INTRODUCTION

For many Native Americans archaeology has long been viewed in negative terms. For much of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, archaeologists enjoyed unrestricted access to the material culture, artifacts, sites, and human remains of my ancestors. There were no efforts on the part of archaeologists to consult with Native Peoples before conducting excavations, and museums collected artifacts largely because of their rarity and aesthetic beauty. Later, materials would be collected to expand the knowledge of Westerners about the evolution of human societies. Unfortunately, very little of this work involved interaction with descendent communities of Native Americans or any discussion of their more recent histories. As a child growing up in California, the only time that Native Americans were ever discussed in the fourth grade was in the context of Mission studies. I recall that each student was asked to create a model of mission life in colonial California and that most of the discussion of Native Peoples focused on the impact of conquest and disease among California Indian populations. One student even glued plastic Indians lying on the ground to demonstrate the impact of European pathogens. Once the Indians had all "died" in the missions, they disappeared from our textbooks and classroom discussions for much of the next eight years. This experience had a profound effect on my academic life and career.
My father's family are Yuman or Quechan from the lower Colorado River. From our family history, I learned that they controlled access to an important passage between Arizona and California and had kept Spanish colonists out of California until the late 1700s. I also knew that the last battle fought between tribes in the United States was between the Pima and the Yuma in 1849. Over the years many Yuma were forced off their farmlands and moved onto reservations or to nearby cities. Like many Native Americans, my grandfather fought in the South Pacific during World War II. He knew where he came from. He had been a part of history. And yet there was no story that explained what either he or I were doing living in the twenty-first century.

As I came to learn as a university student, the study of Native Americans has largely been confined to the fields of archaeology and anthropology. If I wanted to tell a different kind of story about Native Americans, to expose the mythology I encountered in classrooms, films, and textbooks, I would need formal training as an archaeologist and ethnographer. When I entered graduate school there were no Native American archaeologists working as university professors. Today there are three. As the result of changes within the discipline, many more Native People are entering the profession and are struggling to assert a voice in the scholarship of our ancestors. This essay explores the same questions that led me into the field—both literally and figuratively. Some of my first fieldwork took place near Zuni, New Mexico, at what is called a "Chacoan outlier." These are large buildings or "Great Houses" that were an important part of the Chacoan system. Shortly after this I worked for the O'Odham or Pima Nation on a large archaeological project in the heartland of Hohokam archaeology. In both cases I was struck by the degree of separation that existed in the literature and in the field between living Native Peoples and archaeologists. How had this rupture happened? Did Indigenous societies simply collapse and vanish? Or is the mythology of conquest and disappearance grounded in a scholarship that has until very recently simply ignored Indigenous histories?

This chapter helps to answer these questions. The first section explains how the Pima lost not only their economic power but also their past in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The second part reveals the ideological basis (and popular appeal) of

FIGURE 5.1 Regions of ancestral Southwestern peoples, including Pueblo dwellers (Anasazi, especially at Chaco Canyon) and O'Odham (Pima) and earlier Hohokam.
Jared Diamond’s account of European ascendancy. I explain how archaeological scholarship (and discussions of abandonments in particular) has played an important part in the portrayal of Native Americans as “failed” stewards of the environment. The third segment exposes Diamond’s thesis of overpopulation, deforestation, and collapse at Chaco using archaeological evidence. The final section deals with the survival of Pueblo communities during the Pueblo Revolt of 1680. Here I provide a counternarrative to both of Diamond’s works through a discussion of “abandonments” and demonstrate the important role that narratives and ideology play in any account of European ascendancy and conquest.

AN OPENING FABLE: HOW THE PIMA LOST THEIR PAST AND THE HOHOKAM WERE BORN

Most people visiting Arizona are unaware that a major river once ran from the mountains of New Mexico, through Phoenix, across the northern Sonoran Desert, and into the Gulf of California. Fewer realize that, contrary to popular imagery, most Indians in the arid Southwest were agriculturalists. In the years leading up to the Mexican American War (1846–1848), U.S. Cavalry expeditions, exhausted by heat and lacking provisions, were shocked to find a large community of Indian farmers diverting water from the Gila River into an elaborate system of canals that fed expansive fields of wheat, cotton, corn, melons, and squash. Throughout the 1800s, Pima farmers freely offered thousands of pounds of emergency provisions and water to the U.S. Army. By the 1870s, the tribe had provided both safe passage through the desert and up to 6 million pounds of wheat annually to gold rush dreamers, military parties, and transcontinental migrants.

