



**BIRLA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY AND SCIENCE, PILANI,
DUBAI CAMPUS**

**DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
DISTINGUISHED LECTURE SERIES**



LEANNE HOWE

University of Georgia

**MOUND BUILDING, BALL GAMES,
and the**

COUNTERCLOCKWISE MOTION of TRIBALOGGRAPHY

15 November 2021

8:00 pm – 9:00 pm GST | 9.30 pm - 10.30 pm IST | 11:00 am - 12:00 pm ET

Zoom Meeting ID: 983 8878 4625 Passcode: 436080

<https://zoom.us/j/98388784625?pwd=bThKWVdsTm110E1Xc3VyczBkendrZz09>

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Mound Building, Ball Games, and the Counterclockwise Motion of Tribalography

Professor LeAnne Howe, University of Georgia

Building on my essay, "The Story of America: A Tribalography" [1] I'll discuss the Choctaws and our mounds, contemporary ball games and ancient ball fields in the Southeast. Through our physical actions in games and earthworks' building skills, I'll show the often-overlooked reciprocal embodiment of Choctaw people and land. I am interested in continuances rather than disappearances and by linking mound-building with Native Southeastern architects in the ancient past. I show how "returning home" in contemporary recreational ball games, or in ceremonies, is an expression of an ongoing embodied lifeway of Choctawan people.

[1] L. Howe, "The Story of America: A Tribalography," in *Clearing a Path: Theorizing the Past in Native American Studies*, Nancy Shoemaker, Ed. Routledge, 2001, pp. 29-48. My chapter argues that narratives, whether classified as mythological, scientific, historical or fictional, share the power to create truths to live by and through which members of specific cultural groups see the world. This chapter is republished in *First Nations of North America, Politics and Representation* (2005).

Biography

LeAnne Howe is an enrolled citizen of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. She is the Eidson Distinguished Professor of American Literature in English at the University of Georgia. Howe is the author of novels, plays and poetry, and screenplays. She is the on-camera narrator for a 90-minute PBS documentary, *Indian Country Diaries, Spiral of Fire*, 2006, and producer and writer for the 60-minute *Searching for Sequoyah*, airing this month on PBS stations and affiliates in the United States.

Howe's awards include the American Book Award, Western Literature Association's 2015 Distinguished Achievement Award; the inaugural 2014 MLA Prize for Studies in Native American Literatures; and a 2012 United States Artists Ford Fellowship, among others. During 2010-2011, Howe was a Fulbright Scholar at the University of Jordan, Amman. Her monograph, *Savage Conversations* (Coffee House Press, 2019) is the story of Mary Todd Lincoln and the Savage Indian ghost she claimed tortured her nightly in 1875.

In August 2020 her most recent books were released: *Famine Pots: The Choctaw Irish Gift Exchange 1847-Present* (Michigan State University Press, 2020) co-edited with Irish scholar, Padraig Kirwan; and, *When The Light of The World Was Subdued, Our Songs Came Through: A Norton Anthology of Native Nations Poetry* (2020) co-edited with U.S. Poet Laureate Joy Harjo, and Jennifer Elise Foerster.