NATIVE AMERICANS
From Conquest to Tribal Survival in a Postindustrial Society

1838
Approximately 17,000 Cherokee are forcibly removed from North Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, and Alabama to the Indian Territory, present-day Oklahoma, along the 1,200-mile “Trail of Tears.” Some 4,000 to 8,000 Cherokee die during the removal process.

1830
The Indian Removal Act leads to the deportation of 100,000 Native Americans to west of the Mississippi.

1845
The Indian Appropriations Act of 1851 allocates funds to move tribes onto reservations.

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1862
The Homestead Act essentially allows Americans to settle on Indian land.

1871
The Indian Appropriations Act of 1871 dissolves the status of tribes as sovereign nations.

1876
Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse (Lakota) defeat George Custer at the Battle of the Little Bighorn.

1886
Apache leader Geronimo surrenders to U.S. troops.

1887
The Dawes Act allows government to divide Indian land into individually owned parcels in an attempt to establish private ownership of Indian lands.

1889
About 300 Sioux are killed at Wounded Knee in last battle between U.S. troops and Native Americans.

1838
Approximately 17,000 Cherokee are forcibly removed from North Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, and Alabama to the Indian Territory, present-day Oklahoma, along the 1,200-mile “Trail of Tears.” Some 4,000 to 8,000 Cherokee die during the removal process.

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Lorinda announced that the [Blessing Way ceremony for Lynette’s unborn child] was about to start . . . [so we] walked into the hoghan. A single light bulb lit the room dimly. Couches, futon mattresses, and large pillows were set against the walls for the night’s sing. A coffee-maker, microwave, and crock-pot sat on a folding table against the northern wall for the midnight eating. This was the same Navajo adaptation I’d grown up seeing, the age-old ritual with modern technology.

The hataałii [shaman or healer] sat against the western wall. . . . He wore thick silver bracelets and a silk bandana across his brow, the knot tied off at his right temple in traditional style. A basket of tádidiin[corn pollen] sat at his left.

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

By the end of this chapter, you will be able to do the following:

1. Explain the changing population characteristics and common cultural characteristics of Native Americans and Alaska Natives.
2. Summarize and explain the changing relationship between Native Americans and the U.S. federal government, especially the changes in laws and policies and their effects, and the dynamics of Indian resistance and protest.
3. Understand the most critical issues and trends that have influenced relations between Native Americans and the larger U.S. society in recent decades, including
   a. struggles over natural resources,
   b. attempts to bring jobs to reservations,
   c. broken treaties,
   d. gaming, and
   e. prejudice and discrimination.
4. Analyze the contemporary relations between Native Americans and whites using the concepts of prejudice, discrimination, assimilation, and pluralism, especially in terms of
   a. acculturation,
   b. secondary structural assimilation, and
   c. primary structural assimilation.
5. Assess the overall situation of Native Americans today based on the concepts and information presented in this chapter.

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1924
Federal law grants all Native Americans citizenship.

1934
The Indian Reorganization Act decreases federal control of Indian affairs and re-establishes self-governance for many tribes.

1938
The American Indian Movement, an advocacy group, is founded.

1948
Federal legislation legalizes reservation gambling.

1972
The American Indian Movement sponsors the Trail of Broken Treaties, a cross-country protest presenting a 20-point list of demands from the federal government.

1978
The American Indian Movement leads the Longest Walk, a spiritual walk across the country for tribal sovereignty and to protest anti-Indian legislation.

1988
Federal legislation legalizes reservation gambling.

1995
Revenue from gaming on reservations reaches almost $28 billion.

2005
The National Collegiate Athletic Association bans use of “hostile and abusive” American Indian mascots in postseason tournaments.

2012
Thousands protest the Dakota Access Pipeline.
In Chapter 4, we discussed the contact period for Native Americans, which began in the earliest colonial days and lasted nearly 300 years. It ended with the final battles of the Indian Wars in the late 1800s. During that time, the many, diverse Indian nations fought to preserve their cultures and to keep their land (see Chapter 4 for a review). The tribes had enough power to win many battles, but they eventually lost all of the wars. Nichols (1986, p. 128) suggests that the diversity of Native communities (including 250 different languages) contributed to the challenges of fighting whites (Regan, 2018, p. 239). The superior resources of the burgeoning white society made the eventual defeat of Native Americans almost inescapable (Diamond, 1998).

By 1890, the last of the tribes had been conquered, their leaders had been killed or were in custody, and their people were living on U.S. government-controlled reservations. By the start of the 20th century, Native Americans were, in Blauner’s (1972) terms, a conquered and colonized minority group. Like African Americans on slave plantations, Native people living on reservations were subjected to live, by law, under a paternalistic system controlled by federally mandated regulations. Because the reservation system destroyed tribal governments, most lived under the supervision of U.S. appointed Indian agents who temporarily lived on the reservations and who supervised their acculturation into U.S. society in detail, for example, by governing everything including hair length, clothing, and language (Nichols, 1986, p. 135). For almost 150 years, as Jim Crow segregation, Supreme Court decisions, industrialization, and urbanization shaped the status of other minority groups, Native Americans lived on the fringes of development and change and had weaker links to the larger society than white ethnic groups and other minority groups. Thus, they were marginalized, relatively powerless, and isolated geographically and culturally. While other minority groups have maintained a regular presence in the national headlines, Native Americans have been generally ignored and unnoticed, except perhaps as mascots for sports teams (e.g., Washington Redskins, Atlanta Braves) or because of recent protests at the Standing Rock Reservation about the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL).

The last decades of the 20th century witnessed some improvement in the status of Native Americans in general.

1Columbus used the term Indian because he thought he had landed in India. We use the term Native American—rather than American Indian—to emphasize that such people are indigenous to the area that became the United States of America. The term Native American also applies to other indigenous peoples of the United States (e.g., in Alaska) as well as Canada and Central and South America. We focus on people indigenous to the U.S. mainland because their experiences most closely parallel the other mainland groups discussed in this book. Likewise, people debate the language of tribes, nations, or communities. Different indigenous people use different terms. As with other racial and ethnic groups, these labels highlight their socially constructed nature. We encourage you to learn more and decide what seems most accurate and respectful. In “real life,” it’s best to ask people what they like to be called instead of assuming.
and some tribes, especially those with casinos and other gaming establishments, made notable progress toward parity with national standards (Spilde & Taylor, 2013; Taylor & Kalt, 2005). Also, the tribes now have more control over their own affairs, and many have effectively used their increased autonomy and independence to address problems in education, health, joblessness, and other matters. Despite the progress, large gaps remain between Native Americans and other groups, especially whites, in virtually every area of social and economic life. For example, some Native Americans living on reservations are among the poorest groups in U.S. society.

In this chapter, we will discuss the history of Native Americans up to the present and explore recent progress and persisting problems. Some of the questions we will discuss include: How does the situation of Native Americans compare with that of other colonized and conquered minority groups? What accounts for the inequalities this group has faced for much of the past century? How can we explain improvements, especially since the 1990s? What key problems remain? What strategies could close the remaining gaps between Native Americans and the larger society?

### SIZE OF THE GROUP

How many Native Americans live in the United States? This question has several answers, partly because of the social and subjective nature of race and group membership. Historically and today, the U.S. government and individual tribes have defined the status of “Indian” in different ways. Sometimes those definitions have been based on specific percentages of “Indian blood” (Cohen, 1945, p. 5). At other times, they have defined Indian status broadly, even including individuals who joined tribal communities through marriage (Nichols, 1986, p. 128).

The answer also varies because of the way the Census Bureau collects information. As with other racial and ethnic groups, the Census Bureau’s categories for Native Americans have changed over time. As you recall from Chapter 1, the first time people could claim membership in more than one racial or ethnic category on the census was in 2000. If we define Native Americans as consisting of people who identify themselves as only Native American, we will get one estimate. If we include people who claim mixed racial ancestry our estimate of group size will be much larger. Table 7.1, based on the most recent (2010) U.S. Census, shows this difference in size.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Native Americans and Alaska Native Population, 2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ALONE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Native Americans &amp; Alaska Natives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Americans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alaska Natives</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 10 LARGEST TRIBAL GROUPINGS FOR NATIVE AMERICANS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tribe</th>
<th>One Tribe</th>
<th>Two or More Tribes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cherokee</td>
<td>284,247</td>
<td>819,858</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navajo</td>
<td>286,731</td>
<td>332,129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choctaw</td>
<td>103,910</td>
<td>195,764</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chippewa</td>
<td>112,757</td>
<td>170,742</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sioux</td>
<td>112,176</td>
<td>170,110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apache</td>
<td>63,193</td>
<td>118,810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackfeet</td>
<td>27,279</td>
<td>105,304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pueblo</td>
<td>72,270</td>
<td>91,242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creek</td>
<td>48,352</td>
<td>88,332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iroquois</td>
<td>40,570</td>
<td>81,002</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Largest Tribal Groupings for Alaska Natives**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tribe</th>
<th>One Tribe</th>
<th>Two or More Tribes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yup’ik</td>
<td>27,329</td>
<td>33,868</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inupiat</td>
<td>20,941</td>
<td>25,687</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tlingit-Haida</td>
<td>8,547</td>
<td>13,486</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alaskan Athabascan</td>
<td>12,318</td>
<td>16,665</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SOURCE:** Norris, Vines, and Hoeffel (2012).
If you look at the top row of Table 7.1, you’ll see that more than five million people claimed at least some Native American or Alaska Native ancestry; if we define the group as people who select only Native American, the group is a little more than half that size. By either count, Native Americans are a small minority—about 1.6%—of the U.S. population. Table 7.1 presents information for the 10 largest tribal groupings of Native Americans and for the four largest tribal groupings of Alaska Natives but these categories only hint at the diversity of the group. We present them as separate groups because their vastly different geographical locations shaped the contact situation and, therefore, their group histories and also because tribal affiliation continues to matter to many members of this group (National Congress of American Indians, n.d.).

As you’ll see in Figure 7.1, the Native American population has grown rapidly over the past several decades, but this fact needs to be seen in the full context of history. As you learned in Chapter 4, in 1492, there were anywhere from several million to more than 10 million or more Native Americans living in what is now the continental (“Lower 48”) United States (Mann, 2011). By 1900, fewer than 250,000 American Indians remained due to deaths during the contact period—from disease, battles, and starvation due to loss of land and, therefore, the ability to hunt animals and gather plants, and nuts, and other resources.

Recent population growth is largely the result of changing definitions of race in the larger society and people’s greater willingness to claim Indian ancestry (Wilson, 2000). This pattern also underscores the social character of race.

**NATIVE AMERICAN CULTURES**

The dynamics between Native Americans and Anglo-Americans have been shaped by the vast differences in culture between the two groups (e.g., beliefs, values, norms, language). These differences have hampered communication in the past and continue to do so in the present. Although we’re discussing Native Americans as a group, as we noted in Chapter 4, there were (and are) almost 600 different tribes, each with its own heritage, social structure, and geography (National Congress of American Indians, n.d.; Regan, 2018). A comprehensive analysis of Native American cultures that takes such diversity into account is beyond the scope of this text. However, as Regan (2018) notes, we can identify some common cultural characteristics.

**AGRICULTURE, VIEWS ON NATURE, AND LAND OWNERSHIP**

Before exploring the content of their culture, recall Lenski’s arguments about how subsistence technology profoundly shapes societies (see Chapter 1). Most Native American tribes that existed in what is now the U.S. relied on hunting, fishing, and gathering to satisfy their basic needs. As the text box on page 229 shows, many also cultivated gardens rich with squash, corn, beans, sunflower (for the oil-rich seeds), goosefoot (a starch), and other plants (George-Kanentiio, 2000; Nabhan, 2002; Nash & Strobel, 2006; Nelson, 2008; Park, Hongub, & Daily, 2016; Wessell, 1986).
Below, William Strachey describes his travels to Virginia (in the English of the early 1600s) his travels to Virginia, including what Native Americans grew and ate each season and how food availability (or lack thereof) affected people. It illustrates the precariousness of the food supply: When food was plentiful people were fat and strong, but when food was scarce they would become lean and weak.

About their houses they have commonly square plotts of cleered ground, which serve them for gardens, some one hundred, some two hundred foot square, wherein they sowe their tobacco, pumpkins, and a fruit like unto a musk melon, but less and worse, which they call macock gourds, and such like, which fruets increase exceedingly, and ripen in the beginning of July, and continue until September; they plant also the field apple, the maracock, a wyld fruit like a kind of pomegranette, which increasest infinitelye, and ripens in August, continuing until the end of October, when all the other fruets be gathered, but they sowe neither herb, flower, nor any other kind of fruit. They neither ympale for deare, nor breed cattile, nor bring up tame poultry, albeit they have great store of turkies, nor keepe birds, squirrells, nor tame patridges, swan, duck, nor goose. In March and April they live much upon their weeres [traps used to catch fish] and feed on fish, turkies, and squirrel, and then, as also sometymes in May, they plant their fields and sett their corn, and live after those months most of acrons [acorns], walnuts, chestnuts, chechinquarnins [a form of wild grain], and fish; but, to mend their dyett, some dispere themselves in small companyes, and live upon such beasts as they can kill with their bows and arrows, upon crabs, oysters, land-tortoyses, strawbenyes, mulberries, and such like. In June, July, and August they feed upon the roots of tockhow (luckahow, or the arrow arum plant that grows in wetlands), berries, ground nuts, fish, and greene wheate [corn], and sometyme upon a greene serpent, or greene snake, of which our people likewise use to eate. It is strange to see how their bodies alter with their dyett; even as the deare and wild beasts they seem fat and lean, strong and weak (Strachey & Major, 1849, pp. 72–73).

