#### = Ward Churchill =

Ward LeRoy Churchill (born 1947) is an American author and political activist. He was a professor of ethnic studies at the University of Colorado Boulder from 1990 until 2007. The primary focus of his work is on the historical treatment of political dissenters and Native Americans by the United States government. His work features controversial and provocative views, written in a direct, often confrontational style.

In January 2005, Churchill 's work attracted controversy because of the circulation of a 2001 essay, " On the Justice of Roosting Chickens ", in which he argued the September 11 attacks were a natural and unavoidable consequence of unlawful US foreign policy over the latter half of the 20th century; the essay is well known for Churchill 's use of the phrase " little Eichmanns " to describe the " technocratic corps " working in the World Trade Center.

In March 2005 the University of Colorado began investigating allegations that Churchill had engaged in research misconduct; it reported in June 2006 that he had done so . Churchill was fired on July 24 , 2007 , leading to a claim by some scholars that he was fired because of the "Little Eichmanns "comment . Churchill filed a lawsuit against the University of Colorado for unlawful termination of employment . In April 2009 a Denver jury found that Churchill was wrongly fired , awarding him \$ 1 in damages . In July 2009 , a District Court judge vacated the monetary award and declined Churchill 's request to order his reinstatement , deciding the university has "quasi @-@ judicial immunity " . In February 2010 , Churchill appealed the judge 's decision . In November 2010 , the Colorado Court of Appeals upheld the lower @-@ court 's ruling . In September 10 , 2012 , the Colorado Supreme Court upheld the lower courts ' decisions in favor of the University of Colorado . On April 1 , 2013 , the United States Supreme Court declined to hear the case .

In a February 2014 interview , Churchill commented that after living more than forty years in the northern plains / Colorado region , he had relocated to Atlanta , Georgia in 2013 . Churchill also stated that he had a half @-@ dozen uncompleted books which he intended to finish and publish in the next three years .

# = = Early life and education = =

Churchill was born in Urbana, Illinois, to Jack LeRoy Churchill and Maralyn Lucretia Allen. His parents divorced before he was two, and he grew up in Elmwood, where he attended local schools

In 1966, he was drafted into the United States Army. On his 1980 resume, he said he served as a public @-@ information specialist who " wrote and edited the battalion newsletter and wrote news releases."

In a 1987 profile on Churchill , the Denver Post reported that he was drafted , went to paratrooper school , then volunteered for Vietnam , where he served a 10 @-@ month tour as Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol (LRRP) , one of a six @-@ man team sent out to track down the enemy . The Post article also reported that Churchill was politically radicalized as a result of his experiences in Vietnam . Churchill told the Post that he had spent some time at the Chicago office of the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) in the late 1960s , and briefly taught members of the Weather Underground how to build bombs and fire weapons .

In 2005, the Denver Post reported that Churchill 's military records show he was trained as a film projectionist and light truck driver, but they do not reflect paratrooper school or LRRP training. The 75th Ranger Regiment Association found no record of Churchill having been a member of the unit, or a LRRP team.

Churchill received his B.A. in technological communications in 1974 and M.A. in communications theory in 1975, both from Sangamon State University, now the University of Illinois at Springfield.

#### = = Career = =

In 1978, Churchill began working at the University of Colorado Boulder as an affirmative action

officer in the university administration. He also lectured on American Indian issues in the ethnic studies program. In 1990, the University of Colorado hired him as an associate professor, although he did not possess the academic doctorate usually required for the position. The following year he was granted tenure in the Communications department, without the usual six @-@ year probationary period, after having been declined by the Sociology and Political Science departments

He has long been interested in issues associated with the Dawes Act , which broke up the communal reservation lands and assigned plots to individual households . Connected with that was the federal government 's first use of " blood quantum " to define individual membership in tribes , for what became known as the Dawes Rolls . Since re @-@ establishing self @-@ governments , federally recognized tribes have established their own criteria for enrollment as members , often related to descent from recognized historical lists , but less often requiring proofs of blood quantum . Some of his published works address these issues , which he has interpreted as part of the federal government 's policy of genocide against Native Americans .