The Pima never called themselves by that name. In 1692 a party of Spanish soldiers happened upon a small group of O’Odham men and asked them who they were. They dutifully recorded the reply, “pimas,” as the name of the people – not knowing that the phrase pimaas translates roughly from O’Odham as “I don’t understand what you are saying” or “huh?” It is not surprising that incomprehension and ignorance would come literally to define a people. What is surprising is the degree to which their history has been ignored by archaeologists and historians and replaced with other more fantastic tales of disappearance or invisibility. The act of “ignoring,” of deciding which stories to tell and how to tell them, is an essential instrument of conquest. The power to articulate some “failures,” as interpreted by Diamond and others, provide us with cautionary tales of societal collapse.

But just like these imagined groups (no Native person ever referred to themselves as Anasazi or Hohokam), the popular narratives of conquest and disappearance are just that – a mythology. And any consumer of that mythology, concerned with the destruction of the planet or searching for an account of European dominance, need look no further than our own more recent past for fables just as fantastic and unbelievable as those articulated by popular authors such as Diamond. The stories of how the Hohokam along the Gila River or the Anasazi at Chaco Canyon self-destructed and vanished through environmental mismanagement are, as we shall see, largely fictional. So too is the notion that colonization and conquest were accidents of geography or biology. The descendents of these groups, the Pima, their neighbors, and the Pueblos, still live in the lands of their ancestors. And one could argue that the most damaging “collapses” and “failures” they have endured have been at the hands of scholars who have ignored their presence in a modern world or failed to tell the stories that explain that presence.

The real question we should be concerned with is why these fictions exist. I would argue that the stories of Indigenous disappearance and the fables of conquest and European ascendancy articulated by Jared Diamond in Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies, as well as his subsequent work Collapse: How Human Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed, are not only factually incorrect but also exemplify a powerful impulse to reshape and reconfigure colonial histories to suit the needs of a changing audience. Diamond’s accounts of poverty and failure market a new version of conquest and Indigenous failure in
which human agency and ideology are ignored. The narratives we choose to believe, how we construct the winners and losers, how we locate our own society in a continuum of "failure" and "success," are born of universal human impulses to make sense out of the social and cultural worlds in which we live. But this mythology, rarely challenged publicly by archaeologists and historians, often obscures other more immediate causes of Indigenous "failures." It provides us with a set of more palatable, self-serving narratives — narratives that remove the reader (as a consumer of information) from a position of critical reflection, participation, and responsibility. But the consumer is an active agent in this exchange. And the story of how the O'Odham became the Pima and how the "Hohokam" were invented demonstrates the powerful consequences associated with the marketing of success and wealth for the victors, and failure and poverty to the victims.

Race and citizenship, not indigenous environmental mismanagement as Diamond states in Collapse, is at the center of the story of the Pima and the invention of the Hohokam. Having cornered the agricultural market and secured contracts and treaties with the U.S. government in the 1850s, the Gila River Pima, much like their Hohokam ancestors, were arguably the most powerful economic group in the entire Southwest. But within a decade of American settlement, Anglo farmers would divert so much water upstream that the Gila would run dry before it reached Pima farms. For white farmers citizenship held its privileges. Recognizing the economic power wielded by the Pima and eager to populate western territories with yeoman farmers and ranchers, the United States government passed the Desert Land Act (1887), offering 640 acres to any Euro-American willing to cultivate farmland along the desert waterways of the Southwest.

Understanding the mechanisms of plant reproduction, the Pima (hereafter referred to as the O'Odham, as they call themselves) knew from centuries of practice to segregate fields in order to prevent bees from cross-pollinating the wrong flowers. They had a year-round crop cycle alternating fallow and active fields in order to not exhaust the fragile desert soils and drained irrigated fields to prevent salinization of the soil. They engineered hundreds of miles of canals with precise slope and elevation calculations (without writing) and coordinated the opening of gates and barriers to direct water flow...
at proper intervals. These were technologies they had developed for over a thousand years. Incredibly, in Collapse Diamond completely ignores the history of the O’Odham and cites the presence of abandoned fields in the O’Odham homeland as evidence of willful environmental mismanagement, fed by “overextension,” a euphemism for greed. Greed, willful environmental mismanagement, and ignorance did in fact lead to the abandonment of O’Odham fields and farms. But if Diamond had bothered to glance at the history of the region, he might have cast a very different set of characters into the roles of enlightened heroes and ignorant villains.

