

SECOND EDITION

NATIVE NATIONS

CULTURES AND HISTORIES OF NATIVE NORTH AMERICA

NANCY BONVILLAIN

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PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

THIS BOOK INCLUDES DISCUSSION of the cultures, histories, and contemporary lives of members of the First Nations of North America. Following a brief introduction, two chapters provide overviews of historical and contemporary issues. [Chapter 2](#) is a summary of the major events that have shaped North American history, including the policies of colonial powers and of the United States and Canadian governments. [Chapter 3](#) first presents recent social, economic, and population data from Canada and the United States and then proceeds with a discussion of contemporary issues relevant to the lives of First Nations peoples, including climate change, treaty claims, and programs to maintain and enhance cultural, environmental, economic, political, and health rights. It ends with an examination of recent decisions handed down by the Supreme Courts of the United States and Canada as they affect Native rights.

Subsequent chapters are divided into nine parts based on region (Northeast, Southeast, Plains, Great Basin, Southwest, California, Plateau, Northwest Coast, and Subarctic and Arctic). Each part begins with an overview chapter, followed by one (or in some cases, two) chapters that deal in detail with a First Nation within the region.

Each chapter (beginning with [chapter 4](#)) that explores the circumstances of Native communities starts with what is known of indigenous societies at about the time of European arrival on these shores, approximately AD 1500. Indigenous lifeways encompass economic activities, family and social life, community and political organization, and religious beliefs and practices. The chapters then turn to the histories of Native communities, focusing on the ways that historical processes affected indigenous cultures and the responses that Native peoples had to these processes. Finally, the chapters conclude with sections discussing contemporary Native life, attempting to give a picture of the strength of Native communities as they confront and respond to cultural, economic, and political changes.

This second edition includes updates in each of the chapters of social and economic data from the most recent US and Canadian government reports, as well as from information provided in First Nations websites. In most cases, data are collected from census statistics from 2010 or later, but in some cases, economic statistics (including employment, income, and poverty rates) have not been published for each nation since 1999. [Chapter 3](#), “Native Communities Today,” includes expanded coverage throughout as well as new sections dealing with the effects of climate change on indigenous communities, efforts toward safeguarding treaty rights, treatment of health and illness issues, and the aforementioned section on Supreme Court judicial rulings. This edition also includes two new chapters, a regional overview of the Plateau ([chapter 19](#)) and a separate chapter on the Nez Perce ([chapter 20](#)). Finally, the book contains a list of available websites for many Native American tribes and First Nations. In addition, a listing of all US federally recognized tribes and Canadian First Nations peoples is available at the book’s webpage at www.rowman.com.

I wish to express my gratitude to Leanne Silverman, Senior Acquisitions Editor, Rowman & Littlefield, for her constant encouragement and support in the preparation of this new edition. I also want to thank Mallie Prytherch, data researcher, for her long hours of work and initiative in providing statistical data for the ethnographic chapters. And I thank reviewers whose comments and opinions helped strengthen this edition including Daniel Philip Bigman (Georgia State University), Chris Hurst-Loeffler (Irvine Valley College), Adam King (University of South Carolina), Michelle D. Stokely (Indiana University Northwest), Steven Williams (Oberlin College), Erica Cusi Wortham (George Washington University), and one anonymous reviewer. Finally, my continual appreciation goes to the people at Akwesasne for the personal and intellectual support that I have always received there. I am especially grateful to the late Gloria Thompson, the late Ernest Benedict, and Beatrice Francis and their families for the many days over many years spent in their company. My admiration goes to them and others at Akwesasne, including the teachers, staff, and students at the Akwesasne Freedom School, who have led and participated in many struggles for cultural, linguistic, and political sovereignty. It is to them that this book is dedicated.

Nancy Bonvillain
May 2016

Introduction

HUNDREDS OF DISTINCT and diverse peoples have lived in what is now called North America. Their ancestors, who lived on the continent for many thousands of years, adapted their economies to best utilize resources in their environment, developed social systems that bound families and communities together, and devised ways of integrating their communities, making group decisions and ensuring the survival of their societies. These various peoples followed ethical and religious principles that gave meaning to their lives. Chapters in this text are organized into regional divisions, usually called “culture areas” in the literature. These are essentially geographic divisions within which certain similarities, although not identities, of topography, climate, and natural flora and fauna can be found. The societies that developed within each area often shared a core of similar practices and activities, but they were not identical. Cultural or historical homogeneity did not exist. Moreover, societies were influenced by neighboring groups and were affected by continent-wide historical processes. The culture area approach is useful as an organizing principle for North America because the economies and social systems that developed here were, in general, closely related to and grew out of ecological adaptations to natural resources that were themselves adapted to existing topographical and climatic conditions. However, it is important to keep in mind that neighboring Native societies differed from one another in significant features.

Each chapter includes discussion of aboriginal or “traditional” cultures, the transformations that occurred as a result of European intrusions into North America, and the conditions of contemporary

Native communities. The time frame for the discussion of aboriginal culture varies from region to region and from nation to nation depending on the time of initial European contact. The effects of Europeans’ policies and actions began earliest in the Northeast, Southeast, Southwest, and coastal California, whereas they were latest in interior Subarctic and Arctic areas.

[Chapter 2](#), “A Short History,” presents an introductory analysis of historical processes begun after the appearance of Europeans on the North American continent that affected all indigenous nations to one degree or another. It reviews major federal US and Canadian legislation concerning Native peoples. It is followed, in [Chapter 3](#), “Native Communities Today,” by an overview of population, income, and employment trends in Native communities today in the United States and Canada. The chapter also reviews some contemporary economic, political, and cultural issues that may help to shape the future of Native America, focusing on significant developments as Native nations have attempted to broaden their sovereign powers and assert their political and cultural rights. Thereafter, chapters are presented in sections, each beginning with an overview of the region, followed by one (or in some cases two) chapters examining the culture and history of a nation residing within that area. The following regions and nations are included: Northeast (Mohawk, Mi’kmaq), Southeast (Choctaw), Plains (Teton Lakota, Hidatsa), Great Basin (Shoshone), Southwest (Zuni, Navajo), California (Pomo), Plateau (Nez Perce), Northwest Coast (Kwakwaka’wakw or Kwakiutl), Subarctic and Arctic (Innu or Montagnais, Inuit). The nations discussed are, of course, but a sample of the more than 500 nations indigenous to this continent.

Before proceeding, some notes on terminology are required here. The ethnic or racial category of “Native American” here refers to people whose ancestors were the indigenous inhabitants of what is now the United States and Canada. In Canada, the term “First Nations” refers to the original peoples of that country. Three additional ethnic identifications are used here: “Indian,” “Inuit,” and “Métis.” “Inuit” is the name of Native people who live in the Arctic regions of northern Canada and parts of coastal Alaska. They are speakers of closely related languages and share many features of culture. The word “Indian” (or “American Indian”) generally refers to indigenous people who are not Inuit. It has come to be general usage, but it is an unfortunate appellation both because it derives from a mistaken belief about this continent and because it lumps together people belonging to many hundreds of separate nations. It is a word of colonial invaders, not of the people being named. The term “Métis” is an ethnic identification used in Canada for people who are “mixed-bloods” or descendants of Native women and European trappers, traders, and woodsmen, especially of French, Scottish, Irish, English, and German origin. They form unique communities, principally in western Canadian provinces, and have special legal status in that country.

Finally, the terms “nation,” “band,” and “tribe” can be distinguished. A “nation” is a group of people who speak the same language (or dialects of the same language), who have a sense of territorial boundaries, and who share many (but not necessarily all) features of cultural practice and belief. “Tribes” and “bands” are specific types of societies having different kinds of systems of leadership, decision-making, and group cohesion. Bands are small, loosely organized groups of people that are politically autonomous and have minimal leadership. In tribes, local communities are united (with varying degrees of cohesion) within a recognized named group having some recognized leaders. Tribal social and/or political unity may be limited to the level of villages or may combine villages into networks of decision-making and cooperation.

Unknown thousands of years ago, ancestors of all of these peoples probably migrated across what is now known as the Bering Strait from Asia into North America. When these migrations began and when they ended is a subject of much debate. Numerous sources that deal extensively with this issue can be consulted. Deloria’s book (1997) is recommended for its refutation of some standard archeological assumptions.

For example, Deloria suggests a counter narrative that focuses on sacred stories told by Native peoples in the Northwest Coast of Washington and British Columbia that describe vast topographic upheavals that resulted in the creation of the lakes, rivers, and coastline of the region. Although these narratives recount the adventures of mythic creatures such as Raven, Muskrat, and numerous monsters, Deloria proposes that they reflect ancient peoples’ experiences and observations. In other words, they use the poetic language of tradition to transmit historical knowledge. Geologists provide evidence that corroborates Deloria’s inferences. For instance, according to Dr. Eugene Kiver, “floods may have happened when people were around [many thousands of years ago]. Native Americans have myths about floods” (Robins 2004).

Although each nation is unique, there are a number of common (but not universal) features of resource utilization, production, social ethics, community cohesion, and religious beliefs. These shared features or concepts are suggestive tendencies, not absolutes. Territory and resources in Native America were owned or controlled communally rather than by individuals. Among foragers of the Plains, Subarctic, and Arctic, land and resources were owned by the community, band, or nation as a whole, while among those in the Northwest Coast and parts of California, resource sites were collectively owned by lineages. In farming nations, productive land was usually controlled by corporate kin groups such as clans or lineages. Rights to use land and exploit resource sites were inherited within the relevant unit, whether lineage, clan, or nation. When limited to kin groups, usufruct rights were conveyed either through matrilineal or patrilineal inheritance, depending upon the prevailing system of kinship and descent. Conflicts over resources rarely developed because in most areas, neighbors were permitted to obtain what they needed when foods in their own domain were scarce or supplies were exhausted.

Native economies were closely adapted to their environments. Where farming was possible (in areas of the Northeast, Southeast, Southwest, eastern Prairies, and Plains) most people grew corn, beans, and squash, the three crops that were the staples of aboriginal horticulture. Land was cleared for farming by slash-and-burn techniques, sometimes by men or sometimes by women and men working together. Women were usually responsible for the major portion of farm work once land was prepared, but in the Southwest, farming was usually (but not always) a man’s task. The central

diet of farm produce was supplemented by gathering wild fruits and plants and by hunting and fishing. Farming people lived in stable villages although some shifted their settlement sites every generation or so when their fields became less fertile and productive or when firewood or drinking water became scarce nearby. Village size generally varied from a few hundred to several thousand. Households were organized by kin groups, some following matrilineal descent while others were patrilineal. Bilateral kinship organization prevailed in only a few farming nations.

For other aboriginal economies, foraging constituted the primary mode of production. Nations inhabiting the northern Northeast, northern Plains, Subarctic, and Arctic were of necessity foragers because of environmental and climatic limitations. Elsewhere, foraging nations often lived side-by-side with farmers, frequently trading surpluses with one another. Most people who relied exclusively on hunting and gathering lived in small, temporary settlements. They were nomadic, attuned to the migration patterns of animals and the seasonal availability of wild plants. In the Northwest Coast and most of California, however, foraging nations were able to support a relatively dense population because of the richness of their natural environments. Unlike foragers in the rest of North America, they lived in relatively large and stable villages. Kinship and descent patterns were not the same everywhere. Some foragers were organized by bilateral descent, others were patrilineal, and some were matrilineal. Variation was attested even within a region. For example, all three types of kinship systems were found among foragers of the Northwest Coast.

Aboriginal social life centered on principles of kin-group support, cooperation, and allegiance. Families and households were the primary units of economic, social, political, and ceremonial cohesion. Social ethics stressed the importance of sharing resources, labor, and property with members of one's kin group and community. People were expected to participate in communal activities, to give economic and ceremonial support to relatives, and to respect each other's autonomy. In general, generosity, even temper, and cooperativeness were highly valued personality traits whereas anger, stinginess, pride, and acquisitiveness were considered shameful attributes. Indian and Inuit ethics valued the primacy of both individuals and communities. People's autonomy, agency, and rights to make decisions for themselves were respected. But people understood that the needs and goals of their

community were also their personal needs and goals. Cooperation with others was not seen as a denial of the self but rather as an expression of one's own interest.

Most Native societies were founded on egalitarian social principles where social distinctions were based solely on age, gender, and abilities. People were esteemed because of their personalities and achievements. There were no inherent barriers to one's success or the possibility of accruing prestige. However, in some nations, particularly in the Southeast, Northwest Coast, and parts of California, systems of social stratification developed that differentiated members of the village or nation into loosely defined classes or ranks. In some of these groups, the populace was divided into an elite and a commoner status while in others a third and lowest class of slaves existed. There was usually some mobility between the elites and commoners, but slaves (typically war captives and their descendants) could not advance socially. However, even in stratified societies, an egalitarian ethic underlay people's interpersonal relations and rights to participate in their society and to have decent living conditions, including adequate food and clothing. This ethic was demonstrated in the sharing and redistribution of resources. People of high status were obligated to provide aid for members of their kin groups and communities. Indeed, generosity was an absolute requisite for anyone aspiring to prestigious positions and public renown.

The basic egalitarianism of most Native nations was demonstrated as well in gender relations. Although economic tasks were said to be the work of either men or women, in actual practice gender roles were not always rigidly demarcated. For example, given the necessity or inclination to do so, people could perform household work usually assigned to the other gender. Many tasks required the cooperative, joint, and interdependent labor of men and women. Furthermore, respect was accorded to both women and men for their economic, social, and spiritual contributions to households and communities. Although leadership was usually vested in men, women could occupy leadership positions in many nations. Women's voices were heard in household and community discussions, and their participation contributed to the formation of group consensus.

The equal treatment of women and men was reflected in generally similar attitudes toward male and female sexual activity and marital relationships in most nations. With some exceptions, violence against

women in the form of beatings or rape was uncommon or even unheard of. Where such violence was tolerated, it was a reflection of some degree of male dominance in aboriginal culture (e.g., among Inuit in the Arctic) or in societies newly incorporated into European trade networks that marginalized women (e.g., among some nineteenth-century Plains nations). Although first marriages were often arranged by parents, the couple concerned usually had the right to veto a disagreeable union. And, if a marriage proved unhappy for either partner, a wife or husband was free to divorce and seek another mate. In many societies, polygamy was possible, although not of great frequency. Polygyny (marriage of a man to two or more women) was more common than polyandry (marriage of a woman to two or more men), but both forms were attested. Where polygyny existed, it seems usually to have been an indication of the high status and wealth of certain men rather than of the submissiveness of women.

Finally, both men and women participated in the religious life of their societies by engaging in ceremonial practices and by obtaining and exercising spirit power. Men and women might have different roles to play in rituals, but neither was excluded from the social recognition and spirit power attainable through religious activity. Generally, equal and balanced models of gender were symbolized in creation or transformation stories and in the pantheon of spirit beings who inhabited the universe and who offered aid and comfort to humans. Female and male deities all had important roles in the Native spirit world.

An important indication of the flexibility of gender roles and attitudes toward sex in Native cultures was the existence of a third category of gender. Documentary evidence indicates that in well over 100 nations, a person could become neither man nor woman but instead occupy a third status, now often referred to as a “Two-Spirit” (Jacobs 1997 et al.; Lang 1998). This term is translated from the Ojibwa phrase *niizh manidoowag*, referring to people who “carry both a masculine and feminine spirit” (Murg 2011: 28). Two-Spirits were biological males and females who, for various reasons, assumed social roles other than (or sometimes in addition to) the roles usually associated with their sex. Their behavior and appearance combined features appropriate to women and men and also incorporated activities specifically assigned to them. The existence of such possibilities for males and females reflects beliefs in individual autonomy as well as underlying philosophical notions concerning the mutability of

gender and of the self. Attitudes toward Two-Spirits were not everywhere the same. Although they were more often regarded as embodying acceptable alternative behaviors, in some nations they were ridiculed or feared. Of the more than 100 societies where they were documented, most were in the midwest and west, from the Mississippi Valley and Great Lakes to California, although their occurrence was also noted, with less frequency, in the east, Subarctic, and Arctic (Callender and Kochems 1983: 444). In the Plains, some women took on male roles as warriors and chiefs without necessarily identifying or being identified as a Two-Spirit.

People might become Two-Spirits as a result of either personal inclination or spiritual calling. In the first instance, a young girl or boy might take an interest in the occupations and demeanors usually displayed by members of the other sex. Parents thereafter trained the child in the subsistence skills appropriate to the child’s chosen role. Among some groups, parents who had no sons might choose a daughter to learn hunting skills as a son would.

The more common mode of recruitment was to receive a spirit calling through a vision or dream. Dreaming to assume the third gender gave both spirit and social validation to a male’s or female’s transformation. As a consequence, Two-Spirits were often thought to have extraordinary powers as demonstrated by their ability to heal and to prophesy or foretell the future.

While the behavior of Two-Spirits differed in various societies, they typically performed economic duties usually appropriate to the opposite sex, sometimes in addition to those associated with their own biological sex. Female Two-Spirits were hunters, trappers, and occasionally warriors as well. Male Two-Spirits contributed their labor as farmers (where economies included horticulture) and were trained in domestic skills such as sewing, embroidery, and food preparation. Where warfare was a significant activity, male Two-Spirits generally refrained from battle but they might join war parties as carriers of supplies or healers for the wounded. And although female Two-Spirits did not always participate as warriors, they were not constrained from doing so, and some became famous for their military and tactical skills.

