

21-22 F.R.E.E. Theme

Book Club for Belonging:  
Diverse Indigenous  
Perspectives

Pre-Reading Strategies:

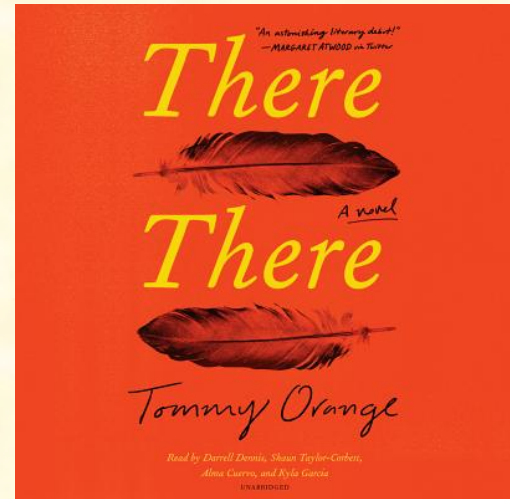
*An Indigenous Peoples' History of the  
United States by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz*

Micaela Rubalcava, Ph.D. Spring 2022

F.R.E.E. - Faculty for Radical  
Enlightenment and Empowerment - an  
interdisciplinary learning community since  
2003, integrates diverse students,  
faculty, and staff into creative  
engagement with big picture themes.

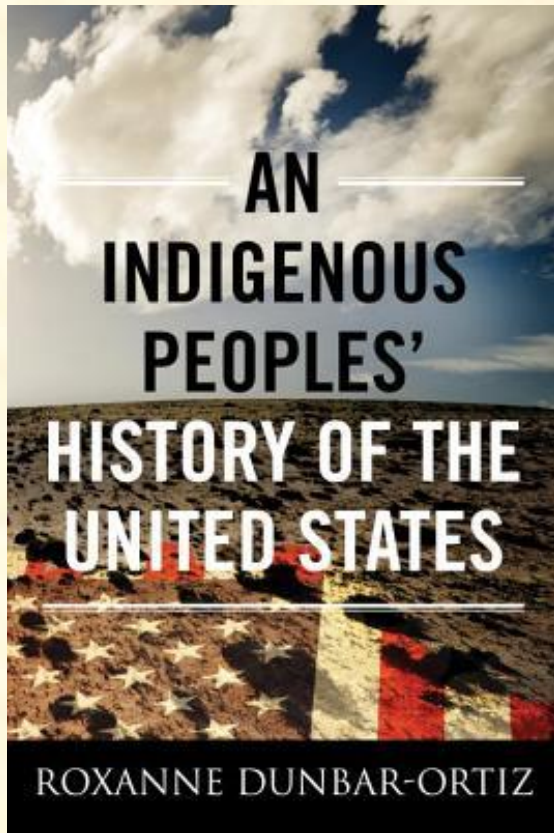


Last spring, diverse faculty and staff chose two books to read 21/22 AY.



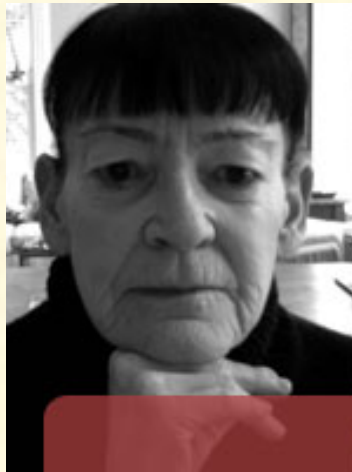
Fall 21:  
*There There*

Cheyenne and Arapaho



Spring 22: *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States*

Partially Native American, Most likely Cherokee



- Allow the F.R.E.E. book club to awaken your sense of "belonging" through diverse Indigenous perspectives.
- Borrow a copy from the DISCO.
- Calendar March 1@ 11:00 for student-led book club at the Diversity Fair!

This book has been on banned book lists in the US!



# Pre-Reading Strategies

## Participants will:

(1) Predict and analyze book themes with visual journaling.

(2) Debate:

When should US history start?

(3) Imagine:

How does a history start date impact belonging?

\*Video on please! \*Please grab some paper and a pencil! \*Be on mute, but be ready to turn it on!

