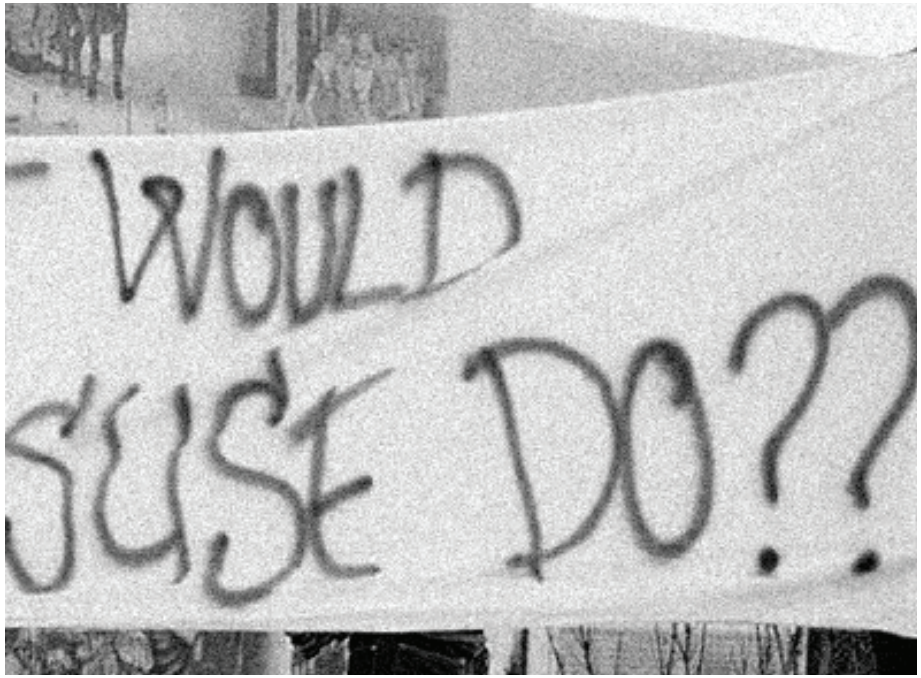
WE'LL DRIVE YOU HOPELESS

FUCK HOPE: A PROJECT OF INDIGENOUS NIHILISM

Indigenous people have always lived with this clarity in the ruins of our worlds beneath the many masks of the frontier with its endless expansion. Trapped in the social position of occupation where life is violently consumed. Our bodies and meanings are processed the same way the state processes land and water. Everything becomes a resource for colonial dividends. Even life-support systems are subsidized by the land and lives it consumes. Every benefit is an extractive necessity no cleaner than a billionaire's first dollar which is always earned long after the harm that made it possible.

This is the cost of the frontier's verdict. A world where Indigenous life is consumed openly and without consequence, a world that calls this consumption normal. There is no misunderstanding here. The colony cannot see us as human because "human" is the name it gave itself. Everyone else is material. And material is the foundation of its wealth, its legitimacy, and its future. That is the truth Casuse and Nakaidine exposed. That is the truth that never ended. The frontier continues, just not for us.



pdf available on
fuckhope.noblogs.org

it killed him to protect the rhythm of its uninterrupted verdict of extraction. The frontier is a sentence handed down again and again. Settlers mistake its repetition as legitimacy. Authority they grant themselves to ensure extraction is not just legal, but unquestionable.

There is no lesson in his death, in any of our deaths, that serves as a redemption arc for the colony. No hidden promise that if we keep telling the story, something might shift. Nothing shifts. That's the point.

What follows is not a call for boycotts, slogans, or moral performance. The colony has survived every version of that theater. There is no consumer choice that interrupts extraction, no chant that dissolves a verdict already centuries old. This is not an invitation to act, redeem, or correct. It is only an invitation to understand that the tools settlers reach for are themselves part of the frontier's machinery. And beneath all of this lies the position we are forced into.

We'll Drive You Hopeless

by

Fuck Hope

II. The American Dream cannot exist unless the wound stays open. If the wound heals, if the land returns, if the original violence is acknowledged without myth or metaphor then the entire economy collapses. So the wound must be maintained.

