

Tribal Culture and Economy on American Indian Reservations

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Two Way Question

economic development \Leftrightarrow tribal culture

Will economic growth in the 21st century erode or augment American Indian tribal culture?

Will tribal culture retard or promote economic development?

Defining Culture

Culture is...

- social not individual
 - local not universal
- learned not instinctive
- historical not biological
 - evolved not planned
- distributed not centralized
 - symbolic not literal
- significant not meaningless
 - cultivated not coarse

Indispensable & Vague

“Culture” indispensable to conversation, like

- “society”
- “norm”
- “institution” “personality”

“Culture” is inevitably vague

-- loose criteria control the word in speech and the concept in thought

--no essence or “true meaning”

Cultural Contests

evaluation

- cultured v. refined
- insiders and outsiders
- “Hopi way” v. “Indian” or “white”

consequences

- pride
- human relationships
- subsidies
- grants
- school curricula
- jobs

Idealism, Materialism

- Idealism: ideas are the base of society and materiality is the superstructure
- Materialism: Property is the base of society and ideas are the superstructure

innovation = new idea + material resources

Culture's Expressions and Foundation

Expressions:

- praying
- singing
- dancing
- dressing
- Dining
- art & craft

Foundations:

- marrying
- child-rearing
- worshipping
- governing
- working

Relatives and Individuals

- Tribal people live more of their lives among kin.
- Urban people live more of their lives among non-kin.

=> Different thoughts and actions.

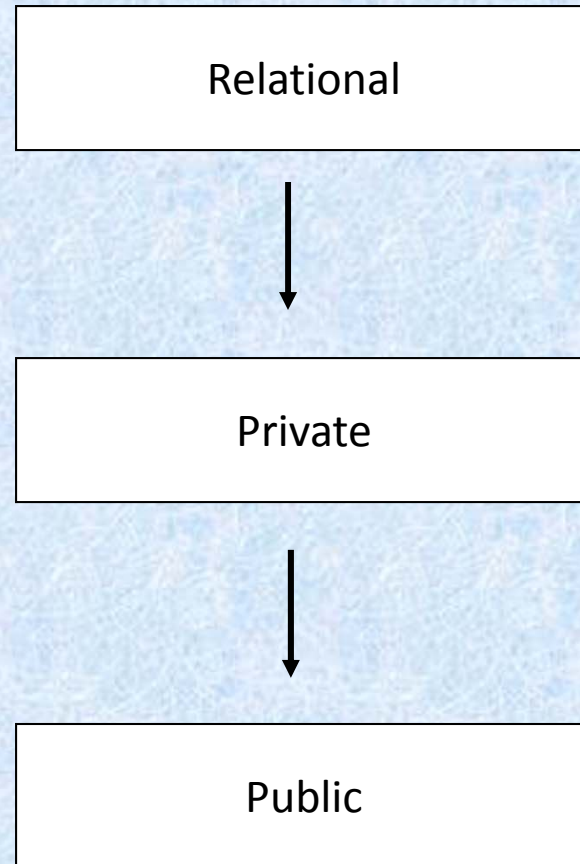
Individuals v. Kin

- Is more individuation necessary to economic development?
- How kinship allegedly blocks innovation:
 - conservatism
 - redistribution

Enormously Wealthy Families

- Pritzkers in Chicago (Hyatt Hotels)
- Koch brothers in New York (KochIndustries)
- Mittals in India (AncelorMittal steel)
- Liang Wengen family in China (Sany Group)
- Slim family in Mexico (Grupo Carso, Telmex, etc.).