Because rain provided all the water needed for farms east of the Mississippi, Anglo-American settlers had no experience with irrigation agriculture. The massive tracts of land (40 acres per household was the norm) were far too large for any single family to operate. They overwatered their fields and did not understand the importance of drainage. Minerals built up through evaporation and salinization ruined both crop and soil. Individual farmers, unfamiliar with the scale of communal coordination required to practice this kind of farming, could not manage the canals, and millions of gallons of water were wasted. Within a few years of passage of the Desert Land Act, Anglo-American farmers had diverted so much water upstream that the Gila River was dry by the time it reached the O’Odham farms. Cattle compounded the problem by overgrazing. Erosion followed and flash floods cut arroyos into the dry earth, lowering the water table. The river was dying, and so were the O’Odham.

In 1873 a delegation of O’Odham officials, led by General Antonio Azul, traveled to Washington, DC, to plead with the government to stop the theft of water by Anglo farmers. His pleas fell upon deaf ears. Indians, lacking rights of U.S. citizens until 1924, were unable to defend themselves or their water rights in the U.S. legal system. The democratic process insured that the rights of voters would be affirmed and defended by elected representatives. But in this version of democracy, full citizenship was restricted to white males. No politician could justify the protection of Indian interests when in conflict with their constituents; by 1878 the 45th Congress recommended that the issue be settled by removal of the Pima (as well as every other tribe in the Southwest) to Oklahoma. In a few short years the O’Odham were reduced to dependence upon the federal government. To make matters worse, the Bureau of Indian Affairs followed a practice of sending teachers, clergies, and Indian Agents infected with tuberculosis to work in the dry environment of Arizona. By 1893 half of all O’Odham children and adults succumbed to the disease. Starvation and disease among the Pima were no accidents.

When the first groups of American archaeologists and anthropologists came to investigate reports of a massive irrigation system, large abandoned village complexes, and massive adobe “Great Houses” in 1880, they simply could not fathom that any connection existed between this advanced civilization and the starving and impoverished O’Odham. Rather than documenting the tragic consequences of American agricultural policies and the recent collapse of the O’Odham economy (which was happening right before their eyes), they chose instead to invent an imaginary ethnic group based upon the O’Odham word hohokam, roughly translated as “things which are all used up.” And so the Hohokam were invented, and the Pima lost their past. Unfortunately this is a common story, and it is only in recent years that archaeologists have bothered to explore the historical bridges between the Hohokam and contemporary Native Americans.

Ignorance of history (and for that matter archaeology) is at the heart of the fables of poverty and environmental mismanagement rendered in the popular works of Jared Diamond. Fables in which Native Americans and other Indigenous Peoples are both blamed for their own poverty and misfortune through “accidental conquests” in Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies and used as examples of environmental mismanagement in Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed.

The lack of scholarly response to these works continues to confound me nearly a decade after their publication. First, I suppose it is because so many intelligent people have read and now accept the grand narrative of conquest and Western domination as gospel. Second, I must take responsibility because I know that an alternate tale, written from the perspectives of Indigenous peoples, is far more interesting.

How is it that five hundred years after Columbus we still read about the perpetually vanishing primitive or the mythical Hohokam or the Anasazi? How does Diamond’s biocultural Armageddon, fueled by
Old World diseases or environmental mismanagement, explain the presence of the O’Odham, myself, or my children? Is it all geography and biology? Or have archaeologists and historians simply chosen to ignore the presence of Indigenous peoples and their histories? As a response to the questions raised by Diamond’s texts (hereafter referred to as Guns and Collapse), I’d like to explore the appealing nature of these works and raise questions about Diamond’s notion that conquests are accidents of biology, geography, and technology. I’ll demonstrate how Diamond’s discussion of deforestation and environmental catastrophe at Chaco Canyon relies upon a selective view of archaeological and historical evidence. As is the case with the O’Odham, archaeologists have contributed to the mythology of the vanishing Anasazi and generated a pervasive narrative of environmental mismanagement by Native Americans. While few would agree totally with Diamond’s work, North American archaeologists bear significant responsibility for many of his conclusions. Archaeological interpretations of abandonments, and a failure to integrate Indigenous histories, have helped to support a national mythology in which conquests are accidents and Indigenous peoples are to blame for their own problems.