Indeed, in 1607 when the colonists arrived in Virginia, their survival was due, in part, to Native Americans’ crops and seeds as well as their willingness to share their knowledge about how to cultivate crops in the new world (Smith, 2013, p. xv). Nevertheless, the food supply was unreliable and Native Americans (like colonists) often lived on the edge of hunger and want.

As is typical at the hunting-and-gathering level of development, Native American societies tended to be more oriented toward groups (e.g., the extended family, clan, or tribe) than toward individuals. Such communities stress values of sharing and cooperation which enable them to maintain strong bonds of cohesion and solidarity. In such communities, people subordinate self-interests to those of the group (Regan, 2018).

One important difference between Native Americans and European settlers involved their ideas about the relationship between human beings and the natural world. In the traditional Native American cultures, the universe is a unity. Humans are simply a part of a larger reality, no different from or more important than other animals, plants, trees, and the earth itself. Because the natural world is connected to the spiritual world, the goal of many Native American tribes was to live in harmony with nature (Regan, 2018, p. 240).

This framework influenced Native American beliefs about property which differed from European thinking. Contrary to popular stereotypes, Native Americans did own personal possessions. For example, Lakota men owned their horses, clothing, weapons, and spiritual objects. Indigenous women of Alaska marked their stored fish to show its ownership. Because many indigenous women were responsible for the tipis, they were considered their property. And, the Great Law of the Iroquois stated, “women shall be considered the Progenitors of the Nation. They shall own the land and soil” (cited from Andersen, 2016, p. 37).
This phrasing, that women “own the land and soil,” shows how indigenous Americans thought of land ownership; that is, land belongs to the group. This is partly why Tecumseh, a Shawnee chief, was incensed to find that a few men had sold land to settlers while he was away. He spoke to Governor William Henry about why this was problematic, saying,

> [the] Great Spirit that made them, to keep it, to traverse it, to enjoy its productions... it never was divided, but belongs to all for the use of each. For no part has a right to sell, even to each other, much less to strangers—those who want all, and will not do with less. (Tecumseh, 1810, as cited in Drake, 1845, p. 121)

Although the European notion of individuals owning, selling, and buying land went against this ethos (Andersen, 2016; Banner, 2005) Native Americans had a system of land tenure that served them for generations, somewhat like the English common gardens with which colonists may have been familiar (Banner, 2005; Craven, 1970, p. 107). Land was often given to individuals and those people had land use rights, but anyone could hunt or gather on unallocated land (Banner, 2005, p. 37). According to one Creek chief, “We have no suits about land titles because the title is not disputable” (Banner, 2005, p. 266).

**GENDER AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE**

Egalitarianism, respect, and the worth of every person were other important values that organized many traditional Native American communities. Virtually all tribes had a division of labor based on gender, and often by age, and they valued work regardless of who did it. For example, Choctaw men and women both did food-related work: Men hunted for food and women supervised food production and distribution (Andersen, 2016). The gendered division of labor in many tribes was flexible, allowing people to do what fit with their gender identity and skills. For example, among the Yuma (or Quechan), a woman who had a dream about fighting could take on the role of a warrior and fight alongside the men of her tribe (Allen, 1992; Andersen, 2016, p. 35).

Women in many indigenous communities occupied important economic, political, and religious positions, and had much greater freedom than colonial women (who the law defined as dependents) (Anderson, 2016; George-Kanentiio, 2006; Hartman, n.d.). Among the Iroquois, a council of older women appointed the tribe’s chiefs, had veto power over their decisions, and made decisions about when to wage war (Allen, 1992; Amott & Matthaei, 1991, pp. 34–35; Mann, 2008). Women could also impeach chiefs that did not make decisions in the interests of the group or live up to their standards (George-Kanentiio, 2006, p. 45; Mann, 2008, p. 191).

The colonists and Native Americans viewed gender differently, too. The colonists believed that one's gender came from God and that gender relations on earth should model the biblical account of Adam and Eve. For them, gender was a binary: A person is either a girl/woman or a boy/man. They linked gender to biological sex (e.g., anatomy) and saw women and men as having essential differences. In their interpretation of Genesis, God made woman from man. Thus, in colonial families, men were expected to be patriarchs (“fathers”) who would rule families as God the Father is said to rule over creation—with ultimate power and authority. Women and children were expected to be subservient to them.

Because fathers are of the utmost importance in patriarchal societies like Great Britain and the American colonies, those societies are patrilineal. This means that people trace their name and lineage through the father’s family line. Patriarchal societies also tend to be patrilocal. That is, when (heterosexual) couples get married, the woman would leave her father’s (family) house to live with her husband and his family.

Native Americans also connected gender and the spiritual world, but their creation accounts are woman-centered and often emphasize women’s ability to bring life into the world. For example, the Iroquois tell of Sky People who lived happily (in the sky) and for whom death
did not exist. When a pregnant Sky Woman fell toward earth, the birds caught her and other animals helped, too. Together, they created the world (Allen, 1992; Anderson, 2016; Nash & Strobel, 2006, p. 40).

Because women are central to creation stories, Native Americans considered them central to everything on earth. Thus, the social organization of many tribes, such as the Iroquois, Tlingit, and Navajo, are matrilineal. In matrilineal societies people trace their name and lineage through the mother’s family. Many of these tribes were also matrilocal. That is, when heterosexual couples got married, the man would move into his wife’s (family) home rather than she moving to live in his (George-Kanentiio, 2006; Nash & Strobel, 2006).

Native Americans separated gender, sex, and sexual orientation which allowed for gender expression beyond the girl/woman and boy/man dichotomy of colonial America. (See Chapter 1 for a basic review and Chapters 11 and 12 for details.) Researchers have documented as many as 130 tribal communities that welcomed two-spirit people—formerly called berdache by anthropologists and hermaphrodites by Europeans (Roscoe, 2014)—who identify as both genders or who identify outside of the Western gender binary (Lang, 2010; Roscoe, 1991, p. 5; Thomas, 1997). Some people also use two-spirit to include diverse sexual orientations (e.g., lesbian/gay, queer). In reality, the two-spirit designation is more complex; it connects and cuts across gender and sexuality.

The number and type of two-spirit genders varied by tribal community including the winkte (Lakota), nádleehí (Navajo), kwídó (Tewa), wa’ippe (Shoshone), dubuds (Paiute), and lhamana (Zuni). The Navajo, for example, had four genders (Thomas, 1997) while the Cree had five (Âpihtawikosisân, 2012), for example, a “feminine” male who lives as a woman and is viewed as a woman. Or, a “masculine” female who is socially defined and accepted as a man (Estrada, 2011; Lang, 2010; Mirandé, 2017; Thomas, 1997).

These labels may sound similar to contemporary ways of thinking about gender. For example, people display femininity and masculinity to varying degrees. However, in contemporary American society, people tend to think of a “feminine” male/man as a woman. In traditional Native American communities, such a person could be recognized as a woman although they are biologically male. Keep in mind that these gender categories don’t always translate well into English (Âpihtawikosisân, 2010). We may be tempted to think about them through a Western framework, seeing them as gender binary with additional options. Blackwood (1997) urges us to think this way because doing so privileges certain categories and presumed relationships (e.g., female/girl/woman, male/boy/man) over others (p. 288). Rather, she suggests, we need to think about the diversity of Native American genders as a holistic system of gender relations. (Also see Mirandé, 2017.)

**BELIEF SYSTEMS AND GENDER**

In every society, belief systems (ideologies) shape norms of behavior and other aspects of social structure. Native American communities believed that the Great Creator made everything, including two-spirit people. They were thought to have the qualities and skills of both women and men and, thus, were seen as uniquely sacred. This gender status gave them a special role in their communities for which they received appreciation and respect (Anderson, 2016; Cherry, 2012; Harrington, 2016; Mirandé, 2017; Roscoe, 1991). The “Old West” painter, George Catlin, documented the celebration of two-spirit people among the plains Indians in his painting, “Dance to the Berdache.”

Mythology and religious beliefs encouraged acceptance of two-spirit people. For example, the Zuni have Ko’lhamana, a two-spirit god. Likewise, the Maricopa have Avialyxa (Lang, 2010), the Bella Coola have Sx’ints (or Skhints), and the Navajo have Begochiddy, described as a “cross-dressing shape-shifting bisexual Navajo.
god...who is the son of the Sun and a creator of wild and domestic animals” (Roscoe, 1991, c.f. Brunnerová, 2016, p. 35). The Acoma-Laguna Pueblo have stories that describe the Storoka, an entire community of two-spirit people (Brunnerová, 2016; Cherry, 2012; Roscoe, 2014, p. 12). Lastly, the Bella Coola have a story that highlights the unique contributions of two-spirit people. It tells of Winwina, six supernatural birds, and Ala’yao, a two-spirit person, who go in search of food. Each bird finds a different type of salmon while Ala’yao gathers the first berries for people to eat (Bagemihl, 2000; Carlson-Ghost, 2016).

In contemporary language, we would say that Native Americans accepted gender fluidity. Someone could choose their gender based on a dream or their perceived skills (for example) rather than having to be the gender that “matched” a certain kind of anatomy (Anderson, 2016; Lang 2010; Mirandé, 2017). (Today, we call people with sex and gender congruence cis gender.) Among the Cocopah and Mohave, children’s friends and preferences for play could, for example, influence one’s gender. A biological female who preferred to play with boys or “boys’ toys” could live as a boy (Allen, 1992; Gilley, 2006). They might adopt boys’ clothing and do work assigned to boys and people would recognize them as a boy (rather than what we, today, might call a “tomboy”). Likewise, biological males might wear women’s clothing and do women’s work and be accepted as women (Mirandé, 2017).

Being two-spirit was normative within different indigenous communities until the 1890s. Community members did not see two-spirit people as acting, confused, or deviant. However, the influence of European culture, especially Christian beliefs about gender, changed that (Thomas, 1997, p. 156). Native American writer Leslie Silko describes that shift among the Laguna, saying, “before the arrival of Christian missionaries, a man could dress as a woman and work with the women, and even marry a man without any fanfare. Likewise, a woman was free to dress

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRIBE</th>
<th>OCCUPATIONS</th>
<th>CONTEXT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shoshoni</td>
<td>Hunting, men’s work in general</td>
<td>Sometimes men’s clothing; one case: married, hunted; other case: wore only man’s clothing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sinkaitk</td>
<td>Hunting</td>
<td>Refused to marry; behavior not supported by the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thompson</td>
<td>Behaved “like men”</td>
<td>Rare cases; men’s clothing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ute</td>
<td>Men’s work</td>
<td>Men’s clothing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wintu</td>
<td>Men’s work, not clothing</td>
<td>Women’s clothing; lived with women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wiyot</td>
<td>Hunting</td>
<td>Men’s clothing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

like a man, to hunt and go to war with the men, and to marry a woman. In the old Pueblo world view, we are all a mixture of male and female, and the sexual identity is constantly changing” (Silko, 2013/1999, p. 67).

Table 7.2 illustrates what Lang (2010) calls gender role change. Some native women wanted to do “men’s work” and were generally permitted to do so. Others had identities more aligned with two-spirit people or “men-women.”

Anthropologist Sue-Ellen Jacobs says that most of the tribes she studied spoke about homosexuality in positive ways. The 11 tribes that denied the existence of homosexuality among their members were those with the “heaviest, lengthiest, and most severely puritanical white encroachment” (Anderson, 2016, p. 66).

Native Americans view of land ownership and their lack of experience with deeds, titles, contracts, and other Western legal concepts often made it difficult for them to defend their resources from Anglo-Americans. Over time, Christian missionarines and government representatives continued to pursue an assimilationist path. They tried to reverse the traditional Native American division of labor, in which women handled the gardening, because in the Western view, only men did farm work. Likewise, they pushed women out of the fur trade (Anderson, 2016). Military and political representatives of the dominant society usually ignored women tribal leaders and imposed Western notions of patriarchy and men leadership on the tribes (Amott & Matthaei, 1991, p. 39). According to Anderson (2016), George Washington said he planned “to turn Native men into industrious, republican farmers and women into chaste, orderly housewives” (p. 38). These cultural differences in thinking—about nature, land ownership, gender, sexuality, and family—compounded by the power differentials, often placed Native Americans at a disadvantage when dealing with the dominant group.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. Why are there different estimates for the size of the Native American and Alaska Native population? How do these differences support the idea that race is a social construction?

2. What are the key characteristics of Native American cultures? How do these vary from Anglo culture? Describe the conflicting notions regarding gender. How did these differences shape Anglo–Indian relations?

3. Describe the main tenets of colonists’ and Native American belief systems. How did those ideas shape group life? How did they fuel tensions between the groups?

RELATIONS WITH THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AFTER THE 1890s

By the end of the Indian Wars in 1890, Native Americans had few resources with which to defend their self-interests. In addition to being confined to the reservations, most Native American groups were scattered throughout the western two thirds of the United States and split by cultural and linguistic differences. Politically, the power of the group was further limited by the facts that the huge majority of Native Americans were not U.S. citizens and most tribes lacked a cultural basis for understanding representative democracy, as practiced in the larger society.

