

# Native Americans and American History

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Native Americans and their history have interested Indians and non-Indians alike—from colonial times through the end of the twentieth century. And, judging by the outpouring of public and private support for the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian, which opened in 2004 across the lawn from the Capitol, this interest continues to flourish. There is a robust, diverse literature discussing Indians and their history. It has deficiencies and limitations, but overall, it is strong enough to satisfy many areas of inquiry in an informative and appealing manner.

## Historiography and the Study of Native Histories

“Historiography” is *not* the study of *history*. Instead, it is the study of the *writing* of history. The way in which an individual, a people, or a nation writes its history reveals much about those who wrote it. The past itself does not change, but the way that people *interpret* it does. The elements of history that are emphasized or downplayed, and the value judgments assigned to them, all change—reflecting the writer's own personal and cultural biases.

Of course, Native American history is subject to these historiographical shifts. In fact, it can be argued that no character in the pantheon of American historical figures has been cast and recast, interpreted, reinterpreted, and misinterpreted more frequently than the American Indian. For example, popular depictions of Native American history from the nineteenth century have an Anglocentric perspective. Writers narrated the country's history from a White American perspective, often celebrating America's “winning of the West” with the national self-confidence characteristic of the era. It was deemed a “good” thing that American civilization overspread the continent and supplanted the less developed, “savage” native inhabitants.

In contrast, the 1960s witnessed a significant historiographical shift in how America viewed its past. The civil rights movement drew attention to the often difficult plight of ethnic minorities in America; the anti-war movement depicted the U.S. military not as defenders of freedom but as imperialist aggressors; the environmental movement forced people to contemplate alternative lifestyles that were less destructive of nature; and the hippies rejected traditional White Anglo-Saxon Protestant values and attempted to create an alternative culture. Those who interpret the past are often influenced by the social, cultural, and political issues of their own time, and these issues often prompt them to reconsider long-held assumptions within the context of those newly-arisen issues. Not surprisingly, the changes of the 1960s influenced historians, writers, film-makers, and other Americans—causing them to view Indians in an increasingly sympathetic and favorable light. They perceived Indians as a historically-oppressed minority victimized by imperial conquest and as a dignified, peace-loving people who lived harmoniously with nature. Furthermore, they became increasingly critical of Europeans, Americans, and the United States government. Over-dramatizing things a bit, some people

replaced the old understanding of “White man good, Red man bad” with “Red man good, White man bad.”

Revising history like this challenges people to contemplate the past from new—and often provocative—viewpoints. However, replacing one simplified stereotype with another doesn’t necessarily lead to better understanding. Nevertheless, after a wave of revisionism has run its course, historians often find themselves in the enviable position of being able to blend the best of the old with the best of the new, and produce more nuanced, thoughtful scholarship. This is precisely where today’s historians of Native America find themselves, and they have produced some first-rate Indian histories.

Still, there remain significant limitations to understanding Indian history. The most notable is the problem of written sources. Native American peoples, up until the nineteenth century or later, were generally pre-literate. They transmitted memories of the past orally—but famines, wars, and diseases extinguished not only people, but Indian histories as well. Consequently, centuries of Indian history have been irretrievably lost. Furthermore, during the contact and post-contact eras, many of those who documented Indian life—trappers, traders, missionaries, explorers, travelers, government officials, and scientists—were of European descent, and their writings reflected White cultural biases and interests. Although the Indians may have been the subject of these writings, the writings often reflected a non-Indian perspective.

One solution to the dearth of written sources is “ethnohistory.” Ethnohistory, which emerged in the 1950s and 1960s, is a methodology that blends anthropology and history. It encourages its practitioners to use historical sources to answer anthropological questions and, conversely, to use an understanding of a culture and its dynamics to answer historical questions. What results is not necessarily “history from an Indian perspective,” but rather a history that is sensitive to a tribe’s culture. In the second half of the twentieth century, scholars increasingly employed ethnohistorical methods to produce commendably sophisticated studies.

The shortage of histories from an Indian viewpoint has been slowly but steadily remedied as time has progressed. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries native peoples either created texts of their own or allowed their testimonies to be transcribed by others. And, in the last several decades, greater numbers of historians of Indian descent have written their own histories, and are enriching the field of Indian history by adding long-absent native voices. When studying any area of history, first-hand accounts provide the reader a level of understanding and a certain “feel” that is sometimes absent from synthetic accounts. Native American history is no exception, and those studying it will benefit from reading these first-hand native accounts.

