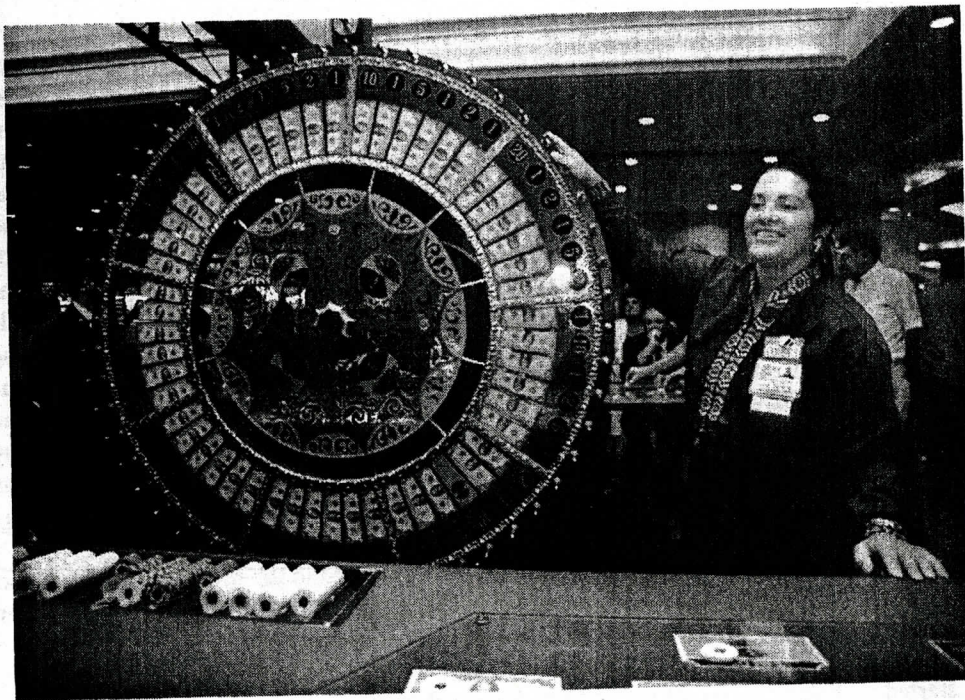


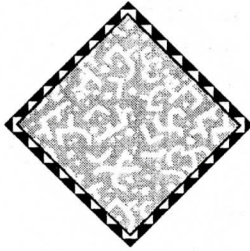
Native Americans



A Struggle to Maintain Political and Cultural Pluralism



Several Native American tribes have been quite successful in economic enterprises such as gaming, tourism, and managing mineral rights on tribal lands. The tribes have invested their profits in education, health care, and Native American businesses. Profits have also been used to maintain or recreate tribal cultural traditions. Some question whether Native Americans can participate actively in capitalistic institutions and still maintain distinctive tribal values and orientations.



*American Indians changed when it was necessary for their survival,
but they have adjusted in ways that have allowed them to preserve
their most valued traditions and lifestyles.*

—C. Matthew Snipp

*All cultures must depend on their younger generations to keep
perpetuating age-old traditions. . . . They are the future leaders of our
tribal people and in many ways are helping to keep our traditions alive.
The work we are doing in the court room and in the state and federal
legislatures is not just for our clients—the Native peoples of this country—
but it is also for ourselves, our children, and our children's children.*

—Native American Rights Fund

Throughout American history, federal Indian policy has shifted between the desire to segregate the Indian people and the desire to assimilate them. By negotiating treaties with Indian tribes, placing Indians on reservations away from Anglo Americans, and encouraging separate tribal governments, U.S. policies have promoted separatism. Overall though, some form of assimilation has been the most prominent policy. Recall that (1) the U.S. government altered the Indians' status as sovereign nations in 1871 and began treating them like other subordinate minority groups; (2) the General Allotment Act tried to eliminate tribal land bases and make individual Indians on the reservations into land-owning farmers and ranchers; (3) the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) schools promoted English-only education and forced some Indian children to attend boarding schools away from their families; (4) the relocation of some Indians from the reservations to urban areas weakened their ties to the cultures of the reservations; and (5) the forced "termination" of services to some tribes and the denial of tribal status to many groups of Indians threatened to extinguish tribal life. How successful have the various assimilationist efforts been in promoting the cultural and structural assimilation of Native Americans?

The struggles of the American Indians have occurred in the reverse order from that of nearly all other American ethnic groups.¹ Groups who came from overseas, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, started with no political or cultural rights and mainly have attempted to gain political and cultural equality with the majority; Indians, in contrast, started with their own nations and have gradually lost much of what they had to the advancing Anglo American group. Since most Indian tribes have long been separate political entities, they have been forced to struggle to maintain their own institutions and beliefs in the face of tremendous racism and governmental policies of forced assimilation.

Chapter 11 suggested that, despite the pressures, the levels of each form of assimilation among American Indians are, in general, comparatively low. Indeed, as we saw, the Indians have clung tenaciously to their tribal heritages and presently are struggling to amplify a pan-Indian identity and to renew tribal sovereignty. Also suggested in the pre-

vious discussion of the migration of Indians to urban areas is the view that the reservations are the repositories of the traditional cultures and that, therefore, the Indians who remain on the reservations are likely to live in a more traditional way and to be more successful in preserving their tribal heritages than are off-reservation Indians. Ideally, therefore, to assess the levels of cultural, secondary structural, primary structural, and all of the other forms of assimilation of the American Indians, one would wish to be able to state the current level of each type of assimilation among each of the distinct Indian groups, taking into account the differences between reservation and off-reservation residents within each tribe. Such a complete approach cannot be attempted here. Rather we must rely on general comparisons that tend to submerge the important differences that exist among the tribes and a few examples chosen to illustrate some contemporary variations among the tribes.

Cultural Assimilation

Who is an Indian? In the previous chapters, we have discussed the difficulty of classifying the members of various ethnic groups. Similarly, the issues raised by the efforts to identify Native Americans also are complex. Tribal classifications are important because they have been used over the years to decide who was entitled to government rights and privileges and who was not (Barringer 1993).

For many years, the federal government attempted to define the American Indian population based on the concept of **blood quantum**² levels. In the nineteenth century, as discussed in Chapter 5, scientific ideas concerning race and racial differences were based on the ancient belief that "races" are sharply distinguishable genetic categories and that both physical and cultural traits are transmitted "through the blood" from one generation to the next. The presumed "amount" of blood that a person possessed from a particular race determined the degree to which that person would resemble and behave like others of similar biological background. For example, **full-blood** Indians were presumed to have the full measure of physical and social characteristics ascribed to Indians. Individuals with one White and one Indian parent were "half breeds" or **mixed-bloods** and were expected to have one-half of the physical and social characteristics of each parent. The BIA used this blood quantum method to identify members of the Indian population. BIA officials calculated that if both parents were "pure" Indian, the blood quantum of their children was 100 percent. The children of racially mixed marriages were presumed to have some calculable fraction of "Indian blood," such as three-fourths, one-half, or one-eighth.

The blood quantum method is still used in some situations. For example, a one-fourth blood quantum is the minimal requirement for receiving some government services, such as medical care on the reservations. On this scale, a large number of tribal governments use one-sixteenth to one-half blood quantum criteria for determining tribal membership (Snipp 1989:34). Bordewich (1996:73) noted that Indians quite commonly speak about being "seven sixteenths Blackfeet or fifteen thirty-seconds Cheyenne." He also said that the Pequots of Connecticut have arbitrarily defined their late-nineteenth century

greatgreatgrandparents as "full-blood" for the purpose of tribal enrollment. As the relationship between the blood quantum approach and the ideas of scientific racism have been clarified, Native American activists increasingly have challenged the racist assumptions underlying blood quantum tests of Indianness (Nagel 1996:244). Indeed, the terms *full-blood* and *mixed-blood* frequently refer to a person's cultural commitment rather than to some presumption concerning his or her biological ancestry.