In 1995 Churchill discussed his views with David Barsamian in an interview:

You could say that five hundred years ago was the basis of blood quantum in Ibero @-@ America . But in Anglo @-@ America , while there was some preoccupation with it , it was not formalized until the passage of the General Allotment Act , mid @-@ 1880s . At that point they began to define Indian as being someone who was demonstrably and documentably of at least one @-@ quarter by quantum blood indigenous in a given group . You couldn 't be an eighth Cheyenne and an eighth Arapaho and be an Indian . You had to be a quarter Cheyenne or a quarter Arapaho or hopefully a quarter and a quarter . The reason for this was quite clear . They were identifying Indians for purposes of allotting them individual parcels of land in the existing reservation base at that point . If they ran out of Indians identifiable as such , then the rest of the land would be declared surplus . So it was clearly in the interests of the government to create a definition of Indianness that would minimize the number of Indians that were available . It was an economic motivation for the application of this genetic criteria to Indianness in the first place . It 's become increasingly so ever since . " ( David Barsamian ( December 1995 ) . " Interview with Ward Churchill : Historical and Current Perspectives " . Z Magazine . )

In 1996, Churchill moved to the new Ethnic Studies Department of the University of Colorado. In 1997, he was promoted to full professor. He was selected as chairman of the department in June 2002.

In January 2005, during the controversy over his 9 / 11 remarks, Churchill resigned as chairman of the ethnic studies department at the University of Colorado? his term as chair was scheduled to expire in June of that year. On May 16, 2006, the Investigative Committee of the Standing Committee on Research Misconduct at the University of Colorado concluded that Churchill had committed multiple counts of academic misconduct, specifically plagiarism, fabrication, and falsification. On July 24, 2007, Churchill was fired for academic misconduct in an eight to one vote by the University of Colorado 's Board of Regents .

### = = Genealogy and Tribal affiliation = =

In 2003, Churchill stated, "I am myself of Muscogee and Creek descent on my father 's side, Cherokee on my mother 's, and am an enrolled member of the United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians." In 1992, Churchill wrote elsewhere that he is one @-@ eighth Creek and one @-@ sixteenth Cherokee. In 1993, Churchill told the Colorado Daily that "he was one @-@ sixteenth Creek and Cherokee." Churchill told the Denver Post in February 2005 that he is three @-@ sixteenths Cherokee.

In a statement dated May 9, 2005, and posted on its website, the United Keetoowah Band initially said,

"The United Keetoowah Band would like to make it clear that Mr. Churchill IS NOT a member of the Keetoowah Band and was only given an honorary 'associate membership 'in the early 1990s because he could not prove any Cherokee ancestry." The tribe said that all of Churchill 's " past,

present and future claims or assertions of Keetoowah 'enrollment,' written or spoken, including but not limited to; biographies, curriculum vitae, lectures, applications for employment, or any other reference not listed herein, are deemed fraudulent by the United Keetoowah Band."

Two days later, the United Keetoowah Band replaced its statement and acknowledged Churchill 's " alleged ancestry " of being Cherokee :

" Because Mr. Churchill had genealogical information regarding his alleged ancestry , and his willingness to assist the UKB in promoting the tribe and its causes , he was awarded an ' Associate Membership ' as an honor , " the tribe 's website now said . " However , Mr. Churchill may possess eligibility status for Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma , since he claims 1 / 16 Cherokee . "

The tribe 's spokesperson , Lisa Stopp , stated the tribe enrolls only members with certified one @-@ quarter American Indian blood . The website statement further clarified that Churchill " was not eligible for tribal membership due to the fact that he does not possess a ' Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood ( CDIB ) " , and the associate membership did not entitle an individual to voting rights or enrollment in the tribe .

Churchill has never asked for CDIB certification, and finds the idea of being "vetted" by the US government offensive.

In June 1994, the United Keetoowah Band had voted to stop awarding associate memberships. Such honorary associate membership recognizes an individual 's assistance to the tribe, but it has nothing to do with Indian ancestry, and it does not entitle an individual to vote in the tribe as a member. The Keetoowah Band states that Churchill still holds the associate membership and it has not been rescinded. In a separate interview, Ernestine Berry, formerly on the tribe 's enrollment committee and four years on its council, said that Churchill had never fulfilled a promise to help the tribe.

In June 2005, the Rocky Mountain News published an article about Churchill 's genealogy and family history. It "turned up no evidence of a single Indian ancestor "among 142 direct ancestors [of Churchill 's ] identified from records. The News reported that both Churchill 's birth parents were listed as white on the 1930 census, as were all but two of his great @-@ great @-@ grandparents listed on previous census and other official documents. The News found that some of Churchill 's accounts of where his ancestors had lived did not agree with documented records. Numerous members of Churchill 's extended family have longstanding family legends of Indian ancestry among ancestors; but, none was confirmed among the 142 direct forebears of Churchill who were identified.