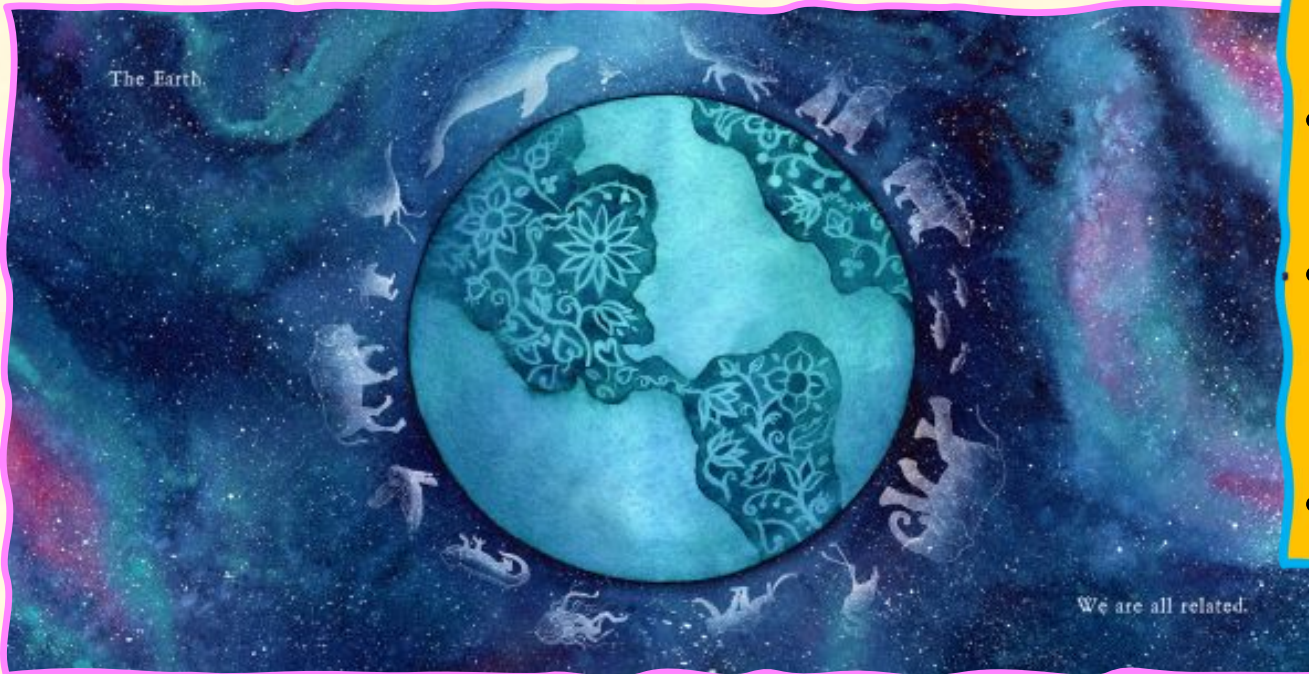


## Activity:

Take 1-minute to sketch a map of the United States at the time it gained independence from Britain.

## Visual journaling develops reading:

- Predict and analyze themes.
- Visualize comprehension.
- Personalize a thesis.
- Documentation for academic writing.
- Make interdisciplinary connections.
- Create artifacts.



Does your sketch have this shape?

"I ask students to quickly draw a rough outline of the United States at the time it gained independence from Britain. Invariably most draw the approximate present shape of the United States from the Atlantic to the Pacific - the continental territory not fully appropriated until a century after independence. . . I call this a Rorschach test of unconscious "manifest destiny," . . . This test reflects the seeming inevitability of US extent and power, its destiny, with an implication that the continent had previously been *terra nullius*, a land without people" (Dunbar-Ortiz 2).



My sketch when I imagine the 13-colonies conquest map of seized Indigenous lands, instead, inspired by an ecological sense of "belonging."

I see a shape-shifting fox!

Belonging to:

- ① Land.
- ② Corn.
- ③ Ecological Sustainability.
- ④ Cross-culturally relevant reparations.
- ⑤ Equity + Justice.



U.S. @ Independence from Britain:

- ① For-profit conquest.
- ② Stealing land + genocide of Indigenous peoples + slave labor.
- ③ Linear-extraction-consumption.