Two-Spirits were often more prosperous than other members of their community. Their ability to perform both women’s and men’s work gave them economic advantages. In some societies, Two-Spirits had unique sources of income because they performed

ritual functions specifically assigned to them. For example, Lakota Two-Spirits received horses in return for bestowing secret, spiritually powerful names on children. In several California groups, Two-Spirits were responsible for burial and mourning rituals. In societies such as the Diné, Cheyenne, and Omaha, they were often paid for resolving conflicts between spouses or arranging liaisons and marriages (Williams 1986: 70–71).

Leadership in most Native nations was through selection and consensus rather than through automatic inheritance of position. Indeed, in most Native communities, formalized leadership was absent. Instead, people of intelligence, experience, skill, and success were looked to for advice and counsel because of their personality and proven accomplishments. Such people led by example and by exhorting their followers to proper behavior. In some nations, leadership tended to be passed in particular lineages or clans, but succession to the position was never automatic. If the eligible candidate was inappropriate because of a lack of intelligence, skill, or valued personality traits, he/she was bypassed in favor of another, more deserving candidate.

In most nations, leadership councils were also looked to for advice and direction. Such councils might be informally recognized and constituted or be highly structured and formalized. Council decisions were based on consensus and unanimity. Furthermore, the opinions of other members of a community were sought in order to arrive at a group decision. Leadership, whether individual or collective, was rarely coercive. Automatic obedience to leaders was absent. Instead, people heeded a leader's or council's advice only if they respected their opinions and intelligence.

Leadership was most typically rewarded with social prestige. Even though kin-group leaders in some Southeastern, Californian, and Northwest Coast nations might be able to amass more wealth than others because of their favored position as redistributors of resources, they were obligated to provide for their constituents' well-being through the generous giving of aid in times of need and through ceremonial giveaways hosted for all members of their communities. Only in some Southeastern and Northwest Coast nations was the standard of living of chiefs and their close kin appreciably better than those of common folk. There, chiefly families lived in more substantial and larger dwellings, and they had finer clothing and

more elaborate personal ornaments. Still, nowhere did any member of the community lack adequate housing, clothing, or food. Everyone might receive aid from their kin groups and from the requisite generosity of chiefs and others of high status.

Social control was usually vested in kin groups. Wrongdoers were admonished by their families to correct errant behavior. They might be scolded, teased, or ostracized. They bore the public shame of having wronged someone else and, because of that, having wronged or dishonored their families. Rarely were formal punishments carried out. Perhaps the best counterexample comes from Plains nations where regulations concerning activities during buffalo hunts were strictly enforced by members of policing societies who might confiscate or destroy a wrongdoer's property or even mete out beatings. But such punishments were only given to people whose behavior jeopardized the success of a communal buffalo hunt, which might result in economic hardship for an entire community.

Native religions were generally based on beliefs in a spirit essence that pervaded the universe and imbued all living creatures and many inanimate objects, forces of nature, and specific locales with spirit powers. Since spirit beings could affect human activity and outcomes, their aid was sought for protection, instruction, and comfort. Fundamental to all Native belief systems, every person might acquire personal spirit power, although some people were able to obtain more power than others. Such individuals could use their extraordinary abilities to heal, foretell the future, or perform other beneficial acts on behalf of their communities.

Aboriginal religions stressed the importance of direct contact with the spirit world. People might have unsought visitations from spirit beings in dreams and spontaneous visions, or they might deliberately seek out contact through prayers, songs, intense thought, and self-sacrifice in the form of fasting and isolation. Native religions placed great significance on dreams as carriers of messages from spirit powers. Through dreams, people could learn the meanings of past or present events, foretell the future, have contact with spirit beings or with deceased kin, and obtain powerful songs and dances.

People participated in both individual and community rituals. Ceremonies were held to mark life-cycle transitions, especially birth, puberty, and death. Of these events, death usually received the most elaborate rituals and the most intense social and emotional

involvement. In addition, people participated in healing rituals that combined a sophisticated knowledge of the medicinal properties of plants and animal substances with complex ritual cures based on the people's understanding of the spirit causes of illness and misfortune. Community rituals were often dedicated to resource renewal. As might be expected, nations with economies based on horticulture tended to stress calendric rites timed to planting and harvesting activities whereas nations with hunting economies tended to emphasize animal thanksgiving and renewal ceremonies.

Native nations were linked to their neighbors through trade, travel, and intermarriage. Extensive local and long-distance trading networks facilitated the exchange of raw materials and finished products from one group to another. Annual trade fairs in some regions, especially in the Plateau and the interior Northwest along the Snake and Columbia Rivers, brought together thousands of people coming from communities as distant as California, the Plains, and the Southwest. Such trading networks and fairs also helped create social and ceremonial bonds among individuals that had long-term significance for their home communities. People not only adopted new items of material culture and learned new technological skills, they also borrowed social practices, rituals, and religious and secular knowledge and literatures. Similar advantages stemmed from marriages between members of different nations as the in-marrying spouses contributed their own languages and cultural practices to the material and ideological wealth of their new homes.

The ability of Native nations to absorb foreign elements of culture had an analogy in their willingness to absorb foreign individuals, learning from them and accepting them as legitimate members of the community. Incorporation of outsiders and cultural assimilation of their descendants defined group membership and ensured stability within the context of change and adaptation.

The issue of group membership continues to be of great significance for Native people today. In both the United States and Canada, governmental policies have shaped the definition of who is an Indian or Inuit and therefore who has claim to land and resources guaranteed by treaty, official agreements, or legislation. As will be detailed in [Chapter 2](#), federal rules that defined Indians according to legal stipulation either of blood quantum (in the United States) or patrilineal descent

(in Canada) effectively denied rights to land and funds to incalculable numbers of people. In Canada, the 1876 "Indian Act" withdrew Native status from Indian and Inuit women who married non-Indians and from their descendants. The rights of women and their descendants were not restored until passage of the revised Canadian constitution in 1982 and a 1985 Supreme Court decision based on that document. In the United States, the General Allotment Act of 1887 divided reservations into allotments to be assigned to individual Indians and established tribal rolls to determine eligible membership. Although rules varied, people typically had to prove from one-quarter to one-half degree of blood in the group (Churchill 1999: 50). Regulations might even disbar people who were "full-blood" Indians but of mixed tribal parentage. Constitutions drawn up for recognized tribes in the United States after passage of the 1934 Indian Reorganization Act continued past practices by restricting membership, usually stipulating a one-quarter blood quantum requirement (52).

Results of these externally imposed policies have many repercussions today. By defining away millions of people of Native descent, they reduce the numbers of people entitled to share land, resources, and funds guaranteed by treaty and those eligible to participate in federal or tribal programs that serve Native reservations and communities. And by defining away millions of people of Native descent, they minimize the potential political strength as well as public awareness of the existence of Indians and Inuit that could be mobilized on behalf of legal, economic, and social issues of concern to Native people. Current rates of intermarriage in which an estimated two-third of people on tribal rolls marry nonmembers will mean a steady erosion of the Native population base given blood-quantum criteria. According to Churchill, "the segment of the federally recognized Native population evidencing less than one-quarter-degree blood quantum, presently about 4 percent, will have climbed to 59 percent or more by 2080" (56). In the face of this dilemma, some Indian tribes have abandoned restrictive requirements for membership in order to stave off their own "definitional and statistical extermination" (56) and have drawn up criteria more consistent with the realities of descent and cultural identification.

The government's practice of ignoring the complexity of mixed-racial and ethnic identification and instead categorizing many respondents with mixed

Indian ancestry as Whites, African Americans, or Hispanics contributes to the undercount of Native people. From a detailed analysis of racial and ancestral identification in the US census, Forbes estimates a probable Indian population of more than 15 million. As Forbes explains, a more accurate assessment of the number of people with Indian ancestry than that of the official count should include at least 7 or 8 million people with “Hispanic” identification as well as “from 30 percent to 70 percent of African-Americans who are reported to be part-Indian in various studies” (Forbes 1990: 8). Including such people would increase the number of Americans with Indian ancestry by another 7 million (18).

With some misgivings and with apologies, population and economic information and data provided in regional and tribal chapters as well as in the final chapter of this text are derived from official sources, including tribal offices, the US Bureau of the Census, the US Bureau of Indian Affairs, Canadian Statistics Canada, and the Canadian Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Finally, tribal names appearing in the book follow those currently in general use in Native American journals and publications.

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NATIVE NORTH AMERICA

A Short History

They made us many promises, more than I can remember, but they never kept but one. They promised to take our land and they took it.

Mahpiya Luta (Red Cloud), Lakota (1822–1909)

NATIVE PEOPLE OF NORTH AMERICA lived in societies that were continually changing from generation to generation. From their earliest origins, people adapted to the climates, ecology, and resources of their regions. As they migrated to new territories or the conditions around them changed, they adapted their economies and developed social, political, and religious practices that they felt best suited their ways of living. Some of the changes in their cultures were prompted by internal developments; others resulted from accommodations and borrowings from their neighbors or even from distant people they met as travelers and traders. Although Native societies were dynamic and continually incorporated new elements and modified their own practices as they lived in North America, the arrival of Europeans on the continent affected indigenous people in ways and to an extent unknown in previous centuries. External forces had an impact on all aspects of culture, altering economies, sociopolitical systems, and religious beliefs. Indeed, the very survival of Native nations was jeopardized as Europeans steadily took the land and either indirectly or directly exacted changes in Native ways of life. In addition, hundreds of thousands of Indians died from diseases of European origin as well as from military conflicts.

This chapter focuses on the transformations of Native societies beginning in the late fifteenth century as people responded to contact with Europeans and later with Americans and Canadians. These contacts sometimes offered opportunities that were welcomed, especially in terms of trade, but then later and more commonly led to individual and community disruption. In subsequent chapters aboriginal ways of life will be more extensively explored. This approach does not imply that Native societies were somehow static and unchanging prior to the fifteenth century. Indeed, we can learn much of earlier indigenous lifeways from archaeological studies that investigate the development of material culture to document technologies, settlements, and economies, and that suggest inferences about social and political systems. The interested reader is encouraged to consult the many sources available.

THE ARRIVAL OF EUROPEANS IN NORTH AMERICA

The first European to make an official landfall on the Northeastern coast of North America was John Cabot, who arrived in 1497 and promptly declared Newfoundland to be a possession of England. Within a few years, English, French, Portuguese, and Basque fishermen crossed the Atlantic Ocean from Europe to fish in the abundant waters off the coasts of Newfoundland, Labrador, and Nova Scotia. By 1550, approximately fifty fishing boats from each of the European countries (England, France, Portugal, Spain) were making annual visits to the Atlantic waters. By the end of the

sixteenth century, the numbers doubled and tripled (Sauer 1971: 240). European fishermen and sailors began trading knives, nails, scissors, and other manufactured products with coastal Algonkian peoples in exchange for food and furs. In some cases, Indians were hired by Europeans to work as fishermen. For example, in the 1530s, Jacques Cartier reported observing a group of Montagnais who were fishing for a French captain off the Labrador coast.

Although such contacts seemed profitable for all concerned, not every encounter between Indians and Europeans was friendly. In 1501, a Portuguese explorer named Gaspar Corte-Real initiated a practice that recurred with some frequency during the next two centuries when on his return to Portugal, Corte-Real's ship bore fifty-seven Native people who had been kidnapped by his sailors. European explorers and traders often took Indians to Europe as curiosities and/or to be trained as interpreters on subsequent voyages. Many never returned to their homeland due to their early deaths from European diseases. Other Indians travelled to Europe voluntarily in order to cement economic and political alliances and to learn something of the cultures of their foreign visitors.

Soon after contact between Indians and Europeans began, commercial relations in the Northeast expanded from intermittent activities to become the focus of European concern in North America. Trade between indigenous nations and French, British, and Dutch merchants turned to fur-bearing animals, especially beaver. By 1520, Algonkians along the Atlantic coast from Newfoundland to Maine were trading furs to European fishermen and explorers. And when Cartier ventured inland along the Gulf of St. Lawrence in 1534, he was offered furs by Algonkian and Iroquoian peoples. As the wearing of beaver felt hats and collars became fashionable in Europe, the desire for animal skins accelerated. For Native people, commerce with Europeans was an extension of aboriginal trading networks. They often admired and sought new products, realizing the technological advantage of metal tools and utensils because of their durability and appreciating the novelty of luxury items such as ornaments, dried foods, and fancy articles of clothing.

While the French, British, and Dutch were establishing trading networks with aboriginal nations in the Northeast, Spanish adventurers were plundering the Southeast and Southwest. Ponce de Leon made the first historically recorded European visit to the Southeast in 1513 when he landed along the southwest coast

of Florida, but he was given an unfriendly reception by members of the Calusa nation. Two decades later, Hernando de Soto led a force of more than 600 soldiers on an expedition inland from the western coast of Florida through the south to the Mississippi River to the Gulf of Mexico. During the four-year span of their invasion (1539–1543), Spanish soldiers looted stores of corn, enslaved men as guides and carriers of provisions, and raped the women. Thousands of people were murdered and their lands and resources ruined.

In the same year that de Soto began his march through the Southeast, another Spaniard, Marcos de Niza, made a brief excursion into New Mexico from Spanish bases in central Mexico. He was followed in 1540 by Francisco de Coronado, whose large expedition searched in vain for treasures of gold and silver. Failing that, they plundered Puebloan settlements in the Southwest.

The early history of North America reveals different motives stimulating European activity but their eventual impact followed similar patterns throughout the continent. Trade, conquest, and colonization spread everywhere, and within a few centuries all Native people were engulfed and their cultures forever transformed.

European assumptions about their right to claim the lands and resources of peoples in the Americas (and elsewhere) were based on what has come to be called the “Doctrine of Discovery.” This “Doctrine” originates in the papal bulls of the fifteenth century. For example, in 1455 Pope Nicholas V granted rights of conquest to the king of Portugal, including the rights to “invade, search out, capture, vanquish and subdue” all peoples who were not Christian and to take their possessions and “reduce their persons to perpetual slavery.” These and similar statements by subsequent popes set the stage for European colonization in North America and elsewhere. But this Doctrine was not restricted to that time period. Its underlying assumptions influenced the development of British, French, and later American and Canadian policies regarding their right to claim the lands and resources of indigenous peoples and their ability to ignore the rights and claims of the original inhabitants.

EXPANSION OF TRADE AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

Many Indians reacted positively, albeit with some distrust, to opportunities provided by foreign trade.

According to accounts given by nearly every European trader/explorer who wrote about the subject, Indians were eager to trade for tools and utensils made of iron, copper, and brass, including pots, kettles, knives, needles, and many other articles. Citing just one of many examples, Champlain described his meeting with Algonkians in Maine in 1604 that began with speeches of friendship, referring to the desire of the French to visit the country and trade with the inhabitants:

They signified their great satisfaction, saying that no greater good could come to them than to have our friendship ... and that we should dwell in their land, in order that they might in future more than ever before engage in hunting beavers, and give us a part of them in return for our providing them with things which they wanted. After he finished his discourse, I presented them with hatchets, caps, knives, and other little knickknacks. (Champlain 1907: 50)

Many people were indeed willing, even enthusiastic, to trade for European goods. Over the centuries, participation in the fur trade increased in volume and in importance in indigenous economies. The immediate consequence of trade was the addition of material and technological innovations but dependence on trade had negative effects not foreseen by most Indian participants. Since the market for beaver could not be controlled by Native trappers, they were vulnerable to changes in demand. When demand was high, men abandoned some aboriginal practices in order to keep pace. Instead of following traditional conservation principles, they over-trapped nearby territories so that they could obtain as many animals as possible. This led to the rapid depletion of beaver in some areas. As a result, men were forced to travel further from their communities to find the desired resource, often entering territories of other people who were similarly engaged in trapping and trading, resulting in conflict. When the demands of the fur market declined, people were left without the ability to procure the goods that they desired. In societies where traditional craft skills had been abandoned once people acquired manufactured tools and utensils, the loss of European goods was difficult to adjust to or even contemplate.

In some cases, the products received from European merchants had negative effects on indigenous communities, especially the commerce in guns and liquor. Although European governments were reluctant to sanction the distribution of guns to Indians,

British merchants began to exchange guns for animal skins in the early years of the seventeenth century. Liquor was also given, sometimes in great quantities, although that practice also violated official European policy. Both guns and liquor wrought havoc in indigenous societies, affecting individuals and communities alike. Acquisition of guns increased the potential for violence of intertribal conflicts and the resulting numbers of casualties. Consumption of liquor increased personal disorientation, with disruption of cooperative, stable community relations. Violence perpetrated by people, usually men, under the influence of alcohol, was most often directed either at members of their families and villages or at themselves.

In addition to the acquisition of a wide range of imported goods, transformations in aboriginal societies included shifts in economic activities, changes in gender roles, development of notions of private property in goods and especially in land, emergence of, or increases in, social differences based on wealth, and intensification of warfare caused by competition over access to resources and to trade routes. These transformations were manifested more intensely in some societies than in others, but they were prevalent throughout North America at different historical periods. They occurred earliest in regions of initial European entry and settlement, that is, along the eastern coasts and nearby inland territories; but they eventually spread to the interior of the continent, leaving no nation untouched.

As early as the seventeenth century in some eastern nations, trapping and trading became men's central economic activities. Among horticultural people where farming was the responsibility of women, food supplies were maintained, but among foragers who depended more heavily on meat, fish, and fowl brought in by hunters, aboriginal food resources were not exploited as fully as had been done prior to involvement in the fur trade. Many people then traded with Europeans for food but this led to increased dependence on traders. Women, too, were involved in the fur trade because their labor was needed to prepare the pelts for the market. Since they also had to perform subsistence and household tasks, demands on their labor increased as well. As shifts in economic roles of both men and women first included and then focused on the fur trade, people grew more dependent on the trade in order to supply their needs and wants. This reliance on trade tended to intensify and solidify the productive shifts that supported it.

