

Eliminating Racism

Profiles in Controversy

Edited by

Phyllis A. Katz

*Institute for Research on Social Problems
Boulder, Colorado*

and

Dalmas A. Taylor

*Wayne State University
Detroit, Michigan*

Published under the auspices of the Society for the
Psychological Study of Social Issues

Plenum Press • New York and London

1988

Stereotypical Images, American Indians, and Prejudice

Joseph E. Trimble

When you walk down a street in Rapid City, South Dakota, behind a Lakota man or a young Lakota girl, and you look into the eyes of whites who walk toward you, what do you see? You see fear. You see hatred. You see it in their eyes, even when they try to hide it with a smile. On the street, in the middle of town, in midday, why are they afraid? Why do whites look at Indians that way? The whites still don't see the Indians as human beings. They see animals.

Anonymous, in Steiner (1976)

Fear and hatred and the feeling of being less than human—don't these feelings occur for any group that has been subjected to rejection, isolation, persecution, incarceration, and extermination? And wouldn't these feelings continue when every effort to subdue a group was met with active or passive resistance? Don't these feelings reinforce and justify any effort to exclude a group from full participation in the pursuit of their inalienable rights? Answers to these questions demand more than mere academic inquiry; they demand answers that reflect the history of intergroup relations, especially ones in which one group forms to subdue another. In this chapter, we explore certain social-psychological elements that have fostered negative intergroup relations between Euro-Americans and American Indians. As we do so, some light may be shed on the feelings of fear, hatred, and inferiority cited above.

Fear, hatred, and feelings of inferiority are attitudes; they are also instrumental in promoting and maintaining racist beliefs and discriminatory practices. They are inventions "propogated among the public by an exploiting class for the purposes of stigmatizing some group as inferior so that the exploitation of either the group itself or its resources or both may be justified" (Cox, 1948, p. 49). Fear, hatred, and inferiority can also become highly institutionalized "norms for dealing with another group [as they

JOSEPH E. TRIMBLE • Department of Psychology, Western Washington University, Bellingham, Washington 98225.

reinforce] images of actual or perceived relationships between the groups" (Sherif, 1969, p. 269). Once the attitudes become normalized, the dominant group searches for differences among out-group members to *justify* racism and discrimination—to the point where the differences actually become factual and immutable (Marx, 1970).

HISTORICAL BEGINNINGS

Almost from the moment that Euro-Americans made contact with America's indigenous population, attitudes and impressions were formed. Noting in his journal, Columbus observed that the Arawak (the Caribbean tribe he first contacted) "are so guileless and so generous with all that they possess . . . they invite anyone to share it and display as much love as if they would give their hearts" (Vigneras, 1960, p. 194). Other explorers and settlers also noted the gentleness and peacefulness of the Indians they contacted (cf. Berkhofer, 1978).

However, as most students of American history will remember, whatever positive characterizations were recorded about American Indians, most were overwhelmingly overshadowed by negative attributions. Typical of the many negatively slanted descriptions are the words of an early Virginia traveler, Samuel Purchas, who noted that Indians were "more brutish than the beasts they hunt, more wild and unmanly than that unmaned wild country . . . captivated also to Satan's tyranny in foolish pieties, mad impieties, wicked idleness, busie and bloody wickednesse" (quoted in Berkhofer, 1978, p. 21).

Early character descriptions of the American Indian basically fell into two general categories. On the one hand, there was the image of the "good Indian" who appeared to be

friendly, courteous and hospitable. Modest in attitude, if not always in dress, the noble Indian exhibited great calm and dignity in bearing conversation. . . . Brave in combat, he was tender in love for family and children. The Indian, in short, lived a life of liberty, simplicity and innocense. (Berkhofer, 1978, p. 28).

Then there was the image of the "bad Indian," whose habits and customs, when

not brutal . . . appeared loathsome to Whites. Filthy surroundings, inadequate cooking, and certain items of diet repulsive to white taste tended to confirm a low opinion of Indian life. Indolence rather than industry, improvidence in the face of scarcity, thievery and treachery added to the list of traits on [the negative] side. (Berkhofer, 1978, p. 28).

The negatively slanted images aided in developing a federal policy and fueled the fires of rampant racism and discrimination that persist to this very day.

Gunnar Myrdal (1944), in writing about America's attitudes toward blacks, suggested that whites were basically ambivalent about the status and character of blacks. Although some historians, social psychologists, and others may contest Myrdal's contention, colonial Euro-Americans were *never* ambivalent toward American Indians. Francis Parker (quoted in Berkhofer, 1978) stated over a century ago that "Spanish civilization crushed the Indian; English civilization scorned and neglected him; French civilization embraced and cherished him" (p. 115). The Euro-American attitudes were, for the most part, justified by the images that best suited their cause: the crushing took the form of genocide, the scorn and neglect took the form of isolation and relocation, and the embrace and passion took the form of overt paternalism. As one traces the historical developments concerning Indian affairs for the past 200 years, genocide, isolationism, and paternalism highlight the policies dealt out by the federal government.

The Indian was judged by most to be incompetent, backward, and incapable of

managing their own affairs, and our early forefathers set up a colonial structure in which the Indian was forced into a hostile form of dependence (Hagen, 1962). In about 1830, the control of Indian affairs was assigned to the war department; about 20 years later the responsibility was shifted to the Office of Indian Affairs, which eventually became the present-day Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA).

COLONIALISM AND ITS IMPACT

Colonialism is a policy that emphasizes "the domination of a people by a culturally different and more powerful group over which they have little influence" (Anders, 1980, p. 690). Typically, under colonial rule, a dominant group controls and directs the life-style of a perceived subordinate group. The U.S. government, through the Bureau of Indian Affairs, has done just that: the everyday life of the American Indian has been under colonial control for the better part of 150 years. The American Indians are the only American ethnic-minority group that has a special agency assigned exclusively to the governance of its affairs.

The colonial posture of any government has all of the elements of racist and discriminatory practices. In the case of American Indians, several policies have been enacted over the years that basically led to the denial of civil and human rights. Essentially, our federal government's early policy toward American Indians was shaped by an attitude similar to that of the Supreme Court of the State of Washington, which concluded that

The Indian was a child, and a dangerous child, of nature, to be both protected and restrained. . . . True, arrangements took the form of treaty and of terms like "cede," "relinquish," "reserve." But never were these agreements between equals [but rather] between a superior and an inferior. (quoted in *Indian Tribes*, 1981, p. 35)

Yes, early Indian-white contacts were fairly amicable. Settlers needed—depended on, in many instances—the Indian to assist them in surviving the harsh New England winters, to understand the complex unexplored environments and to handle and manage relationships between tribes. But because of the constant flow of immigrants, more land was soon needed for settlement, and accommodation was rapidly replaced with competition. And under the "doctrine of discovery," land not immediately occupied was staked out and claimed, even though that very land might well have been part of a territorial domain claimed by a tribe.

Our Continental Congress recognized that the "doctrine of discovery" was hardly ample justification for squatting. They also recognized that Indian-white skirmishes (some referred to them as massacres) could no longer be tolerated. In an effort to regulate conflict and land settlement issues, the first Congress embarked on the policy of negotiating treaties with the aboriginal tribes.

One treaty in 1787 concerning lands in the Northwest Territory proclaimed that "the utmost good faith shall always be observed towards the Indians; their lands and property shall never be taken from them without their consent; and, in their property, rights, and liberty, they shall never be invaded or disturbed" (*Indian Tribes*, 1981, p. 18).

The first Congress wanted to both accommodate the first Americans and to protect them from the encroachment of immigrants. Despite the honorable intent of our early elected representatives, a vast number of settlers and colonialists were convinced that the best policy was one of extermination: genocide. Maintaining "the utmost good faith" required patience, tolerance, and the recognition of the Indian as an equal. Not so, said the characterizations and stilted, biased imagery. Our history books are filled with numerous accounts of the battles, wars, slaughter, pillage, rape, and murder carried out between Indians and whites. The extermination policy, although not formal and legis-

lated, was quietly endorsed by many eighteenth- and nineteenth-century leaders. Andrew Jackson, for example, revered by some as a progressive President, was a noted Indian fighter who, in 1817, claimed, "I have long viewed treaties with the Indians as an absurdity" (quoted in Svensson, 1973, p. 19).

