

**National Multicultural Interpreter Project
American Indian/Alaskan Native Curriculum**

PREFACE

Mi takuye oyasin! These Lakota words perhaps capture the essence and the spirit of the American Indians and Alaskan Natives. The closest English translation of these words would be; “all my relations.” To the Lakota and most other tribes or nations in North America, the concept behind these words goes beyond human description, beyond human relations, and indeed beyond the ability of any language to do them justice. When these words are uttered by American Indians, there is no conscious effort at description or explanation. It is just simply a thought process that includes every animate and inanimate object on earth, in the sky, and below the ground. It involves a consciousness carried through seven generations and to be passed on to the next seven generations. It encompasses the four sacred directions, mother earth, grandfather sky, and the ground upon which one stands. It is part of their belief system, yet is more than simple spiritual experience. All tribes view themselves as ‘the people,’ as can be seen in their names for themselves, but this does not mean that they see other tribes as different, alien or less than themselves. The names they have for themselves: Lakota, Cheyenne, Muskogee, Cherokee, Choctaw, Mohawk, and numerous others are really identities of pride to which the tribal member can point as his or her source of being. In other words, American Indians do not identify themselves in isolation from their tribe or nation. This phenomenon is partly why the development of an interpreter training curriculum based on American Indian and Alaskan Native cultures is extremely challenging. Everyone who participated in this project had valid experiential bases for their input.

Inclusion - the experience of full participation in this project was the driving force, yet there was an urgent need to capture these words, thoughts, concepts, or descriptions that could convey a sense of the culture we attempting to describe without falling into stereotype. There was an urge to find *universals* in the many different cultural heritages. How does one find the single concept, word or thought that fits a given tradition without making exceptions? Impossible! In one sense, the idea of inclusion fits the American Indian sense of accepting all gifts offered, as it is considered an insult to reject any offer. That is why we have so many concepts, descriptions and ideas in this first attempt at curriculum development. It may appear overwhelming at first, but as one progress through it, it will soon become clear that all of those activities have value for understanding the whole. Our aim is not to get the student to understand everything Indian, but simply to help them become aware that there are perhaps more differences among tribes than they had previously thought. As the student starts to become more comfortable with the various signs, concepts and cultural positions of interpreting with and for American Indians and Alaskan Natives, it is hoped that further study and awareness of particular groups or tribes would ensue. With that in mind, one could say this curriculum is a work in progress and will probably be revised from time to time as we learn where all can flow into one harmonious whole. *Mi takuye oyasin!*

–Howard R. Busby, Ph.D., Editor (Mississippi Choctaw)

**National Multicultural Interpreter Project
American Indian/Alaskan Native Curriculum
Module: Cultural Knowledge and Sensitivity
Lecture Notes**

I. American Indian/Alaskan Native Cultural Identity and Related Terminology

A. Diversity and complexity of identity and labels.

Nation - Refers to the total culture, lifestyle and systems of beliefs shared by a specific group of people; most tribes consider themselves a sovereign nation. For example: (Tsa La Gi) Cherokee Nation; Diné Nation (Navajo); Dakota, Nakota, Lakota (Sioux), and the Tlinget in Alaska.

Tribe - Nations are divided into tribes, bands and clans. In Alaska, a nation may be composed of many villages and corporations. "Tribe" as a term was preferred by conquering nations to refer to conquered nations, and may indicate less parity in status than "Nation."

Clan - A clan is a family-based infrastructure, including extended family members, and adopted members, who share common ancestors. A tribe or nation may have several clans, each of which has a specific role or responsibilities, for example the "Wolf Clan" in some tribes are typically viewed as "Keepers of the Fire, or the "Warrior Clan" or the "Teaching Clan" or "the Hunters."

B. Definitions and preferred usage in the United States for American Indian/Alaskan Natives

Many terms have been coined by Europeans or Euro-Americans and/or for United States government purposes, and they are often descriptive adjectives or nouns. The People native to this hemisphere had no such vocabulary that classified them as all one group. Many Indians today, as then, preferred simply to be known by the names of their respective Nations or Tribes.

The preferred usage of these terms is only an issue in English, since there are no generic words that are inclusive of all First Nations in any Indian language, signed or spoken. One should refer to the names of the individual Nation without trying to lump them all together in one spoken, or signed English term. In ASL, the sign glossed as "INDIAN" may be voiced in any of the following fashions, depending upon local or individual preferences. The sign that has been introduced as "politically correct" for Indian; the open "B" handshape rubbing the back of the "S" handshape, this sign was derived from a couple of different Indian signs that were used to indicate "color" in some tribes; and "dirty" in others. The only Indians this sign refers to is the Utes. The Intertribal Deaf Council is not using this sign, some Deaf individuals may continue to use it to mean "Native American" or "American Indian."

Each nation in their own language usually has a term that is equivalent to "The People" in English. There are several Indian nations that have sign names from Indian Sign Language.

1. Preferred usage in the United States

American Indian or Alaskan Native is the most common preferred terms in the United States for Native Peoples. These are the most comfortable terms for the Elders themselves, therefore they are gaining popularity in Indian country. They were voted preferred terms by the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI).

Note: While "Indian" is often considered a misnomer from the time of Columbus, some academics maintain that Columbus did not think that he was in India, and that India had another name on the maps of that time period. They maintain that the comment in Columbus's journal "Una gente en dios" (a people in (with) God) was the origin of the term. Many people who earlier were convinced that "Native American" was a better term have returned to using the former term

“Indian”. One of the most common terms used in the 1500's and 1600's when referring to Indians was simply “Americans.”

“Alaskan Native” is a term inclusive of non-Indian, Inuit, Nunivut, and includes the people commonly referred to as Eskimos who are divided into the Inupiat from the north, and Yu' pik from the south.

Aleuts refers to the Alaskan Natives who come from the Aleutian Islands. Many of the Aleuts have been forced to relocate to the mainland of Alaska.

Native American - This term was coined by the Department of the Interior as a “catch all” term that included all of the Indigenous Peoples of the United States, and its trust territories, this would include native Hawaiians, American Samoans, Alaskan natives, and the Indigenous People of Puerto Rico. This term is considered by some to be incorrect on par with the term “hearing impaired” in the Deaf community. However, it is still a popular term with some urban Indian communities, and with some Nations such as the Navajo. When there was strong usage of the term “Indian” during the 500th anniversary commemorations of Columbus' contact in 1492, many people rebelled against, “any name give to us by that man.”

First Americans - This term was first used by President Lyndon Johnson, it is a synonym for Native Americans.

Some additional terms refer to Indians lands and their relationship to the government.

Indian Country - colloquially used as terms for parts of the United States especially Western states where there are larger number of Indian peoples, lands and culture or in the larger sense of Indian people who have gathered together.

Reservation - This is a common term for land held in trust by the United States government for Indian Nations. It is colloquially referred to as “Rez” and is often fingerspelled R-E-Z in ASL, even for land that has been divided into allotments and has lost reservation status is commonly referred to with these terms.

Reserve - This term is the Canadian equivalent of “reservation.”

Settlement - This is there preferred term to “reserve” for the First Nation land base in Canada, where no treaty was ever signed with the government, and sovereign nation status is claimed, one example is the Oneida First Nation of Canada.

Mission - Term most often used in California to refer to a Indian Community land without reservation status.

Pueblo - Southwestern villages and communities of Pueblo Peoples, such as Zia, Zuni, Isleta, etc. Each pueblo has elected governors, not chiefs. They have a historically different relationship with the federal government established under the Spanish system.

Corporations - Refers to the over 500 villages and nations of American Indians and Alaskan Natives in Alaska separate from the commonly counted 500 Nations of the 49 lower states. They are not dealt with by the federal government as governmental entities with reservation status, but are given status as corporations, giving the federal government more unilateral control.

2. Preferred usage in Canada for First Nation peoples

The use of the name that is commonly used by any nation or reserve such as; Inuit, Cree, or Oneida Nation is what is usually preferred, here are some terms:

First Nations - This the preferred term in Canada, and was voted as the preferred term by the Assembly of First Nations (AFN). It is becoming more popular in the United States. Among the First Nations on Canadian reserves the term "Indian" is still in common usage. However, the term is formally rejected.

The People - The translation into English of a Nation or tribal name, is often represented as simply "The People."

Indigenous People(s) or Nation(s) - Synonymous with "The People" in context. It is more commonly used in Canada and Latin America than in the United States. It can refer to Native populations all over the world. All ethnicities are indigenous somewhere in the world.

Aborigines, or Aboriginal People(s) - See also "Indigenous" this term is also frequently associated with the first Australian people.

3. Preferred usage in Mexico and in South America may also refer to the "Indigenous" people and by the specific name of the group such as tribal group.

C. Nation and tribal names

Many of the tribal names that were used in the past were the result of mispronunciation by trappers and settlers. Several Nations and tribes have recently changed their names back to their original Indian root names. The following is a list of some of the names used by the people, along with the common name used by the United States government:

Diné - (Navajo)

Lakota, Dakota, Nakota, Oglala - or spelled Lacotah, Dacotah, Nacotah (Sioux)

Tsa La Gi - (Cherokee)

Inquire or research from a cultural guide or from information printed by the nation/tribe to determine the preferred name, spelling and pronunciation.

D. Pejorative terms and disrespectful usage of words for American Indian/Alaskan Natives

Use of tribal names and "logos" by others:

Many Indians feel that the use of their tribal names, or their native words for the names of sports teams are misuses of their language, and their cultural, and that these references which are in a caricatured manner is very disrespectful to their culture.

The Zia Pueblo symbol was appropriated by the state of New Mexico for the symbol on the yellow field of their flag. There is an on-going discussion on this usage.

The Cleveland Indians ostensibly used this name to honor a former team member, the first American Indian ball player to play in the professional baseball leagues. The stereotypical caricature that serves as their logo has been likened to the cartooned portrayal of Jews in Nazi propaganda.

Some names and uses have been given the official permission of the appropriate tribes. For example, the Florida Seminoles were granted permission by the Seminole Nation to use that name. However, the most traditional Seminoles, the "Miccosukee" have apparently not been consulted on this issue. There are many instances of the disrespectful use of Indian symbols by sports teams and mascots including the Washington Redskins.

Use and derivation of racial epithets

The term "red" may have referred to red oxides used as body paint. However, the Choctaw refer to themselves as "Oklahoma" literally meaning "People Red" out of a preference for the color - red. The actual skin tone of most Indians varies from a light tan or olive to a deep mahogany color.

Some racial epithets include: Red Man, Injun, redskin, blanket ass, prairie nigger, red nigger, woods nigger, savage, squaw, brave, scalp, "chief" are some of the derogatory words used by non-Indians.

E. Frequently used terms and acronyms for American Indian/Alaskan Native

Some commonly used abbreviations and acronyms examples are:

BIA - Bureau of Indian Affairs

NCAI - National Congress of American Indians

AFN - Assembly of First Nations

IHS - Indian Health Service

AIM - American Indian Movement

NAC - Native American Church

NAGPRA - National American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act

Other acronyms are reassigned "ingroup" meaning to indicate political humor or satire:

FBI - Full Blood Indian

BIA - Boss Indians Around

IHS - Indian Hell Service

II. American Indian/Alaskan Native Historical Perspectives and Demographics

A. Historical chronology before first European contact

There are estimates that the Indian population was between 5 and 30 million individuals living on the North and South American continents before European contact.

The Indian's concept was that the land was not "owned" by anyone. The various Indian groups that were the indigenous inhabitants of the entire North American continent had recognized tribal villages, cities, encampments, farming, fishing and hunting lands.

Resource: See map from p.10, Russell, G.,(1997) *American Indian Facts of Life: A Profile of Today's Tribes and Reservations*. Phoenix: American Indian Data Resources.