In addition, since European traders dealt with Native trappers as individuals, a process began that eventually

resulted in a reorientation of ideology away from kin-based, community-based mutual reliance and support to one that stressed individuals rather than groups. Over the centuries, notions of personal private property developed that contrasted fundamentally with beliefs about communal ownership of resources. Although aboriginal societies had concepts of territorial rights, these rights were held by groups, not by individuals. Strangers in need were permitted to use local resources, at least temporarily, but notions of alienability of land and resources were foreign to Native cultures.

As people lost access to their own territory, competition grew for the lands and resources that remained, often leading to warfare. Wars in the Northeast and Southeast increased from the early seventeenth century until the late eighteenth. As trade and European settlement moved steadily westward in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Indians along the Mississippi River and its tributaries were affected. Wars of survival pitted Native groups against one another. By mid-nineteenth century, aboriginal inhabitants of the Plains also saw their territories crowded by both Euro-American settlers and other Indians fleeing west from the sprawling conflicts in their own homelands. Conflicts were often exacerbated by Europeans who forged commercial and military alliances with Indians in opposition to other European nations and their respective indigenous allies.

Unlike most aboriginal warfare, these wars were primarily generated by economic motives and/or by the need to defend one's own community from invaders. Thousands of people were killed, and thousands more were routed from their homes and forced to flee west for safety. Native warfare changed, not only in frequency and in motive, but also in tactics. Warriors began to destroy the homes and fields of their enemies, leaving survivors with no means to sustain themselves. Death from starvation and exposure to the elements often ensued. While it is true that many of the wars involved Native antagonists, they were often encouraged by European powers who succeeded in embroiling their allies in conflicts. For example, some of the American military campaigns in the Plains in the nineteenth century found their victims with the aid of Indian scouts from other nations.

EARLY EUROPEAN SETTLEMENTS

Competition over land and resources was further intensified by European settlement. The first foreign

settlement in North America was begun by the Spanish along the Atlantic coast near Cape Fear, North Carolina, in 1526, ending the following year, probably because of the antagonism of indigenous inhabitants who had heard of the Spaniards' practice of kidnapping Native people (Brasser 1978: 80). In 1585, about one hundred English would-be settlers founded a community on Roanoke Island, North Carolina. This colony, too, failed even though its leaders, Phillip Amadas and Arthur Barlowe, had first described the nearby people as "gentle, loving, and faithfull, void of all guile, and treason" (Quinn 1955, I: 108). The same description could not be applied to the English, who retaliated against an entire community because someone had stolen a silver cup. The English killed the village chief, destroyed the people's cornfields, and burned their homes before abandoning the colony. French immigrants attempted a number of settlements in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries along the northern coasts of Maine, Nova Scotia, and the Gulf of St. Lawrence at Tadoussac. None of these communities lasted for more than a few years despite the encouragement of the French government.

Then in 1607, the first successful colony in the Northeast, called Jamestown, was founded by English settlers on the shores of Chesapeake Bay in Virginia. It survived with the help of the nearby Powhatans, who came to regret their cooperation because the colonists, under John Smith, soon created dissension within the Native community and ultimately took much of their territory. The English colonists' occupation of Powhatan land might be seen as an unstated response to the question posed by Wahunsonacock, the Powhatan leader, "What do you expect to gain by destroying us who provide you with food?" (Thornton 1987: 60).

In the Southeast, Spanish and French colonists attempted to establish settlements in mid-sixteenth century but none were successful. Then, in 1565 the Spanish founded the town of St. Augustine and from there tried to exert control over territory extending from southern Florida north through Georgia into South Carolina. Their authority, at least nominally, remained intact until British settlements spread from Virginia into Georgia in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and wrested control from the Spaniards.

Spanish presence in the Southwest began in 1539 and increased in scope by late in the century. Expeditions were sent from Mexico to explore the region and exert control over its inhabitants, demanding provisions and labor from the Indians. Resistance

was answered with force. As recorded by a member of a Spanish expedition led by Antonio de Espejo into Puebloan territory in 1582:

the corners of the pueblo were taken by four men, and four others began to seize those natives who showed themselves. And as the pueblo was large and the majority had hidden themselves, we set fire to the big pueblo, where we thought some were burned to death because of the cries they uttered. We at once took out prisoners, two at a time, and lined them up, where they were shot many times until they were dead. Sixteen were executed, not counting those who burned to death. (Hammond and Rey 1966: 204)

Spanish colonial authority expanded in 1598 when Juan de Oñate led a group of settlers into New Mexico. They built houses near Puebloan villages and, with military force, demanded provisions from the indigenous population. Oñate's tactics set the tone for the Spanish conquest of the region that extended through the next two centuries. Spanish civilians, military personnel, and priests established farms, mines, and workshops made profitable by the forced labor of Indian men and women.

In Virginia, English settlers resorted to military raids to compel Powhatans and other Native groups to abandon aboriginal territory. In at least one instance, they gave poisoned drinks to Powhatan emissaries who came to negotiate peace between the two communities. As their own statements testify, "we hold nothing injuste, that may tend to their ruine ... with these neither fayre Warr nor good quarter is ever to be held" (Washburn 1959: 21–22).

Several European governments began policies aimed at obtaining Native territory by ostensibly legal means, that is, documented sales and land cession agreements. Dutch, French, and British representatives were authorized to contact leading members of Indian nations and conclude sales and treaties that transferred land to the European Crowns. Private citizens were likewise permitted to purchase land from indigenous inhabitants. However, the degree to which Indians understood the terms of these transactions is questionable. Aside from the important issue of differences in concepts of land ownership and use-rights to resources, it is often made clear in Native complaints that borders were poorly delineated and that settlers, taking advantage of the lack of clarity, encroached on territory that Indians believed they kept in their domain. For instance, at a

meeting in Albany, New York, in 1753, the Mohawk chief Hendrick presented New York's governor George Clinton with a list of colonists' illegal occupations of Mohawk lands that included:

We have a complaint against Arent Stevens. He bought a tract of land of us, and when the surveyor came to survey it, we showed him how far to go, and then Arent Stevens came and told him he had employed him and made him go a great deal further.

We have another complaint against Conrardt Gunterman. We gave him a tract of land out of charity but he takes in more which we have not given or sold him.

Johannes Lawyers Patent at Stonerabie to no further than the Creek. He has taken up six miles further than the Creek. (Nammack 1969: 37)

The passive acceptance of settlers' thefts of Native land reveals a consistent pattern implying collusion between government and citizen that continued from the colonial period through the nineteenth century.

MISSIONARIES AND THEIR PROGRAM OF CULTURAL CHANGE

Nearly as soon as Europeans made contact with Indians, missionaries found their way into Native communities. At first, they generally saw their role as compatible with their country's goals that included converting and civilizing pagan inhabitants of the continent while at the same time exploiting their resources. In later periods, though, missionaries sometimes came into conflict with civilian authorities, whose actions and policies toward Indians became increasingly brutal at a time when moral standards had begun to change.

Catholic priests were the earliest to establish missions in North America. In the Southwest, Spanish Franciscans dominated the field. Their actions were based on assumptions that indigenous people were sub-human and should be controlled by force if necessary. When priests entered the region in the mid- sixteenth century, they forced men to build churches, destroyed Native ceremonial kivas, and burned religious paraphernalia. They beat and tortured indigenous religious leaders into submission or at least into overt compliance. Spanish priests also compelled men and women

to work on plantations or “haciendas” that they created out of aboriginal territory, producing profits for their foreign owners. Missionaries’ actions sometimes came under criticism from Spanish secular authorities, although civilians’ own conduct was often equally corrupt. As Captain Nicolas de Aguilar noted in 1662: “the friars are not content with a few helpers. They want ... the Indians of the entire pueblo, for gathering piñon nuts, weaving, painting, and making stockings, and for other forms of service. And in all this they greatly abuse the Indians, men and women” (Simmons 1979: 183).

In the Northeast, French Jesuits applied gentler techniques. As men with formal education in philosophy and history, their approach was based on assumptions that Indians were capable of intelligent thought and reasoning (Vecsey 1997). Jesuits believed that the people’s religious and intellectual errors were because they were led astray by the devil or by indigenous charlatans. The missionaries saw their role as one of enlightening misguided but sincere people. In this quest, they attempted to learn Native languages so that they could better teach and reason with the people. Overt coercion was not one of their tactics, although bribery in the form of guns and favorable trading terms with merchants was often used as a means of gaining converts. In the words of a Jesuit priest among the Huron in 1643: “The use of arquebuses [guns], refused to the Infidels by Monsieur the Governor, and granted to the Christian Neophytes, is a powerful attraction to win them; it seems that our Lord intends to use this means in order to render Christianity acceptable in these regions” (*Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents, 1610–1791* 1896–1901, 25: 27; hereafter *JR*). In addition, reminders of the French state’s power and of the advantages of military alliance with France were frequently part of missionaries’ arguments.

The number of converts that Jesuits made was initially quite small, but their impact on Native culture and history was dramatic. Policies for transforming Native ideology, social ethics, and community life were first instituted by French Jesuits in the early seventeenth century, followed later by British and American missionaries as well.

The Jesuit plan advocated changes in Native settlement patterns and systems of leadership and social control. In social and personal relations, they aimed to alter attitudes toward sexuality, marriage, and family life (Bonvillain 1986; Vecsey 1997). The priests, along with the French government, wanted to induce nomadic or seminomadic people to settle permanently, preferably

near French ports and trading posts. If settled, Indians were more easily contacted for purposes of conversion as well as for deepening the state’s economic and political control. The directors of the Company of New France, the major trading company operating in the Northeast, “in order to induce the Savages to settle, have granted the same favor in their store to the sedentary Christians as to the French” (*JR* 16: 33).

Aboriginal patterns of social control were also criticized since they were deemed to allow too much personal freedom and independence. Native social control was based primarily on the strength of public opinion, supported by formal acknowledgement of wrongdoing and ritualized payment of tribute or presents to victims or their families. Writing in 1645 about the Huron, Gabriel Lalemant complained that “although this form of justice restrains all these peoples, and seems more effectually to repress disorders than the personal punishment of criminals does in France ... it leaves individuals in such a state of liberty that they never submit to any Laws and obey no other impulse than that of their own will” (*JR* 28: 49–51).

Along with condemnation of what they saw as lenient policies toward society’s wrongdoers, priests also decried lax reactions to children’s misbehavior. Instead of the patient correction and indulgence that were typical Native responses to a child’s errors, missionaries advocated corporal punishment as a means of controlling a child’s will.

Missionaries also condemned Native attitudes about sexuality that generally regarded premarital sexual relations as normal and natural. In most aboriginal societies, extramarital relations were tolerated, although not condoned, as long as they were not deemed excessive. For example, attitudes of the Montagnais of eastern Québec caused consternation to Jesuits who tried to alter Native behavior, as demonstrated by the following exchange between Paul LeJeune and an unnamed Montagnais man:

I told him [a Montagnais man] that it was not honorable for a woman to love any one else except her husband, and that this evil being among them, he himself was not sure that his son, who was there present, was his son. [The man responded]: Thou hast no sense. You French people love only your own children; but we all love all the children of our tribe. (LeJeune: *JR* 6: 255)

Native marriages were ideally assumed to create enduring bonds that joined a woman and man in an

economic and domestic unit. Husbands and wives were expected to cooperate with and show respect to one another. However, in practice, divorce was common, particularly in the early years of marriage. Unions became more stable after a number of children had been born to the couple. Describing the Huron, Lalemant noted that in marriage

the faith that they pledge each other is nothing more than a conditional promise to live together so long as each shall continue to render the services that they mutually expect from each other, and shall not in any way wound the affection that they owe each other. If this fail, divorce is considered reasonable on the part of the injured one. (*JR* 28: 51–53)

French missionaries attempted to transform the basically egalitarian gender relations that they observed in most Native societies into the European system of patriarchal dominance. Although priests sometimes misinterpreted and exaggerated the actual authority of Indian women, they nevertheless admonished men to control their wives. LeJeune's remark to a Montagnais man is representative: "I told him then that he was not the master, and that in France, women do not rule their husbands" (*JR* 5: 181).

British missionaries came to convert Indians to Protestant sects, first in eastern regions of North America, emphasizing the spiritual rewards of Christianity along with the advantages of protection bestowed upon converts by the British Crown. In fact, however, little aid was ever given to the converts, and such protection as they may initially have received proved to be temporary. Even the so-called Praying Towns established in the seventeenth century in Massachusetts at Natick, Stockbridge, and elsewhere were eventually overtaken by colonists with the tacit and sometimes overt approval of the British government despite the fact that the towns had been founded under the aegis of colonial land grants.

TREATIES AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF RESERVED LAND

The establishment of "reservations" ("reserves" in Canada) for Native people became a common technique for obtaining vast tracts of land and resettling Indians on only a portion of their former territory or removing them to new lands. Reservations consisted of land that was guaranteed by treaty for Native residence,

ownership, and control. Native leaders acceded to government demands that they cede much of their land and settle on reservations because they hoped that some measure of peace and security would result. But despite promises guaranteeing the perpetual right of Indians to reservation land, relocation often led to additional forced moves until people found themselves in territories far distant from their original homelands and often far distant from the reservations they initially accepted. In the nineteenth century, the American government quickened the pace of westward expansion, accompanied by treaty signings that transferred millions of acres of Native land to the United States and created hundreds of Indian reservations.

American officials tended to take one (or all) of several approaches when dealing with Native representatives in land-cession agreements or disputes. Intimidation and threats of military force were typical, especially when the people resisted abandoning their homelands. The words of General Edmund Gaines, speaking in 1831 to a delegation of Sauk leaders who balked at moving from their Illinois villages, are representative of this approach: "I came here neither to beg nor hire you to leave your village. My business is to remove you, peaceably if I can, but forcibly if I must. I will now give you two days to remove in, and if you do not cross the Mississippi within that time, I will adopt measures to force you away" (Jackson 1964: 111–112). And in 1851, Luke Lea, the federal Commissioner of Indian Affairs, told Santee delegates attending a treaty council that they should agree to treaty terms offered by the government to exchange valuable territory in Minnesota and South Dakota for annuities and a small reservation elsewhere because, "Suppose your Great Father wanted your lands and did not want a treaty for your good, he would come with 100,000 men and drive you off to the Rocky Mountains" (Meyer 1993: 78).

A less direct but equally effective strategy was employed in continual pressure exerted on Native nations to abandon land that had been illegally occupied by settlers in defiance of existing treaty agreements. The argument in these instances was that since the increasing numbers of settlers posed a danger to the Indians, Native people would be better off if they moved west away from the most recent American incursions.

Another strategy used from the early years of the nineteenth century until the end of the treaty period in the 1870s was collusion between government and traders to force Native representatives to sign land-cession

agreements in exchange for the forgiveness of debts incurred by members of their nations. Traders were encouraged to grant credit to Indian hunters and families that amounted to more than they could repay and then officials demanded land in exchange for the debts owed. Such a policy was explained by President Thomas Jefferson in 1803: “We shall push our trading houses, and be glad to see the good and influential individuals among them [the Indians] run in debt, because we observe that when these debts get beyond what the individual can pay, they become willing to lop them off by a cession of lands” (DeRosier 1975: 86). In some cases a sizable proportion of the monies that accompanied land-cession agreements was handed over to traders who insisted on full payment of debts. For example, at a treaty signing at Traverse des Sioux between the Santee Dakota and the United States in 1851, “each Indian, as he stepped away from the treaty table, was pulled to a barrel nearby and made to sign a document prepared by the traders. By its terms, the signatories acknowledged their debts to the traders and pledged themselves to pay those obligations” (Meyer 1993: 80). By this procedure, instituted because at that time Congress had outlawed direct payment of merchants’ debts, traders received \$210,000, a sum that constituted approximately one-sixth of the funds Congress had set aside for the Santees as annuities for fifty years. When the Santees signed another land cession treaty in 1858, “nearly all of the payment [of \$266,880] to the lower Sioux and a large part of that to the upper bands went to pay the ‘just debts’ of the traders” (105).

Another common tactic that government officials used in treaty negotiations was to bribe and intoxicate Indian delegates who sometimes returned to their villages still drunk. Black Hawk, a Sauk war chief of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, described events surrounding a peace council held in 1804 between the Sauk and Governor Henry Harrison of Missouri Territory to discuss the release of a Sauk prisoner who had participated in a skirmish with American settlers. Harrison demanded land as retribution while the Sauk delegates tried to obtain the freedom of their compatriot.

Quash-quame [leader of the delegates] and party remained a long time absent. They at length returned, and encamped a short distance below the village—but did not come up that day—nor did any person approach their camp. They appeared

to be dressed in fine coats, and had medals. From these circumstances, we were in hopes that they had brought good news. Early the next morning, they came up, and gave us the following account of their mission:

On their arrival at St. Louis, they met Governor Harrison and explained to him their business, and urged the release of their friend. The American chief told them he wanted land—and they had agreed to give him some on the west side of the Mississippi, and some on the Illinois side. When the business was all arranged, they expected to have their friend released to come home with them. But about the time they were ready to start, their friend was let out of prison, who ran a short distance, and was shot dead. This is all they could recollect of what was said and done. They had been drunk the greater part of the time they were in St. Louis. (Jackson 1964: 53–54)

Treaty negotiations typically produced agreements that became legal documents compelling Indians to abandon most, if not all, of their aboriginal territory and relocate elsewhere. The negotiating process and its results had damaging effects on community stability in several ways. Of most immediate concern, people were forced away from lands to which their economies had been adapted. Their subsistence success relied on intimate knowledge of the topography, climate, and resources of their accustomed territory. Their annual cycle of productive activities was attuned to the rhythms of the natural world around them. When their aboriginal lands were taken, they had to adjust to new sets of circumstances, often many hundreds of miles from their homelands. It took many years, generations in fact, to acquire the knowledge needed to reestablish viable economies. Their task was made more difficult because the lands they were forced to accept in exchange for their own were usually less fertile and productive than the ones they lost.