EXTERMINATION, RELOCATION, AND ISOLATION

The informal and insidious policy of extermination was replaced with a more formalized policy of relocation and isolation. And beginning about 1830, large numbers of Indians were *forced* to leave their ancestral homes for reserved land set aside for settlement west of the Mississippi. Never mind the treaties. Relocation and isolation meant that the Indian problem would be out of the way for a while. And as colonialism prevailed, the minority Indian had no rights, no power, no status, and little support.

Relocation and isolation were hardly sufficient policies to stop the flow of immigrants and the pressing need for more land. The reservation policy did protect some tribes; an invisible boundary could be policed by the U.S. Army, but it could not guarantee that unoccupied lands would not be taken by settlers. And toward the end of the nineteenth century, it was clear to Congress that colonialism had to shift to a position of promoting a pluralist, assimilationist policy. Under a diluted and paternalistic policy of "separate but equal," Indians were given the opportunity to own and manage property in the hopes that they would eventually blend in and adopt the "American" way of life:

Pluralism and assimilation didn't work either, for beneath the fabric of the Indian ethos was an enduring sense of dignity and reverence for traditional custom, legend, and spiritualism. This ethos somehow transcended all efforts to control and regulate it, and it managed to bring the Indian into the twentieth century amidst paternalism, poverty, fear, hatred, and frustration. And in recognition of the Indians' persistence in surviving despite the policies of extermination, isolation, and assimilation, the U.S. Congress in 1924 conferred citizenship rights to all Indians born within the territorial boundaries of the United States.

THEN CAME CITIZENSHIP

Along with citizenship, one ordinarily receives voting privileges. Yet, some 14 years after Indians were granted full citizenship, some seven states continued to deny Indians the right to vote; New Mexico and Arizona continued to deny their sizable Indian population voting privileges right through to 1948, when they were court-ordered to stop the practice (*Indian Tribes*, 1981). Despite the court precedent, the tribes in Utah in the 1950s had to bring suit to gain a right to vote in state elections. And in South Dakota, when it was clear that the Sioux had gained a majority in certain local school-board elections, whites were able to successfully appeal to the state to change the structure so that they would (once again) hold the majority vote. In Arizona and New Mexico, in 1973, whites challenged the Indian right to occupy elected positions on local government boards on the basis that Indians reside on untaxed lands (Kemnitzer, 1978). Indians may be citizens, but their struggle to realize their rights, particularly through voting, continues to be challenged, in large part because of their unique relationship with the federal government, a relationship established by the government to regulate and control Indian affairs.

AND NOW THEY CALL FOR TERMINATION

Beginning in the mid-1940s, there has been a growing sentiment on the part of a number of politicians, citizens, and corporate officials to absolve the government of all its

responsibilities toward Indians. This policy is typically referred to as *termination* and implies that treaty responsibilities with federally recognized tribes should be eliminated. Many sympathetic to a termination policy point to the 1985 Indian Affairs federal budget of close to \$90 million as a futile and inflated venture—futile because the 1.6 million American Indians who desire benefits from the staggering budget remain close to the bottom of just about every socioeconomic category: unemployment rates, median family income, median years of education, incidences of certain diseases and alcoholism are all either disproportionately higher or lower (depending on the category) than in any other ethnic-minority population in the United States. Other critics argue that as long as Indians are dependent on the federal government, no substantial progress and growth can occur in Indian communities. And still others argue that far more important national needs can be addressed with \$90 million than meeting treaty responsibilities.

Although the termination policy is quite a way from becoming formal government policy, many Indian leaders rightly fear that it may be the final gesture that would end two centuries of colonial domination and, in turn, amplify the existing problems to an uncertain magnitude.

CONTEMPORARY EXAMPLES OF DISCRIMINATION

The historical course of Indian affairs in the United States demonstrates the rampant efforts of government policy to mold and shape the destiny of an indigenous people. Viewed as incapable of self-governance, as well as with fear, hatred, and distrust, the Indian, under colonial control, was forced into a paternalistic, wardlike state. Tribes, willing or not, relied on the government for direction and support for just about every phase of daily life. Within the past few decades, efforts have been taken to give the tribes more autonomy in governing their destiny, and that policy is paying off in some areas of the country. Nonetheless, Indian-white relationships are still largely controlled and strained by an antiquated image, and that image, seemingly cherished by many non-Indians, continues to fan the flames of racism and discrimination. Some illustrations of present-day discriminatory practices can be found in the following arenas.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Bahr, Chadwick, and Strauss (1972) found, in a study of legal practices among Indians in Seattle, that levels of legal action for Indians were significantly greater than for the non-Indian population. Further, their research showed that about 20% of the Indians sampled in Seattle believed that they had been arrested because they were Indian.

Numerous legal complications persist concerning law enforcement practices on Indian reservations. Plagued by legal entanglements and questions of jurisdiction, reservation tribes continue to struggle with maintaining law and order. Many tribal officials complain that county law-enforcement agencies will not respond to complaints arising on reservations. County sheriffs argue that they have no jurisdiction on reservation lands because of their unique trust status with the government. Consequently, many felons go unconvicted and many crimes go unsolved. All the while, the federal government maintains the responsibility for law enforcement, mainly for serious offenses, and, according to many, has not yet fully lived up to that task (*Indian Tribes*, 1981).

EDUCATION

In the early 1970s, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) investigated parent complaints concerning the practices occurring in a federally controlled Indian school. Among other

things, the BIA found evidence of criminal malpractice and evidence of physical and psychological cruelty: some of the Indian youth were allegedly handcuffed and locked in their rooms for as long as two days. In another investigation, a white school principal was dismissed from his post when it was learned that he had ducked the heads of Indian youth into toilets as a form of punishment for truancy and for being suspected of drinking alcohol. Another white principal of a BIA school was reported as making statements such as "All Indians are brain-drains," "Indian culture belongs in museums," and "They are even worse than our coloreds, and the best you can do is just leave them alone."

In 1968, the U.S. Congress authorized a thorough investigation of the status of Indians in the educational system (U.S. Senate, 1968-1969). The findings point out that: (a) the government has failed in living up to responsibilities for providing educational opportunities for Indians; (b) the failure has created a severe and self-perpetuating cycle of poverty and unemployment; (c) the schools fail to understand the cultural differences among Indian students; as a consequence, the schools blame their own failure on the Indian student and, in so doing, reinforce a defensive attitude, and Indians, in turn, retaliate by viewing the school as an alien institution; and (d) the relationship between the schools and the Indian community is demeaning. Low self-esteem and self-confidence, encouragement of apathy, and a sense of alienation result, leaving many Indian youth with the feeling that they have been "pushed out" of the educational system. Simply stating that many Indians drop out of school is hardly sufficient.

In the 1970s, American Indians achieved a median of eight years of education, the lowest of any ethnic-minority group in the United States. And in the late 1960s, a survey of the educational status of Indians in Oklahoma found that 6% of the 60,000 Indians in the state had no formal schooling whatsoever, and that close to 60% had not gone beyond the eighth grade. In one particular school in western Oklahoma, with an Indian enrollment of 129, there were 635 reports of absenteeism in 1 year alone among Indian students (Trimble, 1972).

Many researchers have attributed the high rates of absenteeism and dropping out to the racist attitudes of white administrators and teachers, which, in turn, cause in the Indians a distinct lack of interest in schoolwork, academic difficulty, and general behavioral problems.

There is some hope, as many Indian educators and sensitive school administrators are reporting encouraging results. The 1980 U.S. Census shows that the median years of education had increased to 10. And many more Indian youth are attending institutions of higher learning than ever before. In spite of the gains, though, many Indian communities continue to complain that racist practices occur in many of the schools.