B. Historical chronology after first contact "discovery or invasion"

1. In the American Indian view of "first contact," Indians originally played the obligatory role of good hospitality and welcomed the 'visitors.' Later, they felt betrayed by the 'visitor's' abuse of their hospitality.
2. In the European's view of "first contact", the "Natives" were often referred to in accounts written by non-Indians as being "discovered" and they were regarded as naive and child-like or primitive and crude.

There is historical evidence to indicate that Columbus's expedition was not the first non-Indian visit to the this continent but others may have been prior such as the Vikings.

Reference is often made to the "first time" that Indians encountered the Spanish expeditions of Columbus, De Soto or other Europeans. The term was coined to be intentionally amorphous, leaving out any connotation of "discovery" or "invasion." Sometimes viewed as equally hiding the truth as "discovery." Discovery denotes no prior inhabitants, glorifies the "explorers" and gives a right to take possession of the lands. Invasion connotes an uninvited trespass, loss of homelands, loss of "ways of life," accompanied by assault, death and destruction and subjugation by the invaders.

C. Disrespect for Indian culture and religious and spiritual practices

Religious persecution - Throughout United States history, there has been a government prohibition of religious ceremonies such as the Ghost Dance, Potlach, the Sun Dance, Sweat Lodge and Pipe Ceremonies. Resource: Russell [American Indian Facts of Life](#). maps p.15

D. Historical First Contacts

Columbus - Carribean Islands (1492); Juan Ponce de Leon - Florida (1513)
English colonizers: Jamestown (1607); Plymouth (1620)

The United States holiday celebrated as "Thanksgiving" is a reduced version of the Pilgrims interactions with the Wampanog Indians who were skilled farmers and on whom the early settlers were dependent upon for survival during the harsh winters. The focus on this one early event minimizes the complex series of events of the alliances and hostilities that led to the diminished tribal lands and conquering of the indigenous peoples.

1. Incompatibility of European values and Indian's values

Some of the incompatibility was from:

Communal versus individual land ownership
Views of wealth
Spaniard's search for gold
Trading and commodities

2. Interactions with traders, missionaries, settlers, and soldiers

The American Indians saw themselves "defending their People, land, and protecting the Indian "Way" of life."

Many Europeans viewed themselves as "Discoverers, Explorers, Pioneers, and Settlers" of a vast land that was occupied by uncivilized people. Many Europeans viewed Indians as "Hostile, Savage, Warlike, Uncivilized, Heathen, Animal worshipers and Demons." Missionaries often tried to convert Indians to their religions. Spanish missions were set up for exactly this purpose.

Resource: See Russell, American Indian Facts of Life, map on page 13.

Europeans did not understand the "oral traditions" and non-written forms of government that were in place when they arrived. It was recorded that:

"Among the Indian there have been no written laws. Customs handed down from generation to generation have been the only laws to guide them. Anyone might act differently from what was considered the right thing to do so, but such acts would bring upon him the censure of the Nation....This fear of the Nation's censure acted as a mighty band, binding all in one social, honorable compact."

Source: (1994). Native American Wisdom. George Copway (Kah-ge-ga-gah-bowh), Ojibwa Chief (1818-1863) Philadelphia: Running Press Book Publishers. page 54-55.

Indian cultural and religious practices were not considered by the Europeans upon their arrival in the Americas. The newcomers did many things to the Indians that they would never have been tolerated if the roles had been reversed. For example, if an Indian dug up a "White" body in a graveyard that would be considered desecration, grave robbing, and ghoulish behavior; but if a White "archeologist" digs up an Indian body, that would be considered "science" and they would probably earn a Ph.D. for their "research."

When Indians tried to defend their tribal lands and hunting lands they were viewed as completely in the wrong, and the aggressors. So, if Indians defended their rights, they were "hostile's", and if they would win a battle such as Custer's defeat, at the Battle of Little Big Horn it is described as a "massacre", but if Whites defended their rights, and slaughtered entire villages, they get a medal for "bravery" and if they won, it is called a "battle."

The right of religious freedom only applied to "dominant" culture, and the Indians are still fighting for their own "freedom of religion" today.

If Indians put up a contemporary legal action, or protest against injustice in support of sovereignty or other treaty rights, these defenses are seen at times by the majority culture as "militant."

E. Sources of Sovereignty and Tribal Treaty Rights

President William Jefferson Clinton wrote in 1994:

"So much of who we are comes from who you are. Long before others came to these shores, there were powerful and sophisticated cultures and societies here, and they were yours. Because of your ancestors, democracy existed here long before the Constitution....In every relationship between our people, our first principle must be to respect your right to remain who you are and to live the way that you want to live and I believe that the best way to do that is to acknowledge that the unique government to government relationship we have enjoyed over the time."

The United States Constitution written in 1787 stated:

“The Constitution and the laws of the United States which shall be made in pursuance thereof; and all treaties made, or which shall be made, under the authority of the United States, shall be the supreme law of the land; and the judges in every state shall be bound thereby, anything in the Constitution or laws of any state to the contrary notwithstanding.

The United States government entered into a number of treaties with Indian nations. Many of the provisions of these treaties were disregarded or broken for the benefit of white settlers allowing them ownership of the best land for their own use.

Felix S. Cohen’s Handbook of Federal Indian Law 1958 stated that:

“From the earliest years of the Republic the Indian tribes have been recognized as “distinct, independent, political communities,” and as such, qualified to exercise power of self-government, not by virtue of any delegation of powers from the Federal Government, but rather by reason of their original tribal sovereignty.

Northwest Ordinance written in 1887 said:

“The utmost good faith shall always be observed toward the Indians, and their lands and property shall never be taken from them without their consent; and their property, rights, and liberty, they shall never be invaded or disturbed....but laws founded in justice and humanity shall from time to time be made for preventing wrongs being done to them, and for preserving peace and friendship with them.”

The United States Supreme Court in 1979 wrote:

“A treaty, including one between the United States and an Indian tribe, is essentially a contract between two sovereign nations.”

The history of allotments and land rights treaties for hunting and fishing, water and wildlife rights is full of scandal, murder, decimation and violence against the American Indian.

F. History of oppression and decimation of Indians peoples

Handout Resource: “Statement of Vision Toward the Next 500 Years From the Gathering of Native Writers, Artists and Wisdom Keepers at Taos, New Mexico on October 14-18, 1992.

Handout Resource: Bigelow, B., & Miner, B., & Peterson, B. (Eds.) (1991) Rethinking schools: A special edition Rethinking Columbus. Milwaukee: Rethinking Schools Ltd. Available 1001 E. Keefe Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53212.

In reviewing the 400 years of the American holocaust, these are some of the factors that have contributed to the decimation and oppression of Indian peoples:

Disease - Disease claimed the lives of millions of Indian people, many diseases were unintentionally spread, such as smallpox and measles. Indians had no immunity to these new diseases. There is documentation that some diseases were spread intentionally (for example, blankets contaminated with smallpox.)

Enslavement - Indians were placed in concentration camps/reservations and forced removal from their home lands to reservations. There are well -documented accounts. The Cherokees were removed on the “The Trail Where They Cried.” The Indian Removal Treaty that forced the relocation of Cherokees, Creeks, Seminoles, Chickasaws Choctaws, and other smaller tribes to areas west of Mississippi. Typical of the forced removal of 60,000 American Indians over a period of 10 years, resulting in the death of thousands due to cold, starvation, and murder by armed militias. Oklahoma was the final destination of some 60 tribes in the 1800s. In a similar injustice the Navajos endured “The Long Walk” from their lands. The Aleuts were relocated and were moved from island to islands nearer to the mainland and interior of Alaska.

Political Prisoners - Indians have been imprisoned and viewed as "political prisoners, examples are Geronimo and the contemporary imprisonment of Leonard Peltier.

Termination - The United States government has historically had active plans for the annihilation of Indian peoples and conducted these programs through a series of Indian wars and the decimation of traditional sources of food and material needed for their survival. "The only good Indian, is a dead Indian" was an oft quoted sentiment.

The decimation of traditional sources of food, game and crops when the settlers over-ran the tribal lands and hunting areas. An example was the killing of the buffalo. The buffalo was considered sacred and the source of food, shelter, clothing and survival for the Plains Indians. Other Indian groups were treated similarly with the restrictions of hunting and fishing lands.

Genocide - There is a history of United States government military and agency policies that resulted in death by starvation, disease and massacres of thousands of Indian people. There were programs of removal such as the removal of Navajos in the 1850's to 40 acres of sterile barren land that after four years of hunger and disease that claimed perhaps 1/4 of their population. As late as the 1970's there were high numbers of sterilization procedures of Indian women by Indian Health Services.

Assimilation - The United States government through the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), and other religious missionary groups established schools for the forced assimilation of Indian children. The children were often forcibly removed from their parents and community contacts and sent away to "boarding school" to be integrated. The motto "Kill the Indian, save the man" represented this philosophy.

Urban relocation programs - Under Eisenhower, the United States government attempted to resettle the Indian populations from the reservations to the urban cities.

Some of the major historical incidents are:

Battle of Little Big Horn involving the Lakota (Sioux), Cheyenne and other tribes

The Long Walk - Dine (Navajo)

The Battle of Wounded Knee which had two incidents. The first was in 1890, and the second was in 1973.

Ghost Dance

Sand Creek Massacres

The "Trail of Tears"

III. Demographics of Tribal Nations

A. United States federal definition of a tribe or nation

The United States government uses this definition: "Any Indian tribe, band, nation, rancheria, pueblo, colony or community which is recognized by the United States government as eligible for special programs and services provided by the Secretary of the Interior to Indians because of their status as Indians."

B. Recognized tribes - 557 federally recognized tribes in the United States

There are 557 federally recognized tribes in the United States and they vary in size as show below:

The largest nations are the Diné (Navajo) with a population of over 300,000 and the Cherokee with over 80,000 and both are still increasing. There are some 503 villages/tribes in Alaska, there are about 200 tribes that are extinct, and there are approximately 150 that are in the process of application for recognition by the United States government.

Tribal names:

Are a mixture of Indian languages and European influences.

Many are changing their official names, or at least using their preferred names among themselves while using their "treaty" names to deal with the United States government:

- Ex. Papago to Tohono O'Odham
- Navajo to Diné
- Winnebago to Ho-Chunk
- Sioux to Lakota
- Eskimo to Inuit, and Yupik

C. Number and size of nations or tribes

United States 1990 Census information indicated that:

"The nearly 2 million American Indians, Eskimos, and Aleuts living in the United States in 1990 represented an increase of 38 percent over the 1980 total. The 1990 census showed that 437,079 American Indians, 182 Eskimos, and 97 Aleuts lived on 314 reservation and trust lands; about 218,290 American Indians, 25 Eskimos, and 5 Aleuts lived on the 10 largest reservations and trust lands. In Alaska, the Doyhon Corporation has 12.5 million acres and there are 43 Athabaskan Villages. The largest reservation and trust land populations are Navajo, Pine Ridge, Fort Apache, Gila River, Papago, Rosebud, Hopi, San Carlos, Zuni Pueblo, and Blackfeet."

Source: A complete demographic overview is available from the United States Department of Commerce contact Racial Statistics Branch, Population Division, Bureau of the Census, Washington, DC 20233 - We, the First Americans. This is available from the web. Last version September, 1993. Consult again after the 2000 United States Census.

D. Demographics: Current Indian population and census

Increasing population

American Indians comprise approximately 1 to 2% of the United States population, but they are increasing in numbers both in rural and urban settings. Alaskan Natives are composed of many groups including but not limited to: Aleuts, Inuits, Athapaskans and Eskimos.