Amid controversies over how to determine who is a member of the various ethnic and racial groups, the federal government adopted **self-identification** as the method of classification for the Census Bureau and for most other agencies. As a result, changes in the ways that Native Americans have classified themselves are believed by demographers to be among the most important sources of the rapid growth of the Indian population. For example, the Indian population counted in the census increased more than fivefold in the three decades following 1950 (Passel and Berman 1986). Eschbach (1995) carefully analyzed birth and death rates and migration patterns and determined that the unexpected growth in the Native American population indicated that a large proportion of persons of mixed descent are now identifying themselves as Indian. These increases in the Indian population have occurred in urban areas as well as on the still largely segregated reservations. The reality that the population has not diminished as tribal members have learned English and intermarried has challenged the idea based on the assimilation models that the Indian population would decrease over time.

Nagel and Snipp (1993) proposed that ethnogenesis is occurring among Native Americans.³ They argued that in response to reduced numbers and various threats to their survival, some tribes have combined, resulting in the disappearance of some groups, the growth of other groups, and the creation of multitribal composite communities. The formal recognition of some groups and not others as Indian tribes by the federal government has also forced Indians to reorganize, with some reservation tribes adopting tighter, more exclusionary membership rules and nonreservation tribes adopting looser, more inclusionary rules. For many Indians, the process of ethnogenesis has meant that the pan-Indian "nationality," which we discussed in Chapter 11, has become a new ethnic identity. Nagel and Snipp (1993:212) found that in 1910 only 8 percent of American Indians failed to report a tribal affiliation, but by 1980 almost one-quarter of the Americans who reported their race to be Indian failed to designate a tribe. Some of this ethnogenesis has occurred because of federal policy makers' tendency to treat the culturally varied Native American groups simply as "Indians." The increasing urbanization of the American Indian population also has provided a basis for pan-Indian identification. Eschbach (1995) suggested that having an Indian heritage has come to convey a positive status that it formerly did not have, which has encouraged many people of mixed descent now to claim their Indian heritage.

The experiences of the Native Americans provide good examples of the complexities of the processes of assimilation. As we noted in Chapter 11, this group represents almost 550 diverse cultural tribes and officially recognized groups that have survived wars and policies aimed at their annihilation. The processes through which the Indians have moved toward becoming sovereign states and toward developing a pan-Indian identity illustrate the changing nature and dynamics of ethnic relations in the United States. Let us look more closely at the operation of these processes.

Language Maintenance

At the time of first contact with Europeans, at least 200 and, perhaps as many as 1,200, languages and dialects were spoken by the Native American tribes.⁴ By 1990, less than one third of those identifying themselves as American Indians spoke a language other than English, and fewer than 3 percent spoke no English at all. Although some of the tribes have managed to maintain their languages and are teaching them in reservation schools, many Indian languages are now extinct. For example, the Narragansetts of New England and the Luisenos of California have not spoken their native languages for at least a century. In addition to the languages that are no longer used, several other Indian languages may be nearing extinction. The Sac and Fox Indians of Oklahoma, for instance, are mainly English speakers. Among the Omahas, less than 10 percent of those under the age of 40 speak only the native tongue. By 1980, in fact, in only one census region of the country (the Mountain States) did a majority of the Indians (62 percent) speak their native language in the home. The next highest region of native language use was in the west north-central region (21 percent) (Snipp 1989:176).

Although for the most part Indian children have been forced to learn English, and many of the Indian languages have disappeared as the elders of the tribe die, a number of different Indian languages are used in varying degrees on a daily basis. In some cases, these languages are spoken by a majority of the tribal members who usually also speak English, Spanish, or French. For example, most Oklahoma Cherokees, Iroquois, and Penobscots are bilingual. Furthermore, many Indians also speak more than a single Indian language or Indian dialect. In some cases, where the Indian languages already are in general use within a tribe, the number of native language speakers is growing. Among the Navajos—the largest reservation tribe in the United States—a majority of those on the reservation use the mother tongue in the home. Now that the Indians have control of the curriculum in the schools on the reservations, Navajo is also a language of instruction in the Rough Rock School and the Navajo Community College. Among the Apaches and many other tribes there is a renewed interest in learning and using the mother tongue (Olson and Wilson 1984:202–204; Nagel 1996:194–198).

What, then, are the general prospects for the survival and growth of the Indian languages? Since, presumably, a language community is easier to maintain in comparative isolation, we should expect Indian languages to fare better on, or near reservations; and since children are more likely to be affected by exposure to alien languages than are adults, we should expect older people to report a greater use of an Indian language. An analysis by Gundlach and Busch (1981) showed that Indians who were 25 years or older were more likely than those under 25 to report that an Indian language was used in their home when they were children. This finding was true for both reservation and off-reservation Indians; however, the percentage who reported an Indian mother tongue was much higher for both age groups among the reservation Indians. Snipp's (1989:178) analysis confirmed that native language speakers are generally found in nonmetropolitan and reservation areas. For instance, in the east south-central region of the country, around 90 percent of the Indians living on or near a reservation speak a native language in the home, whereas in the same region only about 5 percent of those in metropolitan areas do so.

Snipp (1989:180) also reported some interesting findings concerning age differences in language use. Older people were more likely than children to be among those who speak a native language but little English, though the proportions in both cases were low. Among those between the ages of 61 and 70, for instance, around 5 percent spoke little English. Among those between the ages of 11 and 20, less than 2 percent spoke little English. Of special interest is the finding that young people were slightly *more* likely than older people to speak a native language and also to be fluent English speakers.

These data suggest that, although those who live on or near reservations and in non-metropolitan areas are more likely to have an Indian mother tongue than those who live in metropolitan areas, English is nevertheless the primary language of most American Indians. They also indicate, however, that approximately 25 percent of the Indians are fluent in both English and a native language, and that the younger people are slightly more likely to be bilingual than the older. As far as languages alone are concerned, then, the Indian cultures seem very unlikely to disappear within the next generation or two. The actual conditions among American Indians may well be more nearly consistent with the pluralist conception of cultural assimilation (i.e., by language addition) than with the Anglo conformity conception (i.e., by language substitution). The critical point here, of course, is the extent to which American Indians continue to become or remain bilingual and multilingual.

Although language is an extremely important part of culture, there also are other significant cultural elements that may continue, be modified, or die whether a native language exists or not. For example, religious preferences and ceremonies, housing styles, hair and dress styles, recreational patterns, and so on also reveal whether, or to what extent, one way of life has been added to or exchanged for another.

Indian Religious Freedom

Our historical sketch in Chapter 11 has shown that an enormous effort has been made by many different religious bodies to Christianize the Indians. The resulting pattern of religious affiliations is very complex. Many American Indians have accepted Christian beliefs, many practice both Christian rites and those of an Indian religion, and many adhere solely to an Indian religion. In the latter case, as we saw in the Ghost Dance religion, some elements of Christianity also may be included. In many cases, an adherence to Christian or native religious ways parallels a person's general level of "Indianness" which, in turn, tends to be related to whether a person is considered to be a "full-blood" or "mixed-blood." In general, "full-bloods" are culturally more conservative, more likely to live on a reservation, and more likely to practice an Indian religion.

Several native religions among American Indians are closely identified with particular tribes. The Silas John religion of the Apaches and the Handsome Lake (or Longhouse) religion of the Iroquois are illustrative. Probably the best known, and certainly the most controversial of the Indian religions is practiced by members of the Native American Church (NAC). The NAC is a pan-Indian religious movement that is nevertheless closely related to traditional tribal life (Hertzberg 1971:239). Its religious beliefs are compatible in several important respects with those of most Christian denomina-

tions. The church emphasizes brotherly love, close family ties, self-reliance, and the avoidance of alcohol. The controversial element, however, arises from the ritual use by NAC members of peyote as a formal part of the sacrament. Peyote contains several psychedelic substances. Therefore a number of state governments have declared the use, possession, or transportation of peyote by Indians for traditional religious purposes illegal. The NAC prohibits recreational use of the drug (Wax 1971:142-144), but numerous Indians practicing this religion have been arrested for their religious use or possession of peyote.