In addition to economic difficulties faced by dispossessed people was the spiritual cost they bore. Traditional religious beliefs profoundly interconnected the spirit world with the natural world in which they lived. Their land was the land of spirits upon whom they depended for support and guidance. Stories of creation and transformation often told of specific locales where spirits resided or where significant primordial events had taken place. And their aboriginal territory was the resting place of ancestors whose eternal spirit essences were disturbed by Anglo settlers entering the region.

When people abandoned these lands, they lost their spiritual as well as geographical bearings.

Population shifts resulting from relocations also increased the likelihood of intertribal conflicts since displaced nations unavoidably intruded on land that was already the home or hunting territory of another group, causing competition over resources. Each incoming group of settlers caused indigenous inhabitants to either relocate or resist, both alternatives resulting in internal and intertribal turmoil.

Once Indians were settled on reservations and reserves, the federal governments began to implement policies aimed at “civilizing” Native people by transforming them into sedentary farmers who lived in nuclear-family households, wore Anglo clothing, spoke English, and attended church. Ministers, priests, and lay workers were assigned by mission organizations, with approval of the federal government, to enter Indian reservations to convert residents to a variety of Christian denominations. In many cases, they took control of local education and merged religious and secular training in farming, manual skills, and domestic duties.

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the assault on Native culture in the United States and Canada centered on constructing a system of education through which children would be taught to accept Anglo values and beliefs while simultaneously shunning traditional practices. Boarding schools were preferred because they physically separated children from the influences of parents and communities. Use of Native languages was forbidden in schools. For example, an order issued in 1887 by the US Bureau of Indian Affairs Commissioner John Atkins stated: “The instruction of the Indians in the vernacular is not only of no use to them, but is detrimental to the cause of their education and civilization, and no school will be permitted on the reservation in which the English language is not exclusively taught” (Commissioner of Indian Affairs 1887: xxii). Restrictions against use of Native languages continued well into the twentieth century at schools run by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA).

Participation in traditional religious ceremonies was forbidden by official policies in the United States and Canada. A federal supervisor at the Santee Reservation in Nebraska warned teachers that “No school children should be permitted to be spectators at [traditional ceremonial] dances as the Office thinks it would be better to keep their ideas away from these old-time customs” (Meyer 1993: 303). Important religious

ceremonies were outlawed by federal statutes in the United States and Canada, including the Sun Dance, Ghost Dance, and socioreligious feasts called “potlaches” conducted by people of the north Pacific coast.

Many people resisted the pressure to abandon traditional practices and beliefs. The words of Big Eagle, a Mdewakantan Santee chief, are representative: “The whites are always trying to make the Indians give up their life and live like white men, and the Indians do not want to. If the Indians tried to make the whites live like them, the whites would resist, and it is the same way with many Indians” (Holcombe 1894: 384). Others literally stood in the way of federal agents and police sent to round up children and remove them from their communities to attend boarding schools. Nevertheless, despite objections and resistance, a total of 21,568 children nationwide were in boarding schools in 1900, accounting for about one-third of their age group (Churchill 1999: 51).

From the very beginning of European contact and throughout the periods of later American and Canadian administrations, communities were divided in their attitudes toward the proper course of action when dealing with the foreigners. Although the historical record indicates little if any objection to trade, there certainly was controversy concerning the wisdom of forming military alliances with European nations and becoming embroiled in their conflicts. The reasons underlying various positions were complex. Some people recognized the danger posed to aboriginal ways of life and to their very survival by extensive involvement with Europeans. Others saw short-term benefits of trade and opportunities of political or military ascendancy over neighbors. And some indigenous leaders favored alliances with Europeans as a means of enhancing their own prestige within their communities. The wealth offered by Euro-American officials in the form of gifts and bribery was no doubt an inducement as well. Finally, in the middle and late nineteenth century, when the Anglo population had grown as the indigenous population had declined precipitously, many leaders acceded to demands for aboriginal land because they believed they had no alternative. Recognizing the enormous military power of the government, they hoped that concessions would at least allow their people to survive.

Whatever the motives and means of individual decisions, debates and controversies that were stirred by the new conditions in which Native nations found themselves had serious repercussions for community stability

and survival. Using the tried and true techniques of “divide and conquer,” Europeans were able, sometimes with Native collusion, to turn Indians against one another, causing conflicts not only between nations but within them as well. Without a united voice, internal politics became contentious and bitter. And factions in Native communities sometimes became surrogates for Euro-American authorities. Among the stark examples of this process was the assassination of the Lakota chief and religious leader Sitting Bull in 1890, arrested and killed by Lakota members of a local police force operating on Lakota reservations at that time.

Although internal disagreements and conflicts no doubt existed before the arrival of Europeans, the new tensions resulted from both more serious cause and more serious effect. The loss of independence and autonomy experienced by Native nations, the startling decline in populations, and the rapid cultural changes taking place led to confusion as people were forced to endure conditions created by forces previously unknown to them. Given the many threats to survival that Indians faced (i.e., loss of land and continual invasions by settlers, economic insecurity, military assaults, and disease), the internal antagonisms and struggles for power that arose as the people’s problems intensified often became the proverbial last straw that helped destroy a nation’s ability to defend itself against external forces.

US GOVERNMENT LEGISLATION

Although the bullet and the treaty had proven effective weapons in the campaign to wrest control of Indians’ land, by the late nineteenth century considerable expanses of territory, particularly in the west, still remained in the Native domain. Therefore, a novel combination of forces coalesced in support of US federal legislation that led to the loss of tens of millions of acres of land protected by treaty. Land-hungry western settlers and ranchers pressured their congressional representatives to act so that they could gain title to valuable grazing land and farmland. The legislation that resulted was also supported by missionaries, educators, and others who believed that Indians’ best interests were served by leading them to “civilization” embodied in agrarian labor, nuclear-family domestic organization, and the love of private property. In 1887, Congress passed the General Allotment Act (also known as the Dawes Act) that mandated the division of reservation land into parcels of 160

acres for families and 80 acres for individuals. After all eligible people had been assigned their allotments, land remaining from the original reservation base was declared “surplus,” and available for “homesteading” and sale to westerners. Thus by a mandated process, more than 60 million acres were lost (Gibson 1988: 227). Allotted land was eventually available for sale to outsiders after a protected period of 25 years had elapsed. By 1934, two-third of all allotted acreage, amounting to some 27 million acres, had been lost (227). Currently about 43 million acres of land remain in tribal trust status, and about 10 million acres are allotted to individual Indians (*American Indian Report* 1999b: 8). The Dawes Act also stipulated that Indians who accepted allotments or who had voluntarily left their reservations and “adopted the habits of civilized life” were to be granted US citizenship. It was not until 1924, however, that Congress passed the Indian Citizenship Act, bestowing citizenship on all Indians.

Federal policy toward American Indians began to change in the 1930s in the context of the New Deal promoted by President Franklin Roosevelt. At that time, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, John Collier, developed a program aimed at changing the relations between Native people and the federal government. Collier’s policies were, in part, a response to a national report issued in 1928 concerning living conditions on reservations throughout the United States. The report, called the “Meriam Report,” after Lewis Meriam, director of staff, reviewed housing, health status, educational programs and achievements, and reservation governing structures. The report condemned the General Allotment Act of 1887 and the ensuing policies of the federal government. It criticized the breakup of Native territory and shrinkage of their land base. It noted the deplorable living conditions and health status that Indians endured. And it criticized the federal educational system that forced children to leave their families to be schooled in boarding schools. The Meriam Report made recommendations to significantly reorient federal policy. It urged ending the boarding school system, to be replaced with an extensive network of day schools on reservations. It also urged that tribal groups have more power to make decisions concerning programs and policies affecting their communities. Further, the Meriam Report stressed the right of Indians to maintain their language and cultural traditions if they chose to do so. However, the report also supported long-range goals of “expedit[ing] the transition and hasten[ing] the day when there will no longer be

a distinctive Indian problem” because most Indians will have voluntarily chosen to leave the reservations and merge with the general population. The Meriam Report therefore can be seen as laying the foundation of both the reformist programs of John Collier and the “termination” policies of the 1950s and 1960s.

Collier’s efforts to revamp government policy culminated in passage by Congress of the 1934 Indian Reorganization Act (IRA; also known as the Wheeler-Howard Act). The IRA, however, did not institute all of Collier’s proposals but rather was a diluted bill that acknowledged the need for change while maintaining federal control over reservation politics. Although the Act provided for self-government on reservations, actual tribal authority was limited. Each reservation was encouraged to adopt a constitution and set up a tribal council whose members were elected by reservation constituents. The councils were given responsibilities to manage federal and local programs and to develop economic resources as tribal enterprises. They also had the task of managing efforts at improving the living standards, health, and education of their people. However, their decisions were (and in most cases still are) subject to approval by the BIA and ultimately by the Secretary of the Interior, in whose department the BIA is housed. But the IRA did move to protect Indian lands by forbidding any future allotments to individuals on reservations and outlawing the sale of already allotted land. It returned to reservations any surplus land that had not already been sold. And the Act sought to consolidate Indian landholdings through exchanges with public or private land adjacent to reservations. With Collier’s urging, Congress appropriated funds for the purchase of land that had been lost through treaty violations and sales and for programs of economic development and educational improvement.

In recognition of the millions of acres lost through illegal government and private actions and in order to settle claims and clear title to claimed land, in 1946 Congress established the Indian Claims

Commission. Tribes were empowered to file suit with the Commission for compensation for land that had been taken without treaty or had been lost from treaty-guaranteed territory. The Commission issued their final judgments in 1979. Under the act establishing the Commission, however, a number of crucial restrictions were mandated. First, tribes could only receive monetary awards for lost land; they could not regain their territory. Second, the amount of awards was based on the market value of the land at the time it was taken. And third, certain federal funds expended on reservations that had not been promised in treaties were deducted from the awards. In all, therefore, approximately \$800 million was granted to tribes whose claims were approved (Bacheller 1997: 22).

Despite important administrative and policy changes in the 1930s and 1940s, widespread poverty continued to plague most reservations, prompting the BIA to institute a new policy aimed at encouraging Indians to leave their reservations and move to cities where jobs were supposedly available. The policy was also aimed at alleviating pressure on resources resulting from a rapidly growing Indian population with little or no financial or legal means of obtaining additional territory. Through the “Job Relocation Program,” the government paid for transportation to a city and in some cases paid the fees for job-training instruction. Thousands of people, principally from



A group of Chiricahua Apaches on their first day at Carlisle Indian School.

reservations in the Plains, Southwest, and California, participated in the program and relocated to such cities as Rapid City (South Dakota), Minneapolis, Green Bay (Wisconsin), Chicago, Denver, Seattle, Portland (Oregon), San Francisco, and Los Angeles. Their efforts to improve their economic condition, however, most typically met with failure. Job-training programs either did not materialize or were inadequate. And few jobs at good wages were available in the cities to which the people relocated, resulting in their concentration in poor urban ghettos. As a consequence, most participants returned to their home communities, where they at least had the cultural and social support of their families and friends.

Federal policy shifted again in the 1950s with plans to terminate the trust status of Indian reservations and the services and funds provided by the government in fulfillment of treaty obligations. This policy, commonly referred to as “termination,” was put forward in 1953 in House Concurrent Resolution 108. In the guise of “entitling [Indians] to the same privileges and responsibilities as are applicable to other citizens of the United States ... and to grant them all of the rights and prerogatives pertaining to American citizenship,” the Resolution effectively ended the protected trust status of

Indian land and aimed to withdraw federal support of educational, health, and social programs that had been guaranteed by treaties signed by representatives of the federal government and Indian nations in prior centuries. Although federal planners intended that eventually all reservations no longer have trust status, the Resolution stipulated the immediate termination specifically of tribes living in the states of California, Florida, New York, and Texas. It also “free[d]” from “federal supervision and control and from all disabilities and limitations especially applicable to Indians,” the Flatheads of Montana, Klamaths of Oregon, Menominees of Wisconsin, Potawatamies of Kansas and Nebraska, and Chippewas of the Turtle Mountain Reservation of North Dakota. The “disabilities and limitations” referred to in the Resolution essentially meant the tax-immune status of Indian land and the monetary support for education and other services provided pursuant to obligations undertaken by the federal government in treaties. One year after the House Resolution, Congress passed the “Menominee Termination Act” (1954) mandating per capita distribution of Menominee tribal funds and ending trust status from the Menominee Reservation. The law did not go into effect until 1961 and thereafter quickly plunged Menominees into poverty as a result of

the forced sale of tribal assets to cover newly imposed taxes and the withdrawal of federal support for social programs (Shames 1972). The effects of termination led Menominees and their supporters to appeal to Congress for restoration of their reservation. Finally, in 1973 Congress passed the “Menominee Restoration Act,” which returned the Menominees to their previous legal status. And in 1999, the government awarded the Menominees a sum of \$32 million for “damages suffered by the tribe as a result of its termination and the mismanagement of tribal property by the BIA prior to termination” (*American Indian Report* 2000a: 18). Still, some 103 reservations were eventually and permanently terminated.



A group of Chiricahua Apaches four months after arriving at Carlisle Indian School.

In the late 1960s and 1970s, Congress passed several important pieces of legislation that affected Indian tribes and marked another shift in federal policies. The Civil Rights Act of 1968, among other provisions, stipulated that in order for states to extend jurisdiction over reservations within their boundaries, the formal approval of a majority of the affected residents was necessary. In 1975, the “Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act” established principles of self-government that have been used to advance Native claims of sovereignty. The legislation was based on Congressional recognition that serious problems on reservations were caused by, among other things, a lack of local control and involvement in administering programs affecting reservation communities and on findings that

prolonged federal domination of Indian service programs served to retard rather than enhance the progress of Indian people and their communities by depriving Indians of the full opportunity to develop leadership skills crucial to the realization of self-government and has denied to the Indian people an effective voice in the planning and implementation of programs for the benefit of Indians which are responsive to the true needs of Indian communities.

Congressional findings also acknowledged that “Indian people will never surrender their desire to control their relationships, both among themselves and with non-Indian governments, organizations, and persons.” The Act empowered tribes to contract directly for the administration of educational, health service, and welfare programs. Significantly, it stated that “nothing in this Act shall be construed as authorizing or requiring the termination of any existing trust responsibility of the United States with respect to the Indian people,” putting an end to fears of a return to policies of the 1950s and 1960s.

Indian nations have used the statement of findings as well as provisions of the Self-Determination Act in order to broaden their claims of sovereignty and to extend tribal jurisdiction not only regarding educational, medical, and social services but also regarding claims to control of territory, tax immunity, and economic development. Tribes have also taken advantage of a provision in the Act permitting the acquisition of additional land that could then be protected by federal trust status. Some tribes have implemented this provision in order to acquire and extend jurisdiction over land not adjacent to their reservations. Although this

practice is not without controversy, it has been applied to benefit tribal economic development.

Tribal governments throughout the United States are increasingly taking control of local education, incorporating a curriculum that includes tribal history, culture, and language. They are also administering healthcare delivery systems by running clinics and hospitals as well as outreach programs for the prevention and treatment of physical and psychological ailments that particularly affect their community. Tribal agencies have taken charge of constructing and maintaining infrastructure for the delivery of water and energy. And many reservations have established tribal courts based on both traditional and contemporary forms of conflict resolution and adjudication. They are initiating programs for economic development involving local and national businesses. And, finally, tribal governments can now negotiate and conclude leases for their lands without needing to get prior approval from the Secretary of the Interior, although the Secretary does still need to approve the kind of leasing regulation policies that tribes draw up. Furthermore, this new policy does not extend to leases for oil and gas exploration and extraction. Therefore, even though tribal governments have gained greater powers for self-determination, they lack total sovereign authority.

In 1978, the BIA established procedures for federal recognition of Indian groups who were not at that time recognized as legal tribal entities. BIA guidelines set forth seven criteria that groups petitioning for “acknowledgement as an Indian tribe” had to fulfill:

1. evidence that group has been “identified as Indian on a substantially continuous basis”; Claims of identification may be substantiated by relationships with federal authorities, state or local governments, churches or schools based on Indian identity. Other possible supporting evidence might include reports by anthropologists or historians or citations in newspapers and books. Finally, relationships based on Indian identity with recognized tribes or national Indian organizations might also support a claim for acknowledgment.
2. evidence that a “substantial portion of the group” lives in a specific area distinct from other populations;
3. evidence that the group has exerted “tribal political influence over its members throughout history until the present”;

4. document describing the group's present governing system;
5. list of known current members and any other former lists;
6. group is "composed principally" of people not belonging to any other tribe;
7. group was not terminated by Congress.

Subsequent to the formulation of the BIA requirements, small Native groups, especially in the Northeast, Southeast, and western states, have sought federal recognition. Although many have been successful, most petitioners have failed to satisfy the BIA's standards of evidence that some critics assert are overly dependent on formal, written sources and ignore personal life histories and oral traditions. In addition, the wording of the necessary criteria is often vague and open to interpretation. The phrases "substantial continuous basis" of identification, "substantial portion of the group," and "composed principally" could be read differently by different evaluators.