Documents in Churchill 's university personnel file show that he was granted tenure in a " special opportunity position . " In 1994, then CU @-@ Boulder Chancellor James Corbridge refused to take action on allegations that Churchill was fraudulently claiming to be an Indian, saying " it has always been university policy that a person 's race or ethnicity is self @-@ proving."

Some of Churchill 's Native American critics , such as Vernon Bellecourt (White Earth Ojibwe) and Suzan Shown Harjo (Southern Cheyenne @-@ Muscogee Creek), argue that his assertion of Native American ancestry without the ability to prove it might constitute misrepresentation and grounds for termination. The University has said that it does not hire on the basis of ethnicity. The University of Colorado 's Research Misconduct Committee conducted a preliminary investigation into whether Churchill misrepresented his ethnicity to "add credibility and public acceptance to his scholarship." The committee concluded that the allegation was not "appropriate for further investigation under the definition of research misconduct."

In a 2005 interview in The Rocky Mountain News , Churchill said , " I have never been confirmed as having one @-@ quarter blood , and never said I was . And even if [ the critics ] are absolutely right , what does that have to do with this issue ? I have never claimed to be goddamned Sitting Bull . " The longtime indigenous activist Russell Means said in February of that year , " So I want , from this day forward , every media person nationally , internationally and locally to know that we have ascertained that Ward Churchill is a full @-@ blooded Indian leader . "

Churchill has responded to requests for verification of his claimed Indian heritage in various ways, including attacking the blood quantum upon which some Native American tribes establish their membership requirements. Churchill argues that the United States instituted blood quantum laws based upon rules of descendancy in order to further goals of personal enrichment and political expediency.

For decades in his writings, Churchill has argued that blood quantum laws have an inherent genocidal purpose. He says,

" Set the blood quantum at one @-@ quarter, hold to it as a rigid definition of Indians, let intermarriage proceed as it [ has ] and eventually Indians will be defined out of existence ".

Churchill 's assertions have been raised as one of the several research @-@ misconduct allegations that were brought against him in 2005 ( see below ) . He has been accused of using his interpretation of the Dawes Act to attack tribal governments that would not recognize him as a member .

### = = Writing = =

Churchill has written on American Indian history and culture, and speaks about genocide inflicted on the indigenous people of the Americas by European settlers and what he describes as the repression of native peoples that continues to this day.

As of 2007, according to a report submitted on his behalf, Churchill has written 10 books on his own and co @-@ authored 4. Some have been reprinted with updates. He has written 51 book chapters, 3 law reviews, and 50 scholarly essays; 27 of these were refereed. He has edited 4 volumes and co @-@ edited 3 more.

According to the University of Colorado investigation, "His academic publications are nearly all works of synthesis and reinterpretation, drawing upon studies by other scholars, not monographs describing new research based on primary sources." The investigation also noted that "he has decided to publish largely in alternative presses or journals, not in the university presses or mainstream peer @-@ reviewed journals often favored by more conventional academics." In addition to his academic writing, Churchill has written for several general readership magazines of political opinion.

In 1986, Churchill wrote an essay titled Pacifism as Pathology: Notes on an American Pseudopraxis criticizing pacifist politics within the U.S. left as being hypocritical, de facto racist and ineffectual. In 1998, Arbeiter Ring Publishing published the essay in a book entitled Pacifism as Pathology: Reflections on the Role of Armed Struggle in North America and listing Ward Churchill as the author. The book included a preface by Ed Mead, a new introduction to the essay by Churchill and a commentary by Mike Ryan. The book sparked much debate in leftist circles and inspired more aggressive tactics within the anti @-@ globalization movement in the following few years.

Agents of Repression (1988), co @-@ authored by Jim Vander Wall, describes what the authors claim was a secret war against the Black Panther Party and American Indian Movement carried out during the late 1960s and '70s by the FBI under the COINTELPRO program. The COINTELPRO Papers (1990; reissued 2002), also co @-@ authored with Jim Vander Wall, examines a series of original FBI memos that detail the Bureau 's activities against various leftist groups, from the U.S. Communist Party in the 1950s to activists concerned with Central American issues in the 1980s.