# What species does your map-sketch look like?

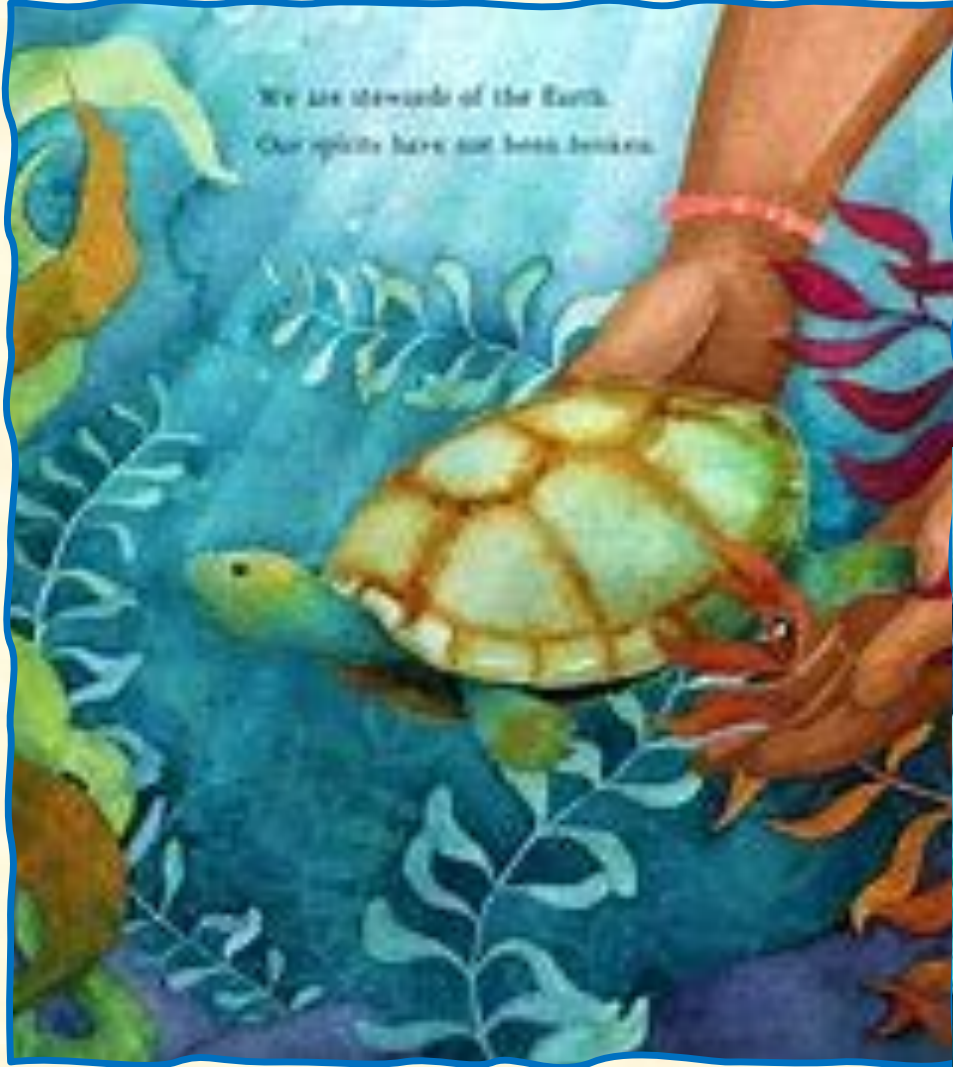


Illustration of the turtle is from this children's book:



Chat: When you first learned US history, at what date or epoch did it start?





Chat: When  
should US  
history  
start?



## Dunbar-Ortiz starts US history 4 million years ago!

“Humanoids existed on Earth for around **four million years** as hunters and gatherers living in small communal groups that through their movements found and populated every continent. Some **two hundred thousand** years ago, human societies, having originated in Sub-Saharan Africa, began migrating in all directions, and their descendants eventually populated the globe. Around **twelve thousand years** ago, some of these people began staying put and developed agriculture – mainly women who domesticated wild plants and began cultivating others” (15).



Why do you think  
women  
domesticated wild  
plants?