In addition to the NAC, a variety of Christian denominations and native religions may be found among most Indian tribes. For example, the Comanches are mainly members of the Methodist and Dutch Reformed churches, but a substantial number also belong to the NAC or practice their tribal religion; the Kiowas are divided among the Catholic, Methodist, Episcopal, and Baptist churches, as well as the NAC; the Pawnees include Catholics, members of the NAC, and adherents to their tribal religion; and the Sioux are mainly Episcopalians, Catholics, or members of the Church of God. They, too, include many members of the NAC and their tribal Yuwipi cult. In many cases, individual American Indians belong to more than one religious organization (Spicer 1980a:88-92). This crisscross pattern of religious experiences and affiliations frequently has been the basis of conflict within some tribes. The Nez Percés, for instance, long have been split between rival Presbyterian and Catholic groups, whereas the Prairie Band of the Potawatomis have been torn between conservatives, who adhere largely to the native religions, and liberals who are mainly Christians (Spicer 1980a:79, 95). In a unique blending of traditions, the Our Lady of Guadalupe Church on the Zuni Indian Reservation has combined the religious icons of the Catholic religion with large murals of more than two dozen life-sized kachinas, the spirit beings of Pueblo culture. The Catholic church has officially acknowledged a need to respect the cultural traditions of the Zuni who want to worship God in a way that is familiar to them (Niebuhr 1995).

The various religious factions have been united, however, in coalitions to protect Native American religious freedom. For many Indians, even those who are Christians, traditional religion and ceremonies are the essence of Native American culture. Congress passed a joint resolution called the "American Indian Religious Freedom Act" in 1978, but the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in the case *Employment Division of Oregon v. Smith* in 1990 that the First Amendment of the Constitution does not protect the religious use of peyote by Indians.

This situation led to a pan-Indian effort in support of new legislation to guarantee religious freedom to Indians (NARF Legal Review 1994). The Native American Cultural Protection and Free Exercise of Religion Act was introduced in 1994 by Senator Inouye of Hawaii. The legislation allowed the religious use of peyote by Indians and offered protection for Native American cultural and religious sites, the cultural and religious rights of Native American prisoners, and the cultural or religious use of eagle feathers and other animals or plants by Native Americans in religious ceremonies. The Indians were concerned about some 44 sacred sites that were threatened by tourism, development, and resource exploitation. Additionally, many Native American prisoners were denied access to Indian spiritual leaders and denied the opportunities to practice their religions, despite the fact that other prisoners had access to priests, ministers, rabbis, and other religious

leaders. Finally, Native Americans faced criminal prosecution if they were found in possession of eagle parts or feathers due to the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act.

The proposed legislation⁵ permitted the use of lawfully obtained eagle feathers and provided for the protection of the free exercise of religion by Native Americans. The right of Indians to use peyote in religious services became law in 1994, and in that same year President Clinton relaxed a provision of the Endangered Species Act to meet demands from Indian leaders that they be permitted to gather eagle feathers and carcasses used in religious ceremonies. The sacred site component of the bill met resistance from legislators concerned that the legislation would be extended to non-Indian land-based religious claims. The legislation that was passed, however, required federally funded institutions and government agencies to return Indian skeletons, grave goods associated with Indian burials, and other sacred and culturally significant articles to those Indian tribes and individuals with a justified claim to them. Opponents of the legislation requiring the return of Indian remains argued that because of emerging techniques for analyzing skeletal material, scientific knowledge of early American diseases, diet, and settlement patterns would be lost if the artifacts were not available for study. Some compromises have been reached; many of the artifacts have been returned to the proper tribes; and an increasing number of Indian scholars have assumed important roles in museums that were formerly Anglo dominated (Washburn 1995:252–256).

Traditions

The variety and complexity that exist among American Indians in regard to language and religion extend to every other sphere of life. In many cases, the members of a given tribe may live in a manner that is largely indistinguishable from that of their White neighbors, although even in such cases of high cultural assimilation, certain distinctive Indian elements may still be present. For example, Lorraine Canoe, a Mohawk Indian, has lived in Brooklyn for more than 35 years; but she considers the Mohawk reservation her real home.⁶ She was born there and hopes to return when she retires. In the time she has been in New York, she has tried to return to the reservation for as many ceremonies as she can. She takes a 9-hour bus trip to the reservation for about half of the 13 annual ceremonies and spends her summer breaks there. She owns a house on the reservation where her two grown daughters live. She cooks traditional boiled corn bread and brings one of her favorites—deer meat—back from the reservation. Although her daughters grew up in New York, they moved back to the reservation because they preferred the more traditional life and relaxed pace.

The split lives of urban Indians and variety of cultural “mixes” also extends to differences within various tribes. Consider the Oklahoma Cherokees, for example. This non-reservation group is located principally within a five-county region of northeastern Oklahoma, and the people who are considered, or consider themselves to be, Cherokees vary markedly in culture. The Cherokee tribe, with over 300,000 members in 1990, was the largest American Indian tribe (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1995:50). Wax (1971:92–93) distinguished broadly between the “tribal Cherokees” and those “of Cherokee lineage.” The tribal Cherokees live in old, distinctively Cherokee communities that have Cherokee

names, and among these groups the main language of the home and church is Cherokee. Those of Cherokee lineage, however, may maintain only the most superficial connection with their heritage. They may have no social relationships with the tribal Cherokees, may live entirely in the White way, and may be unable to speak Cherokee. This same general pattern of variation within specific tribes may be found throughout the United States.

Consider the case of the Pequots, a 260-member Connecticut tribe. After 350 years of dispersion, most of its language, important ceremonial dances, and other traditions have disappeared. After the tribe introduced big-stakes gambling, it became enormously wealthy. In an effort to reconstruct an Indian culture, the tribe used some of its millions in profits to stage a major powwow that drew about 1,200 American Indians from all over North America to compete for prizes in sharing their traditional dances, skills, and songs (Johnson 1993:16). The Pequots said that they planned to observe the other tribes and borrow and adapt what they could in an effort to construct a culture of their own.

What, then, are we to conclude concerning the cultural assimilation of American Indians? First, all tribal cultures have been drastically changed by their long period of contact with the dominant American culture;⁷ hence, a large majority of American Indians today speak English as one of their languages and exhibit greater or lesser degrees of acceptance of Anglo American ways. Second, the number of people who bear a particular Indian culture has, in many cases, either stabilized or now is increasing. Third, in addition to the maintenance and elaboration of the many tribal cultures, pan-Indian culture continues to develop. Although traditional rivalries and factionalism are still prominent, these increasingly are being subordinated to the larger concerns that affect all American Indians. Simultaneously, Indian people are emphasizing ways in which the many tribes share certain values.

American Indian Ethnic Renewal

There are many forces both inside and outside the American Indian communities that have promoted pan-Indian identity. Many have objected to the emergence of "Indian" as an ethnic group identifier, arguing that it reduces the experiences of Native Americans, who are tribal sovereign nations, to the status of immigrant ethnic groups who have no rights to sovereignty or nationhood (Nagel 1996:8). As we saw in Chapter 11, however, the activism of the 1960s convinced many Indian leaders that they had much in common with other minority groups. They increasingly thought of themselves as "Indians," as well as members of their tribal groups. Ironically, many of the policies aimed at assimilation, such as Indian education, political and economic development of the reservations, urban relocation, and settlement of land claims, led instead to increases in Indian ethnic identification and an Indian ethnic resurgence (Nagel 1996:115). Let us look at some of those processes.

Pan-Indian Identity. The boarding schools often provided young Indians with their first opportunities to interact with members of other tribes and to identify similarities in values. The Carlisle School in Pennsylvania tried to bring students from different tribes together to teach them English and citizenship skills. In doing so, English became

a language Indian students could use across tribes. The school also produced marriages across tribes, which strengthened mixed tribal identity. Indians educated in these schools became some of the first pan-Indian leaders (Nagel 1996:116). Pan-Indian values—which Steele (1982:287) called “the informal credentials of ‘Indianness’”—included things such as an acceptance of obligations to the extended family, the importance of mutual aid among Indians, noninterference in the affairs of others, a reverence for nature, and pride in a knowledge of Indian languages.

Service in the military was another experience that contributed to both the assimilation of Indians into U.S. society and to the development of a pan-Indian identity. To others in the military who knew little about tribal differences, the Pequots, Sioux, Navajos, Cherokees, and Mohawks became simply “Indians.” After World War II, many Indians used their G.I. benefits to pursue additional education and, in the process, gained a better understanding of the common Indian problems of poverty and unemployment.