In Fantasies of the Master Race (1992), Churchill examines the portrayal of American Indians and the use of American Indian symbols in popular American culture. He focuses on such phenomena as Tony Hillerman 's mystery novels, the film Dances with Wolves, and the New Age movement, finding examples of cultural imperialism and exploitation. Churchill calls author Carlos Castaneda 's claims of revealing the teachings of a Yaqui Indian shaman, the "greatest hoax since Piltdown Man"

Struggle for the Land (1993; reissued 2002) is a collection of essays in which Churchill chronicles what he describes as the U.S. government 's systematic exploitation of Native lands and the killing or displacement of American Indians. He details Native American efforts in the 19th and 20th

centuries to prevent defoliation and industrial practices such as surface mining.

Churchill 's Indians Are Us? (1994), a sequel to Fantasies of the Master Race, further explores American Indian issues in popular culture and politics. He examines the movie Black Robe, the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation killings, the prosecution of Leonard Peltier, sports mascots, the Indian Arts and Crafts Act of 1990, and blood quantum laws, calling them tools of genocide. Churchill is particularly outspoken about New Age exploitations of shamanism and American Indian sacred traditions, and the "do @-@ it @-@ yourself Indianism" of certain contemporary authors. John P. LaVelle of the University of New Mexico School of Law published a review of Indians Are Us? in The American Indian Quarterly. Professor LaVelle, an enrolled member of the Santee Sioux Nation, states that Indians Are Us? twists historical facts and is hostile toward Indian tribes. It was in this book that Churchill first made the claim that the United States distributed "smallpox @-@ infested blankets" to Indian tribes, a claim which he repeated several times over the next decade. The claim has been criticized as a falsification. Churchill has, however, received support from some scholars.

From a Native Son: Selected Essays on Indigenism, 1985? 1995 (1996) is a collection of 23 previously published essays on Native American history, culture, and political activism. In his introduction to this volume, Howard Zinn lauds "the emergence of a new generation of Native @-@ American scholars "and describes Churchill's writing as "powerful, eloquent, unsparing of cant and deception".

Churchill 's A Little Matter of Genocide (1997) is a survey of ethnic cleansing in the Americas from 1492 to the present. He compares the treatment of North American Indians to historical instances of genocide by the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia, Turks against Armenians, and Europeans against the Gypsies, as well as Nazis against the Poles and Jews.

In Perversions of Justice ( 2002 ) , Churchill argues that the U.S. 's legal system was adapted to gain control over Native American people . Tracing the evolution of federal Indian law , Churchill argues that the principles set forth were not only applied to non @-@ Indians in the U.S. , but later adapted for application abroad . He concludes that this demonstrates the development of the U.S. 's "imperial logic , " which depends on a " corrupt form of legalism " to establish colonial control and empire .

Churchill 's controversial essay on 9 / 11 was expanded into a book @-@ length manuscript , published as On the Justice of Roosting Chickens : Reflections on the Consequences of U.S. Imperial Arrogance and Criminality ( 2003 ) by AK Press . The book features two other chapters , one listing US military interventions , another listing what Churchill believes to be US violations of international law . The original essay takes the "roosting chickens " of the title from a 1963 Malcolm X speech , in which Malcolm X linked the assassination of U.S. president John F. Kennedy to the violence which Kennedy perpetuated as " merely a case of chickens coming home to roost . " Churchill 's essays in this book address the worldwide forms of resistance that he posits were and continue to be provoked by U.S. imperialism of the 20th and 21st centuries .

In Kill the Indian, Save the Man: The Genocidal Impact of American Indian Residential Schools (2004), Churchill traces the history of removing American Indian children from their homes to residential schools (in Canada) or Indian boarding schools (in the USA) as part of government policies (1880s? 1980s) which he regards as genocidal.

# = = Activism on Native American issues = =

Churchill has been active since at least 1984 as the co @-@ director of the Denver @-@ based American Indian Movement of Colorado , now an autonomous chapter of the American Indian Movement . In 1993 , he and other local AIM leaders , including Russell Means , Glenn T. Morris , Robert Robideau , and David Hill , broke with the national AIM leadership , including Dennis Banks and the brothers Vernon and Clyde Bellecourt , claiming that all AIM chapters are autonomous . The AIM Grand Governing Council is based in Minneapolis and retains the name of the national group . It says that the schism arose when Means , Churchill , Glenn T. Morris and others openly supported the Miskito Indian group Misurasata , who were allied with the anti @-@ revolutionary , CIA @-@

backed Contras.