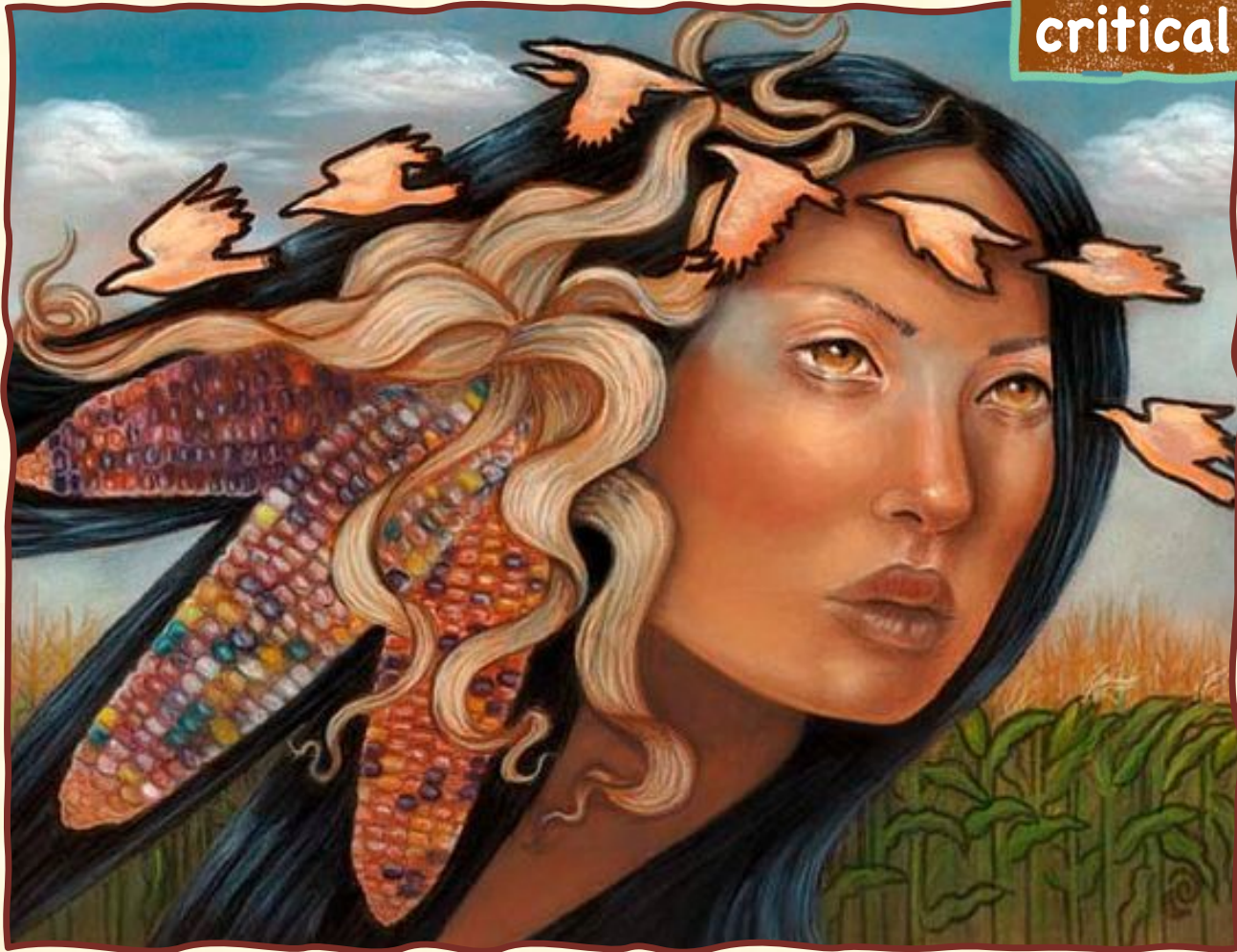
## Why read an Author's Note to a history textbook?

**Critical race theory** is a cross-disciplinary movement of civil rights scholars and activists who examine race in institutions. We challenge mainstream colorblind or race-neutral approaches to racial justice. We start with the question of race first, e.g. black lives matter (W.E.B. DuBois, Marcus Garvey).

## How does Dunbar-Ortiz challenge critical race theory?

"I . . . set aside the rhetoric of race, not because race and racism are unimportant but to emphasize that Native peoples were colonized and deposed of their territories as distinct peoples – hundreds of nations – not as a racial or ethnic group. 'Colonization,' 'dispossession,' 'settler colonialism,' 'genocide,' – these are the terms that drill to the core of US history, to the very source of the country's existence."

- xiii Dunbar-Ortiz



# Why read the Introduction to a history textbook?

“Everything about US history is about the **land** – who oversaw and cultivated it, fished its waters, maintained its wildlife; who invaded and stole it; how it became a commodity (‘real estate’) broken into pieces to be bought and sold on the market.”

