

**THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT  
AND AMERICAN INDIANS - AN ONGOING  
RELATIONSHIP SHOWCASED  
BY FEDERAL DOCUMENTS**

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**M**ore than 100 years ago, on June 7, 1902, a report was submitted to the United States Congress to reimburse the claimant for conducting an expedition from Fort Sheridan in 1877 to return a group of American Indians, under the leadership of Chief Crazy Horse, to their reservations.<sup>1</sup> This is only one small example of the ways in which American Indians are documented in federal publications.

American Indians are different in their relationship with the federal government than other minority groups, in that their tribal governments have a formal relationship with the U.S. Government set forth in the Constitution, treaties, statutes and various court decisions. No other ethnic group in this country has this relationship. Interaction between federally recognized tribes and the federal government is that of a government-to-government relationship and, by treaty, the United States agrees to provide certain benefits to tribal groups.<sup>2</sup> Historically this relationship has generated many federal documents and continues to do so.



**ILLUSTRATION 1.** The Hopi Koyala (Koshari) are considered to be Clown Kachinas. They behave in the manner of Pueblo clowns, engaging in loud conversation, inappropriate actions and of course, gluttony. They are often drummers for the dances.

The long and intertwined relationship between American Indian peoples and the federal government becomes apparent when exploring the wide variety of government publications on North American Indians. Since an entire book could be written on the subject, this article will not attempt to be comprehensive. (A good short article is "Essential U.S. Government Publications for Researching Native Americans" by John S. Wilson of Baylor University.<sup>3</sup>) Laws and treaties would be too extensive a topic as well, and are discussed in other sources. Instead, landmarks for traditional research and recent documents illustrating the wide variety in format, subject, and publishing agency will be addressed. These titles are not all federal depository items nor are they all currently documents (as noted) although they were at one time. Notes as to where to acquire the publications that are no longer available from the Government Printing Office have been included.

Researchers should begin with a few of the reference tools that are often used to locate documents on American Indians. Marilyn L. Haas in *Indians of North America, Methods and Sources for Library Research* (1983) recommends the following sources: Michael Tate's *Red Power: Government Publications and Rising Indian Activism of the 1970's* and *Studying the American Indian Through Government Documents and the National Archives*. The second title includes three sections: classic documents indexes of the nineteenth century that provide useful access to older publications; the newer cumulated indexes which cover up to 1975; and the ongoing *Monthly Catalog of United States Government Publications*. The following traditional sources, such as *Guide to US Government Publications* (2002 edition) published by the Gale Group and edited by Donna Batten, *CIS U.S. Serial Set Index, 1789-1969*, and *Using Government Publications. Vol. 1: Searching by Subjects and Agencies* and *Vol. 2: Finding Statistics and Using Special Techniques* by Jean L. Sears and Marilyn K. Moody are also excellent tools.

Online sources useful for locating American Indian federal documents include *OCLC First Search*, *GPO Access*, *CodeTalk* (a federal inter-agency American Indian Web site designed to deliver electronic information from government agencies and other organizations to Native American communities), and the Oklahoma State University Library Web page, <<http://www.library.okstate.edu/govdocs/browsetopics/nativeam.html>>. An e-book source is *American Indian Studies* by Phillip M. White, a reference book and bibliography for Indians of North America, which provides an extensive list of guides to federal government documents and publications. <<http://www.netLibrary.com/urlapi.asp?action=summary&v=1&bookid=18472>>

Researchers will discover many federal agencies still publishing materials on American Indians in a variety of formats. These include Congressional reports and hearings, census materials, health advisories, educational directories, and publications on all aspects of American Indian life, culture, and history. Reports on American Indians may be found with many different SuDoc classification numbers because of being issued by different departments and agencies.