United States Government's 1990 Census indicates:

- 2 million self-identified Indians
- 1.2 million tribally enrolled - Tribal Registry/Rolls
- 10 - 15 million people have a degree of Indian blood but are not enrolled and/or have lost their tribal connection

“...the country’s 550 tribes were estimated at 10 million by the 1990 census, Indians were undercounted by as much as 12.2 percent or 2.5 million, census officials say. This is possibly because of their historic suspicion of the United States government. Part of the problem is location. Unlike other hard-to-reach people, Indians are spread across reservations, and live in homes ranging from the suburbs of Miami to Alaska’s North Slope. Some of the hardest to reach live in “Indian country,” which includes parts of three southwestern states - Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah - the homeland for dozens of tribes. The Navajo reservation, the nation’s largest, straddles all three states. Many live on isolated farms, miles from any sort of communication. Indians are scattered nationwide in an invisible country of sorts that includes 45,000 in Los Angeles, and 30,000 in New York City. At least 60 percent of all Indians live outside the reservations.

Source: “Census Bureau makes effort to count American Indians: Distrust of White culture has kept them off the tally, by Julia Duin, The Washington Times, January 9, 1999.

There are many reasons for the loss of connections:

Lost tribal connections due to:

- assimilation/intermarriage
- fear of death or removal
- family not enrolling with the governmental system
- racial stigma
- inaccuracy and or limitations of governmental statistics
- missionary/educator influence
- government “Termination Policy”
- Non-recognition of tribal groups/nations by the United States government began in the 1700's and continued through the 1800's; one example is the Lumbees of North Carolina.

Re-enrollment due to:

- resurgence of pride in cultural heritage
- perception of benefits, i.e. educational, gambling profits - per capita
- more accurate research sources available

E. National distribution of Indians

1. Reservations by population

- | | |
|------------------|---------|
| a. Navajo | 148,451 |
| b. Pine Ridge | 12,113 |
| c. Fort Apache | 10,394 |
| d. Gila River | 9,540 |
| e. Rosebud | 9,696 |
| f. Tohono O’dham | 8,730 |
| g. Blackfeet | 8,549 |
| h. Zuni | 7,412 |
| i. Hopi | 7,360 |
| j. San Carlos | 7,294 |

2. State populations - There are American Indian and Alaskan Native people residing in all 50 of the United States. The five largest populations are in:

- a. Oklahoma 52,420 that is 8.0% of the total population;
- b. California 242,164 (0.8%);

- c. Arizona 203,527 (5.6%);
 - d. New Mexico 34,355 (8.9%);
 - e. Alaska 85,698 (15.6%)
3. Urban population populations - Many Indians are living in large metropolitan cities. The ten largest urban populations are:
- a. Los Angeles 87,487
 - b. Tulsa 48,196
 - c. New York 46,191
 - d. Oklahoma City 45,720
 - e. San Francisco 40,847
 - f. Phoenix 38,017
 - g. Seattle-Tacoma 32,017
 - h. Minneapolis 23,956
 - i. Tucson 20,330
 - j. San Diego 20,066

- F. Geographical distribution and land ownership -
- Western states - 47.6%
 - North Central - 17.2%
 - South - 28.7%
 - Northeast - 6.4%

Resource: Russell, G. (1997). American Indian Facts of Life: A Profile of Today's Tribes and Reservations. Phoenix: Russell Publications.

American Indian Population by State - Page 25

National Distribution of Indians - Page 24

- G. Definition of a "legal" American Indian

The United States government definition of a "legal" Indian is:

"Any person who has certifiable Indian blood quantum to meet the re-enrollment requirements of a federally recognized tribe."

- H. Complexities of blood quantum

Tribal requirement varies from as high as $\frac{1}{2}$, many $\frac{1}{4}$, and others from $\frac{5}{8}$ to a "trace" $\frac{1}{512}$ or simply require documentation of an ancestor on the tribal rolls regardless of blood quantum.

1. Definitions of blood quantum - "full blood" - non-determinable; some descriptions include:
 - Full Bloods - Considered $\frac{4}{4}$'s or full blood of one tribal identity of a federally recognized tribe, if their ancestors on the tribal roles.
 - Half Blood - $\frac{1}{2}$'s

As used by American Indians often refers to spiritual and traditional lifestyle and adopted members rather than "blood quantum".

- Tribally Mixed - individuals will often identify tribal heritages such as Cherokee/Creek
- Racially Mixed Bloods - individuals who are mixed race such as Black Seminole heritage
- Consensual and non-consensual inter-mixing
- Ceremonial and/or legal adoptions
- Adoptions into Non-Indians families

2. Contemporary issues of blood quantum

The questions, "Are you a full-blood Indian?" or "What kind of Indian are you?" This question can elicit a deep reaction from many individuals. Behind this question, might be a questioning of their

Indian identity and/or appearance, and this has carries a long historical overtone. It is has been said that, "It is ironic that only Indians, dogs and horses have to know their pedigree."

3. Long range implications of the dilution of blood-quantum

The implications of the arbitrary use of "blood-quantum" impacts the membership and entitlement issues for:

- Urban versus reservation Indians
- Land rights
- Entitlement
- Tribal membership (rolls)

4. Membership in tribal roles and benefits.

There are often serious discussions regarding the imposition of blood quantum to determine membership, levels of participation and benefits that may accrue from being Indian.

Intertribal Deaf Council (IDC) in its Spring, 2000 newsletter states that "IDC has a commitment to never turn away First Nations Deaf, many of whom have had no access to their culture before becoming affiliated with their own Cultures. Our doors are open to all who wish to come back to the Circle, learn or share their Native Traditions, and to "WORK TOGETHER" (Indian Sign Language)...May all Deaf and hearing Indigenous Peoples *Walk in Beauty*."

I. Global concepts of indigenous peoples

There are many groups of indigenous peoples. Some other indigenous peoples are:

Indians of Mexico's - ex. Chiapas

Central America's indigenous people

South America's indigenous people

Recently indigenous runners starting from North and South America to meet and symbolically reconnected the hemispheres.

Hawaiian Natives and Pacific Islanders

Aborigines of Australia

Maori of New Zealand

Laplanders

Hmong People

There is the universal concept of the "Brotherhood of Man" that we are all related. This concept is frequently expressed as "All my relations." The Lakota words for this are "Mi takuye oyasin." There are similar phrases in many other Indian languages.

Resources: United States Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration, Bureau of the Census: *We the...First Americans*. Issued in September 1993.

Resource: Russell, G. (1997). *American Indian Facts of Life: A Profile of Today's Tribes and Reservations*. Phoenix: Russell Publications.

Website - www.nativeamericaonline.com

Or Call: 1-888-442-9338

IV. Positive Contributions of American Indians and Alaskan Natives

A. Positive contributions of American Indians and Alaskan Natives

American Indians and Alaskan Natives were the first ecologists in North America. They had and still continue to have an understanding of the balance of nature and how all species of plants and animals are interconnected and mutually dependent upon each other. They have a deep respect for Mother Earth, and Father Sky and an honor for the land and all living things. They understand that when you take something from nature you should give something back, their land use practices before European influences were environmentally sound. They would avoid over hunting, fishing, or farming an area. They held all living things in high regard, and would ask permission to go on the hunt, and when successful, they would give thanks to the animal that they had hunted. Hunting was for food and not just sport. When they would kill an animal they would waste nothing, they would use all of it the meat, hide, bones, and sinew.

When the Europeans arrived here they knew nothing of the medicinal plants that were here in the Americas, the local “drugstore” had to be taught to them by the native people - which plants cured which condition, and which ones were poisonous, was known only by the Indians, such as the medical benefits of a certain tree’s bark that we call aspirin today. Pharmacology comes from the Indian education of Mother Earth’s products.

There have been many contributions in the fields of construction and architecture that have come from Indians. Many of the skyscrapers that are constructed using the skills of the “high steel” construction workers, who are Indians. Many buildings and homes reflect the influence of the pueblo and kiva forms, and use the natural shapes and materials of the Indian culture. The New Mexico state capitol building is build in the style of an Indian pueblo using some of the same materials. There is a Turtle shaped school on Oneida Reservation which represents an important part of their culture.

There was no separation of art and daily life. It was all connected and all related. Native Americans and Alaskan Natives have made many contributions in the areas of the arts and handcrafts such as:

- Silversmith
- Turquoise Jewelry
- Rug and blanket weaving
- Clothing styles - quilt and ribbon clothing, leather clothing and moccasins
- Basketry
- Pottery
- Beadwork, quill work
- Tanning hides
- Ivory sculpture and carving
- Arrowhead points
- Drawing and sketching, painting
- Birch tree bark and wood products, wood carving
- Horse hair items

Indian peoples have always adapted and incorporated new materials and creativity. Many contemporary artisans are using glass, metals such as bronze, gold, and other materials in traditional and contemporary themes.

United States form of government - The United States Constitution

When Benjamin Franklin and his contemporaries wrote the constitution of the United States they used the League of the Iroquois and its “Great Law of Peace” as a model. However, they excluded all women, men of color, and men without property from having rights under their new constitution. The League of the Iroquois had at this time, united five nations, and later six, for over five hundred years, this time period was during the Dark Ages in Europe.

Agricultural/Horticultural:

Foods: i.e. corn, beans, squash, cactus fruits, coffee, chocolate, tomatoes, wild rice, berries and peaches.

Rubber plants

Irrigation systems

Communication:

Navajo Code Talkers used by United States in World War II

Native American Indian Sign Language - Plains Indians

Interpreters for United States expeditions, military, and traders

Bilingualism - Indian Operated Schools and Newspapers

Regional Contributions - Research Regionally

Local Contributions - Research Locally

B. American Indian and Alaskan Native role models

1. American Indian and Alaskan Native Deaf role models:

Mark Azure - artist, storyteller and educator

Will Yaska - former IDC president and political activist

James Woodenlegs - Northern Cheyenne hereditary chief and IDC spiritual leader

Norman Sands - Artist

Linda Carroll - RID Interpreter; IDC President

Doris Thomas - Crow Elder knowledgeable in Crow Indian Sign Language

Melanie McKay-Cody - researcher and doctoral student

Jerry Hassell - Educator, founder of IDC

Donnette Reins - ASL instructor

Michael Byrd - Storyteller

Dr. Howard Busby - Counselor and educator

2. American Indian and Alaskan Native role models:

National

Chief Joseph - Nez Percé Chief

Crazy Horse - Oglala Sioux Nation

Wilma Mankiller - National Leader, Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation

Vine (Victor) Deloria - Writer/Lawyer

Tim Giago - Newspaper/Publisher

Susan La Flesche - First Indian Woman Doctor

Sitting Bull - Hunkpapa Sioux Leader/Medicine Man

Black Elk - A Medicine Man

Marie Sanchez - writer

Ben Nighthorse Campbell - United States Senator

Jim Thorpe - Athlete/Olympian

Regional - What leaders are from your region?

Local - What leaders live in your community?

C. Sources of Negative Portrayal and Stereotypes

Media and Historical Portrayal of Indians have served to perpetuate stereotypes. Some examples are:

Tonto - the faithful companion

Cowboys and Indians in the movies - the Indians were portrayed as "blood thirsty savages"

Pocahontas -the romantic heroine
Wooden Indian - icon for trading posts

Stereotypical View of Indians:

“Savage” - Labeling used to justify the taking of land by the early settlers
The “Noble Savage” - Iroquois people, good, honest, fair, but uncivilized “savage”

Longfellow’s “Song of Hiawatha” uses the word ‘savage’ 50 times.

Conquered Savage -

Savage - e.g. Sioux - “Hostile Indians on the warpath”

Used to justify overt hostility toward Indians

“The only good Indian is a dead Indian”

Indian Princess - there is no royalty in Indian peoples

Museum Indian - as an almost extinct people - “a Museum Indian” is easier to “accept than the complex reality of an adapting and innovative peoples” Indian peoples are not extinct and are in fact a growing population

Stereotypes of Indians

Some of the negative stereotypes of Indians include lazy, drunkards, slow and stupid, dirty, stoic, mean looking, too quiet, no sense of humor, no facial expressions.