- 1 Dunbar-Ortiz

## Mark your Calendar:

March 1 at 11:00 to join EDU students who lead a book club activity about *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States* at the Diversity Fair.



# Standard vs Indigenous Periodization for US History

## Standard Periodization

1. Colonial
2. Revolutionary
3. Jacksonian
4. Civil Overseas Imperialism
5. Progressivism
6. World War I
7. Depression
8. New Deal
9. World War II
10. Cold War
11. Vietnam War
12. Contemporary Decades  
(Author's Note xiii)



## Dunbar-Ortiz Periodization

1. This Land
2. Follow the Corn
3. Culture of Conquest
4. Cult of the Covenant
5. Bloody Footprints
6. The Birth of a Nation
7. The Last of the Mohicans and Andrew Jackson's White Republic
8. Sea to Shining Sea
9. "Indian Country"
10. US Triumphalism and Peacetime Colonialism
11. The Doctrine of Discovery
12. The Future of the United States  
("Contents" viiii and x)

Summarize US history in one sentence when it starts with "colonial."

"U.S. History starts with . . ."

Summarize US history in one sentence when it starts with "land?"



## My sentences:

1. US history starts with 13 conquest colonies in the **1600s** that imposed an English-speaking capitalist, politicized nation-state onto existing peoples and biodiversity.
2. US history starts with sustainable land **4 million years ago** of diverse communities connected to the science of earth ecosystems.



# Standard vs Indigenous Periodization for US History

Indigenous periodization asks fundamental questions about the **formation** of the United States and its implications for the **present and future.**

(Dunbar-Ortiz 5)

## How does a history start date impact belonging?

- Deb Haaland, US Secretary of the Interior, Laguna Pueblo
- Sharice Davids, US Representative, Kansas, Mohican Nation Stockbridge-Munsee Band



What corn products have you eaten this week?

“As a birthplace of agriculture and the towns and cities that followed, America is ancient, not a “new world.”

Domestication of plants took place around the globe in seven locales during approximately the same time, around **85000 BC**. Three of the seven were in the Americas, all based on corn: the Valley of Mexico and Central America (Mesoamerica); the South Central Andes in South America; and eastern North America” (15).

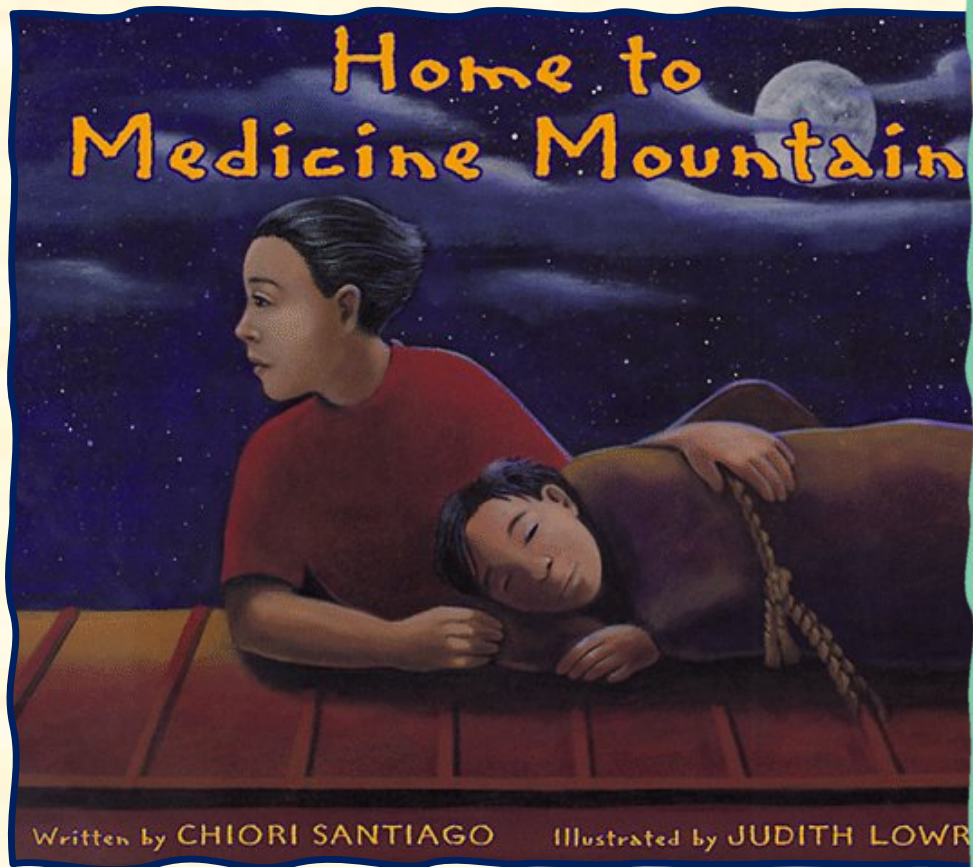


Who knows anything about corn?