Journalists such as Harlan McKosato attributed the split to Means and other AIM members dividing over opposition to the Bellecourt brothers because of their alleged involvement in the execution of Anna Mae Aquash in December 1975 , who was then the highest @-@ ranking woman in AIM but had been suspected of being an informant . It was a year in which other FBI informants had been discovered in AIM . On November 3 , 1999 , Means held a press conference in Denver , Colorado in which he accused the Bellecourt brothers of complicity in Aquash 's death , and named three lower @-@ level AIM members involved in her death : Arlo Looking Cloud , John Graham , and Theda Nelson Clark . This was the first time that an AIM leader active at the time of the Aquash murder had publicly accused AIM of having been involved .

Looking Cloud and Graham were convicted of murder in 2004 and 2010, by federal and South Dakota state juries, respectively. By then Clark was being cared for in a nursing home and was not indicted. Means attributed the split in AIM to divisions in the aftermath of Aquash 's murder. The journalist Harlan McKosato said in 1999, " ... her [ Aquash 's ] death has divided the American Indian Movement ... "

The schism continued , with the national AIM leadership claiming that the local AIM leaders , such as Churchill , are tools of the U.S. government used against other American Indians . The leaders of the national AIM organization , now called AIM Grand Governing Council , claim that Churchill has worked in the past as an underground counter @-@ intelligence source for the U.S. government , for example the FBI , and local , non @-@ Indian , police forces , to subvert the national AIM organization . Specifically , they refer to a 1993 Boulder , Colorado interview with Jodi Rave , a former columnist for the Denver Post , in which Churchill stated that he " was teaching the Rapid City Police Department about the American Indian Movement . " In addition , Vernon Bellecourt accused Churchill of having ' fraudulently represented himself as an Indian ' to bolster his credentials . Bellecourt said he complained to the University of Colorado about this as early as 1986

Churchill has been a leader of Colorado AIM 's annual protests in Denver against the Columbus Day holiday and its associated parade . Colorado AIM 's leadership has come into conflict with some leaders in the Denver Italian American community , the main supporters of the parade . As early as 2004 , Churchill had claimed that such parades are unconstitutional , arguing that the Ninth Amendment to the Constitution provides Native Americans with a right not to be subjected to such displays , overriding the First Amendment rights of non @-@ Native Americans .

#### = = 9 / 11 essay controversy = =

Churchill wrote an essay in September 2001 entitled On the Justice of Roosting Chickens . In it , he argued that the September 11 attacks were provoked by U.S. foreign policy . He compared the role of financial workers at the World Trade Center in " ongoing genocidal American imperialism " to the role played by Adolf Eichmann in organizing the Holocaust . In 2005 , this essay was widely publicized when Hamilton College invited Churchill to speak . This led to both condemnations of Churchill and counter @-@ accusations of McCarthyism by Churchill and supporters . Following the controversy , the University of Colorado interim Chancellor Phil DiStefano said , " While Professor Churchill has the constitutional right to express his political views , his essay on 9 / 11 has outraged and appalled us and the general public . "

A documentary called Shouting Fire: Stories from the Edge of Free Speech, broadcast on HBO, prominently features Churchill's case in addressing the issues of free speech and First Amendment rights.

## = = Research misconduct investigation = =

The controversy attracted increased academic attention to Churchill 's research , which had already been criticized by the legal scholar John LaVelle and historian Guenter Lewy . Additional critics were the sociologist Thomas Brown , who had been preparing an article on Churchill 's work , and the

historians R.G. Robertson and Russell Thornton , who claimed that Churchill had misrepresented their work . In 2005 , University of Colorado Boulder administrators ordered an investigation into seven allegations of research misconduct , including three allegations of plagiarism , and four allegations of fabrication or falsification regarding the history of the Dawes Act , the Indian Arts and Crafts Act of 1990 , and statements that smallpox was intentionally spread to Native Americans by John Smith in 1614 and by the United States Army at Fort Clark in 1837 ( not to be confused with the well @-@ documented use of smallpox @-@ infected blankets at Fort Pitt in 1764 ) .