When tribes pursued legal claims in court, many of the petitions involved more than one tribe and required many occasions of intertribal contact and cooperation. Additionally, the publicity of the Red Power civil rights movement and the political organization required to participate in the massive federal programs of the Great Society in the 1960s combined to mobilize members of many different tribes as “American Indians.” As the urban Indian population grew, pan-Indianism increased in importance. Active all-Indian associations formed in the urban areas containing large Indian populations. The Bay Area American Indian Council of San Francisco, representing around 100 tribes, and the Chicago American Indian Center, also representing nearly 100 tribes, became prominent examples of this trend (Spicer 1980a:113). Additionally, numerous all-Indian powwows, dances, and ceremonies, such as the annual American Indian Exposition at Anadarko, Oklahoma, encouraged American Indians to travel and associate with one another.

Finally, the maintenance of the tribal cultures and the development of a pan Indian culture both serve to ensure that the American Indians will have the option to remain American Indians even as they continue to assimilate the dominant culture. As Stewart (1977a:521) observed, “eventually, Indian cultures may fade away”; but, in the meantime, “Indians believe they can function with competence in modern society as Indians.”

Secondary Structural Assimilation

The long period of conflict with the dominant society, the unwillingness of most tribes to adopt the dominant American ways, and the continuation of prejudice and discrimination into the present all have conspired to keep the Indians from participating equally in the educational, occupational, and financial systems of American society. For many decades, American Indians have lived in poverty, been ravaged by poor health and early death, and been inadequately clothed and sheltered. American Indians long have been, as Josephy (1971:15) stated, “the poorest of the poor.”

No simple statistical accounting can do justice to the suffering the Indian peoples have endured. The authors of a 1969 report of the U.S. Senate's Special Subcommittee on Indian Education (Joseph 1971:168) commented on this point as follows:

We are shocked at what we discovered. . . . We have developed page after page of statistics. These cold figures mark a stain on our national conscience, a stain which has spread slowly for hundreds of years. They tell a story . . . but they cannot tell the whole story. They cannot . . . tell of the despair, the frustration, the hopelessness, the poignancy, of children who want to learn but are not taught; . . . of families which want to stay together but are forced apart; or of . . . children who want neighborhood schools but are sent thousands of miles away to remote and alien boarding schools.

Education

If we consider a bit further the matter of schooling, two points stand out. First, there have been some definite increases in the educational levels of Indians during recent years; but, second, their educational attainments still lag noticeably behind those of Whites. For example, by 1989 more than 65 percent of all Indians over the age of 24 had completed twelve years or more of schooling; at the same time, more than 79 percent of the comparable White population had completed the same level of education (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1995:48, 50). Following a cohort of students from eighth to twelfth grade through 1992, the National Center for Education Statistics (1994) found that Native Americans had a 19.9 percent dropout rate compared to a 12.7 percent rate for Hispanics, a 9.6 percent rate for Blacks, and a 6.1 percent rate for Whites. As we have seen in some of our comparisons of Mexican and Black Americans with Whites, the rates of increase in college attendance have been higher among Indians than among Whites, but the absolute size of the gap between the groups has grown. The high percentages of high school and college dropouts among the Indian population has lowered young people's expectations of completing school. Bordewich (1996:286) quoted the Dean of Students at Haskell College at Lawrence, Kansas (formerly the Indian School, Haskell Institute) as saying, "Not long ago a kid came to me and said he wanted to drop out of school. I asked him why. He said, 'Because that's what Indians do.'"

We emphasized previously that the range of social variation among Indians is wide and that this point certainly applies to differences in educational attainment. Probably the most noticeable differences are between those who live in nonmetropolitan or reservation areas and those who live elsewhere; but there also are large differences between the young and the old. In general, for both sexes, those who live in cities and are young attain the highest average levels of education. For example, among metropolitan Indians older than 24 years who live in various regions of the country, the percentage of those with 12 or more years of education ranges, roughly, between 57 and 71 percent, whereas among those in nonmetropolitan areas the range is 37 to 60 percent. When people of different ages who live in various regions and have completed 12 or more years of education are compared, the range for those between the ages of 25 and 30 (including both

sexes and both types of residential location) is, roughly, 71 to 79 percent, and for those over seventy the range lies between 13 and 29 percent (Snipp 1989:196-198).

There are substantial educational differences, too, among those who are over 24 and reside on one of the 16 largest reservations. To illustrate, in 1970 almost 36 percent of those over 24 on the Wind River Reservation (WY) graduated from high school, whereas less than 13 percent graduated on the Papago Reservation (AZ). In 1980, these levels were over 39 and 25 percent, respectively. During the decade, however, the relative ranking of the reservations changed. In 1980, the Fort Peck Reservation (MT) had the highest proportion of graduates (almost 50 percent), whereas the Rosebud Reservation (SD) had the lowest (almost 20 percent) (Snipp 1989:202-203).

These figures attest to a general and rapid rise in the educational levels of Indians—levels that now approximate those of Mexican and Black Americans—but they tell us nothing concerning the quality of the schooling Indians receive, nor do they answer the question, "What does the educational experience of Indian children mean to them?" One devastating answer to that question may be found in the most extensive study of American education, the famous Coleman Report (1966). This study revealed that in answer to the question, "How bright do you think you are?" Indian children ranked themselves below all other groups.

We referred earlier to the schools operated by the BIA and their role in the attempt to force the Indians to adopt Anglo conformity. In the early days of this system, a comparatively small number of children attended the public schools. Now, however, over two-thirds of the Indian children attend public schools. The role of some of the government-operated schools has changed markedly. Many Indians now view the BIA reservation schools as their best chance to mold Indian education along the lines they desire. In some instances, when the BIA has attempted to close reservation schools, the Indians have protested and stopped the closings (Washburn 1973:103-104).

Lack of adequate funding, however, has seriously threatened the ability of the reservation schools to provide an adequate education. Despite a decade of efforts to improve the school for Pueblo children on the San Felipe Indian Reservation, Indian parents are deserting it for the public school in Algodones, six miles away (Barringer 1990). As a result, the tribal council, the sovereign tribal government, is pressuring parents to keep their children on the reservation; tribal elders accuse those who leave of disloyalty and disrespect and call them "Anglo." The parents respond that they want their children to adapt to the world outside of the reservation and express concerns about their children's opportunities to learn English, to do well academically, and to find good jobs if they attend the reservation school. Since state and federal funding for schools is based on enrollment, each student who "defects" to the public schools drains \$2,500 from the Pueblo elementary school. In 1982, the reservation school enrolled 350 children. In 1990, with barely 300 children remaining, the reservation school had lost 15 percent of its budget, and had had to cut art, music, and physical education programs. The parents want their children to learn the best of both worlds—the reservation culture and "the English way." But those who enroll their children outside the reservation fear that the tribal elders will later deny them petitions for land or a building permit or a job with the tribal government; they also worry that they are going against tribal traditions that have kept the community intact over the years through wars, displacement, and Anglo intru-

sion. The federal government's cuts in education have influenced the decline in reservation schools. For example, although the BIA is required to finance tribal schools at the same per student average as the states they are in, most Indian schools are not equally funded. In South Dakota, the BIA in 1995 spent \$2,900 on each high school student on the reservation whereas the state spent an average of \$3,350 for each student in public schools outside the reservation (Brooke 1995).

The trend toward greater tribal control of the content and style of their children's education has extended into higher education with the establishment of institutions such as the Navajo Community College (mentioned earlier), the Lakota Higher Education Center, Sinte Gleska College (*Newsweek* 1973:71-72), and Little Big Horn College (Bordewich 1996:286). The first tribal college opened on the Navajo reservation in Arizona in 1968, and in 1994 throughout the United States there were 26 reservation colleges enrolling more than 16,000 Indian students. These tribal institutions began as community colleges granting associate degrees; but now three of them, including Sinte Gleska, offer four-year bachelor's programs and have recently expanded to offer master's degrees. Although the continued movement of the American Indians toward higher levels of educational attainment seems almost certain, one may well doubt whether the remaining gap between the Indians and the dominant group will close rapidly.