Finance in Silicon Valley

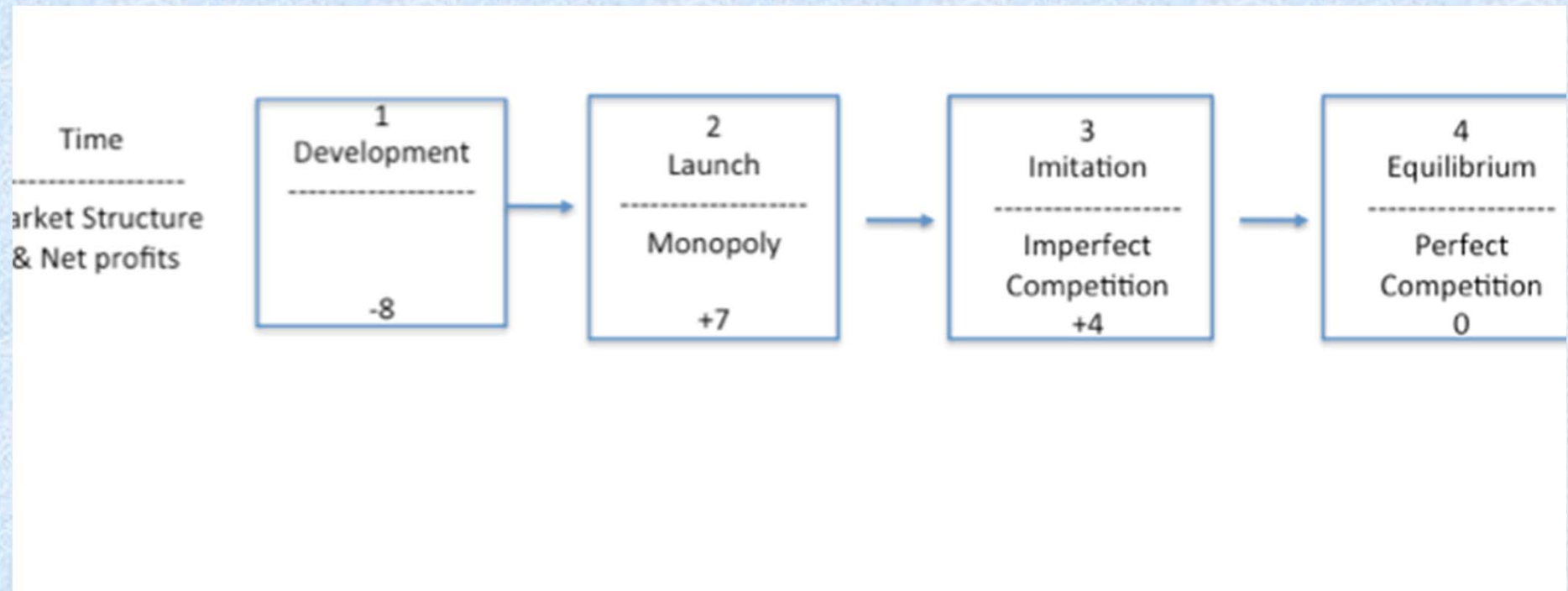


Trust

- Repeat dealing
- Identity

Lowers transaction costs of
innovation => tribal entrepreneurs

Life Cycle of a Profitable Venture





LEGALIZE

FREEDOM

Two Kinds of Liberty

- Negative: absence of prohibitions.
- Positive: presence of possibilities.

Neg + Pos Economic Liberty => Creativity

Sources of the Living Law

- Society: Relationships & Social Norms
- State: Formal Laws & Institutions (Courts & Administration)

Conclusion

Legalize freedom by improving the living law.

More Reading

- Dominic Parker. Statistical analysis of language retention and economic development on reservations.
- Justin Richland. Emory Sekaquaptewa's Hopi Dictionary -- A Case Study of a Social Entrepreneur.
- Robert Cooter and Hans Bernd Schaefer. Solomon's Knot: How Law Can End the Poverty of Nations (Princeton UP, 2012).

END

END

“Legalize Freedom”

The Prescription for Development

Property,
Contract,
growth

Business Law

+

Liberalization

=>

Growth

Three Principles of Law for Growth

- Property Principle for Innovation: The creators of wealth should keep much of it.
- Contract Principle for Coordination: The law should enable people to commit to doing what they say.
- Organizational Principle for Liberty: People can freely enter most lines of business and choose their firm's organization from a legal menu.