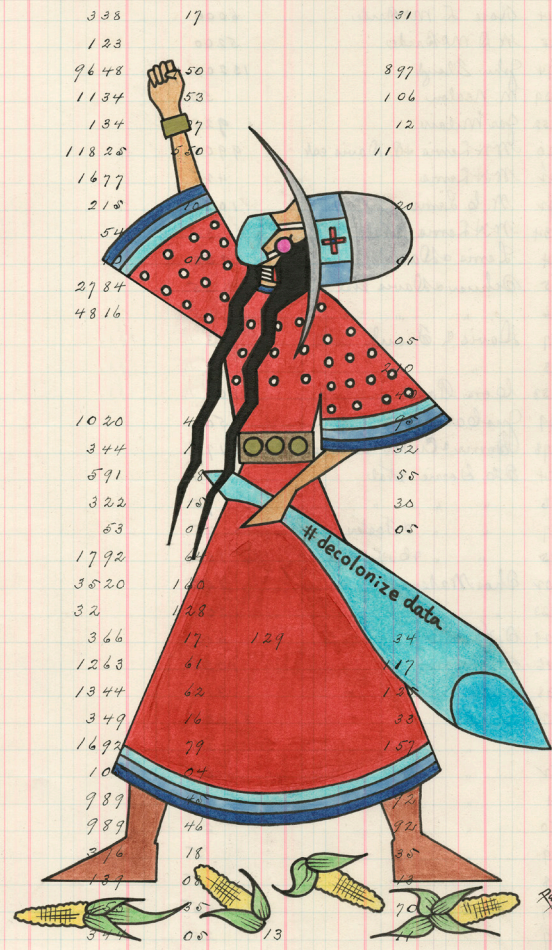
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# DECOLONIZING DATA:

1. Reclaiming the Indigenous value of data collection, analysis, and research.
2. Data for Native people, by Native people.
3. Recognizes the inherent strength of Indigenous people.

Review our Urban Indian Dictionary to learn more.



Penbox



Landa Lakes (Chickasaw)

## WE ARE THE ORIGINAL SCIENTISTS OF THIS LAND AND WE ARE RECLAIMING OUR DATA PRACTICES.

- ▶ **If you are a Native data collector, turn to page 14** for culturally based principles to facilitate data sovereignty.
- ▶ **If you are non-Native, flip to page 20!** We have a section just for you.

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**ARE THEY  
GONE YET?**

**NO?  
WE'LL WAIT.**

**OKAY.**



Now that it's just us NDNs, let's begin.

# IF YOU'RE NDN AF

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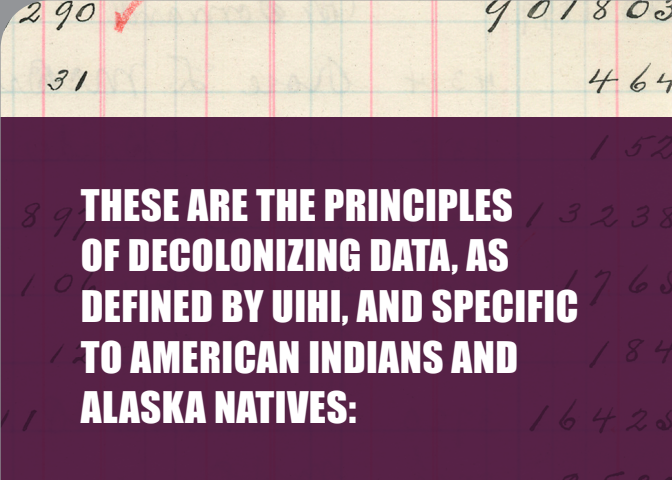
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**THESE ARE THE PRINCIPLES  
OF DECOLONIZING DATA, AS  
DEFINED BY UIHI, AND SPECIFIC  
TO AMERICAN INDIANS AND  
ALASKA NATIVES:**

We have a legal right to data governance through treaty and trust responsibility.

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We are accountable to past, present, and future generations.

We are restoring cultural and spiritual practices that include belief systems that are contrary to western religious practices. This includes but is not limited to spiritual connections to land and animals that inform data practices, beliefs in ancestors guiding data, and other cultural practices that vary by tribe and region.

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We have a responsibility to sustain and build forward tribal strength and vitality.

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Tribal affiliation and/or tribal enrollment data collection is specific to criteria outlined by each unique tribal nation.

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# FOR OUR ALLIES, AKA THE DECOLONIZING DATA HOMIES

While colonial institutions cannot be decolonized, non-Indigenous organizations and people can work to achieve data equity and justice.

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**IN THE CONTEXT OF  
DECOLONIZING DATA, OUR VISION  
FOR THE FUTURE OF ALL NATIVE  
DATA METHODOLOGIES INCLUDES:**

Acknowledgement of harmful data practices coupled with healing, restoration, and reparations.

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Strengths-based data collection, analysis, and dissemination.

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Protective community and cultural factors measured and weighted against disparities and gaps.

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Community governance every step of the way (collection, analysis, dissemination).

Accurate data reporting of race and ethnicity.

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Embedded accountability of entities for collection of race and ethnicity.

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Disaggregation of data by race, ethnicity, and multiple races.

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Undoing STEM education disparities.

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Exploring and refining small populations methodologies.

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Acknowledging community knowledge and investing in data capacity as informed by the community.

Warrants Outstanding Contingent Fund

April	1	Warrants Paid	119	51	Wts Outstanding	984060	
		300	So Balance	88	Wts	985550	
				9697		196991	
May	31-07	Wts	372	1-07	By 10	1888874	
		31-07	Warrants Outstanding	86032	30-07	Wts	1008644
				299959			289752
							28603
							97163
							383197
							2386172
							98656
							337273
Aug	31-07	Wts Outstanding	4138375	Wts	Wts	310108	
							103729
							413837
Sept	30-07	Wts Outstanding	51231	Sept	30-07	Wts Outstanding	413837
							312313
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							607257
							607257
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							70179
							29667
							8689
							78856
							178712
							36618
							34923

## BEFORE YOU GO...

Check out our Best Practices for American Indian and Alaska Native Data Collection guide at [UIHI.org](http://UIHI.org).

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Photography by Steven Yazzie



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