## **References, Textbooks, and General Overviews**

Perhaps the most comprehensive and authoritative reference for Native American history is the *Handbook of North American Indian* series published by the Smithsonian Institution under the general editorship of William C. Sturtevant. This twenty-volume series describes the history, culture, and language of the different Indian tribes of North America. Each volume focuses on the tribes of a particular region, and there are separate volumes on Indian-White relations and

Indian languages. Frank W. Porter III edits a fifty-volume series from Chelsea House Publishers entitled *The Indians of North America*. Each book is authored by an established scholar, is about one hundred pages in length, and includes photographs, drawings, and maps. Most volumes are tribal histories, but there are volumes on thematic topics, too. These books are written for secondary school students and are informative, easy-to-read introductions to Indian histories.

Useful survey textbooks include Roger Nichols, *American Indians in U.S. History*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma, 2004); Colin G. Calloway, *First Peoples: A Documentary Survey of American Indian History* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1999); and R. David Edmunds, Frederick E. Hoxie, and Neal Salisbury, *The People: A History of Native America* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 2006). Philip Weeks's "*They Made Us Many Promises*": *The American Indian Experience from 1524 to the Present*, 2d ed. (Wheeling, Illinois: Harlan Davidson, Inc., 2002), is a collection of essays highlighting important topics in Indian history that range from native relations with the colonial French, Spanish, and British up to the efforts to repatriate native artifacts and burial remains in the end of the twentieth century. These texts are written for college undergraduates, but are useful to general readers as well. Collin G. Calloway's award-winning *One Vast Winter Count: The Native American West before Lewis and Clark* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2003) is a narrative survey of the often-overlooked pre-nineteenth century Native American West. James P. Rhonda's *Lewis and Clark Among the Indians* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984) discusses the Corps of Discovery's interactions with the Indians they encountered on their epic voyage to the Pacific.

One of the most popular surveys of Indian history is Dee Brown's *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee: An Indian History of the American West* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston, 1970). This book reflects the revisionist sentiments of the 1960s, presenting Indian history as a tragic tale of broken treaty after broken treaty, bloody defeat after bloody defeat, and the confinement of one tribe to reservation space after another. The book ends with the 1890 Wounded Knee massacre—implying that meaningful Indian history in the West ended in the nineteenth century—and overlooks themes of cultural adaptation and persistence. Nevertheless, this evocative, powerfully-written book has remained on "must read" lists for over three decades.

People interested in surveying history through biography will find the following books useful. Alvin M Josephy, Jr.'s *The Patriot Chiefs: A Chronicle of American Indian Resistance*, revised ed. (New York: Penguin Books, 1993) focuses on the confrontational aspects of Indian-White relations, as did *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*. The book includes vignettes on Pontiac, Tecumseh, Osceola, Crazy Horse, Chief Joseph, and others. Josephy was a talented writer, and like *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*, it has become a classic in the field. R. David Edmunds has edited two volumes of biographical essays that present a more multidimensional understanding of Native American leadership. *Studies in Diversity: American Indian Leaders* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1980) is a collection of a dozen essays that examine native leadership paradigms from the middle of the eighteenth century through the middle of the twentieth. His *The New Warriors: Native American Leaders Since 1900* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2001) contains fifteen biographical essays that discuss the lives of prominent twentieth-century Indians. *The New Warriors* is particularly valuable because it engages the oft-overlooked story of twentieth century Native American leadership, and includes essays on five Indian leaders who are women.

## Indian-White Relations and Policy

One of the leading authorities in the field of Indian-White relations is Francis Paul Prucha. His masterful two-volume *The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indians* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984) examines the relationship between the United States government and Native Americans from the colonial era through the Carter administration. Anyone interested in U.S. Indian policy should begin with it. It is also available in an abridged edition. Prucha has also written a short, astute, easy-to-read book entitled *The Indians in American Society: From the Revolutionary War to the Present* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985) that uses the concepts of paternalism, dependency, Indian rights, and self-determination to survey United States Indian policy.

Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, reformers, philanthropists, and government officials wrestled with “the Indian question”—the question of what was to be done with the Indians after they had been confined to reservations. Thomas Jefferson was the first president to give this question significant thought. He wanted to “civilize” the Indians and incorporate them into Anglo-American society. The best book on Jefferson’s Indian program is Bernard Sheehan’s *The Seeds of Extinction: Jeffersonian Philanthropy and the American Indian* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1973). It argues that Jefferson’s well-intended reform program proved destructive of native culture—and that ultimately, “the white man’s sympathy was more deadly than his animosity.” Anthony F. C. Wallace’s *Jefferson and the Indians: The Tragic Fate of the First Americans* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999) concludes that Jeffersonian Indian policy produced “ethnic cleansing” and laments that Jefferson and Madison did not work harder to “orchestrate diversity” in the Early Republic.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century the government—believing it was rescuing Indians from irrelevance and marginalization—again attempted to replace native cultures with White American values. In the words of one reformer, the goal was to “kill the Indian and save the man.” Frederick E. Hoxie’s *A Final Promise: The Campaign to Assimilate the Indians, 1880-1920* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984) provides a thoughtful overview of this phase of Indian policy, examining the reformers’ evolving motives as well as the challenges they faced.

Reformers frequently sent Indian youths to boarding schools to immerse them in American culture while stripping away their own native culture. Several books have explored the boarding school experience, like Devon A. Mihesuah’s *Cultivating the Rosebuds: The Education of Women at the Cherokee Female Seminary, 1851-1909* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993). K. Tsianina Lomawaima’s prize-winning *They Called It Prairie Light: The Story of Chilocco Indian School* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994) examines the history of a coeducational Indian boarding school in Oklahoma, making effective use of interviews with the school’s alumni. Lomawaima’s book explores an often-overlooked aspect of the native response to American conquest and does so from an Indian perspective.

Franklin D. Roosevelt’s administration abandoned the policy of forced assimilation in favor of cultural pluralism; however, as Alison R. Bernstein demonstrates in *American Indians and World War II: Toward a New Era in Indian Affairs* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press,

1991), World War II was a profoundly integrating force for many Indians. After the war, the government once again decided to forcibly assimilate native peoples into mainstream society by terminating the special legal status of tribes and the federal government's accompanying obligations to them, and also by relocating native people from rural reservation communities to urban areas. The standard work on the subject is Donald Lee Fixico's *Termination and Relocation: Federal Indian Policy, 1945-1960* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1986). Also of interest is Alvin M. Josephy Jr., et. al., eds., *Red Power: The American Indians' Fight for Freedom*, 2d ed. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999), a collection of government documents and Native American statements from the 1960s through the 1990s dealing with a variety of social, political, and economic points of contention.

## Northeast

There are many good histories discussing Indians of northeastern America. James Axtell's *The Invasion Within: The Contest of Cultures in Colonial North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985) is a thoughtful, provocative study that employs ethnohistorical methods to examine relations between the Indians and the colonial French and English. Colin Calloway's *New Worlds for All: Indians, Europeans, and the Remaking of Early America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997) is a thoughtful thematic overview of Indian history through the eighteenth century, and in *Indians and English: Facing Off in Early America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000), Karen Ordahl Kupperman surveys the complexities of the tentative give-and-take relations between Indians and Europeans along the east coast. Helen Rountree's *Pocahontas's People: The Powhatan Indians of Virginia Through Four Centuries* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1990) is an ethnohistorical survey of the Powhatan Indians, that, unlike many books on eastern Indians, surveys the history of the tribe from the time of early contact through twentieth century.

Focusing principally on Puritan-Indian relations in the seventeenth century are Alden Vaughan's *The New England Frontier: Puritans and Indians, 1620-1675* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1965) and Douglas Edward Leach's *Flintlock and Tomahawk: New England in King Philip's War* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1958). Vaughan argues that conflict among groups was to be expected and that the Puritan Indian policy was relatively just; Leach, however, disagrees. Jill Lepore's *The Name of War: King Philip's War and the Origins of American Identity* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998) looks at how memories of the conflict hardened racial divisions and shaped the identities of Indians and Whites alike. John Demos's *The Unredeemed Captive: A Family Story from Early America* (New York: Knopf, 1994) examines the life of Eunice Williams, the daughter of a Puritan minister, who, after being captured by French and Indians, refused repatriation efforts and ultimately married a Catholic Mohawk.