A good way to become aware of the variety of types of information available is to examine the "I" SuDoc classification stem for documents from the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). While this is one agency, it produces many documents, and highlights the types of publications in production. The classification includes:

- I 20.2: General Publications
- I 20.9/2: Laws
- I 20.12/2: Handbooks, Manuals, Guides
- I 20.27: Addresses
- I 20.46: Statistics Concerning Indian Education, Fiscal Year
- I 20.47: Maps and Atlases
- I 20.48: Bibliographies and Lists of Publications
- I 20.51: Indians of (various states)
- I 20.51/2: Indians (various subjects)
- I 20.58: Tribal and Bureau of Law Enforcement Services Automated Data Report
- I 20.61: Annual Report of Indian Lands
- I 20.61/2: Annual Report of Indian Land and Income from Surface and Subsurface Leases
- I 20.61/3: Indian Forest Management (biennial)
- I 20.62: Posters
- I 20.65: BIA Administration Reports
- I 20.66: Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute, Catalog
- I 20.67: Horizons, Indian Mineral Resource (semiannual)

Some examples of SuDocs numbers for titles from other agencies include:

- HE 23.3002:AM 3 *American Indian Elderly: A National Profile*
- ED 1.319: *Indian Reading Series*
- Y 4.IN 2/11:S.hrg. 99-207 *Gambling on Indian Reservations and Lands*
- SI 1.43:2: *Ojibwa Dance Drum: Its History and Construction*<sup>4</sup>

The following is a list of additional federal agencies, highlighting selected American Indian documents they have published:

## BUREAU OF AMERICAN ETHNOLOGY AND SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

The Bureau of American Ethnology has many older documents such as the *SI 2.1: Annual Report* in 48 volumes, a landmark of original field research. In addition to administrative details, it contains papers on aspects of American Indian culture, language, rituals, and history.

*SI 2.3: The Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin* (200 volumes, 1887-1971) includes papers not suited for inclusion in the large annual reports. The subjects covered include anthropology, archeology, history and customs. One of the handbooks frequently cited is *Bulletin 30, Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico*. Within the 200 volume series, two sub-series emerged, *Anthropological Papers* and *River Basin Surveys*. Congress also issued the *BAE Bulletins* concurrently as Serial Set volumes.

## SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

*SI 1.20/2: Handbook of North American Indians* (10 volumes, 1978- ). The purpose of the handbook is to give an encyclopedic summary of what is known about aboriginal peoples of North America. Planning began for the *Handbook* in 1965, and volumes 8 and 15 were the first to appear in print. There have been ten volumes published to date with an additional eleven planned. These volumes contain wonderful illustrations and maps, with well-written articles.

The Smithsonian Institution is preparing a new 20-volume *Handbook of North American Indians* to be published over an extended period. This will be a new encyclopedia, not a revision of the 2-volume *Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico*, which was edited by Frederick W. Hodge and published in

1907-1910. The new handbook will summarize scholarly knowledge of the history of the cultures of all North American Indians and Eskimos, from the earliest prehistoric times up to the present. While most of the several hundred authors are academic scholars such as anthropologists and historians, they are writing for a broader audience. The *Handbook* articles will be written for the educated general reader as well as the specialist. The work should become a standard reference encyclopedia not only for university teachers and students and researchers but also for Indian peoples and those whose jobs involve aspects of American Indian life and culture.<sup>5</sup>

## BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

The Bureau of Indian Affairs is a rarity among federal agencies. With roots reaching back to the Continental Congress, the BIA is almost as old as the United States itself. For most of its existence, the BIA has mirrored the American public's ambivalence towards the nation's indigenous peoples by carrying out federal policies that have helped or hurt them. But, as federal policy has evolved away from the subjugation and assimilation of American Indian and Alaskan Native people and into one of partnership and service to them, so has the BIA's mission.

BIA provides federal services to approximately 1.2 million American Indians and Alaska Natives, who are members of more than 558 federally recognized Indian tribes in the 48 contiguous United States and in Alaska. The Bureau administers 43,450,266.97 acres of tribally owned land, 10,183,530.13 acres of individually owned land and 417,224.98 acres of federally owned land, which is held in trust.

The tribes' relationship with the Bureau is often described as a love-hate relationship. On the one hand, the Bureau is the symbol of the tribes' special relationship with the federal government. On the other hand, tribes have suffered from mismanagement, paternalism, and neglect. It is the hope and objective of many tribal peoples and government officials that tribes can enter



ILLUSTRATION 2. Navajo Child

into a more equal relationship with the Bureau and that the Bureau can function in an advisory capacity.<sup>6</sup> The Indian Trust Web site, <<http://www.indiantrust.com>>, contains information about the lawsuit, *Cobell v. Norton*. This is a class action suit against the federal government regarding mismanagement of Individual Indian Monies trust accounts.