On May 16, 2006 the University released their findings; the Investigative Committee agreed unanimously that Churchill had engaged in "serious research misconduct", including falsification, fabrication, and two of the three allegations of plagiarism. The committee was divided on the appropriate level of sanctions. The Standing Committee on Research Misconduct accepted the findings of the Investigative Committee but also disagreed on what sanctions should be imposed. Churchill 's appeal against his proposed dismissal was considered by a panel of the University 's Privilege and Tenure Committee, which found that two of the seven findings of misconduct did not constitute dismissible offences. Three members recommended that the penalty should be demotion and one year 's suspension without pay, while two favored dismissal.

On July 24, 2007, the University regents voted seven to two to uphold all seven of the findings of research misconduct, overruling the recommendation of Privilege and Tenure panel that two be dismissed. By a vote of eight to one, the regents determined to fire Churchill.

The next day , Churchill filed a lawsuit in state court claiming that the firing was retribution for his expressing politically unpopular views . The jury in Churchill 's suit for reinstatement weighed the university 's claims of academic misconduct per jury instructions it received in the case . As Stanley Fish said , " It was the jury ? s task to determine whether Churchill ? s dismissal would have occurred independently of the adverse political response to his constitutionally protected statements . " The jury found that the alleged misconduct would not have led to Churchill 's firing and rejected the university 's academic misconduct claim as the grounds for dismissal . On April 1 , 2009 , a Colorado jury found that Churchill had been wrongly fired , and awarded \$ 1 in damages . As one of the jurors said later in a press interview , " it wasn 't a slap in his face or anything like that when we didn 't give him any money . It 's just that [ Churchill 's attorney ] David Lane kept saying this wasn 't about the money , and in the end , we took his word for that . " Churchill 's counsel asked Chief Judge Larry J. Naves of the Denver District Court to order reinstatement in light of the verdict .

On July 7, 2009, Judge Naves found that the defendants (university) were entitled to quasi @-@ judicial immunity as a matter of law, vacated the jury verdict and determined that the University did not owe Churchill any financial compensation. Naves denied Churchill 's request for reinstatement at CU.

Churchill appealed both decisions . On November 24 , 2010 , a three @-@ judge panel of the Colorado Court of Appeals affirmed the trial court 's decision . In February 2011 , Churchill filed a petition for writ of certiorari with the Colorado Supreme Court . In late May 2011 , the Colorado Supreme Court agreed to hear his case . Court records indicate that oral arguments began June 7 , 2012 . On September 10 , 2012 , the court ruled that the University had " quasi @-@ judicial immunity " , upholding the trial court 's ruling . On April 1 , 2013 , the U.S. Supreme Court declined to hear an appeal from Churchill .

= = Honors = =

1992, Alfred University awarded him an honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters.

= = Works = =

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US Off The Planet!: An Evening In Eugene With Ward Churchill And Chellis Glendinning, VHS video recorded July 17, 2001 (Cascadia Media Collective, 2002)

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Z Mag Ward Churchill Audio August 10, 2003 and earlier

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A Little Matter of Genocide: Linking U.S. Aggression Abroad to the Domestic Repression of Indigenous Peoples ", recorded in North Battleford, Saskatchewan on March 19, 2005

Debate with David Horowitz and Ward Churchill at George Washington University April 6, 2006

- " Full two @-@ hour audio of debate with David Horowitz " . rightalk.listenz.com. Retrieved 2006 @-@ 07 @-@ 02 .
- " David Horowitz vs. Ward Churchill ? Round 1 " . Young Americans Foundation . Retrieved 2006 @-@ 07 @-@ 02 . Video and audio ( excerpt )
- " David Horowitz vs. Ward Churchill " . insidehighered.com. Retrieved 2006 @-@ 07 @-@ 02 .

#### = = Artwork = =

Churchill 's subjects are often American Indian figures and other themes associated with Native American Culture . He uses historical photographs as source material for works . In the early 1990s at Santa Fe Indian Market , Churchill protested the passage of the 1990 Indian Arts and Crafts Act . It requires that , to identify and exhibit works as being by a Native American , artists and craftsmen must be enrolled in a Native American tribe or designated by a tribe as an artisan . Under federal law , Churchill cannot identify his art as by a Native American .

Some of Churchill 's pieces may infringe copyrights . For example , his 1981 serigraph Winter Attack was , according to Churchill and others , based on a 1972 drawing by the artist Thomas E. Mails Churchill printed 150 copies of Winter Attack and sold at least one of them . Other copies are

available online for purchase . Churchill says that , when he produced Winter Attack , he publicly acknowledged that it was based on Mails ' work . The online journal Artnet mentions Churchill 's artwork and the controversy surrounding its originality .