At the end of the French and Indian War in 1763, there was an Indian uprising against the British. Francis Parkman writes about "Pontiac's Rebellion" in his two-volume classic *The Conspiracy of Pontiac and the Indian War After the Conquest of Canada*, revised ed. (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1870). Parkman, one of America's greatest narrative historians, provides a gripping account, though some find his prose condescending at times. A more up-to-

date scholarly account can be found in Gregory Evan Dowd's *War under Heaven: Pontiac, the Indian Nations, and the British Empire* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002). Richard White's *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991) argues that Indians existed in a cultural, political, and economic "middle ground" between rival British, French, and American imperial powers. White's book is lengthy and intended for academics, and it is one of the most significant books on the subject.

The Iroquois were the dominant Indians in the northeast, and there are several first-rate Iroquois histories. Anthony F. C. Wallace's *The Death and Rebirth of the Seneca* (New York: Alfred A Knopf, 1970) is a classic ethnohistorical study of the Seneca Indians (an Iroquoian tribe), the challenges posed them by White contact, and their subsequent renaissance in the nineteenth century. Another excellent study of Iroquois history and culture is Daniel K. Richter's *The Ordeal of the Longhouse: The Peoples of the Iroquois League in the Era of European Colonization* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992). The captivity narrative of Mary Jemison, who was abducted by the Iroquois in 1758 as a teenager, provides a sympathetic insider's view of Iroquois life in the eighteenth century. This easy-to-read account is available as *A Narrative of the Life of Mrs. Mary Jemison*, ed., June Namias (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1992).

Tecumseh, a Shawnee Indian who lived in what is now Ohio and Indiana, is one of America's most famous native leaders. Several biographies examine Tecumseh's life and a pan-Indian resistance movement he orchestrated, including John Sugden's recent *Tecumseh: A Life* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, Inc. 1997), and R. David Edmunds's more concise *Tecumseh and the Quest for Indian Leadership* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1984).

## **Southeast**

The American Southeast was home to the "Five Civilized Tribes"—the Cherokees, Choctaws, Chickasaws, Creeks, and Seminoles—and there are many good books documenting their history.

Angie Debo and Grant Foreman wrote in the first half of the twentieth century, and their work, though dated, is still solid. Debo's *The Rise and Fall of the Choctaw Republic* (1934) and Foreman's *The Five Civilized Tribes* (1934)—both published by the University of Oklahoma Press—are thorough overviews of their subjects. Debo's *And Still the Waters Run* (Princeton: Princeton University Press) was a controversial exposé of how Oklahoma's politicians and leading citizens bilked the Indians and the Five Civilized Tribes of their land and resources.

Two prominent scholars of Cherokee history are William G. McLoughlin and Theda Perdue. Among MacLoughlin's several works is *Cherokee Renaissance in the New Republic* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), which describes how the Cherokees underwent a profound cultural change after the American Revolution by adopting many Anglo-American social, economic, political, and religious practices. Theda Perdue's *Slavery and the Evolution of Cherokee Society, 1540-1866* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1979) looks at how Cherokee Indians participated in the slave trade, adopted the slave-labor plantation system, and attempted to negotiate the slavery issue during the Civil War years. The principal chief of the Cherokees from the 1820s through 1866 was John Ross, and Gary E. Moulton's biography *John*

*Ross: Cherokee Chief* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1978), describes how Ross managed the many crises of these turbulent years.

Other significant books in the field include Charles Hudson's *Knights of Spain, Warriors of the Sun: Hernando De Soto and the South's Ancient Chiefdoms* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1997), which is a lengthy but pleasantly readable and richly illustrated account of the Spanish expedition into the American Southeast in 1539-1543 and the Indians encountered there. In *The Tree that Bends: Discourse, Power, and the Survival of the Maskókî People* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1999), Patricia Riles Wickman studies the experience of the Florida Indians and makes the claim that, rather than being swept away by Americans—as conventional wisdom suggests—descendants of early Florida Indians still inhabit the state today. Joel W. Martin's *Sacred Revolt: The Muskogees' Struggle for a New World* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1991) is an insightful ethnohistorical account of the religious dimensions to the Creek "Redstick Revolt" of 1813-1814. James H. Merrell's *The Indians' New World: The Catawbas and Their Neighbors from European Contact through the Era of Removal* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989) is a study of the amazingly adaptable Catawbas, a small tribe in the Carolina Piedmont that managed, unlike many southeastern tribes, to retain their ancestral homelands.