EMPLOYMENT

The employment position of the Indian youth is much less favorable than that of any other ethnic-minority group in the country. In parts of some states, it is not uncommon to find better than 75% of the Indian labor force either unemployed or underemployed. Yearly trends are variable. In 1940, nearly one-third of all Indian males were unemployed. By 1960, the rate had climbed to 39%; in 1970, the rate dropped to 12%. Rates for Indian women, as one might suspect, tend to run much higher than those for men (Feagin, 1978).

Most employed Indians can be found in the blue-collar and service-worker categories, although there is some evidence that more are moving into the professional technical categories—from 2.6% in 1940 to 9.8% in 1970 (Hraba, 1979). It should come as no surprise, then, that the median family income of Indians in 1970 was \$5,800; where 1 in 10

U.S. families in 1970 fell below the poverty line, nearly 33% of Indians were declared as officially poor (Feagin, 1978). In 1965, the Indians in one county in northwestern Oklahoma reportedly had a median family income of \$347 a year, and only 23 of 55 Indians in that county reported earnings of \$2,500 or more during that year (Trimble, 1972). Svensson (1973) noted that "urban Indians shared the disadvantages under which virtually all Indians have operated . . . an average per capita cash income of only \$900 and a median family income of \$3,600" (p. 35).

Many attribute the unemployment problems to discrimination, lack of training opportunities, and the inability to develop and sustain viable employment opportunities on and near reservation communities. Yes, the government and the BIA are keenly aware of the problems, and steps have been taken to provide remedies. In the early 1950s, the BIA launched what has become known as the *employment relocation program*.

In 1952, about 5,000 reservation Indians were directly relocated to urban areas with the promise of finding gainful employment. In the years that followed, one in every three relocated families eventually returned to their reservation homes (Trimble, 1972). It turned out that, as the number who were relocated increased, the number of projected jobs decreased. More than that, relocated families found they were "part of a machine and not part of nature," and that the urban environment was distressing, rampant with discrimination, and lacking in social support. In commenting on the urban experience, Ablon (1971) stated "that the chief problems Indians struggle with in the city are employment, marital discord and difficulties with the law" (p. 204). More to the point, where relocated, Indians were given a promise of a new and better life, but what they found "was no job, no decent place to live and a culture that was difficult if not impossible to assimilate" ("An Indian", 1971, p. 99).

The American Indian has also experienced numerous problems in the areas of religious practices, fishing rights, health care delivery, and land claims. In a heavily documented report in 1981, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights best summarized the status of Indian rights in the United States. In the main report, the commission concluded that

(1) recent conflicts over Indian rights have exacerbated the continuing equal protection problems Indians face; and (2) non-Indians have erroneously attacked and characterized Indian rights as unlawful discrimination against non-Indians; [and] that civil rights violations are promoted by public ignorance of Indian rights and by the failure of appropriate parties to respond promptly to any infringement of Indian rights. (*Indian Tribes*, 1981, p. 188)

The general public is largely unaware of the problems Indians are facing in the last quarter of the twentieth century. Much of what the public knows is fed largely by a host of antiquated stereotypes that serve to promote ignorance and the practice of discrimination and racial prejudice. The pervasiveness of Indian-oriented stereotypes in textbooks, films, research literature, and the news media is discussed in the next section. Following this, some research findings are presented that suggest that stereotypes about Indians can change over time.

PREVALENCE OF STEREOTYPICAL IMAGES

Few non-Indians have had any direct contact with American Indians, yet nearly all non-Indians seem to have some kind of opinion about the first Americans. Most of their information has been derived from historical writings, television, motion pictures, or hearsay. Tourists who visit Indian areas, especially reservations, often do so to confirm what they already "know," rather than to learn something new. Indeed, many think that

the Indians' culture is standing still—that Indians are oddities or curios. The writings of historians and social scientists do little to dispute these notions because they are framed in an "ethnographic present" that leads the reader to believe that what is being described still exists. D'Arcy McNickle (1973), an American Indian historian, argued that many portrayals of American Indians are "seen as components of 'culture areas' frozen in ecological domains and social systems" (p. 6). The static stance taken by many writers envelops much of the information available about the first Americans. Certainly, this view dovetails with that of many present-day Americans.

Over the years, an assortment of stereotypes has been developed to describe American Indians. Many of these stereotypes are holdovers from early Indian-white relationships; they range from the benign observation that Indians are untamed, innocent, and pure lovers of nature to the more caustic description of Indians as savages, animals, and murderers. During more recent times, the tone of the stereotype has calmed down somewhat, but although Indians are viewed in more passive terms, the stereotype remains. For example, it is not uncommon today to hear Indians described as quiet, taciturn, or passive; yet, this image still conveys the stereotype of "the silent Indian." The wooden cigar-store Indian, as he stands alone, staring off into space, saying nothing, is the notion of an Indian of many Americans.

In social situations, Indians "usually sit or stand quietly, saying nothing [until they seem to] disappear into the background, merging with the wall fixtures" (Wax & Thomas, 1961, p. 306). Cultural anthropologists Wax and Thomas (1961) noted that, in similar situations, "the white man will become undiscourageably loquacious. A silent neighbor will be peppered with small shoptalk in the hope that one of his rounds will trigger an exchange and a conversational engagement" (p. 306). The tendency toward silence is a product of the socialization experiences of many Indian youth. Wax and Thomas argued that the Indian is "brought up to remain motionless and watch. Outwardly he appears to freeze. Inwardly, he is using all of his senses to discover" (p. 306). From the non-Indian's perspective, silence appears to be an unacceptable personality trait; for many Indians, it is a strength and a value that guides their actions.

Social scientists have noted other stereotypical images of American Indians. Braroe (1965) found that Jasper Cree Indians were stereotyped as being childish, irresponsible, "worthless parasites," and generally intolerable. Although the Cree did not accept this imposed imagery, Braroe argued that they tended to act in ways that supported the stereotype. James (1961) noted the negative terms used by the local dominant community to describe the Ojibwa who lived nearby as "dirty," "drunken," "lazy," and "immoral." Yet, these negative perceptions were accompanied by a sense of "romanticism" that James attributed to "oldtimers"—older Indians who had been victims of the onslaught of colonialism. James stated that "this negative stereotype is not simply a product of white imagination or bigotry. It is a white judgment, motivated by white values, concerning white experiences with reservation Indians" (p. 732). Similar perceptions were found by Gordon MacGregor (1946) among whites living on or near the Pine Ridge Sioux Reservation in South Dakota. White attitudes varied according to white and Indian socioeconomic levels. Although many whites feared the Indians, most perceived them to be inferior and wished them to remain so.

For anyone familiar with Indian-white relationships, the existence of negative Indian stereotypes is not surprising. Other, more benign images do exist, but they seem to be overshadowed by the more offensive ones. Whether it is justified or not, the existence of negative imagery is unhealthy and does little to promote harmony between groups. Rather, such imagery keeps groups apart and prevents them from learning about and appreciating the value of diversity in a pluralistic society.

TEXTBOOK STEREOTYPES

Textbooks aid and abet the development of stereotypical images of the American Indian. The writers of these texts often take poetic license in their descriptions of Indians and Indian life, both past and present. In reviewing literature written for adolescents to determine the accuracy of the portrayal of American Indians, Anne Troy (1975) found far more inaccurate than accurate accounts of customs, tribes, dates of historical importance, and current living patterns. The novels she reviewed were built on the traditional and historical images of "the dirty, drunken, cruel and warring savage" and "the glorified, noble but naive native" (p. 34). Keith Beaman (1969), a free-lance writer, reported similar findings. Indians were described as "noble savages" when they provided aid to colonists and settlers, but as "treacherous savages" and, more recently, "filthy savages," when they fought the militia and settlers in defense of their land.

The most comprehensive review of the portrayal of American Indians in textbooks was undertaken by the American Indian Historical Society (AIHS) in San Francisco (cf. Costo, 1970). The AIHS, through the efforts of 32 Indian scholars, examined more than 300 books dealing with American Indian history and culture. The reviewers concluded that "not one [book] could be approved as a dependable source of knowledge about the history and culture of the Indian people in America. Most of the books were . . . derogatory to the Native American. Most contained misinformation, distortions, or omissions of important history" (Costo, 1970, p. 11). Alarming and shocking as this may sound, it is more discouraging to note the AIHS finding that "all of these books are currently being used in the schools of this country" (p. 11).