The BIA has published a wide variety of materials about the American Indians in the United States, as indicated by the SuDoc classification outline earlier. A selection of useful and recent publications includes:

### I 20.1 *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to the Secretary of the Interior.*

U.S. Department of the Interior. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1849-1909. The Indian Affairs Office was established in 1806 and placed under the jurisdiction of the Department of War until 1848. The Indian Affairs Office was then relocated to the Department of the Interior in 1849. The name changed to Bureau of Indian Affairs in 1934.

I 20.2 C1/2 *American Indian Calendar* (Annual). U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs. Washington, Dept. of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs; for sale by the Supt. Of Docs., U.S. Govt. Print. Office. The purpose of this annual document is to acquaint tourists with interesting events scheduled on Indian reservations during the year, such as ceremonials, dances, feasts, and celebrations.

I 20.64:date *Spawning the Medicine River*. This publication was originally published by the BIA three times a year, but has been discontinued as government document. It is now published with the title *Tyuonyi* by the Creative Writing Program of the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, New Mexico. This is one of the leading publications in the country that publish writings of American Indians and contains poetry, fiction, and plays. This series can be used as a supplementary text in creative writing courses.

## DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

D 1.2:W 25 *20<sup>th</sup> Century Warriors: Native American Participation in the United States Military*. United States. Dept. of Defense CEHP Incorporated. [Washington, D.C.?]: The Dept., 1996.

## EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (U.S.)

ED 1.331/2:EDO-RC-01-3 *Career and Academic Guidance for American Indian and Alaska Native Youth*. Shutiva, Charmaine L. ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools 2001.

ED 1.310/2:438155. *Teaching American Indian and Alaska Native Languages in the Schools: What Has Been Learned*. ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools. 1999.

ED 1.310/2:400129 *Directory of American Indian Tribes*. U.S. Dept. of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, ERIC, 1996. Microfiche.

ED 1.310/2:400218 *American Indian Population Statistics*. U.S. Dept. of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, ERIC, 1996. Microfiche.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

American Indian Environment Office, < <http://www.epa.gov/indian> > coordinates the agency-wide effort to strengthen public health and environmental protection in areas with significant American Indian populations, with a special emphasis on building tribal capacity to administer their own environmental programs.

PREX 1.2:T 73 *Tribal Environmental and Natural Resource Assistance Handbook*. Domestic Policy Council (U.S.) Working Group on American Indians and Alaska Natives; 1999. The handbook is intended to provide a central location for federal sources of both technical and financial assistance available to tribes for environmental management.

#### UNITED STATES GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

I 19.111/A:998/L 23 *The National Atlas of the United States. Federal and Indian Lands*. Geological Survey, 1998.

I 19.2:IN 2/7 *U.S. Geological Survey Indian Lands Maps*. U.S. Dept. of the Interior. U.S. Geological Survey, 2000.

#### DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

The Administration for Native Americans provides programs promoting self-determination, self-sufficiency, and social and economic development for Native peoples throughout the United States and its territories. Its Web site is <<http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/ana>>.

HE 20.9421; HE 20.316 *Trends in Indian Health*, United States Indian Health Service; Division of Program Statistics, [Washington D.C.] U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, 1989-.

Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Native American Programs

**Code Talk** <<http://www.codetalk.fed.us>> is a useful Web site for topics such as American Indian housing, health, the arts, the environment, and children's issues. Tools used are training, best practices, mailing lists, maps, and state and local resources. The site links to other American Indian and Alaska Native resources.

#### DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT; OFFICE OF CRIME PREVENTION AND SECURITY

HH 1.6D 84/KIT *Fiscal Year 1997 Public and Indian Housing Drug Elimination Grant Program: Application Kit*. U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Public and Indian Housing, etc. 1997.

#### UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

The Minneapolis Division of the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation offers information about the Leonard Peltier case through its Web site <<http://www.fbi.gov/contact/fo/minn/peltier.htm>>. The case involves the arrest, trial, and conviction of Ojibwa-Lakota activist Leonard Peltier (1944-) for the murders of two FBI agents, who were killed in a shoot out near Pine Ridge, South Dakota, in 1975.

#### NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL LIBRARY – UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

NAL E98:F7T74 (NAL classification - not officially a government document) *Tribal Cooking: Traditional Stories and Favorite Recipes/Minwanjigewin Nutrition Project, Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council, Inc.* Eades, Marla. Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council [Wisconsin]: Minwanjigewin Nutrition Project, 1996. The Minwanjigewin (meaning "eating something that tastes good and is good for you" in Ojibwe) Nutrition Project was the USDA Community Nutrition Education Cooperative Agreement for the American Indian tribes in Wisconsin. The project goal was to increase nutrition knowledge through culturally appropriate methods. The target population included participants in the Women, Infants, and Children program, the Food Distribution Program, Elder Nutrition Program, and community members in 11 tribes. The purpose of the cookbook was to preserve traditional recipes that had never before been put in writing. The final product included over 75 recipes and stories contributed by members of all Wisconsin tribes.<sup>7</sup>

The process of developing this particular cookbook took over one year and involved numerous face-to-face interviews with tribal elders, many of whom were 70-80 years old. Tribal Certified Nutrition Assistants conducted interviews that involved two or more visits, tested recipes, and converted measurements to standard format, then returned to the elders for clarification. In addition to the recipes and stories, the cookbook contains original art, photos of some of the elders, and other important nutritional information. One of the results of the cookbook project was the reconfiguration of the national Food Guide Pyramid into a culturally appropriate circle with segments that reflected the proportions of the pyramid layers.<sup>8</sup> The

second edition of this cookbook can be purchased at:  
<<http://glitc.bfm.org/health/cookbook/default.php>>

## NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

### *The Genealogy Page: American Indians*

<[http://www.archives.gov/research\\_room/genealogy/index.html](http://www.archives.gov/research_room/genealogy/index.html)> lists the records published on microfilm by the National Archives and Records Administration that relate directly to American Indians and to the formation of federal Indian policy.

## NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

*The National Archeological Database – The Center for Advanced Spatial Technologies* <<http://www.cast.uark.edu/other/nps/nadb/>> hosts the NADB Online System under a cooperative agreement with the National Park Service. Accessible are inventories of over 120,000 archeological investigations and maps displaying archaeological and environmental data at the state and county level. Documents related to guidance and compliance with the *Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act* are included.

## UNITED STATES CONGRESS

**Y 4.IN 2/11:S.Hrg. 106-730 *Indian Gaming: Hearing before the Committee on Indian Affairs***, United States Senate, One Hundred Sixth Congress, second session, provides information on the activities of the national Indian Gaming Commission, July 26, 2000, Washington D.C. United States. Congress. Senate. Committee on Indian Affairs (1993-) U.S. G.P.O. 2000.

**Y 1.1/8:107-211 *Native American Small Business Development Act: Report Together with Additional Views*** (to accompany H.R. 2538, including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office). United States. Congress. House. Committee on Rules.

This introduction to recent and traditional sources on American Indians, published by the federal government, highlights the intertwined history and future of American Indians and the United States government. The variety of agencies involved shows the many facets of American Indian life and culture in which the federal government has an historical interest. Researchers and librarians interested in the history, culture, economy, and legal problems facing American Indians can locate a great deal of information through federal documents, whether in print, microfiche, or online.

## REFERENCES

- <sup>1</sup> U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Indian Affairs *F.C. Boucher: Mr. Gamble, from the Committee on Indian Affairs, submitted the following report to accompany S. 2991. 57<sup>th</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess., 1901-1902 S Rept 1839.*
- <sup>2</sup> Patterson, Lotsee, "History and Status of Native Americans in Librarianship" *Library Trends* 49, no. 1, (Summer 2000), 182-193.
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Ebook version: <<http://www.netLibrary.com/urlapi.asp?action=summary&v=1&bookid=18472>>, Englewood, Colo.:Libraries Unlimited, 1995.
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- <sup>5</sup> Batten, Donna, ed. *Guide to U.S. Government Publications*. 2002 ed. Farmington Hills, Michigan: Gale Group, 2002, 696.
- <sup>6</sup> Henson, C. L. *American Studies Today Online, From War to Self-Determination. A history of the Bureau of Indian Affairs*: < <http://www.americansc.org.uk/Online/indians.htm>> (September 9, 2003).
- <sup>7</sup> Review, *Journal of Nutrition Education* 30, (1998) 340D.
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