## Plains

The Plains Indians are the most prominent Indians in popular culture. Not surprisingly, there are many books on Plains Indians that demonstrate good scholarship and are accessible to a general audience. Among them are John C. Ewers's *The Blackfeet: Raiders on the Northwestern Plains* (1958); Ernest Wallace and Adamson Hoebel's *The Comanches: Lords of the South Plains* (1953); and several histories on the Pawnees and Sioux written by George E. Hyde—all of which are published by the University of Oklahoma Press. Two classics that incorporate Indian points of view are Peter J. Powell's *People of the Sacred Mountain: A History of the Northern Cheyenne Chiefs and Warrior Societies, 1830-1879, with an Epilogue 1969-1974* (San Francisco: Harper and Row Publishers, 1981), and Jerome A. Greene's edited volume, *Lakota and Cheyenne: Indian Views of the Great Sioux War, 1876-1877* (Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1994). Recent and accessible tribal histories include Jeffrey Ostler's *The Plains Sioux and U.S. Colonialism from Lewis and Clark to Wounded Knee* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004); and novelist Stanley Noyes's lively narrative of Comanche history, *Los Comanches: The Horse People, 1751-1845* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1993).

Another prolific and well-respected historian of the West is Robert M. Utley. Among his many works is *The Indian Frontier, 1846-1890*, revised ed. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2003), which surveys of Indian-White relations on the Plains and the far West. Utley's *The Last Days of the Sioux Nation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963) examines the Ghost Dance messianic movement among the Sioux and the slaughter of approximately two hundred Ghost Dancers at Wounded Knee in 1890.

Not to be overlooked is Francis Parkman's *The California and Oregon Trail: Being Sketches of Prairie and Rocky Mountain Life* (New York: George P. Putnam, 1849), a travel

narrative of his trip to the Plains and his extended visit with an Oglala Sioux band. *The Oregon Trail* has remained a classic for over a century and a half and is still in print today. Elliot West's *The Contested Plains: Indians, Goldseekers, and the Rush to Colorado* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1998) is a well-written study that examines the evolving lifestyles of both Indians and Whites on the Great Plains through the mid-nineteenth century, demonstrating that conflict and competition were important forces of transformation.

John G. Neihardt's *Black Elk Speaks: Being the Life Story of a Holy Man of the Oglala Sioux* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1932) is a warm, sympathetic biography of a Sioux holy man. Neihardt interviewed Black Elk and several other Sioux and, using artistic license, interpreted and rewrote the interviews. This book has been enthusiastically received and is available in at least eight different languages. Those wishing to understand Black Elk without Neihardt's interpretation should consult Raymond J. DeMallie's *The Sixth Grandfather: Black Elk's Teachings Given to John G. Neihardt* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), a book that contains the verbatim transcripts of the Black Elk interviews along with a thoughtful, one hundred-page biographical sketch of Black Elk.

Mari Sandoz grew up in the Sand Hills of Nebraska and personally befriended many Indians in the early reservation period. Her *Crazy Horse: Strange Man of the Oglalas* (New York: Alfred A Knopf, 1942) is a tragic, loving, almost mystical narrative about the famous Lakota warrior, Crazy Horse, whom she saw as the last champion of the traditional Sioux way of life. One esteemed biographer calls it "the best American biography ever written." Among her many other books are *Cheyenne Autumn* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1953), which describes the exodus of the Northern Cheyennes from a reservation in Oklahoma to their traditional homelands on the Northern Plains, and *These Were the Sioux* (New York: Hastings House, 1961), a short, easy-to-read, and affectionate portrayal of pre-reservation Sioux life.

## **Southwest**

In the American Southwest, Indians interacted with Spaniards, Mexicans, Americans, and other Indians. Several studies synthesize the historical and cultural interactions between Indians and their neighbors. One eminently readable—but rather lengthy—study is Elizabeth A. H. John's award-winning *Storms Brewed in Other Men's Worlds: The Confrontations of Indians, Spanish, and French in the Southwest, 1540-1795* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1975).

