NewsWatch
Covering Indian Country

COVER PHOTO: STEPHEN NOWERS

Editor's Note
By Dara Williams

When was the last time you saw an American Indian quoted in the mainstream U.S. news when the story wasn't specifically about American Indians? … There has been discussion after discussion about bettering the coverage of Indian Country. Now is the time to do something about it.

Why media should report on Native issues
By Jodi Rave

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It shouldn't be a crime to have a successful casino
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Editor's Note

In one of comedian Chris Rock's stand-up routines, he jokes about different ethnic groups complaining about being the target of racism. Then, he admonishes people for complaining at all. Rock says: "Nobody got it worse than the American Indians. … Indians got it bad. Indians got it the worst. You know how bad the Indians got it? … When was the last time you met two Indians? You ain't never met two Indians. … I have seen a polar bear ride a … tricycle in my lifetime. I have never seen an Indian family just chillin' out at Red Lobster."

I laughed the first time I heard this joke. But then I started thinking about it.

While I don't like to compare which group is the "most oppressed," and I know American Indians eat out at restaurants, I understand what Rock is saying.

When was the last time you saw an American Indian quoted in the mainstream U.S. news when the story wasn't specifically about American Indians? Did you hear much from American Indians about their reaction to the World Trade Center and Pentagon attacks? What about their Sept. 11 fund raising that brought in about $3 million for victims, their blood drives and their patriotism?

News Watch did a survey of the newspaper photo coverage for two weeks after the Sept. 11 attacks. An American Indian could not be identified in any of the 2,581 faces we examined.

We chose the topic "Covering Indian Country" for News Watch's inaugural online Special Report because we recognized that images of American Indians in the mainstream

news media are far and few between. There has been discussion after discussion about bettering the coverage of Indian Country. Now is the time to do something about it.

Mark N. Trahant, a member of the Shoshone-Bannock Tribe of Idaho, and president and CEO of the Robert C. Maynard Institute for Journalism Education, said in one of his essays: "The media has, for its own purposes, created a false image of the Native American. Too many of us have patterned ourselves after that image. It is time now that we project our own image and stop being what we never really were."

But it's not only up to American Indians. As journalists, we have a responsibility to our viewers and readers to report the truth, and report on all segments of the country -- fairly and accurately. If we want to correct the misconceptions brought about by stereotypes, then we must start covering American Indians at times other than mascot or casino controversies. We must start including American Indians in everyday coverage. We must start now with deeper exploration of Indian nations.

What are you waiting for? A multi-billion dollar, Enron-like scandal? You've got it. The U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs is being sued for misappropriating and mismanaging billions of dollars from the Indian Trust funds. Yet, where is the coverage? Where are the investigative pieces?

In this Special Report: Covering Indian Country, you will find the tools needed to get started today.

Dara Williams
Director, News Watch

posted May 8, 2002

NewsWatch
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Why media should report on Native issues

By **Jodi Rave**

One must ask: If the government had mismanaged billions of dollars belonging to white landowners for more than 100 years, would the media have ignored it?

The answer: It never would have happened in the first place.

Yet the news industry has turned a blind eye to the U.S. Interior Department and its Bureau of Indian Affairs, which have been mismanaging more than $10 billion in trust fund money from more than 300,000 Natives for more than a century.

What's worse, it's not like anyone didn't know this problem existed. But it's one that's been allowed to continue -- a problem that affects some of the poorest people in the country.

Herein lies one of the greatest media travesties this past century: a failure to report on Native people, one of the most politically vulnerable racial groups in America.

As Native people, our expectations are not unlike any other reader.

We need news that authenticates our existence, explains the world around us, and protects us from injustice.

As we begin a new century, newspapers need to make a dramatic shift in news coverage and begin reporting on Native people for three primary reasons:

First, by putting Native people in the news, newspapers prove we exist. For too long, we've been relegated to the pantheon of Old West relics.

Second, newspapers can help educate those who make decisions affecting our lives.

And third, their watchdog role should include the government's treatment of tribes because the government is the federal trustee, a guardian, of tribes dating back to a 171-year-old Supreme Court decision. The trust fund debacle demonstrates how the mainstream media has long failed Native communities.

"Thank God for Indian newspapers," said Charmaine White Face, an Oglala Lakota from western South Dakota.

Native newspapers, however, don't have the mass circulation needed to affect public opinion, nor do they always reach the decision-makers who direct federal policies -- the laws that protect the political and cultural autonomy of tribes.

"We have to live by federal policy," said White Face. "Federal policy can only be changed if people are informed. They need to be informed of all the sides."

That includes both Natives and non-Natives.