Occupations

Along with higher levels of education, the jobs of Indians who are employed have become more like those of the dominant group; but, both on and off the reservations, unemployment among Indians is high and economic hardship is common among them. The overall unemployment rates among males and females between the ages of 21 and 25, for instance, have crossed 18 percent and 14 percent, respectively; and these rates are substantially below the ones for males and females between the ages of 16 and 20 (more than 25 and 21 percent, respectively). The levels of unemployment on the reservations are even more unfavorable than the overall pattern; and on all of the 16 largest reservations, the rate increased during the 1970s. To illustrate, at the Pine Ridge Reservation (SD), the unemployment rate rose between 1970 and 1980 from over 16 percent to nearly 36 percent. The reported level of unemployment on the Pine Ridge Reservation in 1995 was 75 percent and Shannon County, South Dakota, where the Pine Ridge Reservation is located, was the poorest county in the nation (Brooke 1995). These increases in unemployment occurred during a period when the number of people in the labor force also was increasing, suggesting that the increasing education and skill levels of the Indians were not matched by employment opportunities on the reservations (Snipp 1989:220, 226, 227).

One way that some 113 tribes have created jobs, as discussed earlier, is through the establishment of casinos and gaming on the reservations. Their advantage in this area is sovereignty which permits the suspension of many local, state, and federal laws on Indian territory. Reservations have no sales or property tax; so they can sell cigarettes, gasoline, and other items for low prices and can offer activities, such as gambling, that are not permitted off the reservations. Gaming, in fact, has been described as "the best

thing to happen to New Mexico Indians in four centuries of Spanish and American Dominance."⁸ The gaming industry in New Mexico, which employs more than 3,000 people, has generated more than \$200 million in revenue a year, and has reduced unemployment in the Sandia Pueblo in New Mexico to 2 percent.

Some tribes have used the profits from their casinos for other development projects. Consider the following: The Eastern Band of Cherokees earned about \$850,000 per year between 1982 and 1992 and spent the money on government services for tribal members; the Santee Sioux helped tribal members buy homes or cars or go back to school; the Yankton Sioux's casino employed over 175 tribal members, about 80 percent of whom had been unemployed (*Americans Before Columbus* 1992); the Oneidas spent 9 million dollars to extend the Green Bay, Wisconsin, water and sewer system to the reservation (Bordewich 1996:109); the Morongo reservation just north of Palm Springs, California, employed more than 140 people in their bingo business and planned to develop a major desert resort; the 200 members of the Shakopee Mdewekantan tribe expected 1994 payments to exceed \$500,000 for each member (Johnson 1994); and the Pequots, mentioned earlier, have employed 11,000 workers and made sufficient profits to fund 16 restaurants, two hotels, a museum, a theater, a second casino, and—for all who can demonstrate that they are at least one-sixteenth Pequot—guaranteed employment, health care, child care, and educational expenses from kindergarten through graduate school (Pollack 1996).

Not all tribes have been successful in their gambling businesses, however. Many who have attempted gaming have struggled with conflicts among tribe members who oppose it because of the social impact. For example, some Oglalas oppose a casino because the gaming compact with the state gives South Dakota criminal jurisdiction over nontribe members on the reservation. That, traditionalists argued, was an issue of treaty rights that Sioux warriors died for (Judson 1994). Other tribes have been exploited when they contracted with outside companies to run their gambling enterprises. Moreover, as more tribes initiate gaming businesses, they sometimes end up competing with one another. Still, the opportunity to become economically successful in the gaming business has made it possible for some tribes to buy back sacred lands they lost years ago and for others to invest in housing, hospitals, schools, roads, and other social services lacking on the reservations.

The gaming income also has allowed tribes to accumulate capital to diversify reservation economies that have long relied on government payments and subsidies. The Indian Business Association, a tribal trade group, now represents some 5,000 companies (Johnson 1994:10). The Southern Utes in Colorado have bought a gas-drilling company so they can extract their own gas resources rather than leasing the land to non-Indian businesses. The Navajos have organized an oil company. The Sioux on the Cheyenne River Reservation have begun raising bison, which are lower in fat and cholesterol than beef, and have found a market outside the reservation among health-conscious non-Indians. Indians have also financed Indian-run radio stations. Along the same lines, the Pine Ridge Sioux have published the first national Indian newspaper, *Indian Country Today*, that has a circulation of over 20,000. The newspaper employs 30 full-time employees, most of them Indian.

Tribes such as the Arapaho on the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming, where there are not enough customers to make gaming work, have turned to tourism (McInnis

1994:4). In 1988, the Arapaho placed several tribal businesses into a trust. The small businesses—including a convenience store, a truck stop, a laundromat, and a construction company—provide 85 jobs and generate \$7.5 million in annual revenues. The tribe also has plans for a reservation tour service. The Nez Perce Indians, a tribe that was forced from their land in Joseph, Oregon, in 1877, are being recruited to return by the White residents of the area who see the tribe as a potent economic resource (Egan 1996). The area has suffered economically as timber mills have shut down and the cattle industry has declined. Indian cultural events, such as powwows, have become a big tourist attraction, and the White town leaders have joined with the Nez Perce tribal leaders to invest in a Nez Perce cultural center. The tribe has also bought 10,000 acres of land along a creek in the area where their famous chief, Young Joseph, was born. The tribe will manage the land for hunting and fishing. Egan notes that the Whites see the return of the tribe as an economic plus, but the tribe sees it as a homecoming.

An obstacle to entrepreneurship among the Native Americans has been the lack of a capitalist tradition, which was seen as an "Anglo way of doing things." Until recently, there have been few residents on the reservations with experience as business managers and few with college experience (McInnis 1994:4). That pattern seems to be changing. The number of Indian-owned businesses increased 64 percent between 1982 and 1987 (Fost 1996). For example, the Laguna Indians in New Mexico have started manufacturing plants on the reservations. Laguna Industries employs 350 people and has contracts with the U.S. Department of Defense as well as several large companies. Although tribal elders hope that opportunities for jobs on the reservations will encourage young people to stay, these industries have not solved all the problems on the reservations. Unemployment continues to run as high as 35 percent on the Laguna Reservation.

Among those Indians who have jobs, the pattern of employment has become more similar to the dominant White pattern. In 1970, for instance, roughly 64 percent of White females and 43 percent of Indian females were employed in nonmanual jobs. By 1980, these figures had become 70 percent and 56 percent, respectively. Among males, the comparable figures were 41 and 22 percent (1970) and 45 and 28 percent (1980). We should also note that employed female and male Indians in both 1970 and 1980 were more likely to hold nonmanual jobs than were Black Americans (Snipp 1989:231).

Another way in which the jobs of Indians differ from those of Whites is that Indians are more likely to be employed by federal, state, or local governments. Indian employment by governmental agencies rose between 1970 and 1980 from around 24 percent to over 28 percent, whereas the employment of Whites by governments rose only slightly to remain between 15 and 16 percent. Blacks have become more similar to Indians in this respect. During this same period, government jobs for Blacks increased from about 15 percent to about 27 percent (Snipp 1989:238).

Although Indians still are plagued by high unemployment and the accompanying economic hardships, and although their general pattern of employment more nearly resembles that of Blacks than of Whites, there is clear evidence that their increasing educational levels do lead to higher-paying, higher-prestige jobs. In 1980, for example, 59 percent of Indian females and 55 percent of Indian males who had received a college education were employed in managerial and professional jobs, while an additional 28 percent of the females and 18 percent of the males in this group held technical, sales, and

administrative support jobs (Snipp 1989:246). It is true, nonetheless, that Indians have much more difficulty translating high school graduation into college attendance than do Whites. Snipp (1989:190) calculated that among every additional 100 White high school graduates, an additional 41 people graduate from college; but among Indians, 100 additional high school graduates produces only 12 additional college graduates. Furthermore, there is some evidence that the probability that an Indian between the ages of 25 and 30 will have completed 4 or more years of college is now *lower* than for those between the ages of 31 and 70 (Snipp 1989:200).