Economically, Native Americans were among the most impoverished groups in society. Reservation lands were generally of poor quality, traditional food sources such as buffalo and other game had been destroyed, and traditional hunting grounds and gardening plots had been lost to white farmers and ranchers. The tribes had few means of satisfying even their most basic needs. Many became totally dependent on the federal government for food, shelter, clothing, and other necessities.

Prospects for improvement seemed slim. Most reservations were in remote areas, far from sites of industrialization and modernization (see Figure 7.2), and Native Americans had few of the skills (knowledge of English, familiarity with Western work habits and routines) that would have enabled them to compete for a place in the increasingly urban and industrial American society of the early 20th century. Off the reservations, racial prejudice and strong intolerance limited them. On the reservations, they were subjected to policies designed either to maintain their powerlessness and poverty or to force them to Americanize. Either way, the future of Native Americans was in serious jeopardy, and their destructive relations with white society continued in peace as they had in war.

RESERVATION LIFE

As would be expected for a conquered and still hostile group, the reservations were intended to closely supervise Native Americans and maintain their powerlessness. Relationships with the federal government were paternalistic and featured a variety of policies designed to coercively acculturate the tribes.

Paternalism and the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The reservations were run not by the tribes, but by an agency of the federal government: the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) of the U.S. Department of the Interior. The BIA and
its local superintendent controlled virtually all aspects of everyday life, including the reservation budget, the criminal justice system, and the schools. The BIA (again, not the tribes) even determined tribal membership.

The traditional leadership structures and political institutions of the tribes were ignored as the BIA executed its duties with little regard for, and virtually no input from, the people it supervised. The BIA superintendent of the reservations “ordinarily became the most powerful influence on local Indian affairs, even though he was a government employee, not responsible to the Indians but to his superiors in Washington” (Spicer, 1980, p. 117). The superintendent controlled the food supply and communications with the world outside the reservation. This control was used to reward tribal members who cooperated and punish those who did not.

Coercive Acculturation: The Dawes Act and Boarding Schools. Consistent with the Blauner hypothesis, Native Americans on the reservations were subjected to coercive acculturation or forced Americanization. Their culture was attacked, their languages and religions forbidden, and their institutions circumvented and undermined. The centerpiece of U.S. Indian policy was the **Dawes Allotment Act of 1887**, a deeply flawed attempt to impose white definitions of land ownership that divided Native American land into smaller units that the government gave to individuals. The government would offer U.S. citizenship to those Native Americans who took the land and lived away from their tribal communities.

The intention was to give each Indian family the means to survive like their white neighbors and to encourage Native people to assimilate into the larger white society. Once the land had been allotted, the U.S. government then put the rest up for sale to non-Native settlers.

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FIGURE 7.2  Native American Reservations in the United States

![Map of Native American Reservations in the United States](https://www.nps.gov/nagpra/DOCUMENTS/ResMAP.HTM)

The U.S. Army encouraged massive hunts that nearly made bison extinct in the 1870s. One goal of the hunts was to force native people off Plains land and onto reservations.

Although the law might seem benevolent in intent (certainly, thousands of immigrant families would have been thrilled to own land), it was flawed by a gross lack of understanding of Native American cultures and needs, and in many ways, it was a direct attack on those cultures, in part, because of the way it reorganized tribal communities.

Many Native Americans had little or no concept of land as private property, and it was relatively easy for settlers, land speculators, and others to separate Indian families from the land allocated to them by this legislation. By allotting land to families and individuals, the legislation sought to destroy the broader kinship, clan, and tribal social structures and replace them with Western systems that featured individualism and the profit motive (Cornell, 1988, p. 80).

The U.S. government allotted about 140 million acres to Native Americans in 1887. By the 1930s, nearly 90 million of those acres—almost 65%—had been lost. Most of the remaining land was desert or otherwise non-productive and would not be able to support their communities (Wax, 1971, p. 55). From the standpoint of the Indian nations, the Dawes Allotment Act was a disaster and a further erosion of their limited resources (for more details, see Josephy, 1968; Lurie, 1982; McNickle, 1973; Wax, 1971).

Additionally, coercive acculturation operated through a variety of other avenues. Whenever possible, the BIA sent Native American children to boarding schools, sometimes hundreds of miles away from parents and other kin, where they were required to speak English, convert to Christianity, and become educated in the ways of Western civilization such as dressing in western style clothing (Jacobs, 2009). Consistent with the Blauner (1972) hypothesis, tribal languages, dress, and religion were forbidden, and to the extent that native cultures were mentioned at all, they were attacked and ridiculed. Children of different tribes were mixed together as roommates to speed the acquisition of English. When school was not in session, children were often boarded with local white families, usually as unpaid domestic helpers or farmhands, and prevented from visiting their families and revitalizing their tribal ties (Hoxie, 1984; Spicer, 1980; Wax, 1971).

Hastiin To’Haali, a Navajo (Diné) who became known as Tom Torlino. The photo on the left was taken when he entered Carlisle Boarding School in 1882. The photo on the right was taken three years later. Some suggest that photographers used filters and lighting to darken the “before” images and lighten the “after” images. He did not fully assimilate as the school hoped. Rather, he returned to his community and his life as a healer and rancher. He used his knowledge of English to help his community in dealing with Westerners.
Native Americans were virtually powerless to change the reservation system or avoid the campaign of acculturation. Nonetheless, they resented and resisted coerced Americanization, and many languages and cultural elements survived the early reservation period, although often in altered form. For example, the traditional tribal religions remained vital throughout the period, despite the fact that by the 1930s, the great majority of Native Americans had affiliated with one Christian faith or another. Furthermore, many new religions were founded, some combining Christian and traditional elements (Spicer, 1980, p. 118). Mary Crow Dog’s Narrative Portrait earlier in this chapter gives an intimate account of the dynamics of coercive acculturation.

The Indian Reorganization Act. By the 1930s, the failure of the reservation system and the policy of forced assimilation had become obvious to all who cared to observe. The quality of life for Native Americans had not improved, and there was little economic development, as well as fewer job opportunities, on the reservations. Health care was woefully inadequate, and education levels lagged far behind national standards.

The plight of Native Americans eventually found a sympathetic ear in the administration of Franklin D. Roosevelt, who was elected president in 1932, and John Collier, the man he appointed to run the BIA. Collier was knowledgeable about Native American issues and concerns,

Questions to Consider

1. How does this passage illustrate the concept of “coercive acculturation”? What other concepts seem applicable? Why?

2. What do you think about Mary Crow Dog’s comment that “racism breeds racism in reverse”? Does this idea apply to other situations discussed in this text? How about to situations you have observed or experienced personally?
and was instrumental in securing the passage of the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) in 1934.

This landmark legislation contained a number of significant provisions for Native Americans and broke sharply with the federal policies of the past. In particular, the IRA rescinded the Dawes Act of 1887 and the policy of individualizing tribal lands. It also provided means by which the tribes could expand their landholdings. Many of the mechanisms of coercive Americanization in the school system and elsewhere were dismantled. Financial aid in various forms and expertise were made available for the economic development of the reservations. In perhaps the most significant departure from earlier policy, the IRA proposed an increase in Native American self-governance and a reduction of the paternalistic role of the BIA and other federal agencies.

Although sympathetic to Native Americans, the IRA had its limits and shortcomings. Many of its intentions were never realized, and the empowerment of the tribes was not unqualified. The move to self-governance generally took place on the dominant group’s terms and in conformity with the values and practices of white society. For example, the proposed increase in the decision-making power of the tribes was contingent on their adoption of Anglo-American political forms, including secret ballots, majority rule, and written constitutions. These were alien concepts to those tribes that selected leaders by procedures other than popular election (e.g., leaders might be chosen by councils of elders) or that made decisions by open discussion and consensus building (i.e., decisions required the agreement of everyone with a voice in the process, not a simple majority). The incorporation of these Western forms illustrates the basically assimilationist intent of the IRA.

The IRA had variable effects on Native American women. In tribes that were dominated by men, the IRA gave women new rights to participate in elections, run for office, and hold leadership roles. In other cases, new political structures replaced traditional forms, some of which, as in the Iroquois culture, had accorded women considerable power. Although the political effects were variable, the programs funded by the IRA provided opportunities for women on many reservations to receive education and training for the first time. Many of these opportunities were oriented toward domestic tasks and other roles traditionally done by Western women, but some prepared Native American women for jobs outside the family and off the reservation, such as clerical work and nursing (Evans, 1989, pp. 208–209).

In summary, the IRA of 1934 was a significant improvement over prior federal Indian policy, but was bolder and more sympathetic to Native Americans in intent than in execution. On the one hand, not all tribes were capable of taking advantage of the opportunities provided by the legislation, and some ended up being further victimized. For example, in the Hopi tribe, located in the Southwest, the Act allowed a Westernized group of Native Americans to be elected to leadership roles, with the result that dominant group firms were allowed to have access to the mineral resources, farmland, and water rights controlled by the tribe. The resultant development generated wealth for the white firms and their Hopi allies, but most of the tribe continued to languish in poverty (Churchill, 1985, pp. 112–113). On the other hand, some tribes prospered (at least comparatively speaking) under the IRA. One impoverished, landless group of Cherokee in Oklahoma acquired land, equipment, and expert advice through the IRA, and between 1937 and 1949, they developed a prosperous, largely debt-free farming community (Debo, 1970, pp. 294–300). Many tribes remained suspicious of the IRA, and by 1948, fewer than 100 tribes had voted to accept its provisions.

The Termination Policy. The IRA’s stress on the legitimacy of tribal identity seemed “un-American” to many. There was constant pressure on the federal government to return to an individualistic policy that encouraged (or required) Americanization. Some viewed the tribal structures and communal property-holding patterns as relics of an earlier era and as impediments to modernization and development. Not so incidentally, some elements of dominant society still coveted the remaining Indian lands and resources, which could be more easily exploited if property ownership were individualized.

In 1953, the assimilationist forces won a victory when Congress passed a resolution calling for an end to the reservation system and to the special relationships between the tribes and the federal government. The proposed policy, called termination, was intended to get the federal government “out of the Indian business.” It rejected the IRA and proposed a return to the system of private land ownership imposed on the tribes by the Dawes Act. Horrified at the notion of termination, the tribes opposed the policy strongly and vociferously. Under this policy, all special relationships—including treaty obligations—between the federal government and the tribes would end. Tribes would no longer exist as legally recognized entities, and tribal lands and other resources would be placed in private hands (Josephy, 1968, pp. 353–355).

Termination was a federal policy intended to end the reservation system and the special relationships between Indian tribes and the federal government.
About 100 tribes, most of them small, were terminated. In virtually all cases, the termination process was administered hastily, and fraud, misuse of funds, and other injustices were common. The Menominee of Wisconsin and the Klamath on the West Coast were the two largest tribes to be terminated. Both suffered devastating economic losses and precipitous declines in quality of life. Neither tribe had the business or tax base needed to finance the services (e.g., health care and schooling) formerly provided by the federal government, and both were forced to sell land, timber, and other scarce resources to maintain minimal standards of living. Many poor Native American families were forced to turn to local and state agencies, which placed severe strain on welfare budgets. The experience of the Menominee was so disastrous that, at the concerted request of the tribe, reservation status was restored in 1973; for the Klamath it was restored in 1986 (Raymer, 1974; Snipp, 1996, p. 394).

**Relocation and Urbanization.** At about the same time the termination policy came into being, various programs were established to encourage Native Americans to move to urban areas. The movement to the city had already begun in the 1940s, spurred by the availability of factory jobs during World War II. In the 1950s, the movement was further encouraged with programs of assistance and by the declining government support for economic development on the reservation, the most dramatic example of which was the policy of termination (Green, 1999, p. 265). Centers for Native Americans were established in many cities, and various services (e.g., job training, housing assistance, English instruction) were offered to assist in the adjustment to urban life.

The urbanization of the Native American population is displayed in Figure 7.3. Note the rapid increase in the movement to the city that began in the 1950s. More than 70% of all Native Americans are now urbanized, and since 1950, Indians have urbanized faster than the general population. Nevertheless, Native Americans are still the least urbanized minority group. The population as a whole is about 80% urbanized; in contrast, African Americans (see Figure 5.2) are about 90% urbanized.

Like African Americans, Native Americans arrived in the cities after the mainstream economy had begun to de-emphasize blue-collar or manufacturing jobs. Because of their relatively low average levels of educational attainment and their racial and cultural differences, Native Americans in the city tended to encounter the same problems African Americans and other minority groups of color experienced: high rates of unemployment, inadequate housing, and all the other travails of the urban underclass.

Native American women also migrated to the city in considerable numbers. The discrimination, unemployment, and poverty of the urban environment often made it difficult for the men of the group to fulfill the role of breadwinner, thus, the burden of supporting the family tended to fall on the women. The difficulties inherent in combining child rearing and a job outside the home are compounded by isolation from the support networks provided by extended family and clan back on the reservations. Nevertheless, one study found that Native American women in the city continue to practice their traditional cultures and maintain the tribal identity of their children (Joe & Miller, 1994, p. 186).

Native Americans living in the city are, on average, better off than those living on reservations, where unemployment can reach 80% or even 90%. The improvement is relative, however. Although many individual Native Americans prosper in the urban environment, income figures for urban Native Americans as a whole are comparable to those for African Americans and well below those for whites. Native American unemployment rates run much higher than the national average. For example, in the first half of 2010, unemployment for all Native Americans was about 15%, comparable to the figure for African Americans (see Figure 6.3) and 67% higher than that for whites (Austin, 2010). Thus, a move to the city often means trading rural poverty for the urban variety, with little net improvement in life chances.