A CONVENIENT DIALOGUE: CONQUEST (AND PROSPERITY) AS ACCIDENT

Disguised as an attack on racial determinism, Diamond’s Guns, Germs, and Steel lays out the most palatable of narratives of Western global domination. For Diamond, the disparities between the “haves” and “have-nots” (as depicted in Diamond’s introductory conversation with the unfortunate Papua New Guinean, Yali), “Who have so much cargo” and those who don’t, were set in motion long ago, just beyond the effective reach of his sympathetic reader. His argument is a kind of Greek tragedy with the gods played by the inescapable logic of evolutionary biology. According to Diamond, unknown and unnamed geographic forces proffered selective advantages over the centuries to unwitting but select “Eurasian” populations. Diamond’s dialogue with his primitive prototype Yali, could be summarized as follows: “You see, Yali, if your ancestors had come from here in the northern hemisphere instead of there in the southern hemisphere, you might have found yourself on the other end of our equation of inequality. ... Were it not for geography, you might be explaining my unfortunate fate to me.

For Diamond, guns and steel were just technologies that happened to fall into the hands of one’s collective ancestors. And, just to make things fair, they only marginally benefited Westerners over their Indigenous foes in the New World because the real conquest was accomplished by other forces floating free in the cosmic lottery—submicroscopic pathogens. Diamond’s grand narrative cleverly rejects the racism and naked triumphalism of our not so distant forebears and embraces a nouveau-democratic narrative that speaks to the logical sensibilities and sympathies of modern readers: Colonization was an accident. Immunities to disease conferred a biological advantage, and in the contest among peoples the result was foreordained. A reader of Diamond’s story, perhaps lounging in the tropics on his holidays, glances at the hired help and drifts off into a sleep made more peaceful by the notion that his fortunate fate, and indeed the fates of human societies, were settled long ago and far away.

I would feel more comfortable in my current air-conditioned perch of scorn except that I have been that reader myself, perhaps on a beach somewhere wondering about the same things. What now startles me into wakefulness is my own position as a Native American archaeologist. I have read, in courses that I have taken and now in those that I teach, the naïve and simplistic accounts of my ancestors’ collective failures, for example, in the dreamtime landscape of the foremost journal in my field, American Antiquity. Name the tragic fable of the day, and I can find it in the ostensibly value-free and politically neutral, scientific explanations of the flagship journal of American archaeology. The cultures and histories of Indigenous peoples have been appropriated and deployed by scholars in the service of democracy, environmentalism, and gender equality since anthropology began.

It was not hard for Diamond to reach his conclusions about Chaco Canyon or the Hohokam. Any curious reader interested in learning more about these places would encounter a whole genre of academic literature devoted to the technological, environmental, and political failures of Native Americans north and south. Archaeology is the perfect source, a politically neutral data set from which social failure and contemporary marginality can be reverse-engineered. In
Diamond's work we see the logical conclusions one would reach by leafing through the last thirty-five years of archaeological literature on the U.S. Southwest. From these journals we learn that all archaeological sites, by virtue of their abandonment, represent some form of social, technological, or environmental failure. In a neo-evolutionary calculus, where adaptation insures survival (and a claim on the landscape), the Indian affirms his failure to adapt by his absence.

The connections between the archaeological record and living peoples are artfully obscured through the invention of archaeo-ethnicities such as the Anasazi, Chacoans, Athapaskans, and Hohokam-invented cultures with invisible descendents. Through a process of professional appropriation, places like Chaco Canyon became the data set of concerned scientists instead of a part of the living cosmogram of contemporary Pueblos and their neighbors. Instead, we find in Collapse a perfectly logical account of the shortcomings of Indigenous peoples, another origin myth of the "haves" and "have-nots" in Guns. Note the subtle shift (or less charitably the contradiction) between the "accident" of conquest in Guns and the "choice" of success or failure among Diamond's Anasazi in Collapse. I wonder each time I visit the flooded golf courses and melting asphalt surrounding the Ivory Towers of the southwestern mega-universities how Indigenous peoples, who cultivated fields, rotated crops, and developed drought- and disease-resistant strains of corn for at least a thousand years in a desert, are now the locus classicus of willful environmental mismanagement. In Collapse, Diamond merely relays the well-worn tradition among many Southwestern archaeologists of explaining the abandonment of just about every archaeological site as the consequence of environmental mismanagement or warfare resulting from environmental mismanagement. It seems that before the accident of European conquest, Native Americans chose to abuse either the environment, or each other, and this set the table for conquest, colonization, poverty, and the "vanished" (or invisible) Indian.