Incomes

The improved educational and employment levels of Indians have been accompanied by some improvement in income levels. As an example, in 1970, on average, for each dollar earned by White families, Indian families received 57 cents, which was less than 90 percent of the comparable figure for Black Americans (U.S. Bureau of the Census, *American Indians* 1973); but, by 1979, on average, Indian family income had risen to 66 cents for each dollar earned by Whites, which was at that point, slightly *higher* than the median family income of Blacks compared to Whites (60 cents per dollar). The proportion of Indian families below the poverty line (27 percent) also has declined to a point below that of Blacks (31 percent), but both of these groups still have much larger proportions of poor families than do Whites (9.4 percent) (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1995:48, 50).

Nevertheless, by many measures American Indians are the poorest ethnic group in the country (Johnson 1994). Of the 10 poorest U.S. counties in the 1990 census, four were Indian lands in South Dakota. Many Indian families on the reservations still live in shacks and must haul water in pickup trucks. Sandefur and Sakamoto (1988:79) noted that American Indians may appear to have a higher average income than Blacks; however, since Indians are more likely to live in traditional family households (couples with children) than either Blacks or Whites, their higher family income may reflect the efforts of more wage earners.

Life Chances

Health care is an area in which the efforts to close the gap between Indians and Whites appears to be having marked success. To illustrate, consider the change in the infant mortality rates among American Indians. From 1950 to 1983, this sensitive indicator of the general health level of a population declined from an extremely high 82 infant deaths per 1,000 Indian births per year to about 11 deaths per 1,000 births (Snipp 1989:352).⁹ This large decline within such a short period of time is remarkable. Not only was the American Indian infant mortality rate rapidly approaching the White level (9.7 per 1,000 in 1983), it had fallen below the rate for Black Americans in 1992 (16.8) (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1995:91).

The improvement in infant mortality, as important as it is, does not mean that the general health and mortality experience of American Indians is no longer a matter of

concern. Indians still are much more likely than all Americans combined to die fairly early in life. Davis, Hunt, and Kitzes (1989:271) reported that in 1982, "37 percent of the deaths among American Indians occurred before age 45, compared with 12 percent of deaths in the same age group in the U.S. population." Indians also still suffer a disproportionate number of deaths from causes that reflect broader problems faced by Indians. For example, although accidental deaths among them have declined dramatically since 1970, Indians still are roughly twice as likely to die in an accident as are members of the general population; and suicide rates among Indians, though also lower than in 1970, are still roughly 25 percent higher than the rate for all Americans (U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, *Health, United States, 1979 1980*:12, 16); and Indian teenagers are about four times as likely to attempt suicide as are other teens (Brasher 1992). Indians also are about twice as likely to be murdered, four times as likely to die of alcoholism, and nine times as likely to die of tuberculosis as are other Americans (Snipp 1989:355-358). As is true of the American population as a whole, however, Indians are more likely to die of heart disease than of any other single cause (Rhoades et al. 1988:622).

The statistics concerning the status of American Indians in various areas of life may be viewed, from different perspectives, either as encouraging or discouraging. If emphasis is placed on the recency of serious attention to the development of the reservations and to integrating Indians into urban life and industrial occupations, then the size of the "lags" in these areas may be viewed in some ways as being relatively low. But when the "lags" are seen absolutely—in terms of life chances and human privation—it is evident that much remains to be done. Even though it may now be true, after many decades of effort, that Indians, collectively, are no longer the "poorest of the poor," it also is true that they still are far from having the standard of living enjoyed by Whites and still "are one of the most disadvantaged racial/ethnic groups in the United States" (Sandefur and Scott 1983:44).

Primary Structural Assimilation

Throughout the centuries, Indians and Whites have enjoyed few opportunities to be genuinely friendly. Some members of each group, of course, have had large numbers of friends within the other group; but the ordinary state of affairs has been for most of each Indian's friends to be other Indians of the same tribe.

Given the long history of conflicts between Indian and European peoples, and given the effort to contain the Indians by segregating them in Indian Country and on reservations, this outcome is hardly surprising. The historically low level of primary assimilation among the Indians has been extended into the present. Reservation Indians, both by choice and circumstance, are unlikely to have very many contacts with non-Indians. Urban Indians, on the other hand, may have numerous opportunities to form friendships with non-Indians in schools and colleges, at work, in various social organizations, and in their neighborhoods. How do Indians react to these possibilities?

Some valuable information on this question was presented by Ablon (1972) in a study of American Indians who lived in the San Francisco Bay Area. Most of those studied had come to the area under the BIA's relocation program. Ablon interviewed 53 Indians concerning many aspects of their lives in the city, including things such as who their early social contacts in the city were, how those contacts were made, whether they preferred Indian or White friends, how they felt about themselves, and so on. She found, first, that the Indians most frequently established their social contacts at gatherings sponsored by various intertribal organizations founded by or for Indians. The next most common form of early contacts was with friends or relatives from the reservations. The Indians reported that after they had been in the city for a while, they had an increasing proportion of their social contacts with people from work and in their neighborhoods. Most of the Indians stated they had White friends as well as Indian friends; however, in all of these contexts, their friendships with Whites tended to be superficial. Only three of 54 Indians who participated in the study stated they had more White than Indian friends.

Ablon (1972:422-423) argued that two prevalent attitudes among the Indians toward Whites are suspicion and a fear of rejection. Whites who attempt to be friendly toward the Indians are suspected of wishing to take advantage of them, whereas the Indians fear that the Whites will look down on them if they learn the details of the Indians' poverty-stricken reservation lives or their tribal beliefs. Moreover, aside from their reasons for wishing to avoid Whites, Indians have a strong, positive wish to be with other Indians. This view accords with One Feather's (1986:171) observation that "the people who moved to urban areas formed their own Indian communities. Indian centers became a focal point for the people that lived in cities."

As usual, of course, we should expect that the behavior pattern just described would vary among the tribes. In a study of Indians in Los Angeles—the city containing the largest American Indian population—Price (1972) compared the members of the three major tribal groups in the city (the Navajo, Sioux, and Five Civilized Tribes). He found that the Navajo were least likely to establish extratribal ties to life in the city, and the members of the Five Civilized Tribes were the most likely to do so. The Sioux were intermediate. For example, 64 percent of the Navajo, 33 percent of the Sioux, and 26 percent of the members of the Five Civilized Tribes revealed that they "associate entirely or mostly with Indians" (Price 1972:437). In general, the Navajo also maintained the strongest ties to the reservations, while the members of the Five Civilized Tribes maintained the weakest ties. From these findings, Price (1972:436) argued that the Navajos probably would "shift over time to patterns of life exemplified by the Five Civilized Tribes."

While the occurrence of such a shift would imply a parallel increase in primary assimilation for those involved, there is little reason to suppose that urban American Indians will soon reach a point at which associations with other Indians will become unimportant. Liebow (1989:67) found in Phoenix, for instance, that the Indians there—representing many tribes—"have set about self-consciously creating a collective identity that is primarily tied to their adoptive metropolitan home." As Price (1972:439) noted, "the great majority of Indians in the city clearly are ideologically and emotionally affiliated with pan-Indianism." The maintenance or growth of this commitment among American Indians may well exert a continuing pressure against full primary assimilation.

Marital Assimilation

The romantic courtship and marriage of John Rolfe and Pocahontas during the earliest years of the Jamestown Colony did not foretell a high level of marital assimilation of the Indians into the society of the English. Although we lack the information needed to discuss these matters precisely in the present, much less in the distant past, it appears that until recently the levels of marital assimilation among the Indians have been low. This condition is what we would have expected on the basis of our discussion of the generally low levels of primary assimilation. To be sure, various circumstances have produced higher levels of intermarriage at some times and places than others. For example, during the early years in the southern colonies, where White women were scarce and Indian women were plentiful, there were numerous White male-Indian female marriages.¹⁰ After the American Revolution, Indians struggled to survive as communities in the face of prejudice and legal and economic discrimination. Indians and other people of color lived and worked separated from whites and often met and married (Mandell 1998). As in the case of Black Americans, of course, the actual levels of sexual relations between Indians and Whites and Indians and Blacks always have been higher than the rates of legitimate intermarriage; consequently, the level of intermixture after almost four centuries of contact is quite high. The proportion of Indians who were considered to be full-bloods in the 1980s varied among the tribes and was, in general, higher on the reservations than in the cities. In both locations, however, only a minority among the American Indians now qualify as full-bloods, and many millions of Americans who do not profess an Indian identity claim some degree of Indian ancestry. We should note again that the terms full-blood and mixed-blood frequently refer to cultural commitment rather than to biological ancestry. Large numbers of mixed-bloods in the past and present have been, or now are, "completely Indian" in the way they think of themselves and live. On the other hand, some biological full-bloods have adopted the White man's way of life and have been regarded by themselves and other Indians as no longer Indian. Our claim that, in the past, the levels of Indian-White intermarriage have been low, therefore, is based only on those marriages in which one of the partners considers himself or herself to be an Indian. Most instances in which one partner acknowledges some degree of mixed ancestry are not counted as examples of Indian-White intermarriage.