Native Americans will probably remain more rural than other minority groups for years to come. Despite the poverty and lack of opportunities for schooling and jobs, the reservation offers some advantages in services and lifestyle. On the reservation, there may be opportunities for political participation and leadership roles that are not available in the cities, where Native Americans are a tiny minority. Reservations also offer kinfolk, friends, religious services, and tribal celebrations (Snipp, 1989, p. 84). Lower levels of education, work experience, and financial
resources combine with the prejudice, discrimination, and racism of the larger society to lower the chances of success in the city, and will probably sustain a continuing return to the reservations.

Although the economic benefits of urbanization have been slim for the group as whole, other advantages have accrued from life in the city. It was much easier to establish networks of friendship and affiliation across tribal lines in the cities, and urban Indians have been one of the sources of strength and personnel for a movement of protest that began early in the 20th century. Virtually all the organizational vehicles of Native American protest have had urban roots.

Self-Determination. The termination policy aroused so much opposition from Native Americans and was such an obvious disaster that the pressure to push tribes to termination faded in the late 1950s, although the act itself was not repealed until 1975. Since the 1960s, federal Indian policy has generally returned to the tradition set by the IRA. Termination and forced assimilation continue to be officially rejected, and within limits, the tribes have been granted more freedom to find their own way, at their own pace, of relating to the larger society.

Several federal programs and laws have benefited the tribes during the past few decades, including the antipoverty and “Great Society” campaigns launched in the 1960s. In 1970, President Richard Nixon affirmed the government’s commitment to fulfilling treaty obligations and the right of the tribes to self-governance. The Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act was passed in 1975. This legislation increased aid to reservation schools and Native American students, and increased tribal control over the administration of the reservations, from police forces to schools to road maintenance.

The Self-Determination Act primarily benefited the larger tribes and those that had well-established administrative and governing structures. Smaller and less well-organized tribes have continued to rely heavily on the federal government (Snipp, 1996, p. 394). Nonetheless, in many cases, this new phase of federal policy has allowed Native American tribes to plot their own courses free of paternalistic regulation, and just as important, it gave them the tools and resources to address their problems and improve their situations. Decision making was returned to local authorities, who were “held more accountable to local needs, conditions, and cultures than outsiders” (Taylor & Kalt, 2005, p. xi).

In the view of many, self-determination is a key reason for the recent improvements in the status of Native Americans, and we will look at some of these developments after examining the Native American protest movement.

**PROTEST AND RESISTANCE**

**EARLY EFFORTS**

As BIA-administered reservations and coercive Americanization came to dominate tribal life in the early 20th century, new forms of Indian activism appeared. The modern protest movement was tiny at first and, with few exceptions, achieved a measure of success only in recent decades. In fact, the Native American protest movement in the past was not so much unsuccessful as simply ignored. The movement has focused on several complementary goals: protecting Native American resources and treaty rights, striking a balance between assimilation and pluralism, and finding a relationship with the dominant group that would permit a broader array of life chances without sacrificing tribal identity and heritage.

Formally organized Native American protest organizations have existed since the 1910s, but the modern phase of the protest movement began during World War II. Many Native Americans served in the military or moved to the city to take jobs in aid of the war effort and were thereby exposed to the world beyond the reservation. Also, political activism on reservations, which had been stimulated by the IRA, continued through the war years, as the recognition of growing problems that were shared across tribal lines grew.

These trends helped stimulate the founding of the National Congress of Native Americans (NCAI) in 1944. This organization was pan-tribal (i.e., included members from many different tribes); 50 different tribes and reservations attended its first convention (Cornell, 1988, p. 119). The leadership consisted largely of Native Americans educated and experienced in the white world. However, the NCAI’s program stressed the importance of preserving the old ways and tribal institutions as well as protecting Indian welfare. An early victory for the NCAI and its allies came in 1946 when the federal government created an Indian Claims Commission. This body was authorized to hear claims brought by the tribes with regard to treaty violations. The commission has since settled hundreds of claims, resulting in awards of millions of dollars to the tribes, and it continues its work today (Weeks, 1988, pp. 261–262).

In the 1950s and 1960s, the protest movement was further stimulated by the threat of termination and by the increasing number of Native Americans living in the cities who developed friendships across tribal lines. Awareness of common problems, rising levels of education, and the examples set by the successful protests of other minority groups also increased readiness for collective action.
RED POWER

By the 1960s and 1970s, Native American protest groups were finding ways to express their grievances and problems to the nation. The Red Power Movement, like the Black Power Movement (see Chapter 6), encompassed a coalition of groups, many considerably more assertive than the NCAI, and a varied collection of ideas, most of which stressed self-determination and pride in race and cultural heritage. Red Power protests included a “fish-in” in Washington State in 1965, an episode that also illustrates the nature of Native American demands. The state of Washington had tried to limit the fishing rights of several different tribes because the supply of fish was diminishing and needed to be protected. The tribes depended on fishing for subsistence and survival, and they argued that their right to fish had been guaranteed by treaties signed in the 1850s and it was the pollution and commercial fishing of the dominant society that had depleted the supply of fish. They organized a “fish-in” in violation of the state’s policy and were met by a contingent of police officers and other law officials. Violent confrontations and mass arrests ensued. Three years later, after a lengthy and expensive court battle, the tribes were vindicated, and the U.S. Supreme Court confirmed their treaty rights to fish the rivers of Washington State (Nabakov, 1999, pp. 362–363).

Another widely publicized episode took place in 1969, when Native Americans from various tribes occupied Alcatraz Island in San Francisco Bay, the site of a closed federal prison. The protesters were acting on an old law that granted Native Americans the right to reclaim abandoned federal land. The occupation of Alcatraz was organized in part by the American Indian Movement (AIM), founded in 1968. More militant and radical than the previously established protest groups, AIM aggressively confronted the BIA, the police, and other forces that were seen as repressive. With the backing of AIM and other groups, Alcatraz was occupied for nearly four years and generated a great deal of publicity for the Red Power Movement and the plight of Native Americans.

In 1972, AIM helped organize a march on Washington, D.C., called the Trail of Broken Treaties. Marchers came from many tribes and represented both urban and reservation Indians. The intent of the marchers was to dramatize the problems of the tribes. The leaders offered a 20-point position paper that demanded the abolition of the BIA, the return of illegally taken land, and increased self-governance for the tribes, among other things. When they reached Washington, some of the marchers forcibly occupied the BIA offices. Property was damaged (by which side is disputed), and records and papers were destroyed.
The marchers eventually surrendered, and none of their demands were met. The following year, AIM occupied the village of Wounded Knee in South Dakota to protest the violation of treaty rights. Wounded Knee was the site of the last armed confrontation between Native Americans and whites, in 1890, and was selected by AIM for its deep symbolic significance. The occupation lasted more than two months and involved several armed confrontations with federal authorities. Again, the protest ended without the federal government meeting any of the demands made by the Native American leadership (Olson & Wilson, 1984, pp. 172–175).

THE DAKOTA ACCESS PIPELINE (DAPL)

In 2016, Native Americans carried out their biggest protest of the last 40 years in opposition to the construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL), a 1,172-mile oil pipeline that would run from North Dakota through parts of Illinois (see Figure 7.4). Once built, the pipeline is expected to carry between 470,000 and 570,000 barrels of crude oil per day (Dakota Access, LLC; Healy, 2016a). The original route was rejected because it threatened populated (mostly white) residential areas and city water systems, leading the U.S. Corps of Engineers to recommend an alternate route .55 miles north of the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation (Meyer, 2017) on land taken from them in 1958 (McKibben, 2016).

Initially “fast-tracked,” DAPL received exemptions from the National Environmental Policy Act and the Clean Water Act. The company behind DAPL, Energy Transfer Partners (ETP), has said it will create thousands of jobs and be safer than pipelines now in use (McKibben, 2016; Meyer, 2017; Mufson, 2016). As early as 2014, the Standing Rock Sioux (SRS) expressed concerns about the potential impact of an oil spill on nearby land and water. Several federal agencies echoed the tribes’ concerns; for example, the Department of the Interior said the proposed location was a “serious concern” and recommended an Environmental Impact Statement be conducted (Sammon, 2016).

The Great Sioux Nation tribes, including the Sioux, Lakota, Oglala, and others, say the pipeline threatens 380 archeological and sacred sites, including burial grounds, along its route (Matas, 2016). Thus, they argue, it threatens Native American culture(s) (McKibben, 2016). In protest, thousands of Native Americans from more than 100 tribes, and other indigenous people from around the world, began living at three camps in North Dakota (McKibben, 2016; Sammon, 2016). They received support from non-indigenous supporters as well, including 2,100 U.S. military veterans offering to act as “human shields” in the wake of a “militarized police force” (Healy, 2016; Veterans for Standing Rock). Protests occurred throughout the United States and elsewhere and thousands of people donated money to help with legal fees and supplies such as generators, eye protection (against tear gas or water cannons), and medical supplies. More than a million people signed various online petitions asking the U.S. government to end the project and that banks end funding ETP and its partners (Amazon Watch, 2017).

This conflict illustrates familiar concerns about land treaties, Native American sacred sites, and cultural preservation. Calling themselves water protectors, the tribes have repeatedly sued the federal government, ETP, and its subsidiaries to prevent the pipeline’s construction. The tribes argue that the land is theirs, noting that the U.S. Government has broken the 1851 and 1868 Laramie Treaties that gave them land west of the Missouri River. ETP says it purchased the land from private landowners (McKibben, 2016).

In September 2016, a court order temporarily halted DAPL construction. Tensions between protestors and law enforcement (and some area locals) often ran high with police turning to pepper spray, dogs, tear gas, and water cannons to quell protests. Hundreds of people were arrested and injured (Healy, 2016). As a preventative measure, the governor of North Dakota called in the National Guard (Sammon, 2016).

A federal judge rejected the Standing Rock Sioux’s petition to end construction. In response, the Department of the Interior, Department of Justice, and the Department of the Army issued a statement asking ETP voluntarily to halt
construction until it could confirm whether or not DAPL breaks National Environmental Policy Act rules (Sammon, 2016). The SRS made additional efforts to halt construction, each ultimately rejected by the courts. Citing costs due to delays and the need to dig before the ground froze in winter, ETP moved forward with the project, ignoring federal requests to wait.

In November, the governor ordered protestors to leave, saying that the camp is “not zoned for dwellings suitable for living in winter conditions, and also [does] not possess proper permanent sanitation infrastructure to sustain a living environment consistent with proper public health” (Yardley, 2016). Before leaving, the remaining protestors burned the camp. In June 2017, a judge ruled that the Corps’ investigation of “the impacts of an oil spill on fishing rights, hunting rights, or environmental justice” was “particularly deficient” and ordered a new study (Meyer, 2017). As of fall 2017, the pipeline project had moved forward even as protests and legal efforts to stop the pipeline continued around the country (Hand, 2017; Hult, 2017; Sawyer, 2017).

PROTEST AND PRESERVATION OF NATIVE AMERICAN CULTURES

Ironically, the struggle for Red Power encouraged assimilation as well as pluralism. The movement linked members of different tribes and forced Indians of diverse heritages to find common ground, often in the form of a generic Native American culture. Inevitably, the protests were conducted in English, and the grievances were expressed in ways that were understandable to white society, thus increasing the pressure to acculturate even while arguing for the survival of the tribes. Furthermore, successful protest required that Native Americans be fluent in English, trained in the law and other professions, skilled in dealing with bureaucracies, and knowledgeable about the formulation and execution of public policy. Native Americans who became proficient in these areas thereby took on the characteristics of their adversaries (Hraba, 1994, p. 235).

As the pan-tribal protest movement forged ties between members of diverse tribes, the successes of the movement along with changing federal policy and public opinion encouraged a rebirth of commitment to tribalism and “Indianness.” Native Americans were simultaneously stimulated to assimilate (by stressing their common characteristics and creating organizational forms that united the tribes) and to retain a pluralistic relationship with the larger society (by working for self-determination and enhanced tribal power and authority). Thus, part of the significance of the Red Power Movement was that it encouraged both pan-tribal unity and a continuation of tribalism (Olson & Wilson, 1984, p. 206). Today, Native Americans continue to seek a way of existing in the larger society that merges assimilation with pluralism.

Table 7.3 summarizes this discussion of federal policy and Indian protest. The four major policy phases since the end of overt hostilities in 1890 are listed on the left. The thrust of the government’s economic and political policies are listed in the next two columns, followed by a brief characterization of tribal response. The last column shows the changing bases for federal policy, sometimes aimed at weakening tribal structures and individualizing Native Americans, and sometimes (including most recently) aimed at working with and preserving tribal structures.

TABLE 7.3 Federal Indian Policy and Indian Response

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERIOD</th>
<th>ECONOMIC IMPACT</th>
<th>POLITICAL IMPACT</th>
<th>INDIAN RESPONSE</th>
<th>GOVERNMENT APPROACH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reservation late 1800s–1930s</td>
<td>Land loss (Dawes Act) and welfare dependency</td>
<td>Government control of reservation and coerced acculturation</td>
<td>Some resistance; growth of religious movements</td>
<td>Individualistic; creation of self-sufficient farmers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reorganization (IRA) 1930s and 1940s</td>
<td>Stabilized land base and supported some development of reservation</td>
<td>Established federally sponsored tribal governments</td>
<td>Increased political participation in many tribes; some pan-tribal activity</td>
<td>Incorporated tribes as groups; creation of self-sufficient “Americanized” communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Termination and Relocation late 1940s–early 1960s</td>
<td>Withdrawal of government support for reservations; promotion of urbanization</td>
<td>New assault on tribes; new forms of coercive acculturation</td>
<td>Increased pan-tribalism; widespread and intense opposition to termination</td>
<td>Individualistic; dissolved tribal ties and promoted incorporation into the modern, urban labor market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Determination 1960s to present</td>
<td>Developed reservation economies; increased integration of Indian labor force</td>
<td>Support for tribal governments</td>
<td>Greatly increased political activity</td>
<td>Incorporated tribes as self-sufficient communities with access to federal programs of support and welfare</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

3. What are the major phases in Indian–white relations since the 1890s? What laws and federal policies shaped these changes? How did Indians respond?