For Diamond, following generations of archaeologists, especially the ecologically minded "processual" archaeologists of the 1960s, Indian prehistory exemplified a "tragedy of the commons" on wheels—a movable feast of miscalculation, mismanagement, and misery. Under the ostensible purpose of furthering the knowledge of human prehistory generally—where the archaeological record is viewed as a data set belonging to everyone—local, historical narratives like those of the O'Odham and the Pueblos have been generally viewed as particular, inaccurate, and above all "nonscientific." Although this situation is now changing, Native Americans have been disarticulated from both the material remains of their ancestors and the process of interpreting these remains to the public.

The result of being written out of history (and prehistory) is that the presence of 4.5 million Indians in the United States today is a complete mystery to most Americans. And how could they be led to think anything different when most of the people interpreting Native American prehistory were explaining the disappearance of a people they had never bothered to meet? Unfortunately the alienation of the O'Odham from their past is not unique. Many indigenous peoples, frustrated by the activities and scholarship of archaeologists, advocated for a greater voice in the interpretation of their histories. Passed into law in 1990, the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act required archaeologists and museums to consult with Native Americans and return cultural properties and human remains to descendant communities.

It is not surprising that the main challenge posed by the NAGPRA legislation was the process of rearticulating these materials with living groups. Working with the living descendents of an archaeological landscape quickly interrupts the logical links between what archaeologists interpret as an "abandonment," the ready-made parable of "failure" and the social deaths of invented groups such as the Hohokam and Anasazi. Without such a dialogue, each archaeological site is viewed as a kind of skeleton, the corpse of an evolutionary dead end. Since archaeologists and museum curators are now required by law to consult with tribes, invisible Indians are now very visible indeed; many archaeological projects have become collaborative ventures in which ethnographic skills (and talking to living Indians) have become a central component of research.

Diamond's work has completely missed this tectonic shift in archaeology. In Collapse we learn that the Anasazi deforested the landscape and were "done in" by the resulting dropping water tables. Salinization, we learn, forced the Hohokam to abandon their villages. The Mogollon in the central mountains of Arizona
FIGURE 5.3 Urban sprawl of Phoenix, Arizona, that has engulfed the ancestral O'Odham site of Mesa Grande. (Source: Fish and Fish 2008, Plate 12, photograph courtesy of Adriel Heisey)

and western New Mexico exhausted their agricultural potential. All these abandonments, Diamond writes, "were ultimately due to the same fundamental challenge: people living in fragile and difficult environments, adopting solutions that were brilliantly successful and understandable 'in the short run,' but that failed or else created fatal problems in the long run, when people became confronted with external environmental changes or human-caused environmental changes that societies without written histories and without archaeologists could not have anticipated" (my italics). According to Diamond, without archaeologists, Native Peoples not only lacked any notion of memory or concept of sustainability but were also unable to realize that they lived in a marginal environment. Their "failures," according to Diamond, should serve as a warning to more enlightened peoples—people with technological know-how, written histories, and archaeologists. These are the same people who have managed to turn the center of the Hohokam homeland into the sprawling, asphalt-covered and polluted capital city of Arizona. The region is supported by massive irrigation projects that have made the Gila River and the mighty Colorado completely disappear miles inland from their former outlets. Failure, apparently, is in the eyes of the beholder.