V. American Indian World View and Cultural Attitudes, Values and Behaviors

A. Native people's world views and orientation

Most Indian groups share some common orientations:

Respect for all humans, plants and animals

The Earth belongs to all equally

Life is to be enjoyed by all people

Live now and make decisions for seven generations into the future

The fewer rules the better, focus on simplicity

Balance and the good path

All things in the world are two. In our minds we are two – good and evil. With our eyes we see two things—things that are fair and things that are ugly...We have the right hand that strikes and makes for evil, and the left hand that is full of kindness, near the heart. One foot may lead us to an evil way, the other foot may lead us to a good... So all things are two, all two." Eagle Chief (Letakots-Lesa , Pawnee in the late 19th century.) (1994) Native American Wisdom. Philadelphia: Running Press Book Publishers.

The concept of three - the aspect of male, female and spirit in balance.

Traits that are highly valued:

Group harmony, cooperation

Respect for nature - Mother Earth and Father Sky

Respect for wisdom of elderly

Sharing and acceptance are important

Honor in giving, generosity

Suspicious of having too much, taking, or using too much

Emphasis on caring, communal lifestyle and the future of the people

B. Attitudes, values, and beliefs

Verbal traditions are very important

Emphasis on oral history and storytelling

Emphasis on listening, quietly, and saying only what is necessary

Think before speaking, longer pauses between turn-taking

If an elder stops speaking - wait, think and be patient until they continue

Thought before speech

"Conversation was never begun at once, nor in a hurried manner. No one was quick with a question, no matter how important and no one pressed for an answer. A pause giving time for thought was the truly courteous way of beginning and conducting a conversation. Silence was meaningful with the Lakota, and his granting a space of silence to the speech-maker and his own moment of silence before talking was done in the practice of true politeness and regard for that rule, that "thought comes before speech."

Luther Standing Bear (1868?-1939) Ogala Sioux Chief (1994) Native American Wisdom. Philadelphia: Running Press Book Publishers.

Enjoy silent companionship.

Stay in background, avoid attention.

The feelings expressed are based on instinct on par with reason.

Communal feelings take precedence over individual.

Some stories are told only in specific seasons.

(I.e.. Coyote Stories told during first and last frost in Navajo).

Some topics are not discussed in public or with non-Indian tribal members.

Saying "yes" may avoid further questioning by non-Indians.

Men may talk standing next to each other or in a circle looking down.

Lack of overt verbal disagreement may not indicate agreement.

(Avoiding disagreement or contradiction may be misconstrued as “lying”)
American Indian students may not answer “correctly” so that they don’t appear to be acting with individual superiority.

Terms of “Respect” include:

The use of Elder to refer to older persons or the use of “uncle, aunt (auntie), may not be limited to blood relatives, they are also used for extended family members.

C. Nation and tribes culturally specific behaviors.

Information presented in the curriculum is those general cultural values and behavior guidelines that have been observed in intertribal conferences and activities. As discussed in the editor’s preface, it is beyond the scope of this overview to provide any in-depth information on any one of the over 500 Nations of the lower states and the 500 Alaskan villages. Please refer students to seek more information by researching information on the specific nations that may reside in your geographical areas. Many interesting interviews and information are contained in the Time-Life book series The American Indians and in the box set of videotapes from Turner Home Entertainment entitled The Native Americans.

D. Cultural variables: Nations, tribes, regions, clans, villages and degrees of assimilation.

Any individual person is unique based on his or her nation/tribal and clan affiliations and the degree of traditional and assimilation influences that he/she has experienced. Some of discussions below are of general patterns and not applicable to all individual Indians and or culturally specific to all nations and tribes.

E. Cultural view of time - “Indian Time”

Many American Indians have a “polychromic” view versus “monochromic.”

The Past, Present and Future are not viewed as disconnected by American Indians. Time is always with us, we can’t “run out” of time. “Time doesn’t wear a watch!”

Many Indians use sacred time systems that relate to the cycles of nature.

Things are done when the time is “right.”

Concept of punctuality versus quality. When “right thoughts are present” it is the right time to do something. It is not a calendar dictated, or based on other “urgencies.”

Punctuality and “Waiting” may be experienced differently. In some situations Indians have been kept waiting by government officials, and service providers for so long that they have learned to “accept” it, on another level they are not generally “clock” oriented. They may also arrive “late” because they began their preparations and have made it to the appointment or event when they were prepared.

Quantity and division of time

Time is divided differently and quantified differently. Time is not as governed by “length of time” but more as process and as part of the seasons.

Education as a timed process is a product of nineteenth century western thought.

In general, most cultures value stability, and seeing change implies instability.

Beginning and Ending of Events

In Indian Country transportation is sometimes unreliable, and an event must wait for the appropriate people, dancers, and drum groups to arrive before it’s “time” for the event to begin. Therefore Pow Wow’s sometimes may have delayed starting times until all the preparations are complete.

F. Use of space: Indian country, community living space and sacred sites

Ceremonial and sacred uses of space - "All is sacred"

Medicine Circle - Hoop of Life - "Sacred Hoop" and "Tree of Life"

Sacred meaning of "circle"

Do not stand in or enter the sacred circle

Woman and men may have different positions in a circle

Directions are important

Based on nature and earth and sky

Four cardinal directions, six (up/down), or seven (nexus)

Movement in a specific direction is important

Entering or leaving a space, i.e. arena, lodge and/or

Passing objects may be in a specific direction only

Community and sharing of spaces

Communal living

Nearness of extended family

Kivas and other sacred places

Gender dictated use of space

G. Cultural thinking and cognitive styles

Culturally specific behaviors and individuals

All Indians are not alike however there is more in common than differences.

Cultural variables can be from:

Different nations, tribes, regions, clans, degrees of assimilation and or enculturation.

Some common thinking styles are:

Global, conceptual, combining fact with feeling, and reflective. Many Indians are socialized to observe and develop mental competence before attempting a new task. This is contrast to learning by trial and error. Indians tend to watch and observe and watch repeatedly before attempting a new skill. There is a strong emphasis on visual and observational skills.

H. Decision-making, problem solving, and work styles

Cultural and Problem Solving Approaches.

Patterns of observation and group problem solving.

Relatively high context cultures.

Gathering information from immediate environment getting:

"All pieces of the puzzle" before problem solving.

Learning by observation is valued and encouraged.

Group decisions will be honored.

Work Style - Simplify problems and then work cooperatively for a solution.

Verbal traditions are important. Story telling and legends pass on cultural teachings.

I. Social Behavior and Protocols and Taboos

Each nation and tribe has specific behaviors, and cultural protocols. Taboos also may related to very culturally specific issues. For example, in some traditions an "owl" is a messenger of bad news thus displaying owls in classrooms or in artwork may not be appropriate; in another there are many taboos associated with childbirth, death and dying.

J. Physical behaviors, use of touch, and gestures

Physical Touch

Less physical contact than other cultures.

Shaking hands: An Indian may not “shake” hands; or may tend to “shake” hands gently grasping fingers; sometimes placing other hand on top and resting lightly for a moment.

Don't touch dancer regalia or other ceremonial objects.

Person with regalia must initiate physical contact (i.e. hug)

Medicine people generally are not to be “touched” or their belongings especially prior to or during ceremonies; consult culture specific liaison.

“Medicine bags” on individuals should not be “touched.” (In general don't touch someone's belongings without permission.)

A note: Some of the physical contact “support” behaviors (hugs, shoulder rubs, etc.) that interpreters may use in other settings may be viewed as too personal by Traditional members of the audience. Be aware of the impact of interpreter physical contact on the event.

Uses of gestures

Pointing There are some restrictions on some gestures. It is often rude to point with “pointed finger,” therefore an Indian may indicate with “eyes” or point with chin, and or lips. This “lip pursing” should not be mistaken for a “kissing” gesture.

K. Non-manual behaviors and eye contact

Eye Contact

Eye contact often considered rude; a humble demeanor is encouraged.

Eye contact during conversation is often too direct.

Varies regarding age and urban/reservation influences.

Indians may look up or straight ahead during prayer; non-Indians may respectfully down.

Men talking in a circle, or standing side by side usually look down.

Deaf Indian people still rely on “eye contact” for communication and many have taken on the Deaf Culture use of eye contact from their educational experiences and social contacts; while others may use a more indirect or peripheral use of vision to receive the interpretation.

VI. Identity, Roles and Status in Indian Community Life

A. Respect for the individual member's contribution to community.

Status in community life is different than in Western. One is respected for one's contributions to the community. Some individuals function who are the Elders, medicine men/women, healers, storytellers, drummers are honored for their service to the people. There are many ways to be of service to one's community and people.

B. Value for members as individuals who are respected:

Living in Harmony
Integrity of actions
Honor, respect and sharing
Intelligence
Sense of humor
Courage and bravery
Military service

C. Gender related behaviors

1. Roles of men and women

Women are highly respected, they take on a variety of roles among nations to include:

Matriarchal Societies: Examples:

Cherokee, Onondaga, Mohawk, Seneca, Oneida, Cayuga and Tuscarora

Women as leaders: roles as Clanmothers and leaders

Women as warriors: Example - Plains people

Women as mothers

Woman as spiritual leaders in health, rituals, life of the tribe

Woman as farmers, planters, gatherers, cooks and cleaners

Gender related behaviors and roles

Specific work and creative tasks, dances, ceremonies.

Some gender specific instructions and information only conveyed by the appropriate gender.

Men and Women are initiated in gender specific puberty rites.

These rites give honor and respect to the young men and woman and it also establishes their place in the community.

Women's "moontime" is considered powerful and taboos may be associated, possible exclusion from some activities. Female interpreters need to be aware of their own "moontime" and know from an appropriate cultural informant when to excuse oneself from specific activities. In general do not participate or interpret for a Sweat Lodge Ceremony during this time.

Women's physical contact with male relatives and tribal members may be traditionally, socially, and spiritually dictated.

Women may follow modest dress traditions, such as wearing skirts or covering legs. This may be reserved for more traditional activities. Female interpreters may consult a female cultural informant for specific advice on appropriate attire for traditional activities.

2. Two Spirited Traditions and Berdache

An Indian male who dressed and lived entirely as a woman, fulfilling that cultural role within the tribe. Sometimes called in Indian languages a "would be woman" and sometimes thought of as a third sex. Common among the tribes of the Americas, these men-women had social and religious powers. They might be givers of sacred names, first to strike the sun-dance

pole, leaders of scalp dances, “good luck” to war parties, visionaries, and predictors of the future, matchmakers, excellent artisans in beadwork, quill work, hide-tanning and making clothing; creators and singers of songs, and child care. Understood as following a vision by most Indians, they were not tolerated by whites. They persist today, discreetly and are respected.

There still exists the “homophobia” that is present in the dominant culture.

D. Social, economic and class identification, hierarchy, and status

Social Status - Generalizations

American Indian identify is a relationship (or non-relationship) with their nation and tribe. Every person has a “purpose.” The purpose is to serve the people first, then the family, and then oneself. There is great respect for the wisdom of the Elders.

Tribal identify - in the American Indian perspective the individual is an extension of the tribe. The individual accomplishment promotes the well-being and the continuance of the tribe. The members contribute to the harmony of the tribe.

Singling out an individual for praise may cause embarrassment, or they may be asked to perform, sing, or dance.

This is contrasted to non-Native American middle-class where the individual often provides the support and justification for the society.

Society promotes individual accomplishment and achievements for individual prestige.

Source: Chapter 8 “On The Reservation” Experience and Counseling Multicultural and Diverse Populations.