4. Compare and contrast the Red Power Movement with the Black Power Movement discussed in Chapter 6.

5. How were the similarities and differences shaped by the groups’ situations?

CONTEMPORARY NATIVE AMERICAN–WHITE RELATIONS

Conflicts between Native Americans and the larger society are far from over. Although the days of deadly battle are (with occasional exceptions) long gone, the issues that remain are serious, difficult to resolve, and, in their way, just as much matters of life and death. Native Americans face enormous challenges in their struggle to improve their status, but, largely because of their greater freedom from stifling federal control since the 1970s, they also have some resources, some opportunities, and a leadership that is both talented and resourceful (Bordewich, 1996, p. 11).

NATURAL RESOURCES

Ironically, land allotted to Native American tribes in the 19th century sometimes turned out to be rich in resources that became valuable in the 20th century. These resources include oil, natural gas, coal, and uranium, basic sources of energy in the larger society. In addition (and despite the devastation wreaked by the Dawes Act of 1887), some tribes hold title to water rights, fishing rights, woodlands that could sustain a timber industry, and wilderness areas that could be developed for camping, hunting, and other forms of recreation. These resources are likely to become more valuable as the earth’s natural resources and undeveloped areas are further depleted in the future.

The challenge Native Americans face is to retain control of these resources and to develop them for their own benefit. Threats to the remaining tribal lands and assets are common. Mining and energy companies continue to cast envious eyes on Native American land, and other tribal assets are coveted by real-estate developers, fishers (recreational as well as commercial), backpackers and campers, and cities facing water shortages (Harjo, 1996).

Some tribes have succeeded in developing their resources for their own benefit, in part because of their increased autonomy and independence since the passage of the 1975 Indian Self-Determination Act. For example, the White Mountain Apaches of Arizona own a variety of enterprises, including a major ski resort and a casino (Cornell & Kalt, 1998, pp. 3–4). On many other reservations, however, even richer stores of resources lie dormant, awaiting the right combination of tribal leadership, expertise, and development capital.

On a broader level, tribes are banding together to share expertise and negotiate more effectively with the larger society. For example, 25 tribes founded the Council of Energy Resource Tribes in 1975 to coordinate and control the development of the mineral resources on reservation lands. Since its founding, the council has successfully negotiated a number of agreements with dominant group firms, increasing the flow of income to the tribes and raising their quality of life (Cornell, 1988; Snipp, 1989). The council now encompasses more than 50 tribes and several Canadian First Nations (Council of Energy Resource Tribes, n.d.).

ATTRACTING INDUSTRY TO THE RESERVATION

Many efforts to develop the reservations have focused on creating jobs by attracting industry through such incentives as low taxes, low rents, and a low-wage pool of labor—not unlike the package of benefits offered to employers by less-developed nations in Asia, South America, and Africa.

With some notable exceptions, these efforts have not been particularly successful (for a review, see Cornell, 2006; Vinje, 1996). Reservations are often so geographically isolated that transportation costs become prohibitive. The jobs that have materialized are typically low wage and have few benefits; usually, non-Indians fill the more lucrative managerial positions. Thus, the opportunities for building economic power or improving the standard of living from these jobs are sharply limited. These new jobs may transform “the welfare poor into the working poor” (Snipp, 1996, p. 398), but their potential for raising economic vitality is low.

To illustrate the problems of developing reservations by attracting industry, consider the Navajo, the second-largest Native American tribe. The Navajo reservation spreads across Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah, and encompasses about 20 million acres, an area a little smaller than either Indiana or Maine (see Figure 7.2). The reservation seems huge on a map, but much of the land is desert not suitable for farming or other uses. As they have for the past several centuries, the Navajo today rely heavily on the cultivation of corn and sheep herding for sustenance.

Most wage-earning jobs on the reservation are with the agencies of the federal government (e.g., the BIA) or with the tribal government. Tourism is a large industry, but the jobs are typically low wage and seasonal. There are reserves...
Each colonization situation has its unique history, but similar dynamics are at work. To illustrate, we will compare the impact of European colonization of Australian Aborigines and the indigenous peoples of North America.

Australia came under European domination in the late 1700s, nearly two centuries after colonization in the United States. Despite the time difference, the contact situations have commonalities: (1) Great Britain was the colonial power, (2) first contact occurred in the preindustrial era, and (3) indigenous groups were spread thinly across vast geographical areas, and lacked resources and technological development compared to the British (Diamond, 1998).

Aboriginal peoples lived in Australia 50,000 to 65,000 years before the British arrived (Australian Government, 2015). They were nomadic hunter-gatherers who lived in groups of 30 to 50, people connected by marriage or kinship and organized into 500 to 600 nations (Australian Government, 2015; Pettit, 2015). Aborigines shared a common culture, including a belief system called “The Dreaming” that explained the world and offered a moral framework (Australian Government, 2015; Bodley, 2013, p. 41; Pettit, 2015).

Although early relations between the English and the Aborigines were hospitable, competition for land and other resources soon led to conflict (Pettit, 2015; Reynolds, 2006, p. 69). The British equated “blackness” with inferiority (Smithers, 2008) and saw the Aborigines as “savages.” They disliked much about them; for example, Aborigines’ use of spears to hunt, bodily adornment, nomadic ways, and their lack of desire for material wealth (Buchanan, 2005; Grey, 1841).

The contact situation became violent—and included massacres, rape, and the forcible removal of indigenous people from their land. The Aborigines fought back, but lacked British firepower (Clements, 2014). Disease, violence, loss of land, and malnutrition killed 90% to 95% of the Aboriginal population (Reynolds, 2006, p. 127). Some people consider it genocide (Clements, 2014).

The British pushed the remaining Aborigines into missions, reserves, and stations (AIATSIS, n.d.). Church-established missions attempted to “civilize” Aborigines. The government created unmanaged reserves where Aborigines could live as they had prior to colonization. Eventually the government provided blankets and basic food—less out of concern than to keep Aborigines from killing settlers’ cattle in “white areas” (AIATSIS, n.d.; Peterson, 2005). Government-supervised stations provided housing and job training (e.g., as servants) (Choo, 2016, p. 111). However, station conditions were “appalling” and Aborigines suffered from malnutrition and poor health (Berndt & Berndt, 1987, p. xi; Peterson, 2005).

Between 1905 and 1969, the government took approximately 100,000 1 “half-caste” children from their families by “persuasion and threats” (Commonwealth of Australia, 1997, p. 34). Today, they are called “The Stolen Generation.” The stated goals of child removal laws were to protect “neglected” children, teach them “European values and work habits,” and make them employable (Commonwealth of Australia, 1997, p. 2).

The government focused on half-caste children it believed could “absorb” into the white population. It hoped that, over time, “full-blooded” natives would be “eliminated” (Commonwealth of Australia, 1997, p. 24). To ensure they never saw their parents or families again, children’s names were changed and they were taken far away (Commonwealth of Australia, 1997, p. 24). Their lives were strictly controlled. For example, their hair was cut and their possessions taken. They worked during the day or went to school. At sundown, they were “locked up in dormitories” to discourage running away (Commonwealth of Australia, 1997, p. 116). Breaking even minor rules resulted in the “strap” or being “put into jail” (e.g., solitary confinement) (Commonwealth of Australia, 1997, p. 71).

At the start of the 20th century, the Aboriginal population was less than 100,000. In 2014, it was 686,800—about 3% of Australia’s total population. Numbers have increased, partly because of higher birth rates, but also because changing attitudes make it easier for people to claim their Aboriginal heritage. Sixty-two percent of Aboriginal people identified with “a clan, tribal, or language group”; 35% live in cities while only 21% live in remote areas (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2014).

Compared with the general population, Aborigines have less access to health care and higher rates of alcoholism, malnutrition, unemployment, and suicide. Their life expectancy is 12 years lower and 65% reported long-term health conditions. Just 26% had completed 12th grade (up from 20% in 2008) and 18% lived in overcrowded housing. More than one third (39%) reported experiencing discrimination (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2014).

---

1 The Australian government’s report notes that it’s hard to estimate a number because many institutions didn’t keep records or didn’t record children’s family history information as Aboriginal. It did “conclude with confidence that between one in three and one in ten Indigenous children were forcibly removed from their families and communities in the period from approximately 1910 until 1970. . . . and not one Indigenous family has escaped the effects of forcible removal” (Commonwealth of Australia, 1997, p. 3).
The issues facing the Australian Aborigines include the preservation of their culture and identity, self-determination and autonomy, the return of stolen lands, and an end to discrimination. Their history and their present situation support the Blauner and Noel hypotheses.

Questions to Consider
1. Compare and contrast the contact situations of Native Americans and Australian Aborigines. In what ways were both colonized minorities?
2. Compare and contrast the contemporary situations of Native Americans and Australian Aborigines. Why do these differences exist?
3. What similarities and differences exist between the experiences of African Americans and Australian Aborigines? Between Australian Aborigines and slaves in Brazil? (See the Chapter 6 Comparative Focus.)

The Navajo have resisted the damage to the environment that would be caused by mines and oil wells because of their traditional values and respect for the land. When exploitation of these resources has been allowed, the companies involved often use highly automated technologies that generate few jobs (Oswalt & Neely, 1996, pp. 317–351).

Figures 7.5 and 7.6 contrast Navajo income, poverty, and education with those of the total U.S. population. The poverty rate for the Navajo is more than two and a half times greater than the national norm, and they are below national standards in terms of education, especially in terms of college education. Also, median household income for the Navajo is only about 67% of household income for all Americans, and their per capita income is only 53% of the national norm.

On the other hand, some tribes have managed to achieve relative prosperity by bringing jobs to their people. The Choctaw Nation of Mississippi, for example, is one of the 10 largest employers in the state. Tribal leaders have been able to attract companies such as McDonald's and Ford Motor Company by promising (and delivering) high-quality labor for relatively low wages. The tribe runs a variety of business enterprises, including two casinos. Incomes have risen; unemployment is relatively low; the tribe has built schools, hospitals, and a television station; and it administers numerous other services for its members (Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, 2017).

**FIGURE 7.5** Poverty Rates and Educational Attainment for the Total Population, American Indians and Alaska Natives (AIAN), Navajo, and Choctaw, 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>AIAN</th>
<th>Navajo</th>
<th>Choctaw</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percent of Families in Poverty</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
<td>23.6%</td>
<td>27.5%</td>
<td>13.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent High School Graduate</td>
<td>88.9%</td>
<td>82.7%</td>
<td>78.6%</td>
<td>84.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent With a College Degree</td>
<td>33.1%</td>
<td>19.1%</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The poverty rate for the Choctaw is about half that for the Navajo (although still higher than the national norm), and their educational level approaches the national standard for high school education and is much closer to the national standard for college education than are those of the Navajo or Native Americans as a whole. Median household income for the Choctaw is almost 90% of the national norm and more than $10,000 greater than the median income for the Navajo.

The Choctaw are not the most affluent tribe, and the Navajo are far from being the most destitute. They illustrate the mixture of partial successes and failures that typify efforts to bring prosperity to the reservations; together, these two cases suggest that attracting industry and jobs to the reservations is a possible—but difficult and uncertain—strategy for economic development.

It is worth repeating that self-determination, the ability of tribes to control development on the reservation, seems to be one of the important keys to success. Tribes such as the Choctaw are, in a sense, developing ethnic enclaves (see Chapter 2) in which they can capitalize on local networks of interpersonal relationships. As with other groups that have followed this strategy, success in the enclave depends on solidarity and group cohesion, not Americanization and integration (see Cornell, 2006).

**BROKEN TREATIES**

For many tribes, the treaties signed with the federal government in the 19th century offer another potential resource. These treaties were often violated by white settlers, the military, state and local governments, the BIA, and other elements and agencies of the dominant group, and many tribes are pursuing this trail of broken treaties and seeking compensation for the wrongs of the past. For example, in 1972 the Passamaquoddy and Penobscot tribes filed a lawsuit demanding the return of 12.5 million acres of land—an area more than half the size of Maine—and $25 billion in damages. The tribes argued that this land had been illegally taken from them more than 150 years earlier. After eight years of litigation, the tribes settled for a $25 million trust fund and 300,000 acres of land. Although far less than their original demand, the award gave the tribes control over resources that could be used for economic development, job creation, upgrading educational programs, and developing other programs that would enhance human and financial capital (Worsnop, 1992, p. 391).

Virtually every tribe has similar grievances, and if pursued successfully, the long-dead treaty relationship between the Indian nations and the government could be a significant fount of economic and political resources. Of course, lawsuits require considerable (and expensive) legal expertise and years of effort before they bear fruit. Because there are no guarantees of success, this avenue has some sharp limitations and risks.