John examines Spanish-Indian relations from Coronado's visit to the Pueblos to the collapse of imperial Spanish authority at the end of the nineteenth century, arguing that over the decades—and centuries—Indians and Spaniards worked out a system of mutual accommodation. Another lengthy but well-written study is Edward H. Spicer's *Cycles of Conquest: The Impact of Spain, Mexico, and the United States on the Indians of the Southwest, 1533-1960* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1962). Spicer's study extends beyond John's to include Indian relations with Mexico and the United States. A similar—but more recent and shorter—study is Gary Clayton Anderson's *The Indian Southwest, 1580-1830: Ethnogenesis and Reinvention* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999). David Roberts provides a well-written, broadly-accessible survey of the Pueblo Revolt of 1680 in *The Pueblo Revolt : The Secret Rebellion That Drove the Spaniards Out of the Southwest* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2004).



Peter Iverson has written several tribal histories on the Navajo Indians, one of America's largest and most influential tribes. *Diné: A History of the Navajos* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2002), is a richly-illustrated broad overview of the Navajo people that will appeal to a broad audience. Iverson's *Carlos Montezuma and the Changing World of American Indians*, 2d ed. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2001) examines the life of a Yavapai Indian who was born in the mid-nineteenth century, attended college, and became a leading Native American rights advocate in the early twentieth century.

Forrest Carter's *Watch For Me On the Mountain* (New York: Delacourt Press, 1978) is a fast-moving, spirited work of historical fiction about Geronimo and the Apaches' struggle against the U.S. military. Another appealing biography is Eve Ball's award-winning *Indeh: An Apache Odyssey*, revised ed. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988). Her book presents a series of oral interviews conducted with several Apaches, in particular Ace Daklugie, son of the famous warrior Juh, whose life spanned the pre-reservation and reservation periods. The interviews are sometimes humorous, sometimes sorrowful, but always sensitive and informative. Those searching for a traditional account of the Apache wars should consult Dan L. Thrapp's *The Conquest of Apacheria* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1967).

## California and the Northwest

One of the most poignant stories in the history of Indian-White relations is the story of Ishi, a Yahi Indian, who stumbled out of the California backcountry and into a slaughterhouse corral in the summer of 1911. Ishi's band had eluded capture and extermination for many years, but, when all had died except for Ishi, he decided to take his chances and present himself to his American neighbors. *Ishi In Two Worlds: A Biography of the Last Wild Indian in North America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1961), is an account of Ishi's life written by Theodora Kroeber, wife of professor Alfred Kroeber, who became one of Ishi's caretakers. This amazing human interest story, written with a warm, empathetic intimacy, is truly a "must read."

Another important work is Alvin M. Josephy, Jr.'s *The Nez Percé Indians and the Opening of the Northwest* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965). This well-written history explores the Nez Percé Indians and their traditional way of life, their responses to increasing pressure from Whites and the resultant conflicts, and concludes with a description of the Nez Percé war and Chief Joseph's subsequent flight. Lowell John Bean's *Mukat's People: The Cahuilla Indians of Southern California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972) and Frederica deLaguna's *Under Mount Saint Elias: The History and Culture of the Yakutat Tlingit* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1990) are good introductory texts on the Indians of California and Alaska, respectively.

## Native Voices

Although Indian voices are under-represented in the literature, there are still many worthy selections available, including *Black Elk Speaks*, *Indeh*, and Jerome Green's book on Lakota and Cheyenne views of the Plains wars—each discussed above. The works of Charles Alexander

Eastman (*Ohiyesa*), a mixed-blood Sioux, deserve particular attention. Eastman was a boarding school standout and graduate of Dartmouth College who received his M.D. from Boston University's medical school. To reformers, Eastman represented the ideal assimilated Indian. Despite his success in White society, he never lost his affection for traditional Indian culture and devoted much of his life to explaining its merits to White Americans. Among his many works is *From the Deep Woods to Civilization* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1916), a moving autobiographical account.

Vine Deloria, Jr., was the leading Native American intellectual of the latter twentieth century. He wrote copiously on social, political, and theological issues and was a leading Indian rights advocate. Those interested in contemporary Native American issues ought to read one of his many books and essays. Among his publications are *Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1969), which is a humorous yet caustic social and political commentary, and *God Is Red: A Native View of Religion* (New York: Putnam Publishing Group, 1973), which attempts to explain Indian religions vis-à-vis Christianity.