The AIHS reviewers found frequent references to "primitive, degraded, filthy, war-like, savage" Indians. Some authors were a little more imaginative. In one text, the reviewers found Indians grouped with "riffraff, fugitives from justice, runaway slaves . . . whose forays over into Georgia made life hideous" (p. 41). In the same text, a chapter is given the rather dubious title of "Bold, Flamboyant Savages of the Western Plains" (p. 41). In other texts, the reviewers often found the phrase "Indians and animals," suggesting a relationship between the two. Similarly, Indians were often referred to as "savage and hostile to settlers," with no balancing statements that might have indicated any blame or shame on the part of the settlers for the historical course of events or for Indian-white relationships.

In another book, a rather pointed reference documented:

Unnatural affection, child-murder, father-murder, incest, a great deal of hereditary cursing, a double fratricide, and a violation of the sanctity of dead bodies—when one reads such a list or charges against any tribe or nation, either ancient or in modern times, one can hardly help concluding that somebody wanted to annex their land (p. 41).

FILM AND STEREOTYPES

The motion picture and television industries have produced a large number of films that convey still another version of the culture and history of the American Indian. For the most part, films are biased and present unflattering or distorted and fallacious images of American Indian history and culture. Like their counterparts in print—novels and textbooks—films have both created and perpetuated many negative images of Indians. Most films depict the constant struggle between settlers, ranchers, and local tribal groups, although some have dealt with historic events such as the Battle of Little Big Horn or the "Sand Creek Massacre." More recently, Hollywood producers' attempts to

portray Indian life and culture in realistic terms have given birth to such films as *Standing Tall*, *A Man Called Horse*, *Little Big Man*, and *When the Legends Die*.

Indian culture and history have been portrayed in some rather unusual, and often crude, ways, but invariably negatively. Anthropologist Murray Wax (1971) argued that

a distorted image of the warrior aspect of native cultures has permeated American society via the movies. . . . This has been accompanied by a thematic counterpointing of Indian-white relationships in which Indians are placed in a small handful of stock roles (e.g., villainous raiders of peaceable settlers; noble red man defending his land; beautiful barbarian maiden trying to establish peace between the irascible males of two different cultures). (p. 180)

Thus the Indian becomes the infamous "bad guy"—enemy and scourge of the cavalry and white settlers. An Indian portrayed as a "good guy" is usually a "scout" for the military, the "handmaiden" of a white trapper or settler, or the white hero's sidekick. In such examples, the role is always *subordinate* to that of the hero; and the character is inevitably inferior to whites, but slightly more sophisticated than other Indians. Rarely are Indians portrayed as heroes. In short, the image of the "primitive savage" has prevailed in Hollywood's portrayal of the Indian.

An even more insidious characterization of the first American occurs as the film is edited. Films show "Indians," not Sioux or Arapahos or Kiowas. Moviegoers are given a stereotypical picture of an incredibly diverse population group and thus see nothing of the diversity. In this way, the Indian culture becomes standardized as well as stereotyped. When tribal names are mentioned, it is usually only to enhance the little historical truth that the film actually does contain. The overall image, however, has been one of Indians lurking in the bushes, hiding behind rocks, or stalking white heroes. Film directors and wardrobe and makeup designers have developed a highly stylized and consistent "Indian." Extras wear feathers of one sort or another or cloth headbands carelessly tied about their heads. "Chiefs," or Indian leaders, are invariably clad in warbonnets. Indeed, the number of feathers worn is often a good indicator of status or "power." Most Indian historians, as well as Indians themselves, note that the warbonnet was indigenous only to Northern Plains tribes such as the Sioux, the Cheyenne, the Crow, or the Arapaho. Yet, every "Hollywood tribe" is led by someone wearing a warbonnet, just as all Indians, regardless of tribe or band, ride horses, fight constantly, and use nonverbal signals (e.g., smoke signals, bird calls, and the beat of drums) to communicate with one another.

Most Hollywood Indians speak either no English or, at best, a broken English interspersed with grunts, groans, and "ughs." In some films, Indian extras speak in foreign dialects—usually gibberish or nonsense syllables—in an effort to "authenticate" their Indian roles. One producer actually recorded the Indian dialogue in English, reversed the tape, and dubbed it in to represent a tribal dialect. To their credit, some producers actually had their extras learn their parts in a tribal dialect, such as Lakota (Sioux) or Navajo. Even here, however, what Hollywood produced was usually a disastrous mutilation of the true language, and actors and actresses said things that made no sense in context. In one film, for example, a "Sioux," costumed as a Hollywood Indian (i.e., wearing nothing that resembled the traditional dress of the Tetons), speaks in Lakota to an interpreter. The Indian's words, "White man, you are nothing!" are translated as "I have been traveling a long time to talk with you!" The audience never knows the difference.

In many cases, the extras who play Indians in these films were hired because they "looked Indian," yet were often not Indians at all. Mexican-Americans, Greeks, Italians, or other "appropriately dark-skinned" peoples played most Indian roles. When Indians

do play themselves on the screen, their complexions are sometimes darkened with makeup.

With little respect, sensitivity, or appreciation for tribal customs or reality, Hollywood producers have created their own image of the American Indian. That it is a false image has never penetrated the minds of most moviegoers. How could it, when it reinforces so well what they have already learned in classrooms and from textbooks and novels?

RESEARCH THEMES AND STEREOTYPES

Social and behavioral science research efforts appear to confirm many of the stereotypes held by a less knowledgeable public, simply because of the attention certain topics have received. Although researchers are attempting to provide understanding of and solutions to specific areas of concern, they are unintentionally feeding stereotypes.

The most apparent of these stereotypical foci are alcoholism and self-destructive behavior among Indians. The research community has paid a great deal of attention to these two substantive areas, which reflect the stereotypical view of the "drunken, suicidal Indian."

An abundance of articles dealing with alcoholism and mental health among American Indians and Alaskan natives exists in the literature. Kelso and Attneave (1981) compiled some 1,360 articles on Indian mental-health topics. The reviewers broke down the citations into 10-year increments to illustrate publication trends. In the area of studies on discrimination, the authors noted that only 7 references appear from 1930 to 1959; from 1960 to 1969, the number of citations increased to 17, and from 1970 to 1979, the number jumped to 58. The increase in studies on discrimination certainly coincided with the heightened interest in civil rights issues that occurred in the 1970s.

It is of interest that close to 30% of the discrimination citations are related to problems of acculturation and cultural adaptation. Following that category, the authors cited some 18 articles concerning discrimination in school settings. Other discrimination-related citations deal with such topics as crime, health, politics, legal matters, and human relations issues. Kelso and Attneave also cited some 50 publications dealing with suicide and 152 on the subject of alcoholism.

In another biography, Mail and McDonald (1980) listed 969 citations dealing exclusively with alcoholism among American Indians; 24 of these citations deal directly with alcoholism and discrimination. A review of the discrimination citations reveals that about 50% are concerned with criminal arrest patterns and that another 29% focus on the role that attitudes play in the relationship between alcohol consumption and discriminatory practices toward Indians.

Both bibliographies clearly show a strong connection between discrimination and mental health problems. More to the point, it could be assumed that a large contributing factor to the incidence of Indian alcoholism and mental health problems is racism and discrimination.

Suicide or self-destructive behavior seems to be inordinately high among American Indian youth. In their review of the literature related to suicide among Indians, May and Dizmang (1974) reported that Indian suicide rates were higher than those of the general population and that such rates varied from one tribe to another. Miller and Schoenfeld (1971) investigated suicide rates among a sample of Navajo men and women. They found more attempted than actual suicides and suggested that research—and treatment—should focus on such attempted suicides. Moreover, they found no significant difference between the overall suicide rates or suicide-attempt rates of Navajos and those of the

general population. Psychiatrist James Shore (1975) argued that, although suicide rates were unusually high in some areas, the stereotype of the "suicidal Indian" had actually been drawn from the publicity given to a small number of tribes that do have unusually high suicide rates. Shore also maintained that such publicity had convinced members of other tribes that had relatively low rates that self-destructive behavior was one of their major mental-health problems. In fact, if suicide is identified as a major mental-health problem by a tribe, community, or village, it must be recognized as such, whether or not the actual suicide rates support this view. Nonetheless, suicide rates and the publicity given to them have certainly contributed to the stereotype of the "suicidal Indian."