A LESSON IN DRIVE-BY ARCHAEOLOGY: URBAN DEFORESTATION AMONG THE CHACO ANASAZI

Jared Diamond ignores critical basic facts about the history of Chaco Canyon (in north central New Mexico) in order to cast Chaco (and the Pueblos) as models of urban and social failure. Tooling through the arid landscape of northern New Mexico, Diamond marvels at the Anasazi ability to build an advanced city in such a wasteland—a wasteland that he fails to recognize as the present homeland of nineteen contemporary Pueblo reservations. One has to wonder how Diamond was able to ignore the large permanent signs located at the entrance to every Great House in Chaco Canyon, reminding visitors that Chaco continues to serve as a sacred landscape to contemporary Native Peoples. Because he did not speak to any living Puebloan (apparently there was no "Yali" with whom he might converse), his assessments of environmental mismanagement and "the collapse and disappearance of the Chacoans" is based upon a very narrow selection of archaeological books and articles, namely, those in which environmental mismanagement is foregrounded and Pueblo interpretations of the region are largely ignored. Just as he does with the Hohokam, Diamond misrepresents the significance, the function, and the history of what was (and still is) an important center of Pueblo ritual and history. Naturally, Diamond was rightly alarmed as he left the modern urban sprawl of Albuquerque, the endless tracts of homes and strip malls, the evidence of overgrazing, erosion, and arroyo cutting, and the depressing sight of the Rio Grande, which is dry for much of the year due to the relentless groundwater pumping for urban and agricultural purposes. Meanwhile, the modern Pueblos retain their
exceptional knowledge of agricultural planning for both good and drought years, that is, production that is not for maximum yield and profit but for sustainability. Archaeology, of course, is the way we can investigate the human past. Over a century, excellent (and some regrettable) archaeological investigations have taken place at Chaco Canyon. These investigations directly contradict the facts as presented by Diamond. To summarize, Chaco represented the florescence of an unprecedented social movement within the Pueblo world. The evidence is embodied in a collection of large pueblo-like buildings called Great Houses, some with hundreds of rooms, along a small river in the center of an arid basin in northwest New Mexico. In Collapse, Diamond argues that Chaco Canyon was an oasis in which agricultural production (especially of corn) was first adopted and later intensified over a period of six hundred years (600-1200 C.E.). Gradually the population expanded beyond the carrying capacity of the land, the region was deforested by large construction projects, and the resulting erosion cut channels that lowered the water table. When the environment changed (and there was an extended drought between 1125-1150 C.E.), the social system "collapsed" into a period of incessant warfare, extreme violence, and cannibalism. This scenario, however, is incomplete when it is not wrong.

First, Chaco was occupied much earlier than 600 C.E. (Atlalt Cave has been dated to 1000 B.C.E.) by small-scale, mobile groups who experimented with agriculture. Permanent villages dating to 400 C.E. are found at Shabik'eschee Village and Penasco Blanco, and there is every reason to believe that others may be similarly located. Second, although environmental stresses play a part in every agricultural society, the people at Chaco lived literally for centuries in a landscape where extended droughts occurred with great regularity. There were approximately twenty periods of drought between 650 and 1225 C.E. in which the canyon remained occupied; construction events at Great Houses span several of these periods of drought. According to Diamond, to support a rapidly expanding population, a large forest in the canyon was cleared in order to construct these large apartment and religious structures (Great Houses and Great Kivas). Deforestation
FIGURE 5.6 Architectural complexes of Chaco Canyon: Great Houses of (a) Pueblo Bonito and (b) Kin Kletso and (c) a Great Kiva within Pueblo Bonito. (Photos by Greg Jennings)

led to erosion, entrenchment (or arroyo cutting), the lowering of the water table, and the disappearance of the Chaco River.

However, there was never a forest in the canyon. Packrat middens (which contain ancient pollen) in the valley reveal a climate and ecology almost exactly like that which exists today. So where did the estimated 200,000 trees that were cut down to supply building materials come from? The same place where the cycles of drought are documented, 75 kilometers to the west in the Chuska Mountains. As far as arroyo cutting is concerned, geologist Eric Force has identified several periods of aggradation (deposition of sediments) and entrenchment (erosion of water channels) at Chaco. Although construction events coincide loosely with the deposition of sediments, it is unknown whether drought or water diversion (and farming) led to sedimentation. Neither do major entrenchment events coincide with the abandonment of the Canyon in the 1300s. We do know that the water table at Chaco fell in the late 1800s with the introduction of cattle and that since the early 1900s a large arroyo has been cut along the course of the Chaco River. The original inhabitants of the Canyon caused none of these current changes.

The idea that Chacoans recklessly expanded farming in the valley in order to feed large populations is similarly a fiction. Temperature extremes at Chaco range from -38 to 102 degrees Fahrenheit. To
Marketing Conquest and the Vanishing Indian

FIGURE 5.9 Chaco Canyon in relation to Chuska Mountains and contemporary pueblos (language groups indicated in boldface, ancestral and contemporary pueblo locales in regular font).

In the canyon today the average is less than 100 days, making stable agricultural production impossible. So where did the food come from? It was brought in periodically—probably during pilgrimages to the ritual center that was Chaco. Corn and wood (construction materials) collected from Chaco have helped debunk the notion that the canyon was ever used as the source of building materials or food. Water leaves isotopic signatures (ratios of [strontium] Sr$^{87}$/Sr$^{86}$) in plants that are particular to specific geographic contexts. Throughout the Chaco sequence, corn gathered from middens (garbage dumps) and wood have isotopic signatures similar to plants grown far away in the Chuska Mountains (75 kilometers to the west) or the San Juan River.
floodplain, 90 kilometers to the north. Corn and other food supported a very small year-round population. Early investigators were puzzled by the low numbers of burials and human remains within any of the Great Houses in the canyon. After over a century of excavations, only 350 burials have been discovered at a site that was occupied for about eight centuries (400-1300 CE). As for evidence of warfare, violence, and social conflict, only a very small percentage of the burials show evidence of perimortem violence, and there is no burial evidence supporting large-scale warfare at any time in the Canyon's history. Finally, only a small number of rooms at Chaco have fire pits or hearths, a normal indicator of year-round occupation.