Roy (1972:233), for instance, found that among 28 Spokane Indian couples living on a reservation, 20 marriages in which both partners were Indians included at least one member who was not considered to be a full-blood.¹¹ Eschbach (1995:95-96) found that the highest proportion of those who were intermarried occurred in states with large Indian populations that lived in enclave communities. The range of Indians in mixed marriages varied from 16 percent in the Southwest to 82 percent in the Midwest. The younger Indians generally had higher intermarriage rates than older Indians, but the same regional differences persisted for the young couples. One of the dilemmas in intermarriages is whether the children will be identified as Indian or non-Indian. Nationally, only 47 percent of the children in intermarried families are assigned the race of their Indian parent. The assignment of identity to children also varies by region; 73 percent of the children born to intermarried couples in Oklahoma are assigned Indian descent, but

only 33 percent of the children born to intermarried couples in the Northeast are assigned Indian descent at birth. Eschbach (1995:96) speculates that whether parents in mixed marriages assign Indian descent to their children depends on the political and economic importance of Indian identity in the area and the amount of discrimination and ethnic conflict between Indians and others the parents have experienced. Eschbach concludes that Indians in mixed marriages will continue to identify as Indian as long as that identity is available to them *and* is socially valuable.

Despite the paucity of research on Indian intermarriage, we do know that the levels of marital assimilation among Indians appear to have risen sharply in recent times. Between 1960 and 1970, the proportion of Indian husbands who married non-Indian wives rose from 15 percent to 33 percent, and the proportion of Indian wives who married non-Indian husbands rose from over 24 percent to 39 percent (Heer 1980:519). By 1990, Eschbach (1995:93) found that nationally 59 percent of married Indians were married to non-Indians. Taken at face value, these findings suggest a strong surge among American Indians toward the mainstream of society. Given all of our other findings, however, it seems possible that the apparently large increase in intermarriage may be "related to an increased desire among persons with mixed-White and Indian ancestry to identify themselves as Indian Americans" (Heer 1980:519), as we mentioned earlier. Adding to this view are the findings of Passel and Berman (cited by Sandefur and McKinnell 1986:348) that as many as 358,000 people in the United States changed their self-identification from White to Indian during the 1970s. Bordewich (1996:66) quoted an administrator of the BIA as saying, "There are a lot of just plain old Americans who want to belong to an ethnic group of some kind. . . .[A]t this point in time a lot of people want to be Indian."

Many tribes have been forced to expand their definition of who is an Indian because of the increased rate of outmarriage (Nagel 1996:245). For example, Sandefur and McKinnell (1986:357) showed that in states that traditionally have had large numbers of people who define themselves as Indian (states in which pressures toward marrying within the ethnic group, presumably, are strong), 37 percent of the Indian men marry women of different ethnicities. Out-marriage is even higher in states that traditionally have had comparatively small Indian populations. In these states, about 62 percent of the Indian men marry women of other ethnicities.

These broad generalizations, of course, leave many questions unanswered. Are the rates of intermarriage among some tribes remaining steady or falling in contrast to the general trend? Are the rates of intertribal intermarriage increasing and, if so, what is the social and cultural significance of these changes? These and other questions invite further study. For the moment, however, we must be content to note that the rates of Indian-White intermarriage appear to have risen sharply, which may signify an historic change in the relations of the two groups.

Other Forms of Assimilation

Our discussion of the Native American experience in the United States illustrates that what it means to be Indian has varied according to the social, economic, political, and

cultural contexts this group experienced over time. The role of women in maintaining traditional practices and resisting assimilation is important, especially as rates of intermarriage with non-Indians increase. A study of Navajo women (Schulz 1998) illustrates these patterns clearly. Schulz concluded that the women's strategies of negotiating Indian and Navajo identities were "everyday acts of political resistance" against continued pressures toward Anglo assimilation. Schulz interviewed Navajo women of different generations and found a central theme that cut across the different age groups was the feeling of being "different." Many of the older generation remembered feeling that their group was devalued. Part of their Indian identity meant countering these negative associations. The younger generation, who attended Indian schools and experienced the civil rights movements of the 1960s and 1970s, saw "Indian" as a positive identity, but their Navajo identity had to be consciously acquired. They struggled to learn the Navajo language and culture.¹² For these women the politics of identity involved not simply defining the meanings associated with being Indian and Navajo, but also the politics of determining who had a right to assume those identities. Indeed, there is enormous controversy among native people about who should be considered an Indian for purposes of receiving tribal services, federal benefits, affirmative action consideration, or rights to participate in tribal governments (Nagel 1999).

Despite an increasing acceptance of Indian identities, there are still high levels of prejudice against Indians, especially on the edges of Indian reservations. A study published by the Bureau of Justice Statistics in the Justice Department, and reported in the *New York Times* (Butterfield 1999), found that Indians are victims of crime at a rate more than twice the U.S. average. Using data gathered from 1992 to 1996, the study found that Indians are more likely than Whites or Blacks to be the victims of violent crimes committed by members of a race other than their own. As Indian groups have been successful in land-claim disputes and Indian-owned businesses, peaceful coexistence of Indians and Whites has been shattered. For example, the Oneida Indian Nation's casino created thousands of jobs and generated wealth, and they used their profits to challenge the legality of New York state and local government acquisitions of Oneida lands in the 1700s and 1800s. When the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the Oneidas' argument, threats of violence, expressions of jealousy over the success of the Oneida Indian Nation, resentments of their tax-exempt status, and boycotts of Indian businesses emerged (Chen 1999).

Many Indian leaders face continual challenges to their traditional Indian beliefs and life-styles. As the Indian people seek sufficient education, well-paying jobs, modern health services, updated housing, and adequate food supplies, there are increasing demands for cultural change. For example, Indian rights to water, the right to hunt and fish, rights of land ownership, and mineral rights have all been contested in the courts. The growing demands for coal, oil, and water have forced tribal leaders into economics and law. They must deal with energy companies, the federal government, and their own tribal councils. To lead their tribes successfully in the modern era, the Indian leaders have had to comply with the "white man's" methods and practices. In the area of education, the Native American Preparatory School in Rowe, New Mexico, a boarding school founded in 1995 and modeled after East Coast boarding schools, is preparing gifted Indian students for Ivy League colleges.¹³ The goal is to prepare the students to be successful in both worlds, tribal and mainstream academic.

In the legal area, tribal leaders have gone to court to protest that the royalty payments from natural resources leases are too low and the tribes are locked into poorly negotiated leases for long periods of time. The tribes have alleged that the U.S. government misadvised them about the advantages and disadvantages of the leases and have charged the Secretary of the Interior with violating the National Environmental Policy Act. In 1999, a Federal judge held two U.S. Cabinet Secretaries who oversee Indian trust accounts in contempt of court because of mismanagement of Indian trust funds. The trust accounts date to the 1880s when the government tried to break up tribal land ownership and awarded individual allotments of 80 to 160 acres of land per Indian. The Indians charged the U.S. government with improper accounting and mismanagement of the trust funds, which may have cost Indians over \$10 billion in lost income over the last century. These efforts have required many Native Americans to adapt to modern American society's norms. The tribes and their leaders have had to learn to think and function like members of the mainstream society. According to Fixico (1999), this requires adopting the values of the free enterprise system of American capitalism. With the accumulation of wealth, tribes have had financial resources to improve the livelihood of their people, but this involves changing the culture of the tribes, which do not stress the accumulation of wealth. The tribal leaders have also had to educate themselves in the law in order to defend their natural resources and represent their tribal interests. Fixico (1999:202) predicted that in coming years, tribal leaders will "wage the most significant battles since the nineteenth century for the existence of their people and the protection of their homelands."