Economic/Class Identification Status

Respect for providing for family
Taking care of less fortunate - depends on the tribe
Giving and sharing -
Traditions such as Give-aways and Potlatches
Wasting or excess accumulation viewed negatively or as greedy or egotistical.

E. Clan, family status, and extended family

Identification with clans and bands, societies, and grandparents.

Extended families are composed of aunts, uncles, cousins, and other relations. It is not unusual for children to be raised in a variety of households in the extended family. Introductions are often exchanges of family and clan lines. High value placed on harmonious relationships with tribal members and cooperation. Tribal members who leave the reservation or village often lose their sense of personal identity since they lose their tribal identify.

Physical Appearance

Phenotypic characteristics of Indians are often thought to be straight black or dark hair, brown or dark eyes, brown skin and high cheek bones. There are a wider range of height and body sizes.

Many Indians do not fit the “stereotype” and have light hair, light eyes, and fair skin. These individuals may meet with rejection and prejudice from both Indians and non-Indians alike.

F. Tribal Elders are very respected and honored members of their communities.

“Not defined by age or gender, an elder is one who carries the knowledge of the tradition of the wisdom of the heart, one who walks in truth and dignity no matter how poor, in humility no matter how revered. An elder serves the people, even when his or her own larder is down to the last sack of coffee, even when the body aches with fatigue. Even when there is nothing left to give, there is always an open door, an open heart. Some elders heal with a knowledge of natural medicine not yet known or recognized by the dominant culture. Some heal with a spirituality worlds beyond many of those who don black robes and preach on a Sunday. Some heal with a song.” from Introduction

Resource: The Book of the Elders The Life Stories and Wisdom of Great American Indians As told to Sandy Johnson.

G. Identity formation and conflict - “Living in Two Worlds”

1. Indian world - Spirit World contrasted to White World - Cultural Group Identity and Behavior Patterns

In the twentieth-century, an individual Indian’s community and cultural life have been complicated by a number of factors including but not limited living on or off a reservation, educational experiences, extended family influences.

Complex factors have created a theoretical identity model continuum of cultural group identity and behavior patterns. Individuals may be described as belonging to the New Traditionals, Lost Identities, International Human Being, The Traditionals or Assimilated Indians. There are factors in the spiritual and mental health of an individual.

The Traditionalists (*) - Characteristics may include: strong cultural beliefs are foundation, strong emotional peer support, history is clear, practice and beliefs are rooted, in tune with environment, cooperative society, ecology oriented, raised within culture, cultural knowledge of all areas, strong spiritual base, responsible for passing on knowledge.

Lost Identities - Characteristics may include: powerlessness due to transitional stress, in limbo, unprepared, ambivalent, mixture of beliefs, vacillating between extremes, cultural/social breakdown, identity confusion, “acting out,” grief, dependency, “deprived syndrome,” epitomizes social problems (alcoholism, drug addiction, etc.), low economic level, poorly educated.

Assimilated Indians - Characteristics may include: adoption of new norms, possesses technical skills, has paid own social and cultural costs, changed behaviors, “me” identify, materialism, unable to be a role model for traditionist, accepts hierarchical power, competitive, does not value native beliefs.

New Traditionals - Characteristics may include - “born again” Indians, strident-moving in a direction, racist, articulate, younger generation, re-programmed, group oriented, often not raised within a strong sense of culture; usually indoctrinated as a young impressionable adult searching for identify, open display (braids, ribbon shirt, etc.), “going back to traditions,” mixture of belief systems from all sources, often unwilling to learn knowledge that goes behind belief system i.e. from elders or medicine person, may not necessarily set good examples, imposes values and beliefs on others.

International Human Being (*) - Characteristics may include: appreciates gifts of both worlds, adaptability, comfortable in both worlds, accommodating, anti-racist, socially-conscious, appreciates both languages, few in number, healthy spirit, has vision for the future, is a “mover and shaker,” in time with the environment, has “courage of heart,” values own culture without putting down other cultures.

(*) Traditionalist are a health society. In essence, they are almost the same as International Human Beings. The only difference that makes Traditionalist unhealthy is their inability to adapt to the twentieth century. Traditionalists and New Traditionalists view Assimilated Indians as having betrayed their own culture, however, while Traditionalist view Assimilated Indians with compassion, New Traditionalists often view them with contempt.

Assimilated Indians will often view Traditional and New Traditionalists as “lost in the past,” while at the same time may envy International Human Beings for the traditional knowledge that they possess. They will often work for Indian people in an administrative capacity but remain very insulated from the real problems of the people. Assimilated Indians are often more comfortable in non-Indian settings.

The problem for Indian families is that their membership may consist of several of the above categories which contributes to the family’s inability to inter-relate or communicate.

An individual may have experienced more than one of the five categories, or a combination of two or three of the categories, in the search for self; since change is characteristic of growth, this may not be un-healthy as long as the individual does not get stuck.

It is has been said, “nothing is lost, it is merely hidden and when the time is right it will come out or appear again.”

The healing process includes:

- a. Recognize the distinction of each group.
 - b. Determine (one’s) dreams, wishes, goals, and abilities.
 - c. Be sensitive to the human process of healing.
2. Indian Deaf world - White Deaf world
 - a. Degrees of assimilation and enculturation
 - b. Reservation versus urban up-bringing, distance or closeness to extended family
 - c. Educational experiences including state school and mainstream experiences
 - d. Religious affiliations - traditional spirituality versus other religious influences
 3. Although, each individual Deaf Indian person varies in the identity formation and self-identity. There are several common themes that have been recounted in personal anecdotes within the Indian Deaf groups such as discriminatory behaviors experienced at schools for the deaf, a loss of cultural language, knowledge and affiliation in educational environments, the lack of American Indian Deaf role models and teachers. At the IDC conference each year, a “Talking Circle” allows individuals a healing chance to express their unique experiences from a traditional upbringing to those with lost identities to receive community understanding and support.

Resource: NMIP Videotape: Cultural and Linguistic Diversity Series: Life Experiences of Donnette Reins, Muskogee Creek.

H. Status and acceptance of non-Indians

Positive relationships with non-Indians. Trust and acceptance is earned patiently over time through integrity and truth.

Respect may be demonstrated by the amount of care and preparation is taken for a meeting with others.

Cultural sensitivity should be practiced, i.e. Use observation, patience, and display respect for elders.

Non-Indians have earned high respect by their demonstration of honor, respect and integrity.

There is a tradition of non-Indians who have been adopted into a tribe.

I. Suspect relationships with non-Indians - Anthropologists, New Agers and “Wannabes”

In Medicine Women, Curanderas, and Women Doctors, the author writes “The recent attention to Native American Ways has brought difficulties as well as useful exposure, however. Native Americans are critical of the way in which their sacred knowledge has been exploited by educators, anthropologists, clergy, and the myriad of others who had early access to information through tribal members. Many Native American people feel acutely that they have suffered from what they believe was done throughout history by outside cultures, politicians, anthropologists, and fashionable writers. They are sick of being studied under an anthropological microscope and sick of discussing their heritage with academicians whom they believe will take the information and force it into pre-designed molds that will warp their cultural truths. There is exploitation and capitalizing on the sacred things of Indian people”. Page 23.

An excellent example of a respected and accepted person can be found in the book by Mick Fedullo entitled Light of the Feather.

Therefore educational degrees and professional status is less appreciated than demonstrated respect and sensitivity.

Paternalistic attitudes are often exhibited by missionaries, Indian agents, government workers, educators, and other professionals who feel they may “know best” what is in the best interest of an individual or community.

“Wannabes” and “new-agers” who profit from Indian spirituality and ceremonies create mistrust and misinterpretations of traditional practices and beliefs.

VII. Traditional Spiritual Practice and Views of “Medicine”

A. Spiritual beliefs that are common to most Nations:

There is a belief in the Supreme Creator or Great Spirit.

Man is a three fold being composed of: mind, body and spirit. (body/mind/heart/spirit)

Plants and animals are like humans and are also a part of the spirit world.

Harmony in body, mind and spirit is the basis for the core of a person.

They believe that wellness is the harmony of the body, mind and spirit.

And that illness is caused by the disharmony of the body, mind, and spirit.

Natural unwellness is caused by the violation of a sacred or tribal taboo.

Unnatural unwellness is caused by witchcraft.

Each of us is responsible for our own wellness.

In Indian belief, it is each person’s responsibility to keep this protective shield strong and beautiful, not only for his own well-being but for the well-being of the tribe.

B. Native American Church (NAC)

The NAC is not widely discussed with outsiders by members of the Church. Discussion of practices and ceremonies and direct questions regarding NAC are not generally acceptable.

Peyote is considered to be a divine by the Indians, a messenger that allows the faithful to communicate with the Creator.

C. American Indian Religious Freedom Act

American Indian Religious Freedom Act (Public Law 103-344) guarantees the right of Native Americans to possess, transport, and use peyote in the course of traditional religious ceremonies. It was signed into law Oct. 6th, 1994 by President Bill Clinton.

D. Historical and contemporary influence of Christianity

Since the arrival of Europeans to the continent, Indians have been “converted” to a variety of religious practices predominantly Catholic and other protestant sects. Often this conversion was enforced. In many cases, this forced the traditional belief and practices to be “hidden” to be protected. Over the last 500 years, many Indians groups have remained very traditional, while others have virtually lost their spiritual practices.

Many Indians practice Christian influenced religions or adapt and mix belief systems.

Currently, many Indians practice Christian influenced religions or have adapt and mix belief systems. It is common to see a variety of religious denominations including Catholic and protestant on a reservation or Indian community. Individuals and families may attend church, marry, hold funerals in these church settings, and/or in addition to their traditional ways.

Paternalistic attitude among missionaries

There is a history of paternalistic attitudes among missionaries and other religious individuals.

Indian practices in general do not seek to “convert” others, and each Nation or tribe respects the culture and practices of other Nations and tribes. It has been only recently that the United States government has begun to recognize the “freedom of religion” as it extends to all of its citizens including Indian peoples.

E. Concepts of wellness, balance, physical, and mental illness

These concepts are interrelated.

F. View of "Medicine" as spiritual practices, and concepts

Medicine - is an array of spiritual practices, ideas, and concepts rather than remedies and treatments only. The Western medical concept or science does not often include "spirit."

The Indian concept of medicine is different from the "medical" profession that occurs in hospitals. The concept of medicine is associated with many different sacred symbols such as:

- Numbers: The numbers three, four, six or seven are sacred because they represent the three male/female/spirit, the four compass directions, including up to the sky and down to the earth and nexus. Nexus refers to the sacred center.
- Objects: Many different objects are considered sacred items such as shields, rattles, drums, fetishes and/or feathers which are considered to have living spiritual power. The Navajo consider their sand paintings to be sacred. The Kiowa people use a sacred "doll" for their sun dance ceremony.
- Colors: The colors that are given to represent the directions vary among the Nations. Some of the sacred colors are: red, white, black, blue, green, and yellow. The color red has also has significance as in the concept of "The Red Road", "The White Road" and the "Blue Path."
- Songs: The drumbeat is the heartbeat of Mother Earth. In Indian cultures music and religion are intertwined. Song are a means of connecting to the spiritual and curing the sick, Songs are sung for specific ceremonies; some individual spiritual people are gifted with a spiritual song.
- Sweat lodge: The Sweat Lodge Ceremony is a traditional cleansing of both mind and body; performed in a structure such as a earth covered mound, willow frames covered with blankets or bathhouse generally heated with hot rocks. Prayers are offered, and medicinal plants are used. Each tribe may have their own traditional practices.
- Plants: Many plants are used for different purposes, some of the commonly used plants are: sage, cedar, sweet grass, tobacco, and many other herbs.

