

# [To the universe and the earth, and](https://assignbuster.com/to-the-universe-and-the-earth-and/)

To the Navajo, the earth and their sacred lands are a part of their identity.

It is at thevery core of who they are. They believe the earth and all it offers to humans, should be a give and take. They believe in keeping a balance and they do sothrough many rituals, one being chantways, where over the course ofseveral days, ritualized singing and chanting takes place. Everything they do, is centered around the universe, it’s creation and respecting that. Even their hogansand tipis, are religious and sacred, having specific ways to build suchstructures. The hogans represent four sacred mountains that surround theNavajo’s homeland. The roof represents Father Sky and the floor is MotherEarth.

The building of a tipi is also sacred and must be built to specificstandards, as they see it as an image of the universe. All of these sacredrituals were taught to the Navajo people by their ancestors, the Holy People. These rituals help keep order and balance in the universe and are where theNavajo religious practices stem from. Some other rituals they have, thatrestore balance in the universe are rites of renewal and the SunDance. The rites of renewal tend to be seasonal, so that they are designedaround periods of such things like planting and harvesting. The Sun Danceis an annual ritual, centered around an axis mundi, which creates asacred space for the ritual. Native Americans from all over have taken part inthe Sun Dance, for many centuries and still do to this day.

Their historyhas proven time and time again, that they cherish the universe and the earth, and do all that they can to protect it and keep things balanced. When theNative Americans at the protest against the Dakota Access Pipeline, commonlyreferred to as DAPL, say they are “ Protectors, not protestors” history has proven that to be true. Of course, they want to protect the waterand their sacred lands from the pipeline. Oil pipelines leak all of the timecausing destruction to lands and waters, so it’s not a matter of if it willleak, but when.

The Native Americans aretrying to protect Mother Earth and its most valuable resource. Not only arethey being protectors of the water, but also protectors of their religiousrights. In 1978, the American Indian Religious Freedom Act gave NativeAmericans the right to practice their beliefs.

With the pipeline being plannedto go right through their sacred lands, where many of their ancestors lay, theUS government is encroaching on those religious rights. We’ve taken enough fromthe Native Americans. Let them be the protectors they are meant to be and let’slearn from them.