Alcoholism among American Indians and Alaskan natives has received even more research and public attention than suicide. The scope of the articles ranges from an analysis of drinking patterns among certain tribes specifically and among Indians generally to descriptions of treatment programs and services. Nancy Lurie (1971) argued that drinking among American Indians was perhaps the world's oldest ongoing protest demonstration. Yet, alcoholism levels among Indians and Alaskan natives does contribute to the maintenance of the "drunken Indian" stereotype. The stereotype has become both a curse and a legacy; it can be found in historical accounts, in Hollywood "images," and in the actual incidence levels and alcoholism rates of Indian people around the country.

Writing on the subject of Indian alcoholism, Westermeyer (1972) maintained that two distinctive patterns of drinking occurred among the Chippewa: "white drinking" and "Indian drinking." He argued that most drinkers shifted back and forth between the two patterns, depending on the situation. "White drinking" (drinking in a style peculiar to non-Indians) served as an entry into the dominant American culture, whereas "Indian drinking" (often binge drinking in group settings) occurred only among other Indians. In each case, the pattern and apparent reasons for drinking differed (cf. Ferguson, 1968; Lemert, 1958; Waddell, 1975).

In another article, Westermeyer (1974) exposed myths about Indian drinking that he found in the research literature. He identified three major themes: (a) Indians are unable to hold their liquor; (b) alcoholism rates are unusually high among Indians; and (c) alcoholism is a major problem among Indian people. Westermeyer argued that these mythical themes were typically framed in broad, sweeping generalizations. He added that many misconceptions evolved from findings in single-community or reservation-based groups. Westermeyer noted, for example, that many of the physiological studies intended to assess metabolic rates of alcohol absorption had been poorly designed. Finally, Westermeyer strongly argued that many of the alcohol-related research findings simply reinforced long-standing myths about Indian drinking and were not really based on solid research findings.

The emphasis given to suicide and alcoholism among Indians is somewhat unflattering. Moreover, those who prefer to cling to their notion of the Indians as "drunken and suicidal" are not likely to be influenced by contradictory evidence. But a deemphasis on suicide and alcoholism themselves and a corresponding emphasis on the role of treatment and prevention sensitive to the Indian life-style can help erode the pejorative implications of those stereotypes.

On the one hand, the number of research citations on Indian suicide rates and alcoholism acts much as does a lightning rod. Indians and some non-Indians alike are deeply concerned about the problems, and because of the enormity of the topics, researchers and practitioners are drawn to them to seek explanations and solutions. In fact, many Indian professionals consider alcoholism to be the number one mental-health problem among Indians. Yet, the attention given to the topics serves to confirm the self-serving stereotypical images of many racist-minded non-Indians, in whom no amount of factual evidence will alter deep-seated prejudicial convictions. Most Indian professionals

recognize the dilemma. So, in spite of the pitfalls, research on alcoholism and suicide will continue until the problems are significantly reduced or are eradicated altogether.

THE NEWS MEDIA AND STEREOTYPES

News photographers and cartoonists continue to portray American Indians as they were a century or more ago. The Indians most often seen in photographs are clad in stereotypical features, beaded headbands, and decorative clothing. Certainly, the Indian of the cartoonist's pen is a caricature of one or more of the commonly held stereotypes of Indians. The emphasis is on artifacts, rather than on contemporary human beings. It is as if the images of the photojournalist are frozen in the past.

The news coverage by eight national and regional newspapers of the 1973 occupation of the small southwestern South Dakota village of Wounded Knee was reviewed. The Wounded Knee incident lasted 71 days. During that period, and later as well, the news media devoted a great deal of space to the various skirmishes and day-to-day circumstances related to the confrontations. During the 71-day period of the occupation, the eight papers published 244 stories (3,530 column inches), with 94 photos and 22 political cartoons alongside the written text. A content analysis of the photos and cartoons sheds some interesting light on the characterization of American Indians in the news media.

The Wounded Knee incident was an American Indian concern; thus, Indians should have been the central theme of photos and cartoons; in fact, that was the case. In 15% of the photos, government and state agents and attorneys were also shown with various Indians who were involved in the incident. How were the Indians portrayed by the media? Of the photos that showed only American Indians, 54% depicted the Indians in "traditional" garb (braids, feathers, and headbands), and only 26% portrayed the "militant" Indian (in long hair, beaded or decorated vests, and "Billy Jack" hats). Only 5% of the photos showed the American Indians in typical everyday reservation clothing: jeans, boots, western hats, and so on. In virtually all of the political cartoons, the Indians wore feathers of one sort or another, "warpoint," moccasins, and stereotypically traditional garb.

Biased characterization of the Indian by the press serves no real purpose. The light in which the Indian is portrayed reflects neither the nature nor the characteristics of contemporary Indian life. Modern Indians simply do not fit the non-Indians' stereotype of their ancestors. Journalists, news photographers, and cartoonists seem to experience difficulty in portraying modern American Indians, especially when they want to be certain that the reader will recognize the subject as an American Indian. As long as contemporary Indians are portrayed as though they still live and dress as some of them did years ago, stereotypical and unrealistic images will be perpetuated. Far too many people, and especially young people, believe that Indians still wear feathers, live in wigwams or teepees, and "roam" the prairies as they did years ago. The journalistic responsibility for portraying the Indian in more positive and realistic terms must be met. Until that occurs, the public needs to be reminded that caricatures and fictitious images are just that.

Journalistic portrayals of Indians also affect Indians. Many are offended by the continued misrepresentation and the inaccurate characterization of their people. Others, unfortunately, try to live up to such images. Vine Deloria (1969) eloquently stated: "Experts paint us as they would like us to be. Often we paint ourselves as we wish we were or as we might have been." He continued, "To be an Indian is in a very real sense to be unreal and ahistorical" (p. 9). The image rendered through the news media continues to perpetuate a mythical lifestyle and character. It helps the public to identify the characters in the story. Some Indians know what the public expects and comply with that expectation by sporting contrived regalia. But sooner or later, the charade must come to an end.

When that happens, the Indian can then be cast in the role of a twentieth-century human being instead of some historical, romantic character.

SOME DATA ON CHANGING STEREOTYPES

About 1970, during the social upheaval and protest surrounding ethnic-minority and civil-rights issues, the subject of stereotypes of American Indians achieved some attention. At that time, an effort was made to identify the stereotypes held of American Indians by both Indians and non-Indians following the procedures of the classic work on stereotypes by Katz and Braly (1933).

In our initial study, we asked 131 Indian and non-Indian graduate and undergraduate students from colleges in Oklahoma to list as many words as they could that accurately and succinctly described the American Indian. The combined lists produced 38 separate and distinct single-word traits. About 2 months later, the 38-word list was administered to 136 Indian and non-Indian American students. The subjects were instructed to select 15 words from the list of 38 single-word traits, choosing those that seemed most typical of American Indians. Following this task, another group of Indian and non-Indian subjects were asked to select from the list one word that seemed to be the most typical trait of the group. After completing their task, the subjects were asked to rank their 15 chosen words from "most typical" to "least typical," using "most typical" as a benchmark. Results from this 1970 study appear in Table 1.