Many Indians will incorporate the use of mainstream medicine or Western medicine and traditional practices. Seeking assistance from clinics, doctors, and other services in addition to consulting their medicine person and Elders. Many Indian medical and mental health services have begun to adapt and implement community approaches to prevention, and treatment programs.

G. Medicine men and women as spiritual healers and leaders

Medicine men and women are viewed as the spiritual healers and leaders of the community. They have the role not only as a "doctor," but they can be the diviner, rain-maker, prophet, priest, or chief.

Several famous chiefs were also known of as medicine men such as: Gall, Sitting Bull, Chief Joseph, Geronimo, and Cochise.

H. Views of Western medical practices

Medicine is a wide array of spiritual practices, ideas and concepts rather than only remedies and treatments as in "Western Medicine."

Some Indigenous People's views of western medicine

"Many lay people and doctors agree that at the time of the Europeans arrived on American shores, the average Indian-on-the-plains or in-the-woods knew more about anatomy and the treatment of trauma and illness than the average European, and in some respects, more than European physicians. Large-scale "bleeding" for instance, very much in vogue among White

doctors until the late 1800's for almost any ailment, was a bewildering and senseless practice in the eyes of most tribes, though Native Americans would occasionally use the superficial letting of blood in cases of inflammation. Native Americans treatment of wounds was far superior to that of whites in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and even nineteenth centuries, and countless observers during those remarked on the fact that few cripples or amputees were seen among the natives.

Resource: Medicine Women, Curanderas, and Women Doctors. p-22.

Native Americans render medical treatment in a caring manner. Virtually all Native American Cultures include the concept of harmony with nature. Native Americans have an extensive knowledge of plants and herbs, this is the basis for pharmacology.

I. Some tribal views on the Western term "disability" are:

Each person should be treated with respect and dignity.

Most tribal languages do not have a word for handicap or disability.

A disabled person may be viewed as an individual who is in disharmony or who has failed to fulfill their role in the family or community.

Neither the person's mental or physical capacity represents the whole person, a person is the "spirit within the body."

This view may be in conflict with the concepts of "independent living" as opposed to the interdependent living that occurs in most tribal life.

According to IDC President Carroll in the Spring 2000 newsletter, "We have no word for HELP or REHABILITATION in Indian Sign Language. We can *WORK TOGETHER* (Indian Sign Language.) That is our culture! We are equal in the Circle.

VIII. American Indian and Alaskan Native Ceremonies and Community Events

A. Ceremonies and events

There is an incorporation of mainstream and traditional Indian practices and events that are open to the public, if they are viewed with respect, and some that are closed to non-members.

B. Public celebrations and events

1. Pow Wow's - a social celebration of culture and dance.

The world's largest annual powwow is The Gathering of Nations is a two day event held annually in the Spring in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The attendance is around 100,000 persons, with over 3,000 singers and dancers from over 700 nations from the United States and Canada.

The Red Earth celebration is held in Oklahoma.

The Crow Fair is held in Montana.

2. Dances and other events

Dances and Ceremonies:

There are different styles of dancing/singing that serve various purposes. There are different types of drumming, and regalia. Some are tribal specific or intertribal, some dances are gender specific, and vary between regions and or nations.

Some types of Dances:

Fancy Shawl - Women's Dance

Traditional Buckskin and Cloth - Women's Dance

Gourd Dance - Veteran's Societies

Northern - Traditional Dancing

Oklahoma - Feather Dancer or "Fancy Dancer"

Grass Dancing - originally to stomp down grass for other dancers to follow

Victory or "veterans" dance

Straight Dancing

Stomp Dances - Cherokee, - 6 Nations of Iroquois, Seminole

Eastern Woodlands Dances may include:

Social Dances

Stomp Dances

Corn Dances

Pueblo Dances may include:

Corn or Matachine Dances

King's Day Celebrations: Buffalo, Deer, Eagle, and Elk Dances

Various Feast Day Dances

Various Harvest Dances

Various Christmas Celebrations: Basket, Buffalo, Deer, Harvest, Rainbow and Turtle Dances

Winter Celebration Dances and Honor Dances

Based on style of drumming, dancing, purpose, regalia, gender, regional popularity and purpose:

Dry Dance, Round Dance, Hoop Dance, Creeland Square Dance - All in Canadian Plains

Green Corn Dance, Navajo Dance, Whale Dance, Seal Dance - NW Coastal

Public celebrations and events that may be open to the non-Indian public.

There are some ceremonies that are considered public celebrations. Some examples are:

Rain Dances or Pueblo Dances are community events.

The blessings that are given at a new school, or a community center.

A Powwow is a celebration of culture and dance.

The Deer Dance (Yaqui) during the Easter season.
Potlatch - Giveaway from Pacific Northwest & Alaskan cultural traditions.
Arts and Crafts fairs.

C. General guidelines for participation

Arena is blessed for the event do not enter without invitation.
Maintain silence during prayers and certain honor songs, i.e. for flag, veterans.
Don't touch dancers or regalia.
Don't pick up fallen feathers.
Some events or ceremonies are gender specific.
Do not talk to the dancers who are preparing to enter circle.
Do not applaud, unless invited.
Do not bring alcohol or drugs to events.
Do not litter.
Call cultural centers to confirm dates or request special permissions.
Secure permission for any videotaping, photographs or sketching.
Do bring items to make you comfortable, i.e. lawn chair or blanket, water, hat or sunblock, etc.

Another resource: [The Pow Wow Trail - Understanding and Enjoying the Native American Pow Wow.](#) By Julia C. White - ISBN 1-57067-029-3 Summertown: Book Publishing Company.

1. Visiting Reservations and Pueblos, Lodges, Tipis, Long Houses, etc.
Respect people's homes and belongings.
Obey all speed signs and traffic laws.
Do not enter any area marked as private or restricted.
Do not bring alcohol or drugs.
2. Photography rules
Often prohibited or only with appropriate permission. (This may include a fee.)
3. Participation at public events and ceremonies by non-Indians
If invited to participate, then accept as honor.
Pay attention to direction of dancing, opposite is taboo.
Dress may be Native influenced, not "wannabe look," i.e. excessive jewelry or buckskins etc.
Food may be expected to shared.
Meat is often served. (Vegetarianism is not widespread)
Please inform children and friends of cultural rules if attending an open event.

D. Private spiritual ceremonies and dances - although all are sacred

1. Respect and use of sacred places, plants, and objects.
There are some ceremonies that are private, some of them are:
The Birth and Naming ceremonies.
Puberty Rites for the young women and men.
The Blessingway - Diné.
Healing Ceremonies.

Sacred Dances that are never open to the public

The Sundance - this is not even to be discussed.
The Ghost Dance - given by Paiute holy man - Wovoka for the return of the buffalo and survival of the Indian way of life.
The Snake Dance of the Hopi Indians is a sacred dance for balance, to ensure adequate rain and good harvest.
Pueblo Dances and Feasts - some may be open to the public.

Eastern Woodland Stomp Dance.

There are many sacred places that should not be entered by outsiders, some examples are:

- Kivas
- Sundance
- Long House
- Stomp and dance grounds
- Other Sacred sites

The use of sacred plants such as sage for smudging, cedar, sweet grass, chaparral, and tobacco.

Traditional foods - Beans, corn, squash, strawberries and other berries, Indian/Navajo Taco, buffalo, deer, elk and other game animals, fish - salmon. In more recent times "fry bread" and other foods are commonly eaten at celebrations and gatherings.

E. Use of "Ceremonies" by "New Age" groups and individuals

Some "new age" individuals improperly utilized Indian based rituals without permission, or instruction from tribal elders and often with only a profit motive. This shows disrespect and distortion.

IX. American Indian and Alaskan Native Language Use and Cultural Vocabularies

A. American Indian and Alaskan Native language use and discourse patterns.

1. Tribal language use: Of approximately 175 - 250 tribal languages, 50 are spoken by two or more generations; 70 are spoken only by Elders; and 55 are spoken by fewer than 10 persons.

Many Indians speak only their tribal language such as Diné (Navajo).

Many Indians are fluent in both English and their tribal language.

Many Indians speak only English due to "language erosion," and assimilation.

Many Indian tribes are establishing indigenous language preservation programs and teaching native languages to their young children.

Some languages have written forms and they have their own newspapers.

Examples: Cherokee syllabary (alphabet); Navajo language Bible.

Many have published dictionaries and have included their tribal languages as part of educational curriculums and material development projects.

Other languages have oral traditions only.

Ceremonial use of tribal languages for prayers and ceremonies - includes spoken and signed language.

2. English language use including "rezbonics."

Connotation and Denotation of Specific English Vocabulary:

Specific English vocabulary items:

Use of term "Harmony"

Use of term "Medicine"

Use of term "Respect"

Use of term "Elder"

Use of term "PowWow"

Use of term "council"

Phrase - "All my relations"

Phrase - "four-leggeds; two-leggeds;

Use of "first contact", "discovery" and "invasion"

3. Conversational discourse patterns

- a. Use of "silence". Silence is valued.
- b. Turn-taking is acknowledged without "over-lapping" the speaker. There are more pauses prior to or between thoughts. There is generally a pause for reflection before another speaker begins.
- c. Respect for Elders - Elders are not interrupted and younger members sometimes will not speak until after all of the Elders have spoken or not at all. For interpreters allow an Elder to complete his/her thoughts and allow for a pause between speakers.
- d. Non-verbal behaviors and gesture systems
 - Power of words
 - Choose words carefully
 - Words can be mirrors
 - Words as creation
 - Power to cause - "don't even say that" and 'don't ask that'
 - Certain topics are not discussed by members of the opposite sex
 - Certain topics are not discussed with outsiders
 - It is not uncommon for a home visit or interview to be conducted in the person's yard and not inside a home.

4. Value for oral tradition and storytelling

5. Respect for ceremonial language and prayers

B. American Indian and Alaskan Native Deaf language patterns:

American Indian Deaf may reflect:

Literacy and language skills vary widely.

Many American Indian/Alaskan Native Deaf know only ASL.

Some American Indian/Alaskan Native Deaf know both ASL and reservation influenced "signing."

Many have various degrees of fluency in their tribal language.

A few are fluent in ASL and Plains Indian Sign Language - i.e. James Woodenlegs.

Many have language difficulties due to limited or restricted educational opportunities.

1. Use of tribal languages and Indian Sign Language (ISL)
2. Use of ASL and English
3. Use of specific ISL vocabulary

American Indian Sign Language (AISL) in general refers to the signed language used by Plains and other Indian tribes as a intertribal language. There are also intra tribal languages that bear little if any resemblance to AISL.

In his book, The Indian Sign Language. W. P. Clark compares and contrast signs he recorded in 1884 with those used by the "deaf-mutes." As used at the time "deaf-mutes" referred to those pre-lingually deaf and not hard of hearing persons. This book is now in reprint.

Indian Sign Languages are still used today. Indian individuals who are D/deaf may have acquired it as a first language or may code-switch with ASL and/or English signing systems. It should also be recognized that there are different sign languages used among the Alaskan Native villages, and among native communities where traditional sign languages have died out, some families have formed their own forms of signed languages.

The Indian Sign Language books made popular in use by the Boy Scouts of America and for other children's books, after W. P. Clark's may include Some signs not considered accurate in Indian Country.

Resources: Handout of selected signs prepared by James Woodenlegs to be shared with participants at the AIRRTC/IDC/NMIP summer institute, June, 2000 at NMSD.

Clark. W. P. The Indian Sign Language. 1982. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Mc Kay, C., (1998). Plains Indian sign language: A comparative study of alternative and primary signers. In Deaf Studies V : Toward 2000 - Unity and Diversity Conference Proceedings. (pp. 17-78). Washington, DC: Gallaudet University Continuing Education.