**GAMING AND OTHER DEVELOPMENT POSSIBILITIES**

Another resource for Native Americans is the gambling industry, the development of which was made possible by federal legislation passed in 1988. There are currently almost 500 tribally owned gaming establishments (National Indian Gaming Commission, 2017), and the industry has grown many times over, from almost $5 million in revenues in 1995 to over $31 billion in 2016 (National Indian Gaming Commission, 2017). Figure 7.7 charts the growth
of revenues from gaming on Native American reservations from 1995 to 2016.

Most operations are relatively small in scale. The 21 largest Indian casinos—about 5% of all Indian casinos—generate almost 40% of the total income from gaming, and the 74 smallest operations—about 17% of all Indian casinos—account for less than 1% of the income (National Indian Gaming Commission, 2011).

The single most profitable Indian gambling operation is the Foxwoods Casino in Connecticut, operated by the Pequot tribe. The casino is one of the largest in the world and generates more revenue than the casinos of Atlantic City. The profits from the casino are used to benefit tribal members in a variety of ways, including the repurchase of tribal lands, housing assistance, medical benefits, educational scholarships, and public services such as a tribal police force (Bordewich, 1996, p. 110). Other tribes have used gambling profits to purchase restaurants and marinas and to finance the development of outlet malls, manufacturing plants, and a wide variety of other businesses and enterprises (Spilde, 2001).

The power of gaming to benefit the tribes is suggested by the information displayed in Table 7.4, which shows that on a number of indicators, both gaming and nongaming reservations enjoyed significant improvements in their quality of life in the last decade of the 20th century but the gaming reservations improved more rapidly. For example, all reservations increased their per capita income faster than the nation as a whole (+11%), but gaming reservations improved faster (+36%) than nongaming reservations (+21%). (For a more pessimistic view of the benefits of gaming, see Guedel, 2014).

Various tribes have sought other ways to capitalize on their freedom from state regulation and taxes. Some have established small but profitable businesses selling cigarettes tax free. Also, because they are not subject to state and federal environmental regulations, some reservations are exploring the possibility of housing nuclear waste and other refuse of industrialization—a somewhat ironic and not altogether attractive use of the remaining Indian lands.

Clearly, the combination of increased autonomy, treaty rights, natural resources, and gambling means that Native Americans today have an opportunity to dramatically raise their standards of living and creatively take control of their own destinies. Some tribes have enjoyed enormous benefits, but for others, these assets remain a potential waiting to be actualized. Without denying the success stories or the improvements in recent years, the lives of many Native Americans continue to be limited by poverty and powerlessness, prejudice, and discrimination. We document these patterns in the next section.

### TABLE 7.4 Various Indicators of Improvement on Gaming vs. Nongaming Reservations, 1990-2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INDICATOR</th>
<th>NONGAMING</th>
<th>GAMING</th>
<th>UNITED STATES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Per capita income</td>
<td>+21%</td>
<td>+36%</td>
<td>+11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family poverty</td>
<td>–7%</td>
<td>–12%</td>
<td>–1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment</td>
<td>–2%</td>
<td>–5%</td>
<td>–1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school graduates</td>
<td>–1%</td>
<td>+2%</td>
<td>–1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College graduates</td>
<td>+2%</td>
<td>+3%</td>
<td>+4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SOURCE:** Taylor and Kalt (2005, p. xi).

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**PREJUDICE AND DISCRIMINATION**

Anti-Indian prejudice has been a part of American society since first contact. Historically, negative feelings such as hatred and contempt have been widespread and strong, particularly during the heat of war, and various stereotypes of Indians have been common. One stereotype, especially strong during periods of conflict, depicts Indians as bloodthirsty, ferocious, cruel savages capable of any atrocity. The other image of Native Americans is that of “the noble Red Man,” who lives in complete harmony with nature and symbolizes goodwill and pristine simplicity (Bordewich, 1996, p. 34). Although the first stereotype tended to fade away as hostilities drew to a close, the latter image retains a good deal of strength in modern views of Indians found in popular culture and among environmentalist and “new age” spiritual organizations.

A variety of studies have documented continued stereotyping of Native Americans in the popular press, textbooks, the media, cartoons, and various other places (e.g., see Aleiss, 2005; Bird, 1999; Meek, 2006; Rouse & Hanson, 1991). In the tradition of “the noble Red Man,” Native Americans are often portrayed as bucks and squaws, complete with headdresses, bows, tepees, and other such “generic” Indian artifacts. These simplified portrayals obliterate the diversity of Native American culture and lifestyles.

Native Americans are often referred to in the past tense, as if their present situation were of no importance or, worse, as if they no longer existed. Many history books continue to begin the study of American history in Europe or with the “discovery” of America, omitting the millennia of civilization prior to the arrival of European explorers and colonizers. Contemporary portrayals of Native Americans, such as in the movie *Dances With Wolves* (Costner, 1990),

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are more sympathetic but still treat the tribes as part of a bucolic past forever lost, not as peoples with real problems in the present.

The persistence of stereotypes and the extent to which they have become enmeshed in modern culture is illustrated by continuing controversies surrounding the names of athletic teams (e.g., the Washington Redskins, the Cleveland Indians, and the Atlanta Braves) and the use of Native American mascots, tomahawk “chops,” and other practices offensive to many Native Americans (for more, see the Current Debates section for this chapter). Protests have been held at athletic events to increase awareness of these derogatory depictions, but as was the case so often in the past, the protests have been attacked, ridiculed, or simply ignored.

Relatively few studies of anti-Indian prejudice exist within the social science literature. Therefore, it is difficult to fully understand the changes that may have occurred over the past several decades. We do not know whether there has been a shift to more symbolic or “modern” forms of anti-Indian racism, as there has been for antiblack prejudice, or whether the stereotypes of Native Americans have declined in strength or changed in content.

One of the few records of national anti-Indian prejudice over time is that of social distance scale results (see Table 3.2). When the scales were first administered in 1926, Native Americans were ranked in the middle third of all groups (18th out of 28), at about the same level as southern and eastern Europeans and slightly above Mexicans, another colonized group. The ranking of Native Americans remained stable until 1977, when there was a noticeable rise in their position relative to other groups. In the most recent polls, the rankings of Native Americans have remained stable, at about the same level as Jews and Poles but below African Americans. These shifts may reflect a decline in levels of prejudice, a change from more overt forms to more subtle modern racism, or both. Remember, however, that the samples for the social distance research were college students, for the most part, and the results do not necessarily reflect trends in the general population (see also Hanson & Rouse, 1987; Smith & Dempsey, 1983).

Additionally, research is unclear about the severity or extent of discrimination against Native Americans. Certainly, the group’s lower average levels of education limit their opportunities for upward mobility, choice of occupations, and range of income. This is a form of institutional discrimination in the sense that the opportunities to develop human capital are much less available to Native Americans than to much of the rest of the population.

In terms of individual discrimination or more overt forms of exclusion, there is simply too little evidence to sustain clear conclusions (Snipp, 1992, p. 363). The situation of Native American women is also underresearched, but Snipp reports that, like their counterparts in other minority groups and the dominant group, they “are systematically paid less than their male counterparts in similar circumstances” (p. 363).

The very limited evidence available from social distance scales suggests that overt anti-Indian prejudice has declined, perhaps in parallel with antiblack prejudice. A great deal of stereotyping remains, however, and demeaning, condescending, or negative portrayals of Native Americans are common throughout the dominant culture. Institutional discrimination is a major barrier for Native Americans, who have not had access to opportunities for education and employment.
APPLYING CONCEPTS

In this chapter, we’ve shown some of the diversity within the Native American population. To test your general knowledge about Native Americans as a group, here is a true/false quiz. You will be able to answer some questions from chapter information, but others ask you to consider ideas that you might have heard about Native Americans from popular culture or friends. How well do you think most Americans would do on this quiz? Why?

1. Native Americans have their college expenses paid for by their tribes or by the federal government.
2. Pocahontas was an Indian princess.
3. Native Americans scalped their slain enemies.
4. The term powwow is a derogatory, stereotypical term that shouldn’t be used by non-Native people.
5. Native Americans practiced slavery and Native Americans were enslaved much like African Americans.
6. Native Americans use peyote in religious ceremonies.
7. Native Americans are getting rich from casinos.
8. Anyone with an Indian ancestor is automatically a member of that tribe.
9. Native Americans were always considered U.S. citizens.
10. Indian tribes are sovereign nations.

TURN THE PAGE TO FIND OUR ANSWERS.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

6. This section examined a number of issues in contemporary Indian–white relations. In your opinion, which of these is most important? Why?
7. Thinking about the concepts developed in this text, what is the single most important force shaping the situation of Native Americans over the past century? Why?
8. Compare and contrast antiblack prejudice with anti-Indian prejudice. How and why are the two forms of prejudice different? How has that prejudice influenced forms of discrimination?
9. Was the colonization of America a Native American genocide? Explain.

ASSIMILATION AND PLURALISM

In this section, we continue to assess the situation of Native Americans today using the same conceptual framework used in Chapter 6. Once again, please regard this material as an overview and as starting points for further research.

Compared with other groups, information about Native Americans is scant. Nonetheless, a relatively clear picture emerges. The portrait stresses a mixed picture: improvements for some combined with continued colonization, marginalization, and impoverishment for others. Like African Americans, Native Americans can be found at every status and income level in the United States, but Indians living on reservations continue as one of the most impoverished, marginalized groups in society. Native Americans as a group face ongoing discrimination and exclusion, and continue the search for a meaningful course between assimilation and pluralism.

ACCULTURATION

Despite more than a century of coercive Americanization, many tribes have been able to preserve at least a portion of their traditional cultures. For example, many tribal languages continue to be spoken on a daily basis. About 20% of Native Americans and Alaska Natives speak a language other than English at home, about the same percentage as the total population. Figure 7.8 suggests the extent of
Some answers may vary based on tribe or based on the differing opinions among the five million Native Americans currently living in the United States. If you live in an area near a tribal community or organization, we encourage you to use those resources to learn more about these topics. Otherwise, the Internet and your college or local library may have useful information.

1. False. The “urban legend” that all Native Americans get a free ride to college is not true. Only 19% of Native Americans have a college degree. Some tribes offer scholarships to members and the number of tribal colleges has increased over time. Here’s one funding organization that’s trying to assist with scholarships: http://collegefund.org.

2. False. Pocahontas was the daughter of Powhatan, the “paramount chief” of a large confederation of tribes in the Tidewater, Virginia area. So, she wasn’t a “princess” (which is a British royal title). She was held in high regard and she may have saved the life of English colonist John Smith, as legend has it.

3. True. Archaeological evidence dating back to pre-Columbian times suggest scalping was practiced, though the type and prevalence varied widely by tribal community and geographic region. Europeans transformed this indigenous practice into a kind of bounty hunting by encouraging native people to scalp Indians who were hostile to European interests. (See Axwell & Sturtevant, 1980.) Evidence of scalping has been found in Asia, Europe, and Mexico, too.

4. True. Powwows are festivals that preserve and celebrate Native American culture and traditions, including sacred ones. Thus, use the phrase “have a powwow” to indicate a chat, meeting, or negotiation would be factually incorrect and, to some, inappropriate, insensitive, or rude.

5. True. Precolonization, some tribes enslaved other Native Americans as war captives who could provide labor (including reproductive labor). However, they were not seen as an inferior race and often became integrated into tribes, for example, through marriage. Rushforth (2012) notes that “indigenous slavery moved captives “up and in” toward full, if forced, assimilation” (p. 66). Some Southern Indian communities ritually adopted enslaved people who acted as a proxy for dead tribal members (Snyder, 2010, p. 103). For the Comanche, enslavement practices were strategic—to gain numbers. However, they “never draw a hard line between masters and slaves, and they possessed neither the necessary means to enforce unconditional submission nor a racist ideology to mentally suppress the slave population” (Hämäläinen, 2008, p. 291).

Native enslavement practices changed as the U.S. system of slavery developed. Additionally, they were intertwined with the Spanish system. The Spanish enslaved the majority of indigenous Americans to supply labor in the West (e.g., gold mining in Mexico) (Lowcountry, n.d.). As the British and Spanish systems of slavery developed, it became more lucrative for Native Americans to sell, rather than enslave, other Native Americans. However, widespread enslavement of Native Americans in the U.S. colonies was problematic. As discussed in Chapter 4, many indigenous Americans died due to lack of immunity to European diseases, reducing the potential labor pool. Additionally, Indigenous Americans could escape more easily than African slaves because they possessed knowledge of the area and could often get help from other indigenous people (Lowcountry, n.d.). Because of this “flight risk,” slave traders often took them to Brazil to be sold there. As the U.S. system of slavery developed, some tribes, especially in the Southeast, began to enslave Africans (Snyder, 2010) while others offered sanctuary to runaway African slaves. For example, researchers estimate that thousands of “Maroons” lived with Native Americans in the Great Dismal Swamp (Sayers, Burke, & Henry, 2007). In short, Native Americans did enslave other Native Americans and, at times, some African slaves. However, it was quite different from the chattel-oriented slave system developed in the United States (also see Madley, 2016; Reséndez, 2016, Trueur, 2012).

6. True. For example, the Native American Church uses peyote as part of its rituals, as explained later in this chapter.

7. False. While some tribes earn a lot of money from casinos, many do not. See the relevant sections of this chapter.

8. False. Tribes have specific rules about membership eligibility, and an Indian ancestor is no guarantee of acceptance.

9. False. Not all Native Americans were covered by the Fourteenth Amendment granting citizenship to persons “born or naturalized in the United States.” The Indian Citizenship Act of 1924 granted citizenship; however, it didn’t automatically give all rights to Native peoples. As with African Americans, some states refused to give Native Americans the right to vote.