So what was Chaco? Most likely Chaco was a multiethnic ritual center where ideas, as well as some food, were exchanged. Many of the Chacoan structures appear to have been built as arenas and for ceremonies and demonstrations of sacred knowledge. Current interpretations of Chaco suggest that the network of precisely oriented roads extending hundreds of kilometers throughout the San Juan Basin directed people into the canyon for festivals and ritual performances. The "end" of the Chaco system coincides with the establishment of new Pueblo settlements throughout the region, descendents of Chacoans. One important difference between contemporary Pueblos and the Chaco system is the notion that ritual centralization was socially dangerous. Secrecy and the compartmentalization of ritual knowledge (even within Pueblo communities) may have developed in response to what happened at Chaco. Diamond ignores this story, which is as interesting and significant (certainly to modern people) as the existence of Chaco itself. The relationship between social change and ideology appears to have played a significant role in the history of Chaco. Ideology is central to many of the most dramatic changes in Western civilization. There is every reason to believe that these types of changes were at least as transformative among Native Americans as they were to Europeans.

**Creating an Ideology of Conquest: Christianity and the Pueblo Revolt of 1680**

It is significant that Diamond makes reference to the Pueblo Revolt of 1680 as a historically recorded instance of extended drought, a model for the end of Anasazi settlement at Chaco Canyon, which, as Diamond writes, the Europeans did observe. However, the archaeology of the Pueblo Revolt of 1680 tells little about the natural environment. Rather, it speaks significantly about the importance of ideology in European colonization, the responses of Indigenous peoples to social violence, and the meaning of abandonments from the perspectives of the Pueblos themselves. The revolt provides an important counter narrative of survival and helps address the most salient question for Native Peoples: How is it that we are still here?

From my own perspective, a more appropriate troika of destruction would be "lawyers, gods, and money." First and foremost, I reject the notion that any military conquest, however rapid, immediately or totally transforms any society. Conquests are continuously reformulated and reiterated through time. As we have seen recently in the news from the Middle East, conquests demand maintenance. But the maintenance and motives of conquests require ideologies and philosophies that allow one group to imagine itself as the naturally or divinely ordained instruments of progress and change. The philosophical justifications of subordination are not only the most fundamental element of conquests, they are also the most interesting.

What greater irony could one image than the manner in which Christianity, which begins as a small sectarian cult that rejected materialism and embraced a radical egalitarian philosophy, is yoked violently to the arms and economic ambitions of the Spanish state? In Spain and its colonies, Christianity was militarized through the character of Santiago Matamoros (St. James the Moor killer), a mythical brother of Christ. Between 1540 and 1600 the Pueblos endured eight successive waves of violent raids from Spanish colonists, culminating in the first permanent European settlement in the United States, Santa Fe. Santa Fe in Spain was the name of the city from which Christian warriors launched a siege against Grenada, the final Moorish kingdom to fall in the Reconquista of Spain. Colonial New Mexico was imagined as and became a historical projection of the Spanish Reconquista. When battling the Pueblos, the Spanish warriors invoked the name of Santiago and referred to Pueblo kivas as "mosques."

Justifications for the use of violence as a tool of conversion and enforcement can be traced to the theologian Augustine in the fifth
Indigenous sites (other than missions) have been systematically explored or documented. Now we can see that during the Revolt of 1680, when Pueblo people attacked missions and Spanish villages, several new communities were constructed on mesas or deep within the forests of the Jemez Mountains.

The existence of these sites require archaeologists, not just Jared Diamond, to rethink the meaning of abandonment. Rather than regarding abandoned sites as the corpses of a dead society, a more appropriate metaphor is that of a shell. The living organism creates it, inhabits it, and then moves from it only to construct a new home and preserve the life inside somewhere else. Abandonment, like mobility, is a social strategy and not evidence of a social failure or "collapse." One interpretation suggests continuity and creates a space for the survival of indigenous peoples, the other effectively writes Indians out of the present and alienates them from the material remains and communities of their ancestors.