A statistical analysis of the results suggested a lack of agreement between the non-Indian and Indian samples for the ranked traits, with little or no relationships between the rankings of the two samples. Despite the absence of an overall relationship, some interesting findings did emerge. There was some agreement between the groups on the ranking of particular traits. For example, both groups converged on the traits "proud" and "drunkards" and tended to rank them as "moderately descriptive" of American Indians. The traits "stoic" and "savage" were regarded by both groups as "less descriptive." However, there was strong disagreement between the two groups in ranking the

TABLE 1. Average Rankings of Descriptive Traits of American Indians in 1970

Trait	Average ranking ^a	
	Non-Indian	Indian
Artistic	14.3	7.2
Backward	8.5	11.5
Brave	13.8	10.9
Defeated	12.5	2.1
Distrustful	7.1	13.2
Drunkards	5.5	4.4
Ignorant	3.8	14.1
Lazy	3.1	6.6
Mistreated	14.1	2.8
Proud	2.9	3.4
Quiet	9.7	4.9
Savage	10.9	12.5
Shy	6.7	9.2
Stoic	11.7	13.8
Suspicious	4.4	7.9

^a Kendall's tau = $-.09$; $z = 0.47$, nonsignificant.

traits "defeated," "ignorant," and "mistreated." The Indian sample regarded the traits "distrustful" and "ignorant" as "less descriptive" of Indians than the non-Indian sample. On the other hand, the non-Indian sample considered the trait "mistreated" "much less descriptive" than did the Indian sample.

In 1973, the same 15 single-word traits were used with another sample of 122 non-Indian and Indian graduate and undergraduate students from academic institutions in Oklahoma. The subjects were instructed to review the lists of traits and to add any traits that they felt should be included. Following their review, a second group were asked at a later time to rank the traits according to the criteria followed by the 1970 sample. Results from the 1973 ranking appear in Table 2.

The 1970 and 1973 rankings differed somewhat because new traits were added to the original 15-word list. The 1970 traits "stoic," "savage," "distrustful," "quiet," and "brave" were excluded from the 1973 list; among those traits added in 1973 were "unreliable," "stubborn," "poor," "ignored," and "faithful." Apparently, conventional stereotypes had been replaced with those that more accurately reflected the current circumstances of the American Indian. "Poor" and "ignored," for example, seem to reflect a greater concern about the social welfare and status of Indians.

The 1973 results introduced some other interesting data. Basically, even with the addition of new traits, there was some overall agreement between the two samples in ranking the traits. Specifically, both groups showed strong agreement on the ranking of the traits "artistic," "backward," "ignorant," "ignored," "mistreated," "poor," and "suspicious," with "artistic," "backward," and "ignorant" receiving low rankings and "ignored" and "mistreated" receiving high rankings.

In an attempt to further our understanding of change and stereotypes, two more samples of 100 non-Indian and Indian graduate and undergraduate students were again selected in 1976 from academic institutions in Oklahoma. This sample was given exactly the same instructions that had been given to the 1973 sample. The results from the 1976 study are presented in Table 3.

The results of the 1976 study were similar to the findings in 1973. First, the listing of

TABLE 2. Average Rankings of Descriptive Traits of American Indians in 1973

Trait	Average ranking ^a	
	Non-Indian	Indian
Artistic	10.4	12.6
Backward	13.3	14.3
Defeated	4.1	13.4
Drunkards	3.9	7.8
Faithful	13.6	3.7
Ignorant	14.2	13.8
Ignored	2.1	2.6
Lazy	11.7	9.5
Mistreated	2.7	2.1
Poor	5.5	6.3
Proud	6.6	4.8
Shy	9.1	10.9
Stubborn	11.9	5.9
Suspicious	8.8	8.1
Unreliable	7.3	10.8

^a Kendall's tau = .48; $z = 2.53$, $p < .01$.

TABLE 3. Average Rankings of Descriptive Traits of American Indians in 1976

Trait	Average ranking ^a	
	Non-Indian	Indian
Artistic	8.9	10.1
Defeated	14.1	14.3
Drunkards	6.8	9.1
Easy-going	14.2	14.0
Faithful	12.8	4.2
Ignored	6.7	4.9
Lazy	10.0	13.2
Militant	2.3	2.1
Mistreated	1.9	5.8
Native	3.7	2.7
Patient	11.3	12.8
Proud	8.6	7.4
Shy	12.2	11.3
Strong	6.1	3.7
Stubborn	5.5	8.2

^a Kendall's tau = .65; $z = 3.26$, $p < .0007$.

traits in the 15-word limit was again altered: the 1973 traits "unreliable," "suspicious," "poor," "ignorant," and "backward" were replaced in 1976 with "easy-going," "militant," "native," "patient," and "strong." The emergence of the new traits indicated a move away from the use of negatively oriented characteristics toward the use of traits that reflected the then-current social state of affairs and more psychologically oriented attributes. The inclusion of some new traits again supported the notion that certain social conditions may influence the ways in which groups are perceived and characterized.

Perhaps the most outstanding finding that emerged from the 1976 study was the level of overall agreement between the two groups in their selection of the 15-trait list. In fact, the high correlation of the overall ranking suggests a strong level of agreement between the two sample groups in their ranking of traits. For example, both groups converged at the low end on the ranking of the traits "defeated," "easy-going," "patient," and "shy," and at the high end on the ranking of "native" and "militant." The Indian sample ranked "faithful" much higher than did the non-Indian sample, but the ranking of this trait represented the only major point of departure between the two groups.

Table 4 lends some additional insight into the overall pattern of these studies, with its summary of the results found over the six years. Only six descriptive traits were included in all six of the 15-word lists compiled by the six different sample groups, but none of these traits were ranked consistently across the samples. For some traits, such as "shy" and "lazy," the ranking went down from "moderately descriptive" in 1970 to "least descriptive" in 1976. The ranking of the trait "defeated" also went through some interesting changes: in 1970, the Indian sample ranked "defeated" high ("more" to "most descriptive"); in 1976, the Indian sample ranked this trait low ("least descriptive"). The trait "drunkards" went through a similar, although not quite so striking, change in its ranking by the Indian samples. When treated with appropriate statistical procedures, the rankings of these six traits showed a tendency toward intergroup agreement. In 1970, there was almost no agreement (-.06); by 1973, a marginal level of agreement had emerged (.33); in 1976, both groups strongly agreed on the ranking of the six traits (.87).

TABLE 4. Ranking Changes in Descriptive Traits of American Indians^{a,b}

Traits	Study years ^c					
	1970		1973		1976	
	NI	I	NI	I	NI	I
Artistic	14.3	7.2	10.4	12.6	8.9	10.1
Defeated	12.5	2.1	4.1	13.4	14.1	14.3
Drunkards	5.5	4.4	3.9	7.8	6.8	9.1
Lazy	3.1	6.6	11.7	9.5	10.0	13.2
Mistreated	14.1	2.8	2.7	2.1	1.9	5.8
Shy	6.7	9.2	9.1	10.9	12.1	11.3

^a List includes only those traits that were consistently listed in each sample year.

^b The reader is reminded that the numbers ranking the traits varied, as did the individuals in each successive sample.

^c Numerous correlation coefficients were calculated, with the following results: 1970, NI × I = -.06; 1970 × 1973, NI × NI = -.20; 1970 × 1976, NI × NI = -.06; 1973 × 1976, NI × NI = -.33; 1973, NI × I = .33; 1970 × 1973, NI × I = .33; 1970 × 1976, NI × I = -.20; 1973 × 1976, NI × I = .47; 1976, NI × I = .87, *pp.* = .0083; 1970 × 1973, I × I = .20; 1970 × 1976, I × I = .06; 1973 × 1976, I × I = -.47. Only the 1976 NI × I yielded statistically significant results.

Agreement patterns were also obtained by comparing the rankings of the respective groups. The 1970 and 1973 Indian samples showed a little agreement (.20), although the 1970 and 1976 samples had shown almost no agreement; however, the 1973 and 1976 Indian samples showed slightly more agreement than had been found in the 1970-1973 comparison (.47). The 1970-1973, 1970-1976, and 1973-1976 non-Indian comparisons produced similar results (-.20, -.06, and .33). The 1970-1973 and 1973-1976 comparisons between the non-Indian (NI) and the Indian (I) samples also produced comparable results, along with the emergence of some interesting patterns. The 1970-1973 non-Indian and Indian samples showed moderate agreement (.33). The pattern shifted to a small negative relationship when the 1970 non-Indian sample was contrasted with the 1976 Indian sample (-.20) but increased to a moderately positive level of agreement when the 1973 non-Indian sample was contrasted with the 1976 Indian sample (.47). The fluctuations in the between-group comparisons are not statistically significant and could be chance occurrences. The directional trends of the agreement patterns, however, suggest variations in the ways in which American Indians were described by the same traits over the course of the 6-year period.