Davis, J., & Supalla, S. (1995). A sociolinguistic description of sign language use in a Navajo Family. In Lucas, C. (Ed.). Sociolinguistics in deaf communities Washington: Gallaudet University Press. (pp. 77-106.)

Videotape of archival Indian's signing movie.

4. Connotation and denotation of specific ASL signs and English vocabulary

Pronouns - some cultures view finger pointing as "rude. Observe the techniques for accommodating non-referenced pronouns, these may include pointing or referencing with

“pursed lips” or “nose”, using the “A thumb” hand to indicate and object or using “honorific” ASL handshapes to indicate.

Description, cultural expansions and classifiers for peoples features, home descriptions, and cultural ceremonies and items.

Classifiers - select classifiers that represent the cultural meaning:

drumming - use of “one-handed” style of drumming per the type of drum used
pipe ceremonies and smudging

Descriptions - consider cultural implications.

Example: a hogan does not have separate rooms but directional “areas.”

Example: personal descriptions for various Indian regalia, i.e., roach, or facial and hair descriptions.

Specific ASL Vocabulary and American Indian Signs.

Use of traditional sign for “Indian.”

Recent usage of “Native American”

Lexical borrowing of Indian Signs

Voicing to English - Drums are “sung” - not played

Use of the term regalia - not costumes.

Explore the deep meaning of specific English vocabulary items:

Use of term “Harmony”

Use of term “Medicine”

Use of term “Respect”

Use of term “Elders”

Use of term “Pow Wow” (often mistranslated as a “big meeting” rather than a social event)

Use of term “council”

Use of term “heyoka” a contrariwise or a backwards/forwards man

A person whose vision and gift is to see the duality of life and truth; whose “humor” of contrary actions was a lesson and teacher.

Phrase - “All my relations”

Phrase - “four-leggeds; two-leggeds - animals and humans

Phrase - “Three Sisters” to refer to traditional foods of corn, beans, and squash

Use of “first contact,” “discovery” and “invasion”

Dance “regalia” not costume

Regional preferences may include regalia, dance clothes, Indian clothes

Woman - not “squaw”

Counting Coup - boldly touching an enemy to capture his spirit - still used with a contemporary metaphorical meaning

Phrase - “Acting like he had no relatives”

Specific ASL Vocabulary and Signs

Use of traditional ASL sign for “INDIAN”

Recent usage of “Native American”

Some examples of IDC “lexical borrowing from AISL ” for “Elder,” “Medicine Man” “council”

Drumming is “one handed” not two handed as in African drumming styles.

Pejorative signs: “scalping”, feather on head, war cry with hand on mouth, war paint, where do you live indicating “tipi”

Some general suggestions for interpreters:

1st. Educate yourselves, explore your own culture first, we all have culture, meet people, read books and attend workshops on American Indian/Alaskan Native culture in general and related to interpreting issues.

2nd. Avoid assumptions, recognize and try to look from the other perspective. Anticipate the cultural group but do not generalize. Verify and affirm the cultural behaviors and traits. Be aware of the influence of assimilation both cultural and linguistic on the language.

A cautionary note - be aware when asking questions, sacred information cultural and spiritual information cannot and should be shared with non-Indians. In an attempt to be polite, many Indians may avoid questions or answer vaguely rather than offend the questioner. It would be wiser to use an appropriate cultural liaison who can advise the interpreter.

3rd. Make your interpreting work fit the “niche” in the ideal situations and accept your limitations and attempt to expand the communities resources in situations where you do not have the appropriate cultural and linguistic background. Locate cultural contacts both locally and nationally. Advocate for the most culturally appropriate interpretations possible.

X. American Indian Educational Values and Trends

A. Traditional cultural knowledge

High respect for keepers of cultural knowledge.
Elders, healers, storytellers, drummers, singers.
Life long experience of participation to learn "Indian Ways."
Oral history and storytelling.

B. Tribally governed programs, schools and colleges -

Tribal philosophy of education

Many Indians are cynical of "White man's education" and their approaches to curriculum development.

Currently American Indians are in the beginning stages of self-determined educational systems.

"A quality education should empower them to become full citizens of their communities, the country and the world." Chief Plenty Coups, a noted leader of the Crow Tribe, said, "Education is your most powerful weapon. With education you are the whiteman's equal without education you are his victim." Reyhner, J. (Ed.) (1992). Teaching American Indian students. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.

Tribal educational philosophy towards curriculum development

Developing curriculum models that are culturally relevant:

Example: Dine Community College

Use of native plants and animals with respect, i.e. biology.

Use of Indian naming systems for astronomy.

Tribal colleges and universities - There are now 31 fully accredited tribal colleges in 12 states since 1968.

"Tribal Colleges were created over the last 30 years in response to the higher education needs of American Indians, and generally serve geographically isolated populations that have no other means accessing education beyond the high school level. They have become increasingly important to educational opportunity for American Indian students, an importance they have achieved in a relatively brief period of time. Tribal Colleges are unique institutions that combine personal attention with cultural relevance, in such a way as to encourage American Indians especially those living on reservations to overcome the barriers they face to higher education."

Source: See www.aihec.org/collge.htm for a list of all the colleges and locations.

There has been the creation of many tribal initiated, and controlled colleges that are producing many young professionals and other educated people for their communities. At other major universities there are now departments of Indian Studies, as well as Indian student organizations on these campuses. There are national organizations whose membership is comprised solely of Indian professionals such as engineers and lawyers.

C. United States government controlled policies on mainstream education

Indian literacy statistics

Many older Indians have never attended formal schooling

Many Indians currently have not completed a high school education or have High School diploma, or have a GED

A significant number (but low percentage) have completed college, law schools and other advanced degrees.

Governmental practice of forced assimilation through education

"The idea for the off-reservation boarding schools came out of the work of Lieut. Richard Henry Pratt, a U. S. Army officer whose success in developing innovative educational programs for freed African Americans after the War between the States led him to propose making similar educational experiences available to American Indians. In 1879, with the support of the U. S. Congress, he created the Carlisle (Pennsylvania) Indian school, whose curriculum combined the civilization/work ethic orientation of the Hampton Institute (a federally funded school for freedmen in Virginia) with Pratt's personal commitments to education through military discipline and rigor." Other schools followed including Haskell, Kansas; Chemawa, Oregon; Chilocco, Oklahoma; Albuquerque, New Mexico; and other sites in Indian Country.

Previous federal policies of education were used as tools to annihilate the Indian cultural traditions. *"To civilize the Indian, get him into civilization. To keep him civilized, let him stay.* (cited in Reyhner and Eder 1989-80) the school motto became the blueprint for education in all of the federal boarding schools. "The best way to do this, Pratt and his colleagues decided, was to operate these boarding schools as tightly controlled, highly regimented, and self-contained institutions with every phase of student life was to be closely monitored and not activity left without supervision. This was referred to "outing."

In addition to the federal programs, by 1879 missionary schools were in operation by protestant and Catholic churches throughout Indian Country.

"School policy determined what type of clothing the students wore, what food they ate, what time they were sent to bed, and what time they were awakened. Christian religious instruction was mandatory... School language choices were subject to a particularly rigorous regulation at these schools. The ground rules were simple: speaking an Indian language or any language other than English was a punishable offense. Punishments included whippings, having one's mouth washed out with soap, and solitary confinement."

"Indian descriptions of these boarding school life and boarding school language policies assure us that conditions in these schools were severe, intimidating, and (under some circumstances) life-threatening." (Leap, p 157-158).

Until the middle of the 1970's the federal government through, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), controlled schools, reservation and tribal lands and did not allow Indian control of their own affairs. In some areas BIA is still a controlling influence.

Resource: : Leap, W. L. (1993). American Indian English. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press. This book is an excellent discussion of American Indian school experiences and the development of American Indian English, discourse and "rez" influenced English.

D. Educational experiences of American Indian and Alaskan Native Deaf children

As with other areas, there is little research on the experiences of the unique experiences of American Indian and Alaskan Deaf children. Some themes do emerge from the literature as well as from the experiences of NMIP consultants and Indian Deaf Community individuals. The IDC newsletters contain several articles contemporary issues of raising Indian children and maintaining the Traditional cultural linkages with family and community. Indian Deaf individuals who attend IDC conferences often have shared experiences of having a lack of cultural support during their school years; having a lack of Indian Deaf role models or staff; remembering the curriculum as Euro-centric "Columbus discovered America;" remembering prejudicial treatment such as being "deloused" or having one's hair cut without parental permission. These influences resulted in a disconnection or dissonance from community life and language; and a lack of recognition of cultural value's and languages that the individual possessed. At the other end of

these experiences are individuals who due to the early influences of Indian Sign Language had direct access to the cultural knowledge and teachings of their nations. Each individual experience is unique based on all of the factors of deafness such as age of onset, degree of loss and in addition the cultural acculturation and assimilation influences experienced by other Indian peoples. These individuals often walk in three worlds and three distinct cultural experiences.

Many Indian children live in remote locations. Other children live in urban settings or on reservations and pueblos nearer to deaf education programs. In more recent times, state schools have become more attuned to the multicultural issues within their school populations and have attempted to provide a more culturally relevant education. However, it is almost impossible within a "pan Indian" context to impart the specific language cultural traditions that come from life within a family and community context. Many parents are exploring ways to have Indian Deaf children receive an appropriate education nearer to home. Thus interpreter services become a required resource. It is important for the profession to provide Indian individuals opportunities to become education interpreters for both urban programs as well as community based schools.

Current efforts are being made to support American Indian Deaf students that attend post secondary programs at Gallaudet University, the National Technical Institute for the Deaf, or at and other community colleges such as Pima Community College in Tucson.

Resource: Hammond, S. A., & Meiners, L. H. (1993). American Indian deaf children and youth. In Christensen, K. M., & G. L. Delgado, G. L. (Eds.) Multicultural Issues in Deafness (143-166). White Plains: Longman Publishing Group.

Resource: McKay, C. M. (1998/99) The "Well-hidden people" in Deaf and Native communities. NAD Deaf American Monograph. Unrealized visions: What's next for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community? Silver Springs: National Association Of the Deaf. Vol.48 Pp.49-51.

Videotape: National Multicultural Interpreter Project. (2000). Cultural and linguistic diversity series: Life experiences of Donnette Reins, Muskogee Creek. [videotape]. El Paso, Texas: El Paso Community College.

Videotape: RSA Region XIX - Mark Azure

XI. Contemporary Indian Reality and Issues in the United States

A. American Indian Issues of "Walking in Two Worlds." "Traditional Way and Mainstream Lifestyles"

Urban and Reservation
 Individual and Community
 Cultural sharing
 Cultural borrowing and adaptation to other cultural influences

B. Contemporary experiences of American Indian/Alaskan Native Deaf persons

C. Modern reservation realities

D. American Indian health issues

High Incidence Health Problems

US News Basic Data: Indian health Service, Centers for Disease Control	Indians and Alaskan Natives	All Races
Motor-vehicle accidents	79.3	23.7
All other accidents	61.4	20.0
Homicide	25.5	10.4
Pneumonia, influenza	23.1	11.4
Diabetes	22.8	10.0
Suicide	21.8	11.9
Tuberculosis	4.4	.7

Indians have the lowest life expectancy of any population in this hemisphere except for Haitians.

There have been many changes in diet. Many Indians used to live on "commodity food." Commodity food was plain packaged items from the United States government.

There are high incidences of environmental pollution and poisoning.

A 1995 study found that 26.5% of deaths for Indian men were linked to alcohol, for women 13%. That was 5.6 times the overall United States rate. There are increased birth defects, especially Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) 33 times higher than the general population.

Diabetes - around one in eight American Indians develops diabetes - twice the rate for whites; deaths from diabetes are three times higher for Indians. (6.8 times greater than among non-Indians). Diabetes often results in blindness and amputations.

