

Warriors for a Nation: The American Indian Movement, Indigenous Men, and Nation Building at the Takeover of Wounded Knee in 1973 [ABSTRACT]

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Between February 27 and May 8, 1973, Indigenous nationalists of the American Indian Movement and local Lakota reservation residents occupied the tiny hamlet of Wounded Knee, South Dakota. The intent behind the armed takeover was to highlight intratribal conflict over tribal governance on the local Pine Ridge reservation and demand a return to the treaty-making era. Halfway through the prolonged siege, Indigenous nationalists declared the Independent Oglala Nation—separate from the United States government—and proclaimed the setup of a modern-day warrior society. In that these parallel and intertwined actions suggest a close connection between manhood and nationhood in which nationalist warriors rallied in defense of a newly proclaimed nation, the armed confrontation at Wounded Knee can be understood as a highly gendered nation building project. This research article seeks to make new sense of these warriors for a nation and the intricate nature of masculinity and nationalism and to shed new light on the role of marginalized masculinities in processes of nation building—a significant, yet largely overlooked field of research.

Keywords: Wounded Knee, 1973; American Indian Movement; gender/nation; warriorhood; bodily and bodily reflexive practices, masculinity and nationalism.

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