What do the results obtained from the small study mean? What implications do they have for our understanding of the ways in which American Indians are characterized by themselves and by non-Indians? What conclusions can be drawn from the results? How do these conclusions contribute to our understanding of stereotyping in general?

The results of these three sets of examples do point out that groups can change their stereotypes. More specifically, the words that individuals and groups use and prioritize to describe others—and the value that they place on these word descriptions—can change over even a short span of time. Two groups can also agree to some extent on the use of certain words to describe one of the groups. Our results showed a greater level of agreement between the two 1976 samples than between the two 1970 and 1973 samples. In addition, the 1976 samples selected less negatively slanted words than had the previous samples. The strong agreement between the 1976 samples, compared with the earlier studies, is puzzling. Certainly, the results could have been due to chance; on the other hand, it seems more likely that the commonality of agreement was due to a multi-

tude of factors operating at the time of study. In Oklahoma in 1976, the needs and issues of American Indians were very evident in the press; American Indians themselves were more expressive. Such attention and orientation may therefore have swayed the perceptions of the sample.

The 1970s were a time of rapid social change in the United States. Indeed, the civil rights movement played a major role in drawing attention to the oppressed status of America's ethnic-minority populations. For the American Indian, the 1970s were seen as a time to draw attention to past civil injustices, unfulfilled treaty responsibilities, and errant discrepancies in the federal government's mismanagement of Indian affairs. Indians also seized the occasion to remind America that they, too, were living in the twentieth century and that seemingly ageless stereotypical images would no longer be tolerated and ignored.

Yes, Indian activist groups like the American Indian Movement and the National Indian Youth Council borrowed tactics used by blacks and Chicanos. They were effective. And part of those tactics required effective and skillful use of the media. Indian activists, through the media, reminded America that the Indian was not a vanishing species, that their land and culture were not for sale, and that there was a good deal of "unfinished business" to be tended to.

Most likely, the attention that the media gave to the Indian during the 1970s contributed to the changes in stereotypes found in Oklahoma. At the time of the study, Oklahoma had the largest Indian population and the most number of different tribes of any state. And the activists recognized all too well that Indians were likely to receive a good deal of press in the state. To an extent, they were right.

Were the images found among that small sample of 1976 similar to what we would find in the 1980s? Probably. Indians now, more than ever, are pushing strongly for self-governance of tribally controlled lands and the federal government's obligations under treaty arrangements. The problems of unemployment, health, alcoholism, and educational progress still remain, despite gradual progress in all areas.

INDIANS, BLACKS, AND RACISM

Are the racist and discriminatory experiences of Indians similar to those of America's other ethnic-minority populations? How do they compare with those of blacks, the group to which much of the research literature is devoted? On the surface, the needs and problems of ethnic minorities are similar in many respects; hence, the answer to the first question above is a resounding "yes." But at another, more complex level of analysis, the problems and experiences with racism among American Indians are unique, and so, the answer must be "no." Because of the complex makeup of the Indian population in the United States, it is an oversimplification to claim that Indians and blacks share very similar problems and that racist practices are comparable simply because the alleged common enemy is the white. It may prove instructive at this point to highlight the basic differences of the two groups in terms of their relationships with the dominant American culture.

As every student of American history knows, the Indian is indigenous to the Americas. Almost from the beginning of the colonial effort, Indians and their culture were seen as threats, either to be eliminated or to be assimilated. Blacks are immigrants, not of their own choosing. They were brought to America to assist the Anglo-American to "tame the wilderness and cultivate the land"; and in certain instances, they were recruited to fight against the Indian. The settlers coveted Indian land even after it was set aside by treaty agreement with the federal government. After much of the Indian land was confiscated,

stolen, or wrenched away, especially in the mid-southern states, blacks were brought in to work it for their white overseers.

In the course of colonization and throughout the entire settlement of the West, the Anglo-Americans pushed the Indians to abandon their aboriginal ways and to become "like everyone else." Blacks, on the other hand, were invariably excluded from just about every Anglo institution and were left, in many ways, to devise their own culture. Indians, unlike blacks, historically, were always reminded that their vast cultural differences presented problems for them and the dominant culture. As a consequence, the ethnocidal practice of removing Indian youth from reservations to attend Anglo-controlled boarding schools was viewed as a convenient strategy for creating the "white-aculturated Indian." Black schools were created, yes, but not for the purpose of destroying culture; rather, they were created as a token gesture to provide blacks with the skills to manage affairs in their own communities. Strange as it may seem, Indians were historically welcomed in the educational institutions of the dominant culture—even actively recruited. On their graduation, many white school and university officials would point with pride to the effect that education had had on "taming the savage mind."

In the late 1950s, blacks consolidated their efforts to seek their rights to be free from discrimination in voting, housing, use of public facilities, employment, and the right to attend schools and colleges of their own choosing. Civil rights became the rallying point around which protests, demonstrations, and riots revolved. The civil rights legislation of that tumultuous era benefited not only blacks but every other ethnic-minority population in the United States. In a sense, blacks wanted the same rights as whites. Indians, on the other hand, were not so wanting—for the bulk of the tribal governments really wanted to retain a sovereign status within a pluralistic society and the right to exist as separate political entities. Hence, civil rights legislation posed a problem for Indians. They wanted the rights provided by legislation, and they also wanted to retain entitlements provided by treaties. In a word, Indians wanted equality, but they also wanted to remain separate tribal entities.

The basic civil rights issue for Indians centers on a maintenance of cultural independence attainable only through preservation of the reservation land use. Provided by treaties with the United States, the more than 200 reservation and land-settlement areas make an ideal setting for promoting tradition and customs and maintaining tribal identity. Today, more than ever in the history of the United States, the reservation is home, a retreat and haven away from the world of the dominant culture. With some exceptions, the tribes govern in a manner consistent with tradition. Tribal members abide by tribal law first. Residents are free to practice ceremonials, to speak distinct languages, and to follow a life-style free of the strictures of a paternalistic government. So distinct is the status of the Indian that, in 1973, a separate Division of Civil Rights was established by the U.S. Department of Justice to handle Indian civil rights.

So as Indians demand their civil rights, "there is the danger that their separate tribal rights may be overlooked in the process" (*Indian Tribes*, 1981, p. 39). The rights of sovereignty and independent self-government are viewed as far more sacred and meaningful than having a full slate of rights as outlined in the civil rights legislation. Indians see the legislation as assimilationist propaganda and are quite reluctant to accept the standards and conditions that come with full acceptance. Thus, in the main, Indians are more in favor of a separate-but-equal status than they are of total desegregation: Indians essentially want the same rights as all citizens of the United States, but at the same time, they do not aspire to adopt and internalize the ways of the dominant society. The land base and their unique status afford them that right and that choice.

Indians have suffered discriminatory and racist practices similar to those suffered by blacks. However, blacks never signed treaties with the United States and, as a conse-

quence, must deal with the government and the dominant culture in a different way. Furthermore, blacks were never allocated separate land bases, nor were they subjected to the multitude of unique hardships and oppressive acts carried out against the indigenous peoples of the Americas. Anthropologist Luis Kemnitzer remarked:

No other group of people have the heritage of conquest and theft of homeland, of treatments as savages and sub-humans, of decimation of kin by disease, military action, of dissolution of sacred institutions, of demoralization and dehumanization as Native Americans have. . . . No other group of people are so imbued with a need for individual autonomy and privacy and all this means as Indians are. (1978, pp. 15-16)

The federal government is ambivalent toward the Indian in a way that it is not toward blacks. The ambivalence stems from the failure of past efforts to meet the needs of Indians; inherited guilt from past failures, including illegal land claims, genocide, ethnocide, and the prolonged impoverished of Indian communities; and the increasing pressure from congressional and industrial representatives to terminate federal responsibilities and abrogate treaty obligations.