American Indian "Success"

In the twenty-first century, perhaps more sharply than previously, we see an illustration of the close link between a group's ideology and the question of assessing its success within American society. Even though the tribes have varied in their willingness to accept certain elements of White culture, there can be little doubt that the central impulse among the Indians has been to resist being drawn into American society. From this perspective, any step toward assimilation that involved the substitution of White for Indian ways has represented some measure of failure. The Indians' conviction that their way is best has been bolstered by the increasing problems confronting industrial civilization. Problems relating to air and water pollution, soil erosion, energy exhaustion, ecological imbalance, and widespread feelings of loneliness and powerlessness are all interpreted by many Indians, and some non-Indians as well, as signs of the impermanence and inferiority of White culture. Deloria (1972:506) argued the point as follows: "At the present time everyone is watching how mainstream America will handle the issues of pollution, poverty, crime and racism when it does not fundamentally understand the issues. . . . It just seems to a lot of Indians that this continent was a lot better off when we were running it."

As tribal economic and legal resources increase and Indian groups win their battles in the courts, they are assuming greater responsibility for managing land and natural resources, which are much in demand by the larger society. In doing this, Indian traditional values will be severely tested. The outcome of the American Indians' struggle against the worldly success of White society is presently unclear. Many hope that "tribalism can be incorporated with modern technology in an urban setting" (Deloria 1972: 506). This hope is counterbalanced, however, by the unquenched fear that the ancient tribal values will be lost before they can become ascendant. As Deloria (1981:149) stated subsequently: "While tribal traditions provide a bulwark against the consumer society, continued contact may well mean the end of Indian uniqueness in a world increasingly homogenized. The pervasive fear of Indians is that they will in the years ahead move from their plateau of small nationhood to the status of another ethnic group in the American melting pot."

We have described in several of the preceding chapters some of the dramatic changes that have occurred in American racial and ethnic relations during recent decades. In Chapter 13 we consider further some of the ways White Americans have reacted to these changes, and we present additional information concerning the new immigration.

Discussion Questions

Why would individuals who have never before identified themselves as Native American/Indian begin to identify themselves as Indian in the most recent U.S. census surveys?

What are the advantages and disadvantages of pan-Indian identity versus tribal identity?

Why do some Indians leave the reservations and move to urban areas? What are advantages and disadvantages of living on a reservation?

Should the Indian tribes be allowed to maintain tribal sovereignty? Who should make final decisions when tribal laws conflict with state laws?

Should Indian tribes be allowed to take back lands that were taken from them illegally in the past if those lands are now occupied by non-Indian families and businesses?

Why has the federal government been so lax in the management of Indian leases and trusts? What, if anything, should be done to compensate for this lax management?

What would the larger society be like if traditional Indian values regarding wealth, natural resources, and land were to become dominant?

Key Ideas

1. The Indian population is increasing in number, contrary to what each of the assimilation models would predict. This may be due to an increasing number of persons of mixed Indian heritage identifying themselves as Indian.
2. Pan-Indian identity occurs when Indians see themselves as having common "Indian" bonds with members of other tribes. This identity represents assimilation by addition in situations in which Indians maintain a strong tribal identity. It may become assimilation by substitution when tribal identity no longer prevails. As the boundaries of identity expand, "Indian" becomes a term to identify an ethnic group.
3. The movement of American Indians toward secondary assimilation in education, occupations, incomes, and health care has been very rapid during recent decades, especially among urban Indians. Despite the rapid rates of change, however, the Indian averages still lag behind those of American society in general, and many reservations have high levels of poverty and unemployment. On average, however, the income levels of Indians have come to approximate those of Blacks and Mexican Americans. The average educational level among the American Indians now is higher than among Mexican Americans, and the rate of infant mortality among Indians is lower than among Black Americans.
4. Tribal sovereignty has given American Indians opportunities to create their own laws, schools, and businesses on the reservations. Gaming has brought increased wealth to a number of reservations and has allowed them to use the profits to diversify the economies on the reservations, promote traditional cultures, and challenge land ownership rights and government management of Indian affairs. Reservations that do not have the geographic location to succeed at gaming have established small businesses in tourism, provided services on the reservations, and built manufacturing plants. Some of these endeavors have created conflicts among the traditional and the more assimilated tribe members. Sovereignty also has created conflicts with state governments.
5. Historically, primary and marital assimilation of the Indians into White society have been low. Although the levels of primary assimilation may be rising somewhat faster in the cities than on the reservations, they still appear to be generally low. Marital assimilation, on the other hand, appears in recent years to have risen sharply. This puzzling finding suggests either that the levels of primary assimilation also are rising sharply or that the higher rates of intermarriage represent the assimilation of the Indians' spouses into Indian society.
6. Since the end of official separatism in the nineteenth century, the dominant society has alternated between Indian policies of Anglo conformity and cultural pluralism. Throughout this time, Indian tribes largely have rejected the dominant culture and have defined success mainly in terms of tribal and cultural survival. From the perspective of an ability to maintain identities, cultures, and forms of or-

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ganization that are distinct from that of the dominant group, the American Indians have been very successful. As tribal groups succeed in using mainstream strategies to improve the lives of tribal members (e.g., the legal system and capitalism) Indian values and cultures will be severely challenged.

Key Terms

blood quantum Indicates the degree to which a person is of Indian ancestry, and is a key concept used, historically as well as currently, in administrative definitions of who is an American Indian. The concept was based on the ancient idea that hereditary characteristics are transmitted through the blood and, therefore, that the "amount of blood" a person possessed from a particular race determined physical characteristics and social behavior. This concept was central in the eugenics movement.

full-blood A person who is believed to have no non-Indian "blood" or ancestry.

mixed-bloods Persons who identify themselves as Indian but are recognized socially to have some non-Indian ancestry.

self-identification Allows individuals to determine their own racial or ethnic identification. Self-identification is now used in federal census counts and is believed to be a factor in the rapid growth of the Indian population.

Notes

1. See Rothenberg (1995:290-294).
2. For an excellent discussion of the "blood quantum" approach to racial identification, see Snipp (1989).
3. Nagel and Snipp (1993) used the term *ethnic reorganization* to describe the process whereby an ethnic minority redefines its ethnic group boundaries and social structure.
4. See, e.g., Jordan and Litwack (1987:2); (Nagel 1996:115).
5. See *NARF Legal Review* (Summer/Fall 1994).
6. See the *New York Times* article by Kleinfield (1995:A9).
7. Snipp (1989:20) observed that since the White man's diseases generally preceded the actual arrival of many White people, the "traditional" tribal societies that were found by the Whites *already* had been markedly altered.
8. See Johnson (1996:24).

9. These figures reflect only the experiences of the approximately 850,000 American Indians who in 1980 lived within the boundaries of the 88 service units of the Indian Health Service (IHS).

10. According to Nash (1974:282), Thomas Bosomworth, who was a chaplain in the Georgia colony, "found it respectable to marry a Creek woman . . . and many others followed his example."

11. Roy did note, however, that "people with a high percentage of Indian ancestry tended to select mates with a high percentage of Indian ancestry," suggesting some relationship between the Indians' cultural and presumed biological identities. A subsequent study of the Spokane Indians by White and Chadwick (1972:246) found that urban Indians were more likely than reservation Indians to consider their identities to be mainly a

matter of ancestry. The explanation of this finding appears to be that urban Indians suffer more discrimination because of their physical appearance and, therefore, feel "Indian" if they look "Indian."

12. All the women took pride in maintaining the Navajo language, spiritual beliefs and

practices, kinship patterns, and connection to the land as important aspects of being Navajo.

13. The school's curriculum includes American Indian perspectives and half its faculty are Indian. The students in American history classes read both de Tocqueville and speeches by Indian leaders who influenced democracy.