In other words, the border-town liquor stores must stay open. The pipelines must cross through Diné Bikeyah. The data centers have to be built in Page. The subprime auto loans have to continue. The tech empires have to continue and grow. The vending machines have to light up the colonial project of Tempe Town Lake. The narrative of entrepreneurship has to endure. Settler forgetfulness has to pursue its cycle. The nation has to have its myths.

This is why Manifest Destiny is never described as ongoing. This is why extraction is always framed as opportunity. This is why settler success stories begin with nothing and end with everything except history.

Because if the public ever realized how wealth is actually made, how capital is actually accumulated, how families like the Garcias moved from predatory border-town commerce to billion-dollar empires then they might ask what does America owe? And despite all of its wealth and power, America cannot afford that question. The story is not that a border-town family got rich. The story is that the system requires them.

I. Americans love a narrative of ascent but every dollar in the Garcia empire is a fossilized layer of Indigenous dispossession. Every innovation is a new way to extract without appearing to. Every success story in America is just the frontier wearing a different mask. A rerun of the same origin myth in which they take, they extract, they rename, they forget. The mechanism never changes. The frontier isn't a place anymore.

Casuse and Nakaidine knew that. Not as metaphor, not as theory. They knew it the way people know winter. By living inside it until the cold stops being weather and becomes something else entirely. Casuse and Nakaidine never had the luxury of pretending and neither do we. They forced the town to confront the mechanisms of the frontier. Its machinery that eliminates anything that interrupts its momentum. The machinery of the colonial state did not kill Casuse only to protect the mayor,

This is not just the Garcia story rather it is the blueprint of U.S. capitalism. It's predation to profit. Politics to legitimacy. Expansion to innovation. And a straight line to amnesia.

By the 1990s, the Garcia family was no longer merely a border-town dynasty. They were major stakeholders in the used car conglomerate Ugly Duckling, which rebranded as DriveTime. Their model? Subprime auto loans to poor, working-class, often credit-invisible people. Particularly, Indigenous, Black, and Latino renters living in the economic shadow of extraction.

It wasn't alcohol anymore. It was debt. The product changed but the prey did not.

DriveTime perfected the formula of turning structural oppression into a payment plan. The company's internal motto of "We finance good people with bad credit" was the polite corporate version of what border towns had always said. We profit from the system that harmed you. Extraction does not end but rebrands.

III. Then came Ernie Garcia III, a grandson of the Gallup dynasty. He took what his grandfather built on border-town exploitation and rebranded it as innovation. Carvana was sleek, futuristic, frictionless, millennial-friendly. Its vending machine towers became architectural cathedrals of consumer desire. Monoliths of convenience that erased every precursor that made them possible.

To buy a car from Carvana is to participate in a ritual of forgetting. A transaction built atop the unsolved deaths in border-town arroyos. The liquor profits that funded Gallup political careers. The municipal policies that criminalized Indigenous survival. The subprime loans that kept poor families trapped. The generational wealth passed forward. The algorithmic veneer of "new economy" capitalism. Carvana is not merely a tech company rather it is a settler story in its fourth act. And every act begins on stolen land and Indigenous genocide.

To many Diné, Carvana is not innovation. It is the afterlife of the Navajo Inn. A reminder that what Casuse and Nakaidine confronted still stands, only taller. It is the wound automated.

Before the glossy ads, before the vending machines, before "innovation" became a stand-in for absolution, there was a stretch of Highway 264 outside of Window Rock, Arizona where people walked home but didn't make it.

Alcohol bottles cracked like bones against sandstone. Sirens arrived late, if at all. Families drove out at dawn looking for someone who should've walked through the door the night before. The so called border-town economy had a precision to it, slow violence disguised as commerce. Profit built on predictable death.

Gallup, New Mexico calls itself the "Most Patriotic Small Town in America." On weekends, tourists buy turquoise jewelry from stalls lining Route 66. On weekdays, freight trains slice through the center, carrying coal, lumber, oil, and goods across the Southwest. A liquor store and bar known as the Navajo Inn operated just west of the town.