Also in 1978, Congress passed the American Indian Religious Freedom Act amid awareness that Indians were often denied "access to sacred sites required in their religion ... and at times prohibited in the use and possession of sacred objects necessary to the exercise of religious rites and ceremonies." The Act provided for protection for Indians in their "inherent right of freedom to believe, express and exercise [their] traditional religion, including but not limited to access to sites, use and possession of sacred objects, and the freedom to worship through ceremonials and traditional rites." However, ambiguities in the law continued to make it difficult for some Indians to practice their religions, especially regarding access to peyote, eagle feathers, and some sacred sites. Congress therefore strengthened protection in 1993 by passing the Native American Religious Freedom Restoration Act. The Act was prompted by a Supreme Court decision in 1990 (*Employment Division, Dept. of Human Resources v. Smith*) involving an appeal by two Indians who had been denied state unemployment benefits after they had been fired from their jobs as drug counselors by a private drug rehabilitation service on the grounds that they had used peyote in a ritual of the Native American Church. Their application for unemployment compensation had been turned down on the grounds that they had been discharged from their jobs for "work-related misconduct." Ruling on their appeal, the Supreme Court upheld the state law restricting benefits and upheld the judgment

that the denial was appropriate in the case under consideration. The Supreme Court further ruled that the government need not employ a "compelling interest test" in denying free expression of religious practice. According to the Court, it was possible but not constitutionally necessary to exempt peyote use from the application of federal and state drug laws. The Native American Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993 attempted to intervene in the judicial debate by "restoring the compelling interest test" to cases "where free exercise of religion is substantially burdened and to provide a claim or defense to persons whose religious exercise is substantially burdened by government." Additional amendments were passed in 1994 to the American Indian Religious Freedom Act to specifically protect the "use, possession, or transportation of peyote by an Indian for bona fide traditional ceremonial purposes" and exempted such practices from prohibition by the United States or any state government. However, a Supreme Court decision in 1997 declared the 1993 Native American Religious Freedom Restoration Act as unconstitutional. The Court has not yet ruled on the amendments passed in 1994. In 1999, settlement was reached in a class-action suit that now permits Native American prison inmates to possess and employ certain Native religious objects including an unsealed medicine bag, sacred herbs (sweet grass, sage, cedar, sacred tobacco, and calamus root), beaded pendant, smoking pipe, and clan or nature symbols ("Native American Inmates Allowed Religious Items" 1999).

Protection of religious and cultural artifacts was enacted in 1990 in the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) that empowered Indians to reclaim the burial remains of their ancestors and objects found in grave sites. In addition to human remains, "cultural items" are also to be returned upon application by a Native group who can demonstrate ownership. Such cultural items include sacred objects as well as objects having "ongoing historical, traditional, or cultural importance central to the Native American group." Items presently in museums, galleries, and other institutions must be returned to Native American groups upon application and demonstration of "rights of possession." Organizers of future excavations must notify Indian groups of their plans and inventory in order to allow them to apply for repatriation of human remains and cultural objects found at the site. In 2010, the Department of the Interior added new provisions to NAGPRA that allow tribes to claim remains and artifacts found in or near their aboriginal territories even if a definite affiliation with that group cannot be scientifically established.

While most federal legislation pertaining to Native Americans deals with legal and social issues, Congress has also passed laws that establish policies regarding economic development. In 1988, legislation was enacted in response to the growing gaming industry that blossomed in the early- and mid-1980s. That growth was initiated by Seminoles in Florida who opened a high-stakes bingo hall and then successfully fought state attempts to restrict their activities. In landmark rulings in 1981 and 1983 (*Seminole Tribe of Florida v. Butterworth*), the US Supreme Court decided that Indian tribes could operate gaming establishments without state regulation provided that similar gaming was not prohibited “as a matter of public policy” in the state (Wilmer 1997: 90). The Court also ruled that states could not unilaterally extend jurisdiction over gaming on reservations. Finally, by the principle of “reserved rights,” tribes retained “all powers to regulate activities within their boundaries unless expressly forbidden to do so by Congress” (91). Congress then passed the “Indian Gaming Regulatory Act” in 1988 that distinguished among three types of gaming: Class I (social games for minimal monetary value and traditional forms of gaming associated with ceremonies or celebrations); Class II (bingo, lotto, and similar games); Class III (gaming not included in Class I or II). Class I gaming falls under the exclusive jurisdiction of tribes while Class II gaming is subject to protections and regulations of a newly created National Indian Gaming Commission, which sets standards for gaming on reservations. Finally, the act stipulated that Indian tribes negotiate with the relevant state government for a “compact” to govern Class III gaming on reservations. Regulations of the National Indian Gaming Commission allow for non-Indian participation in funding and operating casinos on reservations but limit the profits of non-Indians to 30 percent. This ensures that proceeds from gaming will primarily benefit Native communities.

Some thirty years after the first tribal bingo hall was opened by Florida Seminoles, there are currently 422 casinos operated by 237 tribal governments in 28 states (some governments operate more than one casino). Native people in Canada operate additional casinos. In 2010, the total US tribal government gross revenue from gaming amounted to \$26.5 billion (National Indian Gaming Association 2011). Although casinos run by Native Americans account for a mere 5 percent of gaming revenue in the United States, one of the most lucrative is Foxwoods, owned by the Pequots in

eastern Connecticut. With more than 11,000 employees, they are one of the ten largest employers in the state. Their profits, amounting to about \$1 billion a year, have been invested in reinvigorating their community and the surrounding area. They have built new housing and roads and provide job training, scholarships, and health services to tribal members. The casino and its accompanying resort generate additional income for nearby hotels, restaurants, and stores. This pattern holds true for casinos throughout the country. In the rest of the United States, approximately 682,000 jobs have been created through Indian gaming both in the casinos and in support services and businesses that provide goods, meals, and other amenities to casino workers and patrons. Nationwide, Native Americans held 25 percent of these jobs whereas people of other races and ethnicities held 75 percent (National Indian Gaming Association 2011). Therefore, non-Native people, both as workers and as owners of businesses catering to casino customers, profit as much or more from Indian gaming as do Native Americans.

In addition, Native American casinos generate \$9.4 billion in federal taxes and government revenue savings as well as \$2.4 billion in state taxes and revenue sharing profits agreed upon by compacts between tribes and the states in which they are located.

Most of the net profits realized by casino gambling is spent on projects and services in Native communities and also in nearby locations. According to the National Indian Gaming Association report in 2011, revenues were expended in the following categories: 20 percent for education, child care, elder care, cultural endeavors, and charity gifts; 19 percent for economic developments; 17 percent for healthcare; 17 percent for police and fire protection; 16 percent for infrastructure improvements; and 11 percent for housing.

The presence of a casino can boost income for residents of an area, but it can also bring changes to the community that all residents do not desire. The work that casinos create tends to be low-wage jobs with little future. Some people do not approve of gambling on moral grounds or because of its historical connection with organized crime.

And while the public media often focus on casino revenues, in fact, only a small percentage of Indian-run casinos make large profits. For example, in 2010, the majority (55%) of these establishments took in less than \$25 million and 62 percent of these earned less than \$10 million. Only 21 of the total 422 casinos earn more than \$250 million.

Opposition to Indian-run casinos surfaces from time to time in state legislatures and in Congress. Some legislators have proposed that only tribes who had federal recognition in 1988 when the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act was passed should be permitted to operate casinos. Others advocate restrictions on the ability of tribal governments to extend trust status to newly acquired lands and to promote gaming in these areas.

While there is controversy among Indians regarding gaming, arguments in support generally stress the economic benefits, the need to generate money for infrastructural improvements and social programs, especially in a climate of reduced federal funding, and the need to provide jobs for reservation residents. Arguments opposed to gaming emphasize the potential for social problems related to excessive gambling and fears of attracting undesirable individuals or groups to their communities.

CANADIAN GOVERNMENT LEGISLATION

As in the United States, Canadian Indian policy has gone through numerous shifts, reacting to general attitudes in the country as well as to the circumstances, needs, and strength of political activism on the part of members of the First Nations, as Native people of Canada are now called. From the beginning of colonization, French and British explorers proclaimed land that they first encountered to be the property of their respective Crowns. As French settlement in eastern Canada expanded in the seventeenth and first half of the eighteenth centuries, lands were periodically set aside as reserves for Indians. Formal treaties were not signed, but rather lands were conveyed to Indians for their use from a variety of sources such as government grants or donations of private French citizens and church missions. Ironically, the donated land had originally been occupied by a Native nation dispossessed by the Europeans' self-proclaimed "right of discovery."

In 1763, shortly after the "French and Indian War" ended with a British victory and the ouster of the French from eastern North America, King George III issued a Royal Proclamation that significantly affected Native rights at the time. The Proclamation established a boundary separating colonies east of the crest of the Appalachian mountains and Indian territory west of that boundary. In addition, land in the east already

granted to Indians under the French system was given official British protection. The Proclamation recognized that some eastern land was still occupied by "several nations or tribes of Indians with whom we are connected, and who live under our protection." These nations "should not be molested or disturbed in the possession of such parts of our dominions and territories as, not having been ceded to or purchased by us." Land lying west of the stated boundary was recognized as the exclusive possession of Native inhabitants except for some territory granted to the Hudson's Bay Company, the principal British traders in Canada. Colonists were forbidden from entering Indian territory except for purposes of trade. Strict regulations were proposed to control and license traders. Individuals were barred from surveying, issuing deeds for, or purchasing land from Indians. Land could only be purchased by the British Crown from Indian governments or recognized leaders "at some public meeting or assembly of the said Indians."

However, as British settlement in Canada expanded in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Native rights to territory were jeopardized. In addition to territorial losses, Indians living in central and western Canada who followed a nomadic lifestyle that was considered "uncivilized" by Canadian authorities and missionaries found themselves confronted by policies aimed at encouraging or forcing them to settle on reserved lands and to alter traditional practices. In 1857, an "Act to Encourage the Gradual Civilization of the Indian Tribes" was passed with the goal of leading Indians to eventual assimilation into Canadian society through a process of "enfranchisement." According to the law, an Indian man who was at least twenty-one years old, literate, of good moral character, and free from debt could be declared "enfranchised" on the recommendation of the local superintendent, the local missionary, and a third person appointed by the governor of Canada. Once enfranchised, the person "so declared ... shall no longer be deemed an Indian in the meaning thereof." Men who fulfilled all of the necessary requirements except literacy, but who were able to speak English or French and who were deemed "sufficiently intelligent to be capable of managing [their] own affairs," could also apply for enfranchisement. Canadian officials were far more optimistic about the benefits of enfranchisement than were Native people since by 1869 only one man had applied for the privilege. An "Enfranchisement Act" passed in 1869 gave

enfranchised men the right to vote and confirmed previous policies regarding the process, but Indians continued to ignore the opportunity offered them. The government then began to more directly interfere in Native communities by imposing a system of elected band councils as the primary governing bodies on reserves. The policy was aimed at accomplishing two goals, that is, accustoming Indians to participate in Canadian-style systems of governance and undermining traditional or hereditary leadership. Superintendents were permitted to impose councils if band members refused to participate. Furthermore, if band members attempted to sidestep the new system by electing traditional or hereditary chiefs, superintendents were given the power to depose councilors who they thought were “incompetent” (i.e., unacceptable).

In 1876, the Canadian parliament passed the first of a series of “Indian Acts” (the last revision was enacted in 1951). The Act defined “Indian” as a legal status, entitling people to be registered as Indians and enabling them to be members of bands and live on reserves. According to Canadian law, “status Indians” were people who were registered on official lists drawn up in 1874, their descendants in the male line, and the wives and children of such persons. Indian women who married non-Indians and the descendants of female Indians but whose fathers were not Indian were not considered “Indian” by legal definition. Such individuals were referred to as “non-status Indians.” They and their descendants lost membership in bands and lost the right to live on reserves. It was not until a Canadian Supreme Court ruling in 1985 that Indian women married to non-Indians and the descendants of Indian women were given the power to apply for reinstatement as “status Indians.” Indian women who marry non-Indians no longer lose their status and rights.

The Indian Act of 1876 also inaugurated a system of private ownership of property on reserves. Under its provisions, reserves were to be divided and allotted to band members who were deemed capable of management. Such individuals were given a “location ticket” that served as a temporary deed to the allotment. The deed became permanent after a period of three years if the owner had demonstrated his ability to farm and/or raise livestock (note that the masculine pronoun is appropriate here since only men could own land). If band councils resisted the allotment of their reserves by refusing to validate location tickets, superintendents were permitted to approve the tickets and transfer of land. They were also given the

power to approve leases and sales without council compliance.

In territory west of Lake Superior, most Indians continued to engage in a nomadic foraging economy and knew little of the English language or of the Christian faith. Therefore, policies of enfranchisement and land allotment that affected Indians in the east were not applied to them because they were deemed not yet fit to assume the responsibilities of civilized life. Instead, between 1871 and 1877 the federal government negotiated seven land cession treaties with nations occupying territory between Lake Superior and the Rocky Mountains. Indians living west of the Rockies did not sign treaties with the federal or provincial governments, but by the late nineteenth century most were living on land reserved for them by agreement or consensus. In an effort to “civilize” western Indians, the Canadian government outlawed some Native ceremonial practices that they considered pagan or dangerous, including the Sun Dance of the Plains and public ceremonial feasts called “potlatches,” common in Pacific coast nations.

To further the process of assimilation, the government established boarding schools in the west where boys were taught farming and mechanical skills while girls were taught domestic work. In most of the schools, children lived a highly regimented life and were not permitted to speak their Native languages or follow traditional religious practices. Much recent testimony has been brought forward to document the physical and sexual abuse children often had to endure (see [Chapter 3](#)).

Despite the government’s stated goals of equality, the majority of Canada’s first peoples continued to live in poverty. Their housing and living conditions were much below the standards of Canadian society, and their educational opportunities and health status lagged far behind those of other Canadians, as documented in a report issued in 1967 called “The Survey of the Contemporary Indians of Canada.” However, the report’s many recommendations to improve living conditions, educational and employment opportunities, and political rights of Native people were ignored by the government. Instead, in 1969 it issued a document called “Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy” that proposed to repeal the various Indian Acts, transfer most responsibility for Indian affairs from the federal to provincial governments, and end the “legislative and constitutional basis of discrimination.” With opposition by most Indian leaders,

expressed in their own “Red Paper” calling for greater autonomy of First Nations, the government’s position paper was withdrawn.

During discussion in the 1970s and early 1980s concerning revision of the Canadian constitution, Native representatives and their supporters advocated for inclusion of guarantees of rights and status of First Nations. They urged explicit recognition of their rights, sparking much debate in the parliament and the country. The Constitution Act of 1982 ultimately included only a short section that affirmed the “existing aboriginal and treaty rights of the aboriginal peoples of Canada,” rights that “now exist by way of land claims agreements or may be so acquired.” It defined “aboriginal peoples” to include Indians, Inuit, and Métis. It further noted that such rights apply equally to “male and female persons.” Finally, it provided that the federal and provincial governments are “committed to the principle” that before any changes in constitutional laws affecting First Nations “the Prime Minister will invite representatives of the aboriginal peoples of Canada to participate in the discussions of that item” (Constitution Act, 1982).

One year after passage of the Constitution Act, the Assembly of First Nations, a national Native organization, issued a draft proposal to amend the constitution. It proposed protections of cultural, economic, and political rights including:

The right of the First Nations to their own self-identity, including the right to determine their own citizenship and forms of government.

The right to determine their own institutions.

The right of their governments to make laws and to govern their members and the affairs of their people.

Their right to exemption from any direct or indirect taxation levied by other governments.

The right to move freely within their traditional lands regardless of territorial, provincial, or international boundaries. (Assembly of First Nations; quoted in Asch 1984: 29)

In an effort toward reconciliation, the federal government issued a formal apology in 1998 for what it stated were inappropriate and harmful policies of the past 150 years. In particular, the apology noted the hardship faced by Indian children who had been forced to attend residential schools in central and western Canada. The statement acknowledged the psychological, physical, and sexual abuse often meted out to school residents.

While the statement was greeted with approval by some Native leaders, others criticized it as inadequate. They noted that a Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples had issued a report in 1996 severely critical not only of past practices but also of current policies and procedures. The Commission had made 440 recommendations, including establishment of a separate aboriginal parliament, recognition of sovereign powers of First Nations, and an increase in the annual federal budget spent on Indian affairs by nearly \$1.5 billion by the end of the century, recommendations that were not addressed by the federal government.

NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGES

In the past several decades, many members of Native American communities have focused attention on the issue of language, concentrating on developing programs to retain and enhance use of their Native language. Analysis of 2010 US Census data indicates that some 372,095 people speak an indigenous language as their mother tongue. The Census documents speakers of 169 Native American languages, some spoken by only a small number of people, whereas others are well represented.

By far the most frequently spoken language is Navajo in the Southwest with 169,471 people reporting it as their home language. Other languages with more than 10,000 speakers include Yupik in Alaska (18,950), Dakota/Lakota (18,616) in the Plains, Apache (13,063) in the Southwest, Keres (12,945) in New Mexico, Cherokee (11,610) in Oklahoma and North Carolina, and Choctaw (10,343) in Mississippi. Those with between 5,000 and 10,000 speakers are Zuni (9,686) in New Mexico, Ojibwa (8,371) in the upper Midwest, Pima (7,270) in Arizona, Inupik (7,203) in Alaska, Hopi (6,634) in Arizona, Tewa (5,176) in New Mexico, and Muskogee (5,064) in Oklahoma. In addition, some 8,298 respondents reported their home language as “Indian” or “American Indian.”