10. False. Tribes do, however, have considerable autonomy and the power to govern their own affairs under a variety of laws.
language preservation. For many tribes, less than 10% of their members speak the tribal language at home. Some tribes, however, continue to speak their native language, including about 30% of Apache and almost half of Navajo.

While some Native American languages have survived, it seems that even the most widely spoken of these languages is endangered. One study (Krauss, 1996) estimates that only about 11% of the surviving 200 languages spoken are being taught by parents to their children in the traditional way and that most languages are spoken on a daily basis only by the older generation. Few, if any, people are left who speak only a tribal language. One authority (A. Treuer, 2012, p. 80) reports that only 20 tribal languages in the United States and Canada are spoken by children in significant numbers. If these patterns persist, Native American languages will disappear as the generations change. A number of tribes have instituted programs to try to renew and preserve their language, along with other elements of their culture, but the success of these efforts is uncertain (Schmid, 2001, p. 25; see also D. Treuer, 2012, pp. 300–305).

Traditional culture is retained in other forms besides language. Religions and value systems, political and economic structures, and recreational patterns have all survived the military conquest and the depredations of reservation life, but each pattern has been altered by contact with the dominant group. Cornell (1987), for example, argues that the strong orientation to the group rather than the individual is being significantly affected by the “American dream” of personal material success.

The tendency to filter the impact of the larger society through continuing vital Native American culture is also illustrated by the Native American Church. The Native Americans are more advanced than the dazzling sophisticates of urban America? In a 1972 interview, John Lame Deer, a Sioux, gives his view of the technologically advanced society that surrounds him. Through his words, we can hear the voices of the Indian cultures that have survived.

LISTENING TO THE AIR

John Lame Deer

You have made it hard for us to experience nature in the good way by being part of it. Even here [a Sioux reservation in South Dakota] we are conscious that somewhere out in those hills there are missile silos and radar stations. White men always pick the few unspoiled, beautiful, awesome spots for these abominations. You have raped and violated these lands, always saying, “gimme, gimme, gimme,” and never giving anything back. . . . You have not only despoiled the earth, the rocks, the minerals, all of which you call “dead” but which are very much alive; you have even changed the animals. . . . changed them in a horrible way, so no one can recognize them.

There is power in a buffalo—spiritual, magic power—but there is no power in an Angus, in a Hereford.

There is power in an antelope, but not in a goat or a sheep, which holds still while you butch er it, which will eat your newspaper if you let it. There was great power in a wolf, even in a coyote. You made him into a freak—a toy poodle, a Pekinese, a lap dog. You can’t do much with a cat, which is like an Indian, unchangeable. So you fix it, alter it, declaw it, even cut its vocal cords so you can experiment on it in a laboratory without being disturbed by its cries. . . .

You have not only altered, declawed, and malformed your winged and four-legged cousins; you have done it to yourselves. You have changed men into chairman of boards, into office workers, into time-clock punchers. You have changed women into housewives, truly fearful creatures. . . . You live in prisons which you have built for yourselves, calling them “homes,” offices, factories. We have a new joke on the reservations: “What is cultural deprivation?” Answers: “Being an upper-middle-class white kid living in a split-level suburban home with a color TV.” . . .

I think white people are so afraid of the world they created that they don’t want to see, feel, smell, or hear it. The feeling of rain or snow on your face, being numbed by an icy wind and thawing out before a smoking fire, coming out of a hot sweat bath and plunging into a cold stream, these things make you feel alive, but you don’t want them anymore. Living in boxes that shut out the heat of the summer and the chill of winter, living inside a body that no longer has a scent, hearing the noise of the hi-fi rather than listening to the sounds of nature, watching some actor on TV have a ‘make-believe experience when you no longer experience anything for yourself, eating food without taste—that’s your way. It’s no good.

SOURCE: Reprinted with the permission of Simon & Schuster Adult Publisher Group from Lame Deer, Seeker of Vision by John (Fire) Lame Deer and Richard Erdoes. Copyright © 1972 by John (Fire) Lame Deer and Richard Erdoes. Copyright renewed © 2001 Richard Erdoes. All rights reserved.

Questions to Consider

1. Does Lame Deer’s critique of mainstream American culture ring true? If you were in a debate with him, could you refute his points?

2. How does this passage support the idea that Native American culture has survived coercive acculturation and military conquest? Is there a future for the ideas Lame Deer expresses?
American Church is an important Native American religion, with more than 100 congregations across the nation.

This religion combines elements from both cultures, and church services freely mix Christian imagery and the Bible with attempts to seek personal visions by using peyote, a hallucinogenic drug. The latter practice is consistent with the spiritual and religious traditions of many tribes but clashes sharply with the laws and norms of the larger society. The difference in traditions has generated many skirmishes with the courts, and as recently as 2004, the right of the Native American Church to use peyote was upheld by the Supreme Court of Utah (“Utah Supreme Court Rules,” 2004).

Native Americans have been more successful than African Americans in preserving their traditional cultures, a pattern that is partly explained by the differences in the relationship between each minority group and the dominant group. African Americans were exploited for labor, whereas the competition with Native Americans involved land. African cultures could not easily survive because the social structures that transmitted the cultures and gave them meaning were largely destroyed by slavery and sacrificed to the exigencies of the plantation economy.

In contrast, Native Americans confronted the dominant group as tribal units, intact and whole. The tribes maintained integrity throughout the wars and throughout the reservation period. Tribal culture was attacked and denigrated during the reservation era, but the basic social unit that sustained the culture survived, albeit in altered form. The fact that Native Americans were placed on separate reservations, isolated from one another and the “contaminating” effects of everyday contact with the larger society, also supported the preservation of traditional languages and culture (Cornell, 1990). The second Narrative Portrait in this chapter illustrates the persistence of a distinct Indian culture and point of view.

The vitality of Indian cultures may have increased in the current atmosphere of greater tolerance and support for pluralism in the larger society, combined with increased autonomy and lower government regulation on the reservations. However, a number of social forces are working against pluralism and the continuing survival of tribal cultures. Pantribalism may threaten the integrity of individual tribal cultures as it represents Native American grievances and concerns to the larger society. Opportunities for jobs, education, and higher incomes draw Native Americans to more developed urban areas and will continue to do so as long as the reservations are underdeveloped. Many aspects of the tribal cultures can be fully expressed and practiced only with other tribal members on the reservations. Thus, many Native Americans must make a choice between “Indian-ness” on the reservation and “success” in the city. The younger, more educated Native Americans will be most likely to confront this choice, and the future vitality of traditional Native American cultures and languages will hinge on which option they choose.

SECONDARY STRUCTURAL ASSIMILATION

This section assesses the degree of integration of Native Americans into the various institutions of public life, following the general outlines of the parallel section in Chapter 6.

Residential Patterns. Since the Indian Removal Act of 1830 (see Chapter 4), Native Americans have been concentrated in the western two thirds of the nation, as illustrated in Figure 7.9, although some pockets of population still can be found in the East. The states with the largest concentrations of Native Americans—California, Oklahoma, and Arizona—together include about 30% of all Native Americans. As Figure 7.9 illustrates, most U.S. counties have few Native American residents. The population is concentrated in eastern Oklahoma, the upper Midwest, and the Southwest (Norris et al., 2012, p. 8).

Because Native Americans are such a small, rural group, it is difficult to assess the overall level of residential segregation. An earlier study using 2000 Census data found that they were less segregated than African Americans and that the levels of residential segregation had declined since 1980 (Iceland, Weinberg, & Steinmetz, 2002, p. 23). More detailed data from the 2000 Census for the 10 metropolitan areas with the highest numbers of Native American residents shows that residential segregation was “extremely high” (dissimilarity index at or above 60) in four of the cities (New York, Phoenix, Albuquerque, and Chicago) but lower than the levels of black–white segregation. Also, a couple of the cities (Oklahoma City and Tulsa) had low scores, or

![Figure 7.8 Percentage of Total Population, All American Indians and Alaska Natives (AIAN), and Selected Tribes That Speak a Language Other Than English at Home, 2015](image-url)
What can we conclude? It seems that residential segregation for Native Americans is lower than it is for African Americans. However, it is difficult to come to firm conclusions because of the small size of the group and the fact that 30% of Native Americans live on rural reservations, where the levels of isolation and racial segregation are quite high.

School Integration and Educational Attainment. As a result of the combined efforts of missionaries and federal agencies, Native Americans have had a long but not necessarily productive acquaintance with Western education. Until the past few decades, schools for Native Americans were primarily focused on Americanizing children, not so much on educating them.

For many tribes, the percentage of high school graduates has increased in the recent past, but Native Americans’ graduation rates as a whole are still somewhat below national rates and the rates of non-Hispanic whites, as shown in Figure 7.10. The differences in schooling are especially important because the lower levels of educational attainment limit mobility and job opportunities in the postindustrial job market.

One positive development for the education of Native Americans is the rapid increase in tribally controlled colleges. There are now 37 tribal colleges: All offer two-year degrees, six offer four-year degrees, and two offer master’s degrees. These institutions are located on or near reservations; some have been constructed with funds generated in the gaming industry. They are designed to be more sensitive to the educational and cultural needs of the group, and tribal college graduates who transfer to four-year colleges are more likely to graduate than are other Native American students (Pego, 1998; see also His Horse Is Thunder, Anderson, & Miller, 2013).

An earlier study found that Native American school children were less segregated than African American school children in the 2005–2006 school year, but that the levels of racial isolation might be increasing (Fry, 2007). Again, it is difficult to assess trends because of the small size of the group and their concentration in rural areas.

Political Power. The ability of Native Americans to exert power as a voting bloc or otherwise directly affect the political structure is limited by group size; they are a tiny percentage of the electorate. Furthermore, their political power is limited by their lower than average levels of education, language differences, lack of economic resources, and fractional differences within and between tribes and reservations. The number of Native Americans holding elected office is minuscule, far less than 1% (Pollard & O’Hare, 1999). In 1992, however, Ben Nighthorse Campbell, of Colorado, a member of the Northern Cheyenne tribe, was elected to the U.S. Senate and served until 2005.

Jobs and Income. Some of the most severe challenges facing Native Americans relate to work and income. The problems are especially evident on the reservations, where jobs traditionally have been scarce and affluence rare. As mentioned previously, the overall unemployment rate for all Native Americans is about double the rate for whites.
For Indians living on or near reservations, however, the rate is much higher, sometimes rising to 70% to 80% on the smaller, more-isolated reservations (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).

Nationally, Native Americans are underrepresented in the higher-status, more lucrative professions and overrepresented in unskilled labor and service jobs (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). Like African Americans, Native Americans who hold white-collar jobs are more likely than whites to work in lower-income occupations, such as typist or retail salesperson (Ogunwole, 2006, p. 10).

Figure 7.11 shows median household income in 2015 for non-Hispanic whites, all Native Americans and Alaska Natives, and five of the larger tribes. Median household income for Native Americans and Alaska Natives is about 68% of that of non-Hispanic whites. There is a good deal of variability among the tribes, but again, none approach the incomes of non-Hispanic whites.

These income statistics reflect lower levels of education as well as the interlocking forces of past discrimination and lack of development on many reservations. The rural isolation of much of the population and their distance from the more urbanized centers of economic growth limit possibilities for improvement and raise the likelihood that many reservations will remain the rural counterparts to urban underclass ghettos.

Figure 7.12 supplements the information in Figure 7.11 by displaying the distribution of income for all Native Americans and Alaska Natives (AIAN) compared with non-Hispanic whites. This type of graph was introduced in Chapter 6, which covered African Americans, and its format is similar to the format of Figure 6.13. In both graphs, the pattern of income inequality is immediately obvious. Starting at the bottom, we see that Native Americans and Alaska Natives are overrepresented in the lowest income groups, as were African Americans. For example, over 13% of Native Americans and Alaska Natives have incomes less than $10,000—this is more than double the percentage for whites (5.6%) in this range.

Moving up the figure through the lower- and middle-income brackets, we see that Native American
and Alaska Native households continue to be overrepresented. There is a notable clustering of both groups in the $50,000 to $100,000 categories, but it is whites who are overrepresented at these higher-income levels. The income differences are especially obvious at the top of the figure. For example, almost 12% of non-Hispanic white households are in the two highest income categories, compared with only 4.2% of AIAN households. Figure 7.12 also shows the median household incomes for the two groups: The figure for non-Hispanic whites is more than $22,000 higher than that of American Indians and Alaska Natives. Finally, Figure 7.13 shows the poverty levels for non-Hispanic whites, all Native Americans and Alaska Natives, and five of the larger tribes. The poverty rate for all Native American and Alaska Native families is almost triple the rate for non-Hispanic whites, and three of these tribes have an even higher percentage of families living in poverty. The poverty rates for children show a similar pattern, with very high rates for the Lumbee, Navajo, and Blackfeet. As a
whole, this information on income and poverty shows that despite the progress Native Americans have made over the past several decades, a sizable socioeconomic gap persists.