There is a higher incidence of tuberculosis.

There is a high suicide rate among adolescents. The suicide rate for American Indians, which accounts for 17.3% of all deaths, is 70% higher than the rate for the general population.

Alcoholism: Myth versus Facts

Alcoholism is a serious problem within all Americans as well as Indians. However, alcohol mortality rate among Indians is 6 times the rate for all other races combined. More alcoholism is

present in Indians who are isolated from their tribal affiliations than those that are living on the reservations. Often high unemployment and depression are contributing factors. Excessive drinking often occurs more frequently in situations that are social events. Group behavior is a very powerful influence and refusing an offer from a friend is a culturally difficult situation. The theory of lower tolerance for alcohol in the Indian population has never been demonstrated physiologically or psychologically.

American Indians/Alaskan Natives are working diligently within their own communities to decrease alcoholism rates utilizing traditional spiritual practices. Healing the community as well as the individual. Most American Indian events prohibit alcohol use.

E. Vocational and employment patterns on and off reservations

There is an extremely high level of unemployment and under employment on most Indian reservations. Unemployment stays around 50% and is as high as 90% in some areas. The unemployment rate of the United States population as a whole is 4.2%.

The median household income for American Indians on reservations was \$19,897 in 1989, compared with \$30,056 for the entire U. S. population according to the 1990 census. At that same time 31.6% of American Indians lived below the poverty line, compared with 13% for the other population groups in the United States. There are many households that live without either running water, electricity or a telephone.

Nearly 190,000 Indians are United States Armed Forces veterans. American Indians have the highest level of service per capita of any ethnic group in the United States.

XII. American Indian and Alaskan Native Political Trends

A. Current issues

1. Issues involving the enforcement of treaties and treaty rights.
2. Issues involving the sovereignty of American Indian Nations and Alaskan Villages. Each tribe considers itself a sovereign nation as negotiated with the United States government. There are current issues related to sovereignty and non-federally recognized and terminated tribes and nations. These may in the process of seeking recognition.
3. Issues related to nuclear, mining, and factory interests.
4. Issues involving Alaskan Villages and "subsistence" fishing and hunting.
5. Self government - tribal government and offices
 - Tribal courts and police
 - Tribal councils and their authority over its citizens
6. Issues involving the rise of gambling on reservations involve taxes and federal, state controls
7. Rights of disabled members and implications of ADA on sovereign nations

B. Federal agencies and programs

Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) - Department of the Interior

The BIA head has historically been a White (male) superintendent with many officials on his staff creating a complex bureaucracy. These are some historical perceptions:

From the book Our Brother's Keeper: the Indian in white America (1975). by E. S. Cahn
"The Bureau is realtor, banker, teacher, social worker, it runs the employment service, vocational and job training program, contact office, chamber of commerce, highway authority, housing agency, police department, conservation service, water works, power company, telephone company, planning office. It is a land office, a land developer, patron of the arts, ambassador from and to the outside world and also guardian, protector, and spokesman." There is little left for "tribal council" and president to govern.

From the book The Sun Dance People by Richard Erdoes (p 80):

"In some families, it is the mother who takes care of negotiating with the BIA on such matters as lease money or commodity foods, because men find such dealings not to their taste. All of this means that Indian women take a bigger part in the affairs of their communities, go to meetings and let their views be known. The Plains Indians' world used to be a man's world, but this is no longer true today.

C. American Indian organizations and movements

1. National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) See www.ncai.org
The National Congress of American Indians was founded in 1944 and is the oldest and largest tribal government organization in the United States. NCAI serves as a forum for consensus-based policy development among its membership of over 250 tribal governments from every region of the country. NCAI's mission is to inform the public and the federal government on tribal self-government, treaty rights, and a broad range of federal policy issues affecting tribal governments. Their website will contain in-depth information on any current issues.
2. American Indian Movement (AIM) - AIM is a political/spiritual movement. For an in-depth discussion of current issues they maintain a web site at www.aimovement.org
3. National Museum of the American Indian
Native Peoples Magazine - is an excellent resource for contemporary issues of art and culture. The National Museum of the American Indian is being built on the last space of the Mall in Washington, D. C. www.nmai.si.edu

D. American Indian Deaf/Alaskan Native and related organizations:

1. American Indian Rehabilitation Research and Training Center - AIRRTC

www.nau.edu/~ihd

Under the Northern Arizona University, Institute for Human Development (IHD), A University Affiliated Program, American Indian Rehabilitation Research and Training Center's (AIRRTC) mission is to "improve the quality of life for American Indians and Alaska Natives with disabilities through the conduct of responsive rehabilitation services, to improve employment outcomes and to facilitate access to services for American Indians and Alaska natives with disabilities, and to increase the participation of American Indians and Alaska Natives in the design and delivery of rehabilitation services for employment outcomes. The philosophy of the AIRRTC is based on American Indian concepts. In particular the management structure and approach to human resources, politics, and symbolic frames are based on the American Indian concepts of the Circle and the Four Directions."

This organization together with the NMIP project, IDC and the New Mexico School for the Deaf sponsored a pilot project for an Indian centered interpreter training model during the summer of 2000. For a complete report contact AIRRTC. In addition videotaped materials will be available in the future that document the training topics and activities of this event.

2. American Indian Disability Technical Assistance Center - AIDTAC www.aidtac.org

AIDTAC is an information and technical assistance center that helps American Indian tribes and Alaskan Native villages assist their members with disabilities to live healthy, integrated lives within their communities. They are committed to help tribes build their capacity to develop implement culturally appropriate laws and policies, cross-cutting infrastructure, and direct program assistance. They are funded by a grant from the U. S. Department of Education's Rehabilitation Services Administration, AIDTAC is to assist American Indians and Alaskan Natives an opportunity to address these gaps in policy, programs and services.

3. Intertribal Deaf Council (IDC) www.deafnative.com

This is the only membership organization in the United States that is directly composed of Deaf American Indians/Alaskan Natives and their families and friends. IDC had its beginning with work of committed Deaf individuals Walter Kelly and Tony McGregor who were working in the Southwest with Deaf Indian people and their families. The recognized need for such an organization was brought to the attention of Jerry Hassell (Chicasaw), and Frank Bagley who were instrumental in planning for the first national convention for Native American Deaf held in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma in 1994 prior to the Red Earth. Red Earth is one of the largest festivals of in the United States. The original organization was called the National Association of the Native American Deaf (NANAD). The original organization goals were:

To preserve and carry out traditions and Culture of the Native American Deaf, no matter what obstacles there may be

To increase the appreciation of Native American Deaf Culture through information exchange and educational activities

To educate non-Native American and non-Deaf public about the culture and needs of the Native American Deaf.

The name changed to Intertribal Deaf Council (IDC) and since that first historic conference, IDC has held annual conferences for the past 7 years. The conferences have been held an annual conference each year:

1995 - Albuquerque, New Mexico

1996 - Toppenish, Washington - Yakima Nation

1997 - Turtle Mountain, North Dakota
1998 - Duck Lake, Saskatchewan, Canada
1999 - Oneida Nation Reserve, Ontario, Canada
2000 - Fairbanks, Alaska

The organization currently has a board. Linda Carroll, (Eastern Band Cherokee) is currently president. James Woodenlegs, Northern Cheyenne has been the Spiritual Leader. There is also a Council of Elders. A membership and newsletter are available. This newsletter is a rich source of information on many issues of interest to interpreters who work with Indian Deaf people.

Please contact IDC directly for additional information and up coming conferences and activities.

The conferences are committed to preserving Indian Sign Language and providing cultural connections and education for Deaf Please contact IDC at Email: IDCofNA@aol.com for further information on upcoming events.

IDC and the NMIP project have worked closely together to develop a model of team interpreting that is culturally sensitive and appropriate to IDC's unique intertribal Deaf and hearing participants. This model has been successful at the recent conferences.

Appendix A

STATEMENT OF VISION TOWARD THE NEXT 500 YEARS FROM THE GATHERING OF NATIVE WRITERS, ARTISTS, AND WISDOM KEEPERS AT TAOS, NEW MEXICO OCTOBER 14-18, 1992

In memory of more than 500 distinct Native Nations and millions of our relatives who did not survive the European invasions and with respect for those Indigenous Peoples who have survived, we make this statement.

We, the Indigenous Peoples of this red quarter of Mother Earth have survived 500 years of genocide, ethnocide, ecocide, racism, oppression, colonization and Christianization. These excesses of western civilization resulted from contempt for Mother Earth, and all our relations; contempt for women, elders, children and Native Peoples; and contempt for a future beyond the present human generation. Despite this, we are here.

Since time immemorial, Native Nations have lived in harmony with this land and in solidarity with our relations. Our continued survival depends on this vital relationship. We perpetuate this harmony for our continued survival and world peace. We carry out our religious duties for the good of all. Endangering us endangers us all.

We call for the immediate halt of the abuse, neglect and destruction of life. We call for immediate strategies and compacts to halt the genocide of Native Peoples throughout the western hemisphere.

We demand an end to all exploitation, desecration and commercialization of Indian spirituality and cultures, our sacred places and the remains of our ancestors. We demand an end to the violations of our right to worship, to the disrespect of our religious and cultural property and to the disregard of our very humanity.

Native Peoples over the next 500 years must maintain our status as distinct political and cultural communities. Indian Natives expect the world community to honor and enforce treaties that recognize tribal property and sovereignty. Sovereignty is the inherent right of Indian Nations to govern all action within their own countries based upon traditional systems and laws that arise from the People themselves. Sovereignty includes the right of Native Nations to freely live and develop socially, economically, culturally, spiritually and politically.

The domestic laws of the non-Native countries of this hemisphere have been used to subjugate Native Peoples. Vindication of our rights must be achieved through fair and appropriate procedures, including international procedures.

Indigenous nations have the right to secure borders and fulfilled treaties for which we gave up vast territory and wealth. Native Nations have the responsibility to provide a safe and secure environment for the Peoples' economic self-sufficiency, health and well-being. Tribal economies work best when based on traditional systems. A secure and adequate land base and respect for sovereignty are prerequisites for viable tribal economies.

Indigenous People have the right to educational and social systems that affirm tribal cultures and values that promote physical, spiritual and mental well-being of people and

that teach the care and healing of Mother Earth and all Her children.

We envision that in 500 years Indigenous Peoples will be here, protecting and living with Mother Earth in our own lands. We see a future of coming generations of Native People who are healthy in body and spirit, who speak Native languages daily and who are supported by traditional extended families.

We look forward to leadership that encourages the religious and cultural manifestations of our traditions, and the reclamation and continuing use of traditional ceremonies, hairstyles, foods, clothes, music, personal and tribal names, and medicines. Our cultural renewal will assure the perpetuation of natural species that are dying, and perhaps even some of those thought to be extinct.

We celebrate our rich, continuing tradition of artistic excellence. The works produced for tribal functions or within a religious or historical context are the sole cultural property of the Native Peoples. Our strong cultural continuums accord great freedom of artistic expression, which enhances the dynamic and incorporative nature of our traditional cultures. We envision a future when our artistic gifts are recognized fully for their spiritual transforming power and beauty.

Native Peoples are strengthened by relations among each other at all levels of community life. Commitment, integrity, patience the ability to build consensus and respect are essential components to the flourishing of culture, friendship, strengthening of economies and the pursuit of a common peaceful world.

All life is dependent upon moral and ethical laws which protect earth, water, animals, plants and, tribal traditions and ceremonies. Humanity has the responsibility to live in accordance with natural laws, in order to perpetuate all living beings for the good of all Creation. We share a bond with all the world's Peoples who understand their relationship and responsibility to all aspects of the Creation. The first of these is to walk through life in respectful and loving ways, caring for all life. We look forward to a future of global friendship and the integrity of diverse cultures.