Place of residence is an important factor related to language use. The majority of indigenous language speakers live on reservations or trust territories. That is, of approximately 372,000 speakers of Native languages, about 237,000 live in what are described by federal statistics as “American Indian or Alaska Native” (AIAN) areas. The percentage of indigenous language speakers living in these areas varies by language. For example, 84.5 percent of Yupik speakers live in AIAN areas while 51.5 percent of speakers of Dakota do so. From the perspective of total population, only

5.4 percent of residents of AIAN areas are speakers of their indigenous language. This percentage varies slightly for different age groups: 5.1 percent for children aged 5 to 17 years, 5.6 percent for adults 18 to 64 years, and 5.1 percent for elders 65 years and over. Still, elders are more likely than children to speak their indigenous language. Of the total Native American population, about 20 percent of elders report speaking their Native language while 10 percent of children aged 5 to 17 years are indigenous language speakers. But these figures also vary significantly by language.

Degree of Native ancestry is also a significant factor in the likelihood that people speak an indigenous language. People who identified in the 2010 census as AIAN are more likely to speak their native language than people who reported being “American Indian in combination with another race.” For all ages, 14.8 percent of AIAN but only 0.7 percent of AIAN in combination reported speaking an indigenous language at home.

Finally, numbers of Native speakers are concentrated in three states: Alaska, Arizona, and New Mexico. These states account for some 65 percent of all indigenous speakers.

In Canada, data reported from the 2006 Census indicate that overall 22 percent of the Aboriginal population could speak their indigenous language. But rates varied widely among different aboriginal groupings. The Inuit have the highest percentage of people speaking their language, that is, 70 percent, while members of Métis communities have the lowest, or just 4 percent. Among First Nations peoples, residence on- or off-reserve is a significant factor in language knowledge. About 51 percent of First Nations people living on-reserve, but only 12 percent living off-reserve, speak their Native language. Age is another predictor of language ability. Nationwide, about 18 percent of Aboriginal children aged 14 or younger can speak their indigenous language while 37 percent of elders aged 75 or older are Native speakers.

Information collected in the Canadian Census of 2011 revealed that about 213,500 people reported having an Aboriginal mother tongue and nearly 213,400 stated that they spoke an Aboriginal language either most often or regularly at home. In total, more than 60 indigenous languages were recorded in the Census data. Cree, spoken in Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Alberta, and Québec, is the language with the most speakers (83,475), followed by Inuktitut (34,110) of the Canadian north, Ojibway (19,275) in Ontario and Manitoba, Dene (11,860) in Saskatchewan and

Alberta, and Innu/Montagnais (10,965) in Québec, Newfoundland, and Labrador. Somewhat fewer speakers reported their mother tongue as Mi'kmaq (8,030) in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick or Atikamekw (5,915) in Québec. Several additional languages have between 1,000 and 3,000 speakers while the majority of Canadian indigenous languages have fewer than 1,000 Native speakers.

The linguistic needs of Native American children in the United States are addressed by several federal laws, including the Bilingual Education Act of 1968, amended specifically for Native Americans in 1972 as the Indian Education Act, funding programs serving Native American communities (Spolsky 1977: 59). Extension of the Bilingual Education Act in 1979–1980 also benefits Native Americans even if they do not speak their tribal language.

Various reservations have developed educational programs designed to meet their specific needs. Some groups accept a transitional model advocated by the federal government. Among the Northern Cheyenne, Choctaw, Ute, and Zuni, bilingual programs teach students English in early grades and switch exclusively to English in third grade. Other Native American peoples employ a maintenance model of bilingual education, stressing acquisition of skills in English while simultaneously developing literacy and fluency in their indigenous language. For example, the Navajo, Yupik, and Cree continue instruction in their Native language in elementary school (65). In addition, Navajo is spoken in community colleges on the reservation.

For groups whose Native language is no longer spoken as a first language, linguistic programs aim at revival, usually in conjunction with instruction in other aspects of traditional culture. Immersion programs are an increasingly popular method to expose children (and sometimes adults) to indigenous language instruction. Language immersion may take place in school settings or in retreats and camp environments where only the Native language is employed for communication. Some school programs have fluent speakers, usually elders, who participate with children, creating master-apprentice relationships. Others employ two or more fluent teachers in each classroom who then model for children the kinds of normal interactions that people have when communicating. In these settings, children are exposed to naturalistic language use as they would in a home or community setting.

In 1990, the US Congress recognized the importance of languages to the continuation of distinctive

Native American cultural identity. The Native American Languages Act (PL 101–477) states:

The status of the cultures and languages of Native Americans is unique and the United States has the responsibility to act together with Native Americans to ensure the survival of these unique cultures and languages. The traditional languages of Native Americans are an integral part of their cultures and identities and form the basic medium for the transmission, and thus survival, of Native American cultures, literatures, histories, religions, political institutions, and values.

The act specifically endorses use of these codes as “mediums of instruction in order to encourage and support Native American language survival, educational opportunities, increase student success and performance, increase student awareness and knowledge of their culture and history and increase student and community pride.”

Programs and policies aimed at maintaining Native languages are supported by the United Nations Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Several of the articles specifically mention rights to language, that is, the right to use, develop, revive and teach their indigenous histories, languages, philosophies (Article 14), and the right to an education in their own languages and cultures (Article 15). The intricate relationship between language and other aspects of cultural maintenance have been attended to by members of Native American communities. According to Duane Champagne of the UCLA Native American Studies Center, “languages are holistically interrelated with social, environmental and cultural ways of life. They contain the inherent ways to view or understand the world. When tribal communities renew culture through language, they must also teach about the philosophical processes they convey the ways that indigenous peoples understand being, becoming, ceremony, identity and community” (Champagne 2011:18). And Ojibwa anthropologist and author David Treuer writes, “If the language dies, we will lose something personal, a degree of understanding that resides, for most fluent speakers, on an unconscious level. We will lose our sense of ourselves and our culture” (Treuer 2012). In addition, referring to language and cultural maintenance policies, Treuer states, “This new traditionalism is not a turning back of the clock, but a response to it; modernism (and modern, global capitalism) is

a great obliterater of cultural differences and a great infuser of a new kind of class differences, and language activism is one way Indians are not only protecting themselves and their rights but also creating meaning in their lives.”

Efforts to protect and promote the use of Native American languages are especially critical, given the fact that many of these languages have few speakers at this time. The paucity of speakers has resulted from many factors, not the least of which was the federal government’s policies, lasting from the nineteenth until the middle of the twentieth century, that banned the use of Native American languages in schools and dormitories for Native American children. In the words of John Atkins, Indian commissioner in 1887, “The instruction of Indians in the vernacular is not only of no use to them, but is detrimental to the cause of their education and civilization, and no school will be permitted on the reservations in which the English language is not exclusively taught” (Commissioner of Indian Affairs 1887: xxii).

Processes of language shift and loss are exemplified in many Native American communities in the United States. Some research raises questions concerning the role of Native ideologies about language itself in the abandonment of indigenous languages and in the subsequent attempts to maintain or restore Native codes. One key issue is the association between language and identity. Language tends to become a marker of identity when the survival of one’s language is threatened either from external dominating forces or from the internalization of negative attitudes that results from this domination. In a discussion of Native American language ideologies, Margaret Field and Paul Kroskrity suggest that language becomes a “badge of identity” when the number of remaining speakers dwindles and when community members become alarmed at its approaching loss (2009: 20).

Differences in the speech of younger and older community members may also affect the goals and successes of language maintenance programs. For example, older speakers may promote a kind of “linguistic purism” that denigrates speech that contains borrowings from English or patterns of *code mixing*, the amalgamation of Native and foreign structures and vocabulary.

Finally, concepts related to the issue of “language and thought” underlie the desire to maintain Native languages in some communities. One’s indigenous language is felt to express cultural models of the world

that differ fundamentally from those expressed by English, and, therefore, the loss of language is seen as a loss of cultural distinctiveness. For instance, analysis of a Hopi tribal court hearing revealed that a Hopi tribal advocate representing a defendant repeatedly insisted on the use of the Hopi language. She stated: “You can’t separate Hopi and religion and land, language, court, Constitution. It’s all tied up into one. That’s why we need special courts, hear us in our language” (Richland 2009:93). And the Yukon Native Languages Project, sponsored by the Yukon First Nations in Canada, adopted the motto: “We Are Our Language” to stress the interconnections among language, identity, and worldview (Meek 2009:158). Finally, religious rituals and prayers are often thought to lose their power if not spoken in the indigenous language.

Efforts at revitalizing and maintaining Native American languages have accelerated considerably in the last decade. Innovative learning projects have been initiated in many communities in the United States and Canada. Each project develops in the context of specific language needs based on the number of speakers present in the community and the current vitality of the language as a means of communication. Where languages are still spoken by a sizable percentage of the community, such as among the Inuit in Arctic Canada, Navajo in the southwestern United States, and Cree in central and northern Canada, programs are aimed at language maintenance. The Native language is used in schools as either a primary or secondary code of instruction, books and other teaching materials are printed in the Native languages, and children are encouraged to speak their Native tongue in all appropriate settings. Parents and other relatives, too, need to be involved since the best hope for survival occurs when languages are used in ongoing, spontaneous, and meaningful social interaction. In communities where there are only a small number of Native speakers, other techniques of reintroduction need to be developed. Language immersion programs and the presence of elders as role models help develop the necessary motivation for young children to learn the Native tongue. And of course, there are intermediary cases where people utilize a variety of strategies. For example, in the Mohawk settlement of Kahnawake, located just south of the Canadian city of Montreal, the community operates two elementary schools, one in which English is the language of instruction and the other in which Mohawk immersion predominates. While the majority of Mohawk residents are monolingual English

speakers, a sizable (and now growing) minority are fluent in the Native language. The Mohawk immersion program began in 1984 and was originally used in nursery, kindergarten, and first grade but the program now reaches the sixth grade. A further modification took place in 1994. At that time, full-day language immersion programs were instituted in kindergarten through fourth grade, while in the fifth and sixth grades, language maintenance rather than immersion became the goal (Jacobs 1998:120). About half of the community’s children attends the Mohawk immersion school while the other half attends the English language school.

In California, in contrast, most of the remaining Native languages have only a handful of elderly speakers. In the 1990s, a Master-Apprentice Language-Learning Program was initiated. In this program, each “master speaker” was teamed with an apprentice from the same community. Master speakers were first trained in informal interactional teaching techniques (such as managing repetition and rephrasing). Apprentices were also trained in learning strategies, emphasizing the importance of active learning by asking questions and speaking as much as possible. Following their initial work together, the master and apprentice speakers returned to their communities and attempted to involve a wider network of participants. These programs have generated a great deal of interest in Californian Native communities, but they are unlikely to lead to widespread language use. They are, however, important strategies in language survival.

One of the most remarkable instances of language revitalization, or more accurately language reclamation, is the achievement of members of Wampanoag communities in Cape Cod and Martha’s Vineyard. Started in 1993 by Jessie Little Doe Baird after recurring dreams in which voices spoke in an unknown language, the Wampanoag language has come from a state of extinction to become a language with a growing number of speakers and at least one child who is a Native speaker. Little Doe Baird began working with Ken Hale of the Department of Linguistics at MIT in Cambridge, Massachusetts, using two major types of sources to reconstruct Wampanoag. First, they used the extensive body of colonial documents written in Wampanoag and English dating from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Indeed, there are more documents written in Wampanoag than in any other indigenous language of North America, including deeds, property transfers, letters to colonial authorities, and

agreements between Wampanoag representatives and British and American officials. The documents provide the basis for understanding Wampanoag sentence structure and word formation processes as well as a large body of vocabulary. The second source of information comes from comparative material gleaned from the several dozen languages belonging to the Algonkian linguistic family of which Wampanoag is a member. Study of these languages, some of which are spoken today and others are well-documented by linguists and earlier observers, provides data for the reconstruction of Wampanoag grammar and lexicon as well as clues to pronunciation.

The Wampanoag Language Reclamation Project has involved many community members in organizing immersion camps, master/apprentice teams, and language classes. They have also developed materials for use in these programs such as grammar workbooks, computer files, and board games. The success of this project demonstrates that, provided there are materials available, a community of dedicated people can achieve what might seem impossible. Their work is captured in a documentary entitled *We Still Live Here, As Nutayunean* (Makepeace Productions 2010).

New technologies have been adapted and incorporated into language maintenance programs in many communities. For example, computer programs that teach indigenous languages are increasingly utilized each year. Language apps for young children have been developed for Navajo and Lakota (available at no charge from the iTunes store) with plans to expand into other language communities. The Cherokee syllabary, first developed by Sequoyah in the early nineteenth century, can now be used in social networking media such as Facebook. And speakers can use indigenous languages on Twitter. Indeed, a website called IndigenousTweets.com now collects users of some one hundred indigenous languages worldwide. Interested users can access the website to find other people writing in their own language. Currently included are Navajo, Delaware/Lenape, Lakota, Inuktitut, Mi'kmaq/Micmac, and Secwemctsin. Others can be added by contacting the website. According to its creator, Kevin Scannell, "The important thing is for people to use their language if they want it to survive. The Internet gives people an opportunity to write and chat and be creative while using their language in a natural way" (Meigs 2011:30). While some speakers may have difficulties with advanced technologies, younger people may actually be drawn toward learning and using their

language in such contexts. As Peter Austin, director of the University of London's Endangered Languages Project, observes, "Attitudes play a huge role in language maintenance, language shift and language loss. We can't guarantee that someone twittering in the language is going to keep it going, but it does raise the potential for people to say 'Wow, this is something really valuable and a lot of fun'" (31).

In addition, Google launched a project in cooperation with the Alliance for Linguistic Diversity and other universities and linguistic organizations to collect and store data from some 3,054 languages throughout the world, including many Native American languages, that are considered endangered. Maps of the languages' locations and information about populations are collected in the Endangered Languages Project. Many of the languages already have available a full archive of text samples, audio tapes, and video clips. The ongoing goal is to collect such data from as many languages as possible. The Project's website can be seen at www.endangeredlanguages.com and some information about the Project can be obtained at the following web address: <http://googleblog.blogspot.com/2012/06/endangered-languages-project-supporting.html>

POPULATION DECLINE AND RENEWAL

Just as plants and animals are indigenous to certain parts of the world, organisms that cause disease are also indigenous to specific locales. And when these organisms are transported to new human environments, their effects are often quickly lethal. Such was the case when diseases of European origin came to North America beginning in the late fifteenth century. Among the most devastating were smallpox, measles, and new forms of influenza. The vast majority of excess deaths (numbers of deaths exceeding the normal death rate for a given population) from the sixteenth through nineteenth centuries were caused by disease. Estimates for the aboriginal population of North America vary widely. Any figures given are speculative, particularly because of the unknown rates of death from disease before European or American observers made their earliest calculations. Precontact population densities are difficult to estimate as well. Mooney (1928) suggested an aboriginal North American population of slightly more than

1,150,000, a figure long accepted as a standard but now thought to be much too low. Kroeber's (1939) number of slightly less than 1 million is similarly faulted. Dobyns's (1966) estimates of 9–12 million are considered excessively high. Ubelaker (1976), working with data and estimates provided by scholars preparing the Smithsonian's Handbook of North American Indians, suggests a figure of more than 2,171,000. And Thornton (1987) postulates an aboriginal population for North America at somewhat more than 7 million, including more than 5 million for the area of present-day United States and more than 2 million for Canada. Whatever the figure, rates of decline in the sixteenth through nineteenth centuries were undoubtedly precipitous. By the end of the nineteenth century, only about 250,000 Indians survived in the United States.

The steep population decline had social, economic, and political consequences in addition to the obvious personal suffering and loss. Whole families, sometimes entire lineages or clans, were wiped out in the space of a few years. Not only did the most vulnerable groups, such as young children and elders, die in great numbers, but men and women in their prime also succumbed. Their deaths led to economic as well as social destabilization since they were the principle farmers, gatherers, and hunters upon whom less able family members relied. Political stability was also undermined since established leaders were as likely as others to die from epidemic diseases.

The consequences of disease began soon after the arrival of Europeans in North America. Reports from the sixteenth century and thereafter repeatedly confirm the grim history. For instance, Thomas Hariot, writing in 1590 about people in Virginia, stated "within a few dayes of our departure from everie such towne, the people began to die very fast, and many in short space; in small townes about twentie, in some fourtie, in some sixtie, & in one sixe score, which in trueth was very manie in respect of their numbers" (1972: 28). Indians interpreted the disasters that were striking them within the framework of their own knowledge about cause and effect. According to Hariot, they "were perswaded that it was the worke of our God through our meanes, and that we by him might kil and slai whome wee would without weapons and not come neere them" (28).

In the next century, French missionaries who lived among Algonkians and Iroquoians for decades witnessed similar devastation and recorded similar interpretations of the suffering that befell them. The number

of Hurons, for instance, plummeted from at least 20,000 at the time of French contact in 1610 to no more than 10,000 in less than two decades. Hurons concluded that since the diseases began to flourish only after Jesuits started to live in their communities, the priests had brought the ailments. In accordance with Native beliefs that one possible method of causing disease and death was witchcraft, Hurons accused missionaries of being witches. Since neither Indians nor Europeans of the seventeenth century understood the physical mechanisms of disease transmission, the underlying etiology was misdiagnosed, but the people correctly connected Europeans' arrival with the origin and spread of epidemics. The Jesuits, of course, dismissed the notion that they were witches, but some perceptive priests did admit the justice of the Hurons' accusations against them. Lalemant, writing in 1640, commented,

No doubt, they [Hurons] said, it must needs be that we had a secret understanding with the disease (for they believe that it is a demon), since we alone were all full of life and health, although we constantly breathed nothing but a totally infected air.

