



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on February 26, 2020

Native Americans After Warren Again Over Bogus Ancestry Claim

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Democrat presidential candidate Elizabeth Warren likely thought the controversy about her “Native American ancestry” was over, but alas, more than 200 Indians have signed a letter to say they aren’t ready to forget about it.

[First reported in today’s Los Angeles Times](#), the letter says Warren has not repaired the “harm” she did in claiming Cherokee blood, a lie that nearly wrecked her candidacy last year.

Warren apologized and all seemed to have been forgiven, but now she’s not only defending herself again but also admitting again that she is not, as she claimed for more than three decades in official legal records, an Indian.

The Letter

[The signers of the undated letter are concerned](#) because Warren’s lie raised a “public debate about our identity” that “will impact Native rights for years to come.”

They elaborated:

Whatever your intentions, your actions have normalized white people claiming to be Native, and perpetuated a dangerous misunderstanding of tribal sovereignty. Your actions do not exist in a vacuum but are part of a long and violent history.... Members of fake “tribes” have been awarded over \$800 million in no-bid federal contracts set aside for minority business owners. Rather than using evidence of Native ancestry, these fake tribes rely solely on family stories and commercial DNA tests. When you still defend yourself by stating you believed what you heard growing up, you set a harmful example for these white people stealing Native identity and resources with stories very similar to your own.

Warren’s DNA test, [which supposedly showed](#) she is as little as 1/1024th Indian, “promoted the exact same logic the Right is currently using to try and destroy Native rights,” the [complaint continued](#).

The “Right” isn’t trying to destroy “Native rights,” whatever they are, but anyway, Warren has “yet to fully address the harm [she] caused,” the signers wrote.

“Stating you do not qualify for citizenship is not enough; the truth is you and your ancestors are white,” the [letter averred](#). As well, the Indian claim is “dangerous” because it “undermines indigenous self-determination,” whatever that is.

Cherokees weren’t the only signers. Others were Choctaw, Mohawk, Navajo, Pamunkey, Powhatan, and Oglala Sioux.



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Warren's Reply

[Warren answered](#) on Tuesday with a nauseating, 12-page reply larded with 88 footnotes. That might seem a tad overdone, but three losses in the first three Democrat primaries, as the [Times noted](#), might explain the obsequious reply.

Noting how much time she's spent in "Indian Country" to meet and listen to its residents, "it is in that spirit of learning and listening," she wrote, "that I welcome hearing from you in the form of this letter."

Then comes the apology, the obligatory self-loathing, and ritual bashing of whites who settled the United States:

I am not a person of color; I am a white woman, and that is how I identify. In addition, I am not a tribal citizen. Tribal Nations — and only Tribal Nations — determine tribal citizenship.... I have said very publicly — and I will continue to say—that DNA does not determine tribal citizenship.

This is no small point because of the long history of colonialism and violence perpetrated against Native communities, people, and identity by this country. And I understand that the confusion my actions propagated around tribal sovereignty and citizenship caused real harm to Native people and communities. I was wrong to have identified as a Native American, and, without qualification or excuse, I apologize for the harm I caused.

How bad is [Warren's truckling mea culpa](#)?

I am grateful for your willingness to hold me accountable and for the opportunity to have had this courageous conversation. I know this kind of engagement only happens with people you expect more from, and I am grateful to be one of those people. Please continue to expect more from me, and I will continue to dedicate myself to living up to it.

Forked Tongue

Yet even in her confession and apology, Warren finagled the truth.

In noting that the [Boston Globe reported](#) that her bogus identity didn't advance her career because "people responsible for hiring her saw her as a white woman," she avoided discussing just how long she perpetrated the fraud. As [The New American reported](#) about a year ago, Warren retailed the Indian malarkey for more than 30 years.

In 1986, she registered with the Texas bar as an Indian, and the same year called herself a "minority" in a list of such law professors for the Association of American Law Schools. In 1989, two years after she began working at the University of Pennsylvania, she changed her ethnicity in records from white to Indian, and Harvard University listed her as an Indian in federal affirmative action forms from 1995 to 2004.

Photo: AP Images

R. Cort Kirkwood is a long-time contributor to The New American and a former newspaper editor.



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