## Standard vs Indigenous Periodization for US History



This book is about a Paiute community

- Who belongs with “land” 4 million years ago?
- Who belongs with Indigenous women cultivating “corn” 12,000 years ago?
- Who belongs with a European “colonial conquest” in the 1600s?
- Who belongs with a European “revolutionary war” in the 1700s?



# Culture Conscious Listening Brain

## Prefrontal Cortex

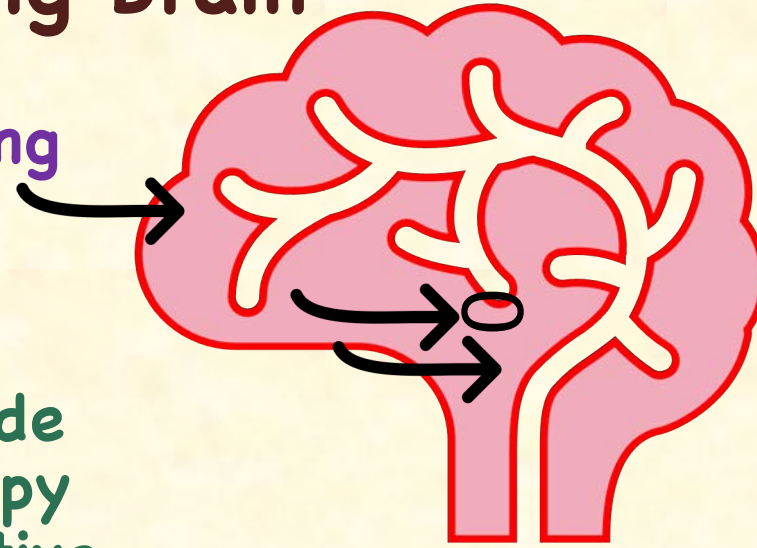
Moderates social behavior; thinking brain; forward-facing antibodies compassion center.

## Amygdalae

Like two almonds; one on each side of the brain; feeling sensors; jumpy emotions; fear watchdogs; protective fight, flight, freeze reactions; they get overwhelmed quickly and shut down calm thinking.

## Hippocampus

Like two evidence libraries, one on each side of the brain; memory storage for deep problem-solving.



## Conscious Breathing

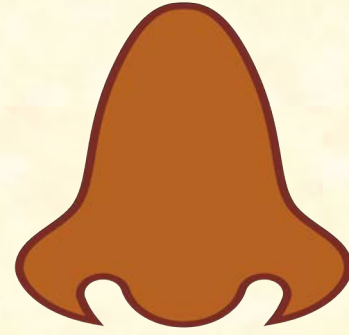
Calms fear, confusion, and bias pulsing through the Amygdalae for mindfulness from the Prefrontal Cortex and Hippocampus. A best practice is nose breathing into lower belly.



# One-Minute Culture Conscious Breathwork:

Now slowly close your eyes. Try to relax for 1-minute while you breathe consciously through your nose deep into lungs, pushing out your belly. We start and end with the chime.

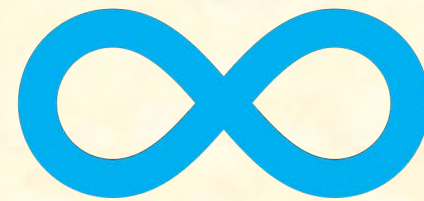
Ask yourself: "What does standard periodization do to our belonging?" or "What does Indigenous periodization do to our belonging?"



# F.R.E.E. Book Club Action?

Easy: Borrow the book from the DISCO, join March 1 book club events, ask colleagues to integrate book excerpts into activities.

Challenging: Does TMCC want to nurture our land acknowledgement by reaching out to seek permission to raise a Numu (Northern Paiute), Wašiw (Washoe), Newe (Western Shoshone), and/or Nuwu (Southern Paiute) flag in the TMCC Dandini Student Center?



Lets Talk  
on Zoom!