Wherein truly it must be acknowledged that these poor people are in some sense excusable. For it has happened very often, that where we were most welcome, where we baptized most people, there it was in fact where they died the most; and, on the contrary, in the cabins to which we were denied entrance, although they were sometimes sick to extremity, at the end of a few days one saw every peron prosperously cured. We shall see in heaven the secret, but ever adorable, judgments of God therein. (*JR* 19: 91–93)

Algonkians living near the Atlantic coast, who were among the first to encounter English settlers in their territories, also remarked on their own destruction. In Virginia, the Powhatan chief, Wahunsonacock, told John Smith "I have seen two generations of my people die. Not a man of the two generations is alive now but myself." And in Massachusetts, Massasoit, a Wampanoag chief, concluded, "Englishmen, take that land, for none is left to occupy it" (Brasser 1978: 66).

In a relatively short time after Europeans' arrival, the numerical balance between Indians and the foreigners shifted due to high rates of death from disease and to endless immigration from Europe. When English settlers first arrived in North America, they needed the help of indigenous people to survive, but as early as 1684, less than eighty years after the first permanent

English settlement in North America, an Iroquois chief remarked to Colonel Thomas Dongan, a British official in Albany: “When the English first came to New York, Virginia and Maryland, they were but a small people and we a large nation, and we finding they were good people gave them land and dealt civilly by them; Now that you are grown numerous and we decreased, you must protect us from the French” (Noon 1949: 15).

When American settlement expanded westward in the nineteenth century, the same process of contact and decline was repeated. As Little Wolf of the Cheyenne noted, “Many have died of diseases we have no name for.” And the Lakota chief, Sitting Bull, remarked, “They promised how we are going to live peacefully on the land we still own and how they are going to show us the new ways of living ... but all that was realized out of the agreements with the Great Father was, we are dying off” (Thornton 1987: 134).

Indian populations continued to decline until the end of the nineteenth century, some nations reaching their nadir in the last decade or in the first decade of the twentieth century. Thereafter, they began to slowly increase until mid-century, when the rate of growth became more dramatic (159–160). The statistical increase developed because of an actual rise in Native populations due to improved health and lowered death rates along with high fertility. The reported growth is also due to changes in federal census policy of ethnic identification through self-report rather than through census-takers’ observation and categorization of respondents. Still, officially counted Native Americans remain a small percentage of the total population of both the United States and Canada. While the actual number of Native people in the United States is higher than in Canada, the percentage of total population is greater in Canada. Bearing in mind the historical and contemporary issues raised by a discussion of Native population figures mentioned in [Chapter 1](#), in 2010, the US Census Bureau reported about 2.9 million Native people (called AIAN in the census terminology) out of a total US population of 308.7 million, constituting approximately 0.9 percent of the country’s inhabitants (US Bureau of the Census 2010). The figure includes residents of some 278 reservations as well as residents of tribal trust lands, designated Native areas of Alaska, and self-identified Native people living in cities and towns throughout the country. Indeed, more than half of Native people live in or near urban areas.

In addition, the Census Bureau reports that another 2.3 million (0.7%) identified as AIAN in combination with one or more other races. Therefore, a total of

5.2 million people (1.7% of the US population) have some American Indian or Alaska Native ancestry. According to some research, an additional 7 or 8 million people who consider themselves “Hispanics” have Indian ancestry as well, raising the total to at least 12 or 13 million (Forbes 1990).

In Canada, the report of Statistics Canada for this census of 2011 noted a total of 1.2 million Aboriginal people including North American Indian, Métis, or Inuit comprising about 4 percent of the Canadian population. Significantly for the future, aboriginal children under the age of 15 comprise 5 percent of their Canadian age group.

Population statistics demonstrate that Native nations have managed to survive despite the policies instituted by European, American, and Canadian authorities that aimed at their physical and/or cultural destruction. Throughout the rest of this text, we will focus on the societies created by Native people in North America, analyzing their aboriginal ways of living as well as the kinds of transformations they experienced as a result of European contact and their situation today in the United States and Canada.

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Native Communities Today

IN THIS CHAPTER, data will document Native population trends in Canada and the United States as well as income, employment, and educational attainment for Native residents. The final section will discuss contemporary political and cultural issues of concern to many indigenous communities.

Native populations in both Canada and the United States have increased dramatically but while their numbers have grown, members of Native communities have not fared well economically. As aggregates, their incomes are below those of other people in their state or province, region, and country. Unemployment rates on Indian reservations and reserves are high as a result both of their rural location and the inadequate education and job training often typical of school systems that serve (or fail to serve) Native children.

CANADIAN DATA

In Canada, statistics on the aboriginal population are derived from two sources that are not exactly comparable, that is, the federal census formulated by Statistics Canada and the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development's Registered Indian Population. National and provincial figures from the 2006 census are given in [Table 3.1](#).

As can be seen, Statistics Canada reported that 1,172,785 people listed aboriginal identity, constituting about 4 percent of the total Canadian population of 31,612,897 (Statistics Canada 2006). Of the Aboriginal group, 60 percent (698,025) were North American Indians, 33 percent (389,785) were Métis, and 4 percent (50,480) were Inuit. In addition, 7,740 people reported multiple Aboriginal responses.

Provinces with the highest Aboriginal populations are Ontario, Québec, and British Columbia, followed by Manitoba, Alberta, and Saskatchewan. Ontario and British Columbia have the largest number of North American Indians but Alberta, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan have the highest number of Métis while Québec and Northwest Territories (now Nunavut) have the most Inuit residents.

Differing somewhat from figures released by Statistics Canada, the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND) publishes a record of people registered under the Indian Act who are members of one of Canada's 608 Indian bands. The total registered Indian population for 2006 was 623,780 (DIAND 2006). DIAND reported an on-reserve population of 360,707 while 275,112 people resided off-reserve. In addition, 24,071 Indians lived on Crown land. The great majority of Indian bands had populations of less than 2,000. Only 10 percent of the bands had more than 2,000 members while 6 percent had fewer than 100. According to DIAND, 44.4 percent of on-reserve Registered Indians lived in "rural zones" (defined as located between 30 and 200 mi. from the nearest service, administrative, or commercial center having year-round road access), 36.4 percent lived in "urban zones" (located within 30 mi. of the nearest service center with year-round road access), 1.7 percent reside in "remote zones" (situated more than 200 mi. from the nearest service center with year-round road access), and a substantial 17.4 percent live in "special access zones," having no year-round access to the nearest service center (DIAND 2000: 84).

Of the major cities in Canada, Winnipeg (capital of Manitoba) has the highest Aboriginal population (68,385), followed closely by Edmonton (capital of

TABLE 3.1 | Canadian Aboriginal Population, 2006

| | Total | Total Aboriginal | North American Indian | Métis | Inuit |
|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Canada | 31,612,897 | 1,171,785 | 698,025 | 389,785 | 50,480 |
| Newfoundland | 505,469 | 23,450 | 7,765 | 6,470 | 4,715 |
| Prince Edward Island | 135,851 | 1,730 | 1,230 | 385 | 30 |
| Nova Scotia | 913,462 | 24,175 | 15,240 | 7,680 | 320 |
| New Brunswick | 729,997 | 17,655 | 12,385 | 4,270 | 185 |
| Québec | 7,546,131 | 108,425 | 65,085 | 27,985 | 10,950 |
| Ontario | 12,160,282 | 242,490 | 158,400 | 73,610 | 2,035 |
| Manitoba | 1,148,401 | 175,395 | 100,645 | 71,810 | 560 |
| Saskatchewan | 968,157 | 141,890 | 91,400 | 48,120 | 215 |
| Alberta | 3,290,350 | 188,365 | 97,275 | 85,500 | 1,610 |
| British Columbia | 4,113,487 | 196,070 | 129,580 | 59,445 | 795 |
| Yukon | 30,372 | 7,580 | 6,280 | 800 | 255 |
| Northwest Territories | 41,464 | 20,635 | 12,640 | 3,585 | 4,165 |

Source: Statistics Canada 2006.

Note: The total “Aboriginal” population is divided into three categories—North American Indians, Métis, and Inuit.

Alberta) and Vancouver (capital of British Columbia). In eastern Canada, only Toronto (capital of Ontario) and Ottawa (the capital of Canada) have more than 10,000 Aboriginal residents. Disaggregating for separate Aboriginal groups, Vancouver and Winnipeg have the most North American Indian residents while Winnipeg has the highest number of Métis (40,980). Ottawa has the largest number of Inuit residents (605), followed closely by Montreal and Toronto. In the west, only Edmonton, Calgary, and Vancouver have more than 200 Inuit residents (Statistics Canada 2006).

Although the Aboriginal population of Canada represents a small minority, they are the fastest growing group as reflected in age distributions. While the total Aboriginal population constitutes about 4 percent of the Canadian population, Native people under 15 years constitute 5 percent of the comparable age group of Canada. The median age of the Aboriginal group was 23.9 years in 2006, that is, 3 years younger than the median Canadian age of 26.5 years. The Aboriginal growth rate is also higher than that of the total Canadian population.

Data concerning languages spoken by people with an Aboriginal identification indicate strong continuation

of aboriginal languages, especially as compared to the situation in the United States. However, there are conflicting indications for future trends. According to federal statistics from the census of 2011, most Aboriginal Canadians speak English as their mother tongue (more than 700,000) while only about 36,000 speak French as their mother tongue. The number of people who reported an Aboriginal language as their mother tongue was 144,015, representing about 18.7 percent of the Native population. Some 60 Aboriginal languages are spoken in Canada. Of these, Cree has the largest number of speakers (83,475). Inuktitut (the language of the Inuit) is spoken by 34,110 people, while Ojibway has 19,275 speakers. No other Aboriginal language has more than 10,000 speakers. Table 3.2 lists the largest number of speakers of Canadian Aboriginal languages.

Although about one-fifth of the Aboriginal population reported an Aboriginal language as a mother tongue (the first language they learned at home in childhood), only 11.8 percent of the entire Aboriginal population reported that they actually spoke their Native language at home. However, 21.5 percent reported that they could carry on a conversation in an Aboriginal language. As expected, the ability to speak

an Aboriginal language increased with age. People aged 55 years or older were most likely to be fluent speakers and most likely to actually use their Native language in daily conversation. In contrast, children were least likely to speak an Aboriginal language. Also as expected, Aboriginal languages were spoken most frequently on Indian reserves while least used among Native people living in urban areas.

The discrepancy between learning a language in childhood and actually using it at home indicates concern for the future continuation of some Native languages. For every 100 people with an Aboriginal mother tongue, 76 actually spoke their language at home in 1981, but only 65 did so in 1996; 12 did so in 2006. According to Statistics Canada, for every 100 children under the age of 5, 91 spoke their mother tongue at home in 1981, but in 1996 when these

children were in their mid- or late teens, only 76 continued to speak their Native language at home. However, DIAND reported that there was an increase in mother tongue knowledge and use by registered Indians residing on reserves.

Statistics from 2006 collected by DIAND concerning income, shown in Table 3.3, indicate a consistent discrepancy among registered Indians, the Aboriginal population, and the general Canadian population. The Canadian population (called “Reference Population” in DIAND tables) has higher household and individual incomes than the total Aboriginal population. Consistently lower than both are the incomes of registered Indians. Finally, in all provinces except Newfoundland, the off-reserve registered Indian population has higher household and individual incomes than on-reserve Indians. These figures indicate that average household income of Canadians was nearly double that of the average on-reserve household income. Table 3.4 reveals that average individual incomes reflect the same discrepancies. Overall, on-reserve Indians earn less than half the money earned by Canadians.

Sources of income for 1991 show trends consistent with the dollar differences in incomes. Table 3.4 presents relevant statistics as percentages. The two sets of figures are correlated. That is, since on-reserve Indians were least likely to receive income from employment, they were most likely to receive income from government transfer payments.

Tables of labor force activity, employment, and unemployment rates for 2006 similarly show consistent patterns favoring the “reference population” while disfavoring the on-reserve registered Indian population. Table 3.5 presents data concerning “participation rate” (the total labor force as a percentage of the total population aged 15 years and older), “employ-

ment ratio” (those individuals employed as a percentage of the total population 15 years and older), and “unemployment rate” (those unemployed as a percentage of the total labor force). These figures are internally consistent. That is, while nearly 70 percent of all Canadians over the age of 15 were employed, only about 10 percent of the total labor force was unemployed. In

TABLE 3.2 | Aboriginal Languages in Canada

| | |
|----------------------|---------|
| Aboriginal languages | 144,015 |
| Cree | 83,475 |
| Inuktitut | 34,110 |
| Ojibway | 19,275 |
| Montagnais-Naskapi | 10,965 |
| Mi'kmaq | 8,030 |
| Dakota/Sioux | 1,160 |
| Blackfoot | 3,250 |
| Salish languages | 2,950 |
| Slavey | 1,525 |
| Dogrib | 2,080 |
| Carrier | 1,525 |
| Wakashan languages | 1,075 |

Source: Statistics Canada 2011.

TABLE 3.3 | Individual and Household Income in Canada

| | Reference Population | Aboriginal Population | Off-Reserve Indians | On-Reserve Indians |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Individual Average Earning (\$) | 39,942 | 32,475 | 32,177 | 25,040 |
| Household Income Median (\$) | 43,261 | 34,223 | 15,000 | 10,500 |

Source: DIAND 2006: Tables 2, 34.

contrast, while slightly less than half of on-reserve Indians were employed, nearly one-third of those in the labor force were unemployed. Unemployment rates indicate that the percentage of unemployed on-reserve Indians was more than three times as high as the percentage of unemployed Canadians. Although provincial unemployment rates varied, unemployment rates for Indians and Aboriginals were consistently higher than for the reference population.

Statistical tables recording percentage distributions of the experienced labor force by occupation indicate that Indians are the most likely to participate in occupations dependent upon land and resources and least

likely to participate in manufacturing jobs. [Table 3.6](#) labels occupations as “primary,” “secondary,” and “tertiary.” Primary occupations include fishing, trapping, forestry, logging, and agriculture; secondary occupations include manufacturing and processing; and tertiary occupations encompass a disparate variety of fields such as managerial, technological, social, religious, teaching, medicine, health, and artistic occupations.

DIAND tables reporting levels of education provide data that are interconnected with occupation and income figures. In 1991, on-reserve Indians were most likely of all the population groups to have less than ninth grade educations and least likely to have graduated

from high school. Although [Table 3.7](#) reveals that less than one-third of on-reserve Indians were high school graduates and that less than half of all Aboriginals graduated from high school, the number of Indian graduates has increased in recent years, as has the number of Indians receiving postsecondary educations

Since the 1990s, representatives of numerous First Nations have negotiated self-government agreements with federal and provincial authorities. The agreements vary in scope, ranging from the assumption by bands of responsibility for managing educational and social programs to more extensive local governing arrangements. In all, these agreements affect 506 First Nations and Inuit communities.

Many Canadian First Nations have filed land claim suits with the “Special Claims Branch” empowered to resolve territorial issues. By March 1999, the branch had settled 200 such claims amounting to total monetary awards of \$900 million. An additional 139 claims are under negotiation while another 302 are “under assessment” (78).

TABLE 3.4 | Sources of Income in Canada

| | Reference Population | Aboriginal Population | Off-Reserve Indians | On-Reserve Indians |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Income from Employment (%) | 71.5 | 66.8 | 59.8 | 43.2 |
| Income from Transfer Payments (%) | 17.0 | 27.5 | 35.5 | 44.7 |
| Source: DIAND 1995: Table 4. | | | | |

TABLE 3.5 | Employment Data in Canada

| | Reference Population | Aboriginal Population | Off-Reserve Indians | On-Reserve Indians |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Participation Rate (%) | 63.0 | 62.7 | 57.3 | 46.8 |
| Employment Ratio (%) | 53.7 | 49.7 | 42.9 | 32.2 |
| Unemployment Rate (%) | 14.8 | 20.8 | 25.1 | 31.0 |
| Source: DIAND 2006: Tables 1, 9. | | | | |

TABLE 3.6 | Educational Achievement in Canada

| | Reference Population | Aboriginal Population | Off-Reserve Indians | On-Reserve Indians |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Primary (%) | 6.1 | 7.3 | 8.1 | 11.1 |
| Secondary (%) | 14.7 | 10.8 | 10.5 | 5.4 |
| Tertiary (%) | 79.2 | 81.8 | 81.4 | 83.5 |
| Source: DIAND 2006: Tables 16, 19. | | | | |

TABLE 3.7 | High School Educational Achievement in Canada

| | Reference Population | Aboriginal Population | Off-Reserve Indians | On-Reserve Indians |
|---------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Less than Grade 9 (%) | 13.7 | 18.4 | 19.4 | 37.2 |
| High School Graduates (%) | 62.1 | 49.4 | 44.7 | 31.1 |

Source: DIAND 1995: Table 1.

TABLE 3.8 | Native Population by State in the United States

| States with over 100,000 Native Residents | |
|---|---------|
| Oklahoma | 266,801 |
| California | 312,215 |
| Arizona | 253,542 |
| New Mexico | 172,276 |
| Texas | 113,755 |
| North Carolina | 100,956 |
| States with over 50,000 Native Residents | |
| Washington | 91,299 |
| Michigan | 60,842 |
| South Dakota | 61,724 |

Source: US Bureau of the Census 2006: 1.