**PRIMARY STRUCTURAL ASSIMILATION**

Rates of out-marriage for Native Americans are quite high compared with other groups, as displayed in Table 7.5. While the overwhelming majority of whites were married to other whites in both years, a little more than 40% of Native Americans had marriage partners within the group. This pattern is partly the result of the small size of the group. As less than 1% of the total population, Native Americans are numerically unlikely to find dating and marriage partners within their own group, especially in those regions of the country and urban areas where the group is small in size. For example, an earlier study found that in New England, which has the lowest relative percentage of Native Americans of any region, more than 90% of Indian marriages were to partners outside the group (Snipp, 1989, pp. 156–159). Also, the social and legal barriers to Indian-white intermarriages have been comparatively weak (Qian & Lichter, 2011).

### QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

10. This section examined a variety of dimensions of acculturation and integration for Native Americans. Which is most important? Why?

11. In which of these areas has there been the most progress over the past 50 years? Explain?

**TABLE 7.5** Percentage Married to a Person of the Same Race, 1980 and 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>WHITES</th>
<th>NATIVE AMERICANS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

COMPARING MINORITY GROUPS

Comparing the experiences of Native Americans with those of other groups will further our understanding of the complexities of dominant–minority relationships and permit us to test the explanatory power of the concepts and theories that are central to this text. No two minority groups have had the same experiences, and our concepts and theories should help us understand the differences and the similarities. We will make it a point to compare groups in each of the chapters in this part of the text. We begin by comparing Native Americans with African Americans.

First, note the differences in the stereotypes attached to the two groups during the early years of European colonization. While Indians were seen as cruel savages, African Americans under slavery were seen as lazy, irresponsible, and in constant need of supervision. The two stereotypes are consistent with the outcomes of the contact period. The supposed irresponsibility of blacks under slavery helped justify their subordinate, highly controlled status, and the alleged savagery of Native Americans helped justify their near extermination by white society.

Second, both Native Americans and African Americans were colonized minority groups, but their contact situations were governed by very different dynamics (competition for labor vs. land) and a very different dominant group agenda (the capture and control of a large, powerless workforce vs. the elimination of a military threat). These differing contact situations shaped subsequent relationships with the dominant group and the place of the groups in the larger society.

For example, consider the situations of the two groups a century ago. At that time, the most visible enemy for African Americans was de jure segregation, the elaborate system of repression in the South that controlled them politically, economically, and socially (see Chapters 5 and 6). In particular, the southern system of agriculture needed the black population—but only as a powerless, cheap workforce. The goals of African Americans centered on assimilation, equality, and dismantling this oppressive system.

Native Americans, in contrast, were not viewed as a source of labor and, after their military defeat, were far too few in number and too dispersed geographically to constitute a political threat. Thus, there was little need to control them in the same way African Americans were controlled. The primary enemies of the tribes were the reservation system, various agencies of the federal government (especially the BIA), rural isolation, and the continuing attacks on their traditional cultures and lifestyles, which are typical for a colonized minority group. Native Americans had a different set of problems, different resources at their disposal, and different goals in mind. They always have been more oriented toward a pluralistic relationship with the larger society and preserving what they could of their autonomy, their institutions, and their heritage. African Americans spent much of the 20th century struggling for inclusion and equality; Native Americans were fighting to maintain or recover their traditional cultures and social structures. This difference in goals reflects the different histories of the two groups and the different circumstances surrounding their colonization.

PROGRESS AND CHALLENGES

What does the future hold for Native Americans? Their situation has certainly changed over the past 100 years, but is it “better” or just “different,” as is the case for large segments of the African American community? As the group grows in size and improves its status, the answer seems to be a little of both. To reach some conclusions, we will look at several aspects of the situation of Native Americans and assess the usefulness of our theoretical models and concepts.

Since the 1960s, the decline of intolerance in society, the growth of pride in ancestry in many groups (e.g., Black Power), and the shift in federal government policy to encourage self-determination have all helped spark a reaffirmation of commitment to tribal cultures and traditions. Like the Black Power Movement, the Red Power Movement asserted a distinct and positive Indian identity, a claim for the validity of Native American cultures within the broad framework of the larger society. During the same period, the favorable settlements of treaty claims, the growth in job opportunities, and the growth of the gambling industry have enhanced the flow of resources and benefits to some reservations. In popular culture, Native Americans have enjoyed a strong upsurge of popularity and sympathetic depictions. This enhanced popularity accounts for much of the growth in population size as people of mixed ancestry resurrect and reconstruct their Indian ancestors and their own ethnic identities.

Linear or simplistic views of assimilation do not fit the current situation or the past experiences of Native Americans very well. Some Native Americans are intermarrying with whites and integrating into the larger society; others strive to retain a tribal culture in the midst of an urbanized, industrialized society; still others labor to use the profits from gaming and other enterprises for the benefit of the tribe as a whole. Members of the group can be found at every degree of acculturation and integration, and the group seems to be moving toward assimilation in some ways and away from it in others.
From the standpoint of the Noel and Blauner hypotheses, we can see that Native Americans have struggled with conquest and colonization, experiences made more difficult by the loss of so much of their land and other resources and by the concerted, unrelenting attacks on their culture and language. The legacy of conquest and colonization was poor health and housing, an inadequate and misdirected education system, and slow (or nonexistent) economic development. For most of the 20th century, Native Americans were left to survive as best they could on the margins of the larger society, too powerless to establish meaningful pluralism and too colonized to pursue equality.

Today, one key to further progress for some members of this group is economic development on reservation lands and the further strengthening of the tribes as functioning social units. Some tribes do have assets—natural resources, treaty rights, and the gambling industry—that could fuel development. However, they often do not have the expertise or the capital to finance the exploitation of these resources. They must rely, in whole or in part, on non-Indian expertise and white-owned companies and businesses. Thus, non-Indians, rather than the tribes, may be the primary beneficiaries of some forms of development (this would, of course, be quite consistent with American history). For those reservations for which gambling is not an option and for those without natural resources, investments in human capital (primarily education) may offer the most compelling direction for future development.

Urban Indians confront the same patterns of discrimination and racism that confront other minority groups of color. Members of the group with lower levels of education and job skills face the prospects of becoming part of a permanent urban underclass. More educated and more skilled Native Americans share with African Americans the prospect of a middle-class lifestyle that is more partial and tenuous than that of comparable segments of the dominant group.

The situation of Native Americans today is vastly superior to the status of the group a century ago, and this chapter has documented the notable improvements that have occurred since 1990. Given the depressed and desperate conditions of the reservations in the early 20th century, however, it would not take much to show an improvement. Native Americans are growing rapidly in numbers and are increasingly diversified by residence, education, and degree of assimilation. Some tribes have made dramatic progress over the past several decades, but enormous problems remain, both on and off the reservations. The challenge for the future, as it was in the past, is to find a course between pluralism and assimilation, pan-tribalism and traditional lifestyles that will balance the issues of quality of life against the importance of retaining an Indian identity.

**SUMMARY**

This summary is organized around the Learning Objectives listed at the beginning of this chapter.

7.1 Explain the changing population characteristics and common cultural characteristics of Native Americans and Alaska Natives.

Although they remain a tiny numerical minority of the population (about 1%), Native American and Alaska Native populations are growing rapidly, and according to the 2010 Census, more than five million people now claim at least partial Native American or Alaska Native ancestry. The increase reflects, in part, the social nature of race and the changing definitions used in the census. Traditional Indian cultures were numerous and variable. As is typical for societies at the hunting-and-gathering level of development, they commonly stressed strong group ties, cooperation with others, and egalitarian relations.

7.2 Summarize and explain the changing relationships between Native Americans and the federal government, especially the changes in laws and policies and their effects, and the dynamics of Indian resistance and protest.

After the end of armed hostilities, relations between Native Americans and the larger society were paternalistic and featured coercive acculturation. At the beginning of the 20th century, Native Americans faced the paternalistic reservation system, poverty and powerlessness, rural isolation and marginalization, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Native Americans continued to lose land and other resources. Some landmark legislation and federal policies included the Indian Reorganization Act (1934), termination, relocation, and, beginning in the 1970s, increasing self-determination. There have been organized protest movements since early in the 20th century, including a Red Power Movement. Native American protests achieved some successes and were partly assimilationist, even though they pursued some pluralistic goals and greater autonomy for the tribes.
CHAPTER 7 • NATIVE AMERICANS

7.3 Understand the most critical issues and trends that have influenced relations between Native Americans and the larger society in recent decades, including

a. struggles over natural resources,
b. attempts to bring jobs to reservations,
c. broken treaties,
d. gaming, and
e. prejudice and discrimination.

As a group, Native Americans and Alaska Natives have experienced some improvements in quality of life, especially since the 1970s, but the progress has been uneven and enormous challenges remain.

a. Some tribes and reservations have access to valuable natural resources, including oil, coal, clean water, and timber, which have sometimes been used to improve their situation.
b. Some tribes (e.g., the Choctaw Nation of Mississippi) have been able to attract industry, but many reservations are too remote and inaccessible to be viable sites for development and good jobs.
c. The legacy of broken treaties may provide the basis for successful lawsuits and give some tribes resources and opportunities.
d. The gaming industry has benefited some tribes and has the potential to benefit others.
e. Prejudice and discrimination remain potent forces limiting the opportunities for Native Americans and Alaska Natives. There is some indication that anti-Indian prejudice has shifted to more "modern" forms. Institutional discrimination and access to education and employment remain major problems confronting Native Americans.

7.4 Analyze the contemporary relations between Native Americans and whites using the concepts of prejudice, discrimination, assimilation, and pluralism, especially in terms of

a. acculturation,
b. secondary structural assimilation, and
c. primary structural assimilation.

a. Native Americans have been able to retain more of their culture than have African Americans, and the tribal languages are still spoken on some reservations. However, the forces of pan-tribalism and especially the attractions of education and jobs in the larger society seem to be working against the survival of traditional cultures.
b. Despite recent improvements, the overall secondary structural assimilation of Native Americans remains low. Inequalities persist in schooling, jobs, income, unemployment, and poverty levels.
c. In terms of primary structural assimilation, intermarriages are high compared with other groups, largely as a function of the small size of the group.

7.5 Assess the overall situation of Native Americans today based on the concepts and information presented in this chapter.

The situation of Native Americans today is shaped by their origin as a colonized minority group, their history of competition with the dominant group for control of land, and their recent history on the reservations. Today, the group faces an array of problems similar to those faced by all American colonized minority groups of color, as they try to find ways to raise their quality of life and continue their commitment to their tribes and to an Indian identity.

With the recent increase in self-determination and the development of resources on some reservations, the situation of some members of the group and some tribes is improved, but many others are far from equality. What evidence of improvements is presented in this chapter? What evidence of continuing inequality is presented? How does this group compare with African Americans? What important similarities and differences can you identify?

KEY TERMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bureau of Indian Affairs 234</th>
<th>Dawes Allotment Act of 1887 234</th>
<th>Indian Reorganization Act 237</th>
<th>termination 237</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>two-spirit 231</td>
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</table>
1. What were the most important cultural differences between Native American tribes and the dominant society? How did these affect relations between the two groups?

2. Compare and contrast the effects of paternalism and coercive acculturation on Native Americans after the end of the contact period with the effects on African Americans under slavery. What similarities and differences existed in the two situations? Which system was more oppressive and controlling? How? How did these different situations shape the futures of the groups?

3. How did federal Indian policy change over the course of the 20th century? What effects did these changes have on the tribes? Which were more beneficial? Why? What was the role of the Indian protest movement in shaping these policies?

4. What options do Native Americans have for improving their position in the larger society and developing their reservations? Which strategies seem to have the most promise? Which seem less effective? Why?

5. Compare and contrast the contact situations of Native Americans, African Americans, and Australian Aborigines. What are the most crucial differences in their situations? What implications did these differences have for the development of each group’s situation after the initial contact?

6. Characterize the present situation of Native Americans in terms of acculturation and integration. How do they compare with African Americans? What factors in the experiences of the two groups might help explain contemporary differences?

7. What gender differences can you identify in the experiences of Native Americans? How do these compare with the gender differences in the experiences of African Americans?

8. Given the information and ideas presented in this chapter, speculate about the future of Native Americans. How likely are Native American cultures and languages to survive? What are the prospects for achieving equality?

9. Given their small size and marginal status, recognition of their situations and problems continues to be a central struggle for Native Americans. What are some ways the group can build a more realistic, informed, and empathetic relationship with the larger society, the federal government, and other authorities? Are there lessons in the experiences of other groups or in the various protest strategies followed in the Red Power Movement?

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Current Debates: Are Indian Sports Team Mascots Offensive?

What messages are conveyed by team names such as the Indians, Braves, and, especially, Redskins? Are these mascots offensive? Do they perpetuate stereotypes and negative views of Native Americans? Or are they harmless tributes to virtues such as bravery and honor?

On our website you will find an overview of the topic, the clashing points of view, and some questions to consider as you analyze the material.

Public Sociology Assignments

Public Sociology Assignments provide opportunities for students to address directly and personally some of the issues raised in this text.
There are two assignments for Part III on our website. The first looks at patterns of self-segregation in school cafeterias, and, in the second, students analyze the portrayal of the American family on television in terms of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and other sociologically relevant characteristics.

*Contributed by Linda M. Waldron*

**Internet Research Project**

For this Internet Research Project, you will use data gathered by the U.S. Census Bureau to assess the situation of all Native Americans and a tribe of your choosing. You will add this information to the data you gathered previously on African Americans and the general population. You will also search the Internet for additional information on the specific tribe you selected. The project will be guided by a series of questions related to course concepts, and your instructor may ask you to discuss your findings in small groups.

**For Further Reading**

Please see our website for an annotated list of important works related to this chapter.