Other significant native histories include *Born a Chief: The Nineteenth Century Hopi Boyhood of Edmund Nequatewa, as told to Alfred F. Whiting* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1993). Charlotte J. Frisbie has edited two lengthy Indian autobiographies, *Tall Woman: The Life Story of Rose Mitchell, a Navajo Woman, c. 1874-1978* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2001); and *Navajo Blessingway Singer: The Autobiography of Frank Mitchell, 1881-1967* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1978). Those interested in contemporary native histories might read Mary Crow Dog's *Lakota Woman* (New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1990), a captivating autobiography of a Sioux woman who was born into reservation poverty and joined the Indian protest movements of the 1960s. Another contemporary native history is *Where White Men Fear to Tread: The Autobiography of Russell Means* (New York, St. Martin's Press, 1995). It is a riveting account, alternately humorous and unsettling, of a man the *Washington Post* calls "[o]ne of the biggest, baddest, meanest, angriest, most famous American Indian activists of the late twentieth century."

## **Indian Imagery, Art, and Expression**

As discussed above, Indians—and the value judgments associated with them—have been cast and recast throughout the centuries based on contemporaneous social, cultural, and political forces. The book that best documents these reinterpretations of "the Indian" is Robert F. Berkhofer Jr.'s *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present* (New York: Vintage Books, 1978). Brian W. Dippie's *The Vanishing American: White Attitudes and U.S. Indian Policy* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1982) explains how White perceptions of "the Indian" influenced government policy. June Namias's *White Captives: Gender and Ethnicity on the American Frontier* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993) surveys the captivity narratives genre, a genre that often used the Indian as a foil for White society.

Many artists chose Indians as principal subjects for their works. Perhaps the most famous is George Catlin, who painted Indian scenes and portraits in the mid-nineteenth century. There are many beautifully illustrated and informative books on Catlin, including *George Catlin*

*and his Indian Gallery* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2002), edited by George Gurney and Therese Thau Heyman. This attractive book contains well over a hundred illustrations, many of them in color, and several essays by leading Catlin scholars. The work of Karl Bodmer, one of Catlin's contemporaries, is noted for its exceptional ethnographic value and is beautifully represented in *Karl Bodmer's America* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), by David C. Hunt, et al. Paula Richardson Fleming and Judith Luskey's *The North American Indians in Early Photographs* (New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 1992) provides a broad overview of Indian photography from the 1850s through the early twentieth century. *The West as America: Reinterpreting Images of the Frontier, 1820-1920* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991) is a richly illustrated volume discussing the significance of Indians in frontier art.

Native people documented their own histories and cultures using a variety of visual media. Ledger drawings—or ledger art—was a common way for native peoples to record and commemorate their history. *Cheyenne Dog Soldiers: A Ledgerbook History of Coups and Combat* (Denver: Colorado Historical Society, 1997), edited by Jean Afton, et. al., is a handsome presentation of a ledgerbook illustrated by Cheyenne warriors in the 1860s. Janet Catherine Berlo has edited a similar book entitled *Spirit Beings and Sun Dancers: Black Hawk's Vision of the Lakota World* (New York: George Braziller, Inc., 2000), in which a Lakota Sioux depicts a wide range of scenes from late nineteenth century tribal life. There are many informative books that explore Native American art and artifacts. David W. Penney's *Art of the American Indian Frontier: The Chandler-Pohrt Collection* (Seattle: University of Washington Press and The Detroit Art Institute, 1992) presents over two hundred decorated weapons, pipes, headdresses, accessories, and articles of clothing—and his *North American Indian Art* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2004), provides a good region-by-region overview of Native American art.

America's understanding of Indian history has become increasingly nuanced and sophisticated, particularly in the last half century. Today's historians continue to revise and build on the scholarship of those who came before them, and new perspectives continue to emerge—not only because new scholars enter the field, but also because scholars borrow theoretical insights from other fields and apply them to Native American questions.

The late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries hold many opportunities for future scholarship. Particularly interesting areas of inquiry include the short- and long-term effects of gaming on native communities, the effects of globalization on Native Americans, and the continuously evolving nature of Indian identity—what will it mean, for example, to be an “Indian” in 2050, or in 2100? On a similar note, according to the 2000 census, the fifth largest specific tribal grouping in America is “Latin American Indian,” a development that suggests conventional categories of analysis are continuing to change and that the narrative of Indian history will, too.

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