US DATA

Turning to data from the United States, it is well to recall issues discussed in chapters 1 and 2 concerning the likelihood of undercounting of Native Americans by governmental agencies. With this caution in mind, the US Bureau of the Census of 2010 reports that about 2.9 million people identified as American Indian and Alaska Native belonging to 554 Indian tribes and Alaska Native groups. This figure constitutes 0.9 percent of the US population. In addition, 2.3 million (0.7%) people identified as American Indian and Alaska Native in combination with one or more other races (US Bureau of the Census 2010).

Although Native Americans live in every state of the country, the largest concentrations of Native people are in the west (45.6%), followed by the south (30.2%), the midwest (17.9%), and finally the Northeast (6.3%). Table 3.8 shows that four states had more than 100,000 Native residents and several other states had more than 50,000.

Of the more than 500 Indian tribes in the United States, the Cherokees are the most numerous. According to the 2000 census, they had a population of more than 302,569 (15.9%). The Navajos, with a reported population of 276,775 (14.6%), were the next most numerous. The several “Sioux” tribes accounted for more than 113,713, while the Chippewa tribes accounted for another 110,857. There were an additional 5 tribes or groups of related tribes who had populations of more than 50,000. These include the Choctaws, Puebloans, Apaches, Iroquois, and Lumbees. The Creeks, Blackfoot, and Chickasaws each had more than 20,000 members. Other groups listed in the census with between 10,000 and 20,000 members were the Tohono O’odham, Potawatomi, Seminole, Pima, Tlingit, Cheyenne, Comanche, Osage, and Salish.

Some 169 Native languages are currently spoken in the United States. According to census data for 2010, 372,095 people reported that they speak an Indian language at home. (Note that others may be speakers of Indian languages but do not use the language at home.) Approximately 10,000 people stated that they were monolingual speakers of an Indian language. Most of the languages with the largest percentage of use as home languages are spoken in the Southwest, particularly New Mexico and Arizona. These include Navajo, western Apache, Hopi, and Zuni. Choctaw in Mississippi, Yupik in Alaska, Cherokee in Oklahoma, and Lakota-Dakota in the northern Plains are also frequently used as home languages (M. Krauss, quoted in “Indians Striving to Save Their Languages” 2006: A22). According to 2000 census data, Table 3.9 lists Native languages that have the most speakers.

Many Indian languages are in grave danger of extinction because they are no longer being learned by children. According to Michael Krauss, of about 200 languages currently spoken by Native people in the United States and Canada, 149 are no longer being learned by children (1992: 5). Krauss distinguishes four categories of languages—Class A: 34 languages still spoken by all generations, including children; Class B: 35 languages spoken only by the parental generation and up; Class C: 84 languages spoken only by the grandparental generation and up; and Class D: 57 languages spoken only by the very elderly, usually less

| TABLE 3.9 Native Languages Spoken in the United States | |
|--|--------------------|
| Native Language | Number of Speakers |
| Navajo | 169,471 |
| Yupik | 18,950 |
| Dakota/Lakhot | 18,616 |
| Apache | 13,062 |
| Keres | 12,945 |
| Cherokee | 11,610 |
| Choctaw (and Chickasaw) | 10,343 |
| Zuni | 9,686 |
| Ojibwa | 8,371 |
| Pima | 7,270 |
| Source: US Bureau of the Census 2010: American Community Survey, Native North American Languages, Table 1. | |

than 10 persons per language (McCarty et al. 1999: 2). Languages in Class D obviously are in serious danger of disappearing, while those in Classes B and C may also face extinction without rapid and well-planned intervention. Many Native nations are responding to the challenge of language survival with innovative programs suited to their particular circumstances such as language-immersion, involvement of elders in the classroom, development of curricula that emphasize conversational uses of language in social contexts, and specialized focus on language use in ritual (McCarty et al. 1999; *Tribal College Journal* 2000). These programs are being implemented in primary and secondary schools operated by tribes. In addition, at least twenty-five of the tribal colleges in the United States offer language courses, some requiring language studies for completion of degrees. To be successful, Native language use must also be encouraged in daily social interactions, not just in school settings. To this end, Clay Slate, director of the Navajo Language Program at the Navajo Community College, suggests that the focus of language planning and use be at the local level of household, clan, and community. He further suggests that in order to protect the Navajo language, English should be restricted from use in some settings. For example, Slate proposes that only Navajo be used in the important interpersonal context of greetings and social introductions where people traditionally locate themselves in “social space” by providing clan identities and other kinship information to establish relationships and exchange social knowledge (1993: 13).

Comparing statistics on incomes for Indians and for the general American population, a consistent disadvantage borne by Indians is revealed. In 1999, the median household income of American Indians was \$30,599 while the total US median family income was \$41,994. Median family income for Indians was \$33,144, compared to a US figure of about \$51,046. Per capita income similarly showed disparities that disadvantaged Native Americans. The per capita income for Indians was \$12,893, significantly lower than the US per capita of \$21,587. Native Americans were consequently more likely to live in poverty than other Americans. In 1999, the percentage of Native families living below the poverty level (defined as a family of four earning less than \$12,670) was 21.8 percent while in the general population, 9.2 percent of families lived in poverty. For Native Americans, the individual poverty rate (defined as an individual earning less than \$6,300 a year) was 25.7 percent while for the general American population, the rate was 12.4 percent. That is, there were nearly three times as many Indians living in poverty as the general population.

Government statistics on occupation indicate that Indians are more likely than other Americans to be employed in farming, forestry, and fishing; in precision and craft occupations; and to work as machine operators, assemblers, handlers, equipment cleaners, laborers, service providers, and protective service workers. They are less likely than the general US population to be employed in executive, administrative, and managerial jobs; in professional specialty occupations; and in sales and administrative support occupations. The discrepancy between Native and other Americans is most marked in executive, professional, and sales occupations. Occupational differentiation results in differences in income since Indians are more likely to be employed in lower paying jobs and less likely to work in higher paying occupations (US Bureau of the Census 2000: Table 2).

Educational training and achievement statistics reveal another source of disadvantage for Native Americans. Table 3.10 displays percentages of Indians and other Americans with high school and college degrees. In order to improve educational and employment opportunities for Native Americans, 31 tribes now administer their own colleges with total enrollments of over 25,000. The schools provide vocational, technical, and academic training, conferring degrees in two-year, four-year, and graduate programs. Tribal colleges also offer adult education programs, job training,

TABLE 3.10

Educational Achievement of Native Peoples in the United States

| | Native Americans | All Americans |
|--|------------------|---------------|
| Aged 16–19 | | |
| High School (%) | 83.9 | 90.2 |
| Aged 25+ | | |
| High School (%) | 70.9 | 80.4 |
| College (%) | 11.5 | 24.4 |
| Source: US Bureau of the Census 2000: Table 2. | | |

and continuing education courses and certificates. However, Congressional budgetary appropriations for higher education translates into approximately \$3,430 per student enrolled in tribal colleges, a figure much lower than the amount of \$4,470 allocated per student attending a state community college (Ambler 1998: 34).

The policy set forth in the federal “Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act” of 1996, commonly referred to as welfare reform, may erode the precarious economic situation of many Indian families. According to the law, tribal governments are permitted to implement their own welfare-to-work programs, but the law does not provide sufficient funding for tribes to realistically be able to do so. Because of the rural location of most reservations, jobs are often difficult to find. For example, The Navajo Nation estimates that it would have to create 2,500 new jobs in order to comply with the work participation requirements of the law (Ambler 1998: 9). However, while many tribes seek to develop high school and college programs for their members in order to improve people’s chances of obtaining jobs, federal law stipulates that pursuing college educations and job training for more than one year does not comply with welfare-to-work requirements. Tribal leaders point out that limits on education and lack of adequate funding are inconsistent with the goals of enabling people to qualify and retain skilled jobs that will earn them adequate incomes. For example, while the unemployment rate on the Turtle Mountain Reservation in North Dakota is 50 percent, 87 percent of people who graduate from the Turtle Mountain Community College are employed (9). Similarly, 82 percent of recent graduates of the Navajo Nation’s Crown Point Institute of Technology have found employment after

graduation, a figure that contrasts sharply with the Navajos’ overall unemployment rate of 50 percent (17).

Much has been made in the media of the attempt of Indian tribes to earn income through gaming. Although more than 200 tribes currently operate some form of gaming, the total Native share of gaming revenues amounts to only about 5 percent. According to figures released by the National Indian Gaming Association, Indian gaming has generated over 120,000 direct jobs and 160,000 indirect jobs nationwide. The vast majority of these jobs are held by non-Indians. Native gaming, therefore, benefits not only the tribes that own and operate casinos but also non-Indians who are employed at the casinos as well as people who run hotels, restaurants, and stores frequented by customers drawn into the gaming establishments. Each tribe makes its own decisions about the distribution or investment of profits. In addition to some per capita disbursements, the majority of the funds are used to improve infrastructure on reservations, provide educational, medical, and social services, grant college scholarships, construct and maintain tribal buildings, and subsidize housing for their members. Most gaming profits support Native communities, in the context of declining federal funding for Indian programs, a decline that has accelerated since 1980.

Income and employment data pertaining to Indian and Inuit communities in both the United States and Canada consistently reveal the economic hardships faced by Native people. All measurements indicate that Native people are poorer and more likely to be unemployed than their neighbors in the state or province, region, and country in which they live. Poverty results from the lack of jobs due, among other factors, to the rural location of most reservations and to the low quality of the education and training that many Indians receive. Control over education at all levels is therefore a major goal of tribal governments, although one that many groups are not able to afford to implement.

RESPONSES TO CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES

Ever since Europeans first arrived in North America, Native people have employed various strategies in reaction to the foreign presence. In some cases, they welcomed the strangers, taking advantage of the opportunity to trade and obtain new products.

At other times, they accommodated European settlers either by sharing their lands and resources or by moving their own settlements to other parts of their accustomed territories. As more Europeans arrived, Native people were often pressured or forced to leave their aboriginal homelands and relocate, sometimes far from their original region. People also resisted the settlers' advance and the consequent loss of land and resources. Modes of resistance depended on the particular economic and political circumstances of the people. Indians sometimes resorted to armed confrontation, defending their own communities and attacking Euro-American settlements. Resistance might also be manifested in spiritual reawakenings or reworkings of traditional beliefs. Frequently, military, social, and spiritual responses were combined.

The following chapters in this text examine the cultures and histories of Native peoples in an attempt to understand the origins and development of the complex Native communities currently living in North America. We focus on aboriginal culture and on indigenous reactions, readjustments, and resistance to European contact. And we explore the ways that Indians and Inuit have shaped their lives today. Here we review some current issues related to sovereignty, self-determination, and protection of political and cultural rights.

Climate Change

We begin with an issue facing everyone on this planet but one that has particular resonance in many Native American communities: that is, climate change. The Arctic, for example, is on the front line of climate change. Rising temperatures due to global warming are resulting in the thinning of ice cover year-round and the erosion and disappearance of glaciers. Temperatures are increasing in the Arctic at faster rates than elsewhere on the planet, as much as 5 degrees centigrade through the twentieth century (Macchi 2008: 32). According to an Inuit observer, "When I was born 60 years ago the ice was 3.5 miles thick, on average. Now, 60 years later, it's 1.5 miles. In just 60 years" (Angaanigaaq 2009: 8). Another sign of global warming is the receding of ice caps. In one area, the ice receded 30 mi. in one year. As the ice caps melt, the sea level rises and waves become stronger, leading to erosion of coastal land. Weather patterns are becoming unstable, affecting the migratory cycles of both marine and terrestrial animals that Inuit subsistence is still dependent on. With warmer temperatures and melting

of the sea ice, hunting becomes dangerous, lessening the food supply. Malnutrition is a serious risk in Arctic communities.

Dramatic effects of climate change can be seen on Baffin Island, the fifth largest island in the world, located in Nunavut in the Canadian Arctic. Inuit Elders there note that the sea ice melts earlier in the year, freezes over later in the summer, the land is warmer, and the land and sea animals are less numerous. And the long Arctic winter darkness is getting lighter. This unusual phenomenon is due to the fact that the warmer air acts as a conduit for light from the south, creating a perceived brightness (Indian Country Today 2011a: 16).

Studies reported in 2011 of more than 62,000 mi. of Arctic coastline indicate that the extent and depth of sea ice are decreasing annually, affecting a rise in ocean levels worldwide. Between 2006 and 2009, 22 cu. mi. of Arctic water were lost yearly, a jump from an annual rate of 7 cu. mi. just two years before. In 2011, sea ice reached its maximum extent early in March, nearly 500,000 sq. mi. less than the average 6.1 million sq. mi. recorded from 1979 through 2000 (Indian Country Today 2011b: 16). The report concluded: "The circumpolar Arctic Coast is arguably one of the most critical zones in terms of the rapidity and the severity of environmental change and the implications for human communities dependent on coastal resources. In the face of unprecedented and jarring changes in the local environment on which traditional livelihoods and cultures depend, Arctic coastal communities are coping with rapid population growth, technological change, economic transformation, and confounding social and health challenges."

For one Inupiat community in Alaska, climate change may mean their imminent forced relocation. Some 427 residents of the village of Kivalina, located on a narrow barrier island 70 mi. north of the Arctic Circle, are faced with a drastic alteration in their local environment. According to their statement, "Due to global warming, the sea ice forms later in the year, attaches to the coast later, breaks up earlier, and is less extensive and thinner. Houses and buildings are in imminent danger of falling into the sea. Critical infrastructure is threatened with permanent destruction" (Indian Country Today 2011c: 18).

In addition to the ecological effects of climate change, Arctic communities are preparing themselves for new struggles over resources and development. As the temperatures warm and the sea ice recedes, land masses and their mineral resources become exposed and available for

extraction. In this changing climatic and development context, new opportunities may exist for Arctic peoples to expand and diversify their economic base. They are, however, aware of the dangers of development that is too rapid and does not take into account long-term consequences. Accordingly, leaders of Inuit communities finalized an agreement in 2011 called the Circumpolar Inuit Declaration on Resource Development Principles asserting that resource development must take place “at a rate sufficient to provide durable and diversified economic growth, but constrained enough to forestall environmental degradation and an overwhelming influx of outside labour.” Furthermore, “While Inuit look forward to new forms and levels of economic development, the use of resources in the Arctic must be conducted in a sustainable and environmentally responsible way, and must deliver direct and substantial benefits to the Inuit” (Indian Country Today 2011d: 15).

Native peoples in other regions are experiencing alterations in their economies due to climatic changes as well. Northwest coast peoples such as the Quinault Indian Nation in Washington have witnessed sharp declines in salmon catches because of retreating glaciers that no longer sufficiently flow into the rivers that are the salmon’s spawning grounds. And in northern Wisconsin, the Ojibwe of the Bad River Reservation have had several years when they have not been able to harvest any wild rice, a traditional staple of their diet and their local economies. The failure of the wild rice crop is due to a combination of warming winters, heavy spring rains that damage young plants, and the spread of plant diseases that proliferate in such a climate.

Several Native nations are constructing new energy projects to replace their reliance on fossil fuels such as coal and oil. The Dine (or Navajos) in Arizona and New Mexico and the Rosebud Lakota in South Dakota are harnessing two sources of energy abundantly available in their territories, that is, wind and sun. The Dine are developing a wind farm near Flagstaff Arizona that is projected to provide power to some 20,000 homes in the area (Navarro 2010). And the Rosebud Lakota began using wind energy at their commercial wind turbine in 2003, generating power for utility companies on and off their reservation.

Treaty Rights

We now look back to the “fish-ins” of the 1950s and 1960s in Washington and Oregon that combined strategies for protecting cultural practices. (See Chapter 20

for details of these events.) Native people of the Northwest were continuing a long tradition of asserting their treaty rights, but rather than employing the methods of pursuing legal suits through the courts or through lobbying public officials and government agencies, they took the action of violating state regulations that restricted their customary fishing activities contrary to treaty guarantees. By fishing “illegally,” Native fishermen claimed their rights to fish in “usual and accustomed places as stipulated in treaties.” Fish-ins helped unite Indians across North America about the political and legal issues raised by the protestors. Supporters in many communities joined to demonstrate their solidarity with indigenous people of the Northwest. The non-Indian media also played an important part by publicizing the claims of Native fishermen to audiences throughout the United States and Canada. Seeking allies in non-Native communities has been a strategy used for hundreds of years, but the availability of national and international media allowed alliances with other groups to develop much more rapidly.

In 1969, the blockade of an international bridge between the United States and Canada that traverses the Mohawk reserve of Akwesasne between the Canadian city of Cornwall, Ontario, and the New York state mainland was another event that asserted Native claims to free and unhindered crossing of the international border as guaranteed by Jay’s Treaty of 1794 (see Chapter 5). The international boundaries that were fixed by foreign powers are culturally meaningless to indigenous people today, but because of the history of state expansion, Native people are restricted by these boundaries. By dramatizing the local problem of a Native nation whose territory was unilaterally divided between two countries, the Mohawks of Akwesasne brought to the fore the issue of unity among all indigenous people in North America.

The occupation of the abandoned federal prison of Alcatraz on an island off the coast of San Francisco in November 1969 was another watershed event. In 1964, one year after the federal penitentiary was closed, five Lakota men living in San Francisco briefly occupied the island, basing their action on their interpretation of the 1868 Fort Laramie treaty signed between Lakotas and the United States that stated that abandoned federal lands could revert to Lakota ownership. The one-day occupation was followed by a suit in federal court claiming title to the island, a suit that was denied. Then, in 1969, after a fire destroyed the San Francisco Indian Center, Native people living in the