As for the causes of the Revolt of 1680, human agency and ideology were at the heart of the conflict, not disease, drought, or weaponry. In the years following the permanent colonial settlement in Santa Fe in 1600, Pueblo peoples were required to work in the textile factories and fields of secular officials, but officials did not overtly interfere with Pueblo religious life. When a new regime of Christian missionaries and officials arrived from Mexico in 1650, they increased taxation from a per household rate to a per capita rate, forbade the practice of ancient Pueblo ceremonies that ensured the survival of the Pueblos, and arrested the religious leaders. Within a decade the Pueblos revolted, and Spaniards were expelled from the Pueblo world and forced to negotiate with and accommodate Pueblo religious practices.

The Spanish legal system as well as the infrastructure and the fragile economy of New Spain were all human constructs, not accidents. No story about Chaco, the O'Odham, or the Pueblo Revolt can be told without referring to ideology, culture, and history. The passage of laws such as the Desert Land Act and the failure of democratic institutions to protect the rights of small minorities such as the O'Odham are social artifacts of Manifest Destiny. The importance of Chaco as a pilgrimage site and the role of Christian evangelism as a justification for military conquest and colonization each emphasize the importance of ideology and history in shaping the trajectories of human societies.
CONCLUSION

And so we return to my original proposition. If we shift our questions 180 degrees and ask if there are narratives that explain not the invisibility and disappearance or marginality but the survival of Indigenous Peoples, we are led to an entirely different set of answers and explanations. Assuming that Indians are still here (as I am forced to do), I am asked to perform a mythic reversal. If, after reading Diamond, we are led to think that conquest was driven by invisible forces, that the table was set (and colonization is justified) by the mismanagement of the environment by prehistoric peoples of North America, we have participated and consumed the most noxious and potent agent of conquest, the narrative itself.

My criticisms are not simply of Jared Diamond himself, but of those who explain global inequalities and poverty among the have-nots—who have no cargo—as inevitable and portray have-nots as powerless victims of impersonal forces. As a reader, I cannot be held responsible for military encounters 500 years ago. But as an archaeologist I am responsible for understanding how the work I create can take on a life of its own and be interpreted as a collective explanation for Indigenous "failures"—failures that seem to justify colonization and the replacement and removal of Indian Peoples.

Diamond's tidy explanation of conquest and global poverty is not only factually incorrect; it gives us the sense that its origins lie somewhere out there, beyond the agency of the reader. The implication is that if conquests were situated long ago, somewhere else, then we are powerless over their contemporary manifestations. Conquests are never instantaneous, transformative, or all encompassing. They are enacted, reenacted, and rewritten for each succeeding generation. In this sense Diamond's narrative of disappearance and marginalization is one of conquest's most potent instruments.

Notes

* I am a Native American archaeologist (Yuman/Choctaw) and an assistant professor of anthropology at Stanford University. I graduated from the University of California at Santa Barbara (1993) and Harvard University (M.A., 1995; Ph.D., 2001). I have conducted fieldwork at Chacoan outlier sites near Zuñi, New Mexico, and have worked for the O'Odham (Pima) Nation in Arizona investigating Hohokam villages. Currently I work with Pueblo People of New Mexico.

My research interests include Native American history, culture, and the emerging field of Indigenous Archaeology. I specialize in the archaeology of early colonial and contact periods in the American Southwest with a special interest in the archaeology of the Pueblo Revolt of 1860. My forthcoming book The Pueblo Revolt and the Mythology of Conquest: An Indigenous Archaeology of Contact (2009) will be published by the University of California Press.

1. United States Office of Indian Affairs 1869: 208-209.
5. United States Office of Indian Affairs 1870: 117; 1885: 3-4.
9. There are important issues surrounding this translation. The term hohokam was originally a common noun referring to things and objects that have been discarded. The archaeologists characterize as "Hohokam" are actually the remains of multiethnic communities. Other tribes in the area, such as the Papago, Maricopa, and Yuma, are likely also among the descendents of the Hohokam (Shaul and Hill 1998: 375-396).
18. Lekson 2002: 607-624. Although Lekson finds evidence for violence in the Northern San Juan Basin with Chacoan Outliers, the links between these actions and the abandonment of Chaco remain unclear. Similarly, what many archaeologists view as evidence for social violence or cannibalism can be accounted for by behaviors linked to witchcraft among the Pueblos (Darling 1998: 732-752; Dongoske et al. 2000: 179-190; Walker 2001: 573-596).
Bibliography

Marketing Conquest and the Vanishing Indian 141