In the 1970s, two young Diné men would name the predator in broad daylight. They would drag the mayor and Navajo Inn owner, Emmett Garcia, into the street and force a moment of clarity in a town that specialized in never looking at itself. Larry Casuse was 19. Robert Nakaidine was 21. Casuse would not survive that day, Nakaidine would. But the line they drew, from border-town extraction to generational wealth, remains carved into the desert like petroglyphs of warning.

VI. So called border-towns are not simply settlements. In fact, they are not towns at all. They are extraction architecture. Gallup. Farmington. Flagstaff. Page. Holbrook. Winslow. Anywhere a reservation meets a jurisdiction that exists specifically to monetize it. They sit outside Indigenous nations like warehouses attached to a mine. They aren't simply communities but are devices.

In Gallup, the device was alcohol.

For decades, the liquor licenses along U.S. 491 (formerly Highway 666) were held by a tight network of families. Among them were the Garcias, one of the most recognizable political families in Western New Mexico. Their businesses operated at the fault line between Indigenous poverty and settler profit. Their customers were Navajo, Zuni, and Hopi relatives walking home across jurisdictional lines, crossing from "sovereign" land into a legal no-man's land where police rarely intervened except to arrest a body already broken. These shops were not simply stores but industrial sites and their production occurred within Indigenous bodies.

One of the Garcia family's earliest footholds in this border-town economy was the Navajo Inn, co-owned by Mayor Emmett Garcia. It was not simply a bar but an engineered point of extraction, positioned at the edge of Diné land to convert displacement, poverty, and vulnerability into cashflow. The Inn was the prototype. A place where the family learned how to monetize Indigenous suffering with political cover and social legitimacy. Every enterprise that followed, Ugly Duckling, DriveTime, Carvana, emerged from the same blueprint the Navajo Inn perfected. The product changed. The scale expanded. The logic never did.

The output was alcohol-related deaths, exposure deaths, traffic fatalities, arrests, fines, municipal revenue, political capital, election campaigns, and eventually, generational wealth.

In the 1970s, it was said that along the border of the Navajo Nation, scores of Diné died annually while trying to walk home from establishments owned or politically shielded by border town elites. Ranchers and police officers routinely found bodies in arroyos. Some bodies were frozen, some beaten, many simply collapsed from the weight of everything the reservation system did to them.

Everyone who grew up there knew this. Everyone Indigenous did, at least. Settlers, on the other hand, could afford not to. Everyone understood the arrangement. Casuse and Nakaidine acted on it.

V. Larry Casuse was a Diné student at UNM. He was watching his hometown of Gallup import and profit from Indigenous suffering. He watched politicians publicly condemn alcoholism while privately protecting the businesses that produced the carnage.

He knew the truth most Americans still refuse to accept. The truth is that predatory economies require bodies and they do not exist without them.

When Casuse and Nakaidine kidnapped Mayor Emmett Garcia in 1973, it was not random. Garcia was politically insulated, economically protected, and socially praised for the very conditions Indigenous families were burying their relatives for. They dragged Garcia into the street. They demanded accountability. They revealed the exploitation for what it was. Within hours, Casuse was killed by police. Nakaidine and Garcia survived. The economy survived, the town survived, and the narrative survived.

Casuse became a cautionary tale for the state and Garcia became a symbol of stability for settlers. The border-town economy kept turning. But something else happened too.

Casuse and Nakaidine exposed the blueprint. Not just of Gallup but of the American economy itself. What they exposed did not die with Casuse, it simply evolved.

IV. To understand the arc of the Garcia family wealth, you must understand the structure Casuse and Nakaidine exposed. The Garcias found a population made precarious by policy. They created a product that exploits that precarity. They monetized the consequences of suffering. They used profits to build political capital. They used political capital to shield the business. They accumulated enough wealth to pivot into new industries. They retold the story as entrepreneurship and not extraction.