In spite of all the failures, the American Indians, this country's indigenous population of 1.5 million, perseveres. Perhaps the strength to survive is embedded in an identification with one's tribal heritage. The strength of that identification is most likely a source of psychological survival that transcends all other forms of intervention (Trimble, 1986).

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter, we have examined a number of factors that have fed racist and prejudicial practices toward American Indians. We opened our discussion by pointing out how early historical images shaped federal government policy. Early settlers and colonialists viewed the Indians as primitive children but nonetheless wise in their knowledge of the ecology and subtlety of the "new world." Thus, early on, most settlers promoted a policy of accommodation. That policy changed to one of extermination and subsequently isolation as the presence of the Indian was seen as a threat to colonial settlement and westward migration. In time, the policy of isolation was intensified, eventually resulting in the present-day policies of assimilation and termination. All the while, the prevailing image of the Indian as a dependent, helpless child has prevailed.

Over the course of time, numerous words have been coined to characterize and describe the American Indian. Most appear to have negative implications; many are false and inaccurate. Many textbook writers, particularly, have contributed to the perpetuation of false images by portraying the history of American Indians inaccurately. Often, these writers have used words that are offensive and degrading to Indians and non-Indians alike. Some journalists, news photographers, and political cartoonists continue to bias their material with portrayals of Indians reminiscent of a century or so ago. The film industry has done the same. These portrayals not only lack historical authenticity but neglect the positive cultural aspects of contemporary American Indians. The themes are far from flattering and serve to feed a seemingly unyielding public, a public that thrives on seeing the American Indian only in the context of the past.

In more subtle ways, research on the American Indian lends credence to a few negative beliefs about Indians. Researchers and practitioners are eager to find explanations and solutions for deviant behaviors such as alcoholism and suicide, but the continued discussion of alarming rates of abuse subtly feeds the public image of the Indian as a "drunkard" and "suicidal." Very little attention is given to those Indians who abstain from drinking, or to those who have maintained sobriety after a bout with alcohol.

Similarly, little attention has been paid to Indians who have earned professional degrees or who have made significant contributions in their respective fields. The negative and deviant themes of much social science research on the American Indian should be balanced with efforts that recognize and identify the inherent strengths of Indians.

With some degree of assurance, we can say that the prevalent image is not truly representative of the way many, if not most, Indians think of themselves. Indians tend to recognize that the stereotypical image is not complimentary. Yet, despite the inaccurate nature of most of the unflattering imagery, it still persists. Once, these stereotypes might have had a functional value. Enough evidence exists today to suggest that many of these stereotypical images are mythical and archaic and are thus no longer functional.

We can continue to moralize and attempt to understand why archaic and inaccurate images persist. Such moralizing may lead to change, but in the interim, it does little to foster an appreciation of cultural diversity or to promote positive intergroup relations. A more practical approach is to pursue an understanding of the functional nature of stereotypes and to emphasize the use of those stereotypes that enhance group solidarity and foster an appreciation of cultural diversity. This seems to be a modest request.

REFERENCES

- Ablon, J. (1971). Cultural conflict in urban Indians. *Mental Hygiene*, 55, 199-205.
- Anders, G. C. (1980). Theories of underdevelopment and the American Indian. *Journal of Economic Issues*, 14(3), 681-701.
- An Indian lives in the city. (1971, June 14). *Newsweek*, pp. 94-102.
- Bahr, H. M., Chadwick, B. A., & Struass, J. H. (1972). Discrimination against urban Indians in Seattle. *The Indian Historian*, 5, 4-11.
- Beaman, K. (1969, September 12). American Indians are still called "filthy savages." *New York Times Educational Supplement*, 2834, 20.
- Berkhofer, R. F. (1978). *The white man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the present*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Braroe, N. W. (1965). Reciprocal exploitation in an Indian-White community. *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology*, 21, 166-178.
- Costo, R. (Eds.). (1970). *Textbooks and the American Indian*. San Francisco, California: Indian Historian Press.
- Cox, O. (1948). *Caste, class, and race*. New York: Monthly Review Press.
- Deloria, V. (1969). *Custer died for your sins*. New York: Avon.
- Feagin, J. R. (1978). *Racial and ethnic minorities*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Ferguson, F. N. (1968). Navajo drinking: Some tentative hypotheses. *Human Organization*, 27, 159-167.
- Hagen, E. E. (1962). *On the theory of social change*. Homewood, IL: Dorsey Press.
- Hraba, J. (1979). *American ethnicity*. Itasca, IL: Peacock.
- Indian tribes: A continuing quest for survival. (1981). A report of the United States Commission on Civil Rights. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.
- James, B. J. (1961). Sociological-psychological dimensions of Ojibwa acculturation. *American Anthropologist*, 63(4), 721-746.
- Katz, D., & Braly, K. W. (1933). Racial stereotypes of 100 college students. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 28, 280-290.
- Kelso, D. R., & Attneave, C. L. (Eds.). (1981). *Bibliography of North American Indian mental health*. Westport, CN: Greenwood Press.
- Kennitzer, L. S. (1978). Native Americans. In K. V. Chandras (Ed.), *Racial discrimination against neither white nor black American minorities*. San Francisco: R & E Associates.
- Lemert, E. M. (1958). The use of alcohol in three Salish Indian tribes. *Quarterly Review of Studies on Alcohol*, 19, 90-107.
- Lurie, N. O. (1971). The world's oldest on-going protest demonstration: North American Indian drinking patterns. *Pacific Historical Review*, 40, 311-332.
- MacGregor, G. (1946). *Warriors without weapons*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Mail, P. D., & McDonald, D. R. (Eds.). (1980). *Tulapai to Tokay*. New Haven, CN: HRAF Press.

- Marx, G. T. (1970). Civil disorders and agents of social control. *Journal of Social Issues*, 26(1), 19-57.
- May, P. A., & Dizmang, L. H. (1974). Suicide and the American Indian. *Psychiatric Annals*, 4(9), 22-28.
- McNickle, D. (1973). *Native American tribalism: Indian survivals and renewals*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Miller, S. I., & Schoenfeld, L. S. (1971). Suicide attempt patterns among the Navajo Indians. *International Journal of Social Psychiatry*, 17(3), 189-193.
- Myrdal, G. (1944). *An American dilemma: The Negro problem and modern democracy*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Sherif, M. (1969). *Social psychology*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Shore, J. H. (1975). American Indian suicide—fact and fantasy. *Psychiatry*, 38, 86-91.
- Steiner, S. (1976). *The vanishing white man*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Svensson, F. (1973). *The ethnics in American politics: American Indians*. Minneapolis, Burgess.
- Trimble, J. E. (1972). *An index of the social indicators of the American Indian in Oklahoma*. Oklahoma City: Oklahoma Indian Affairs Commission, Oklahoma Office of Community Affairs and Planning.
- Trimble, J. E. (1986). American Indians and interethnic conflict: A theoretical and historical overview. In J. Boucher, D. Landis, & K. Arnold (Eds.), *Interethnic conflict: Myth and reality*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Troy, A. (1975). The Indian in adolescent novels. *The Indian Historian*, 8(4), 32-35.
- U.S. Senate. (1968-1969). Hearings before the Subcommittee on Indian Education of the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, Parts 1-5, 90th Congress. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.
- Vigneras, L. A. (1960). *The journal of Christopher Columbus* (C. Jane, trans. rev.). London: Hakluyt Society.
- Waddell, J. O. (1975). For individual power and social credit: The use of alcohol among Tucson Papagos. *Human Organization*, 34, 9-15.
- Wax, M. (1971). *Indian Americans: Unity and diversity*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Wax, R. H., & Thomas, R. K. (1961). American Indians and white people. *Phylon*, 22(4), 305-317.
- Westermeyer, J. J. (1972). Chippewa and majority alcoholism in the Twin Cities: A comparison. *Journal of Nervous and Mental Diseases*, 155, 327-322.
- Westermeyer, J. J. (1974). The drunken Indian—myths and realities. *Psychiatric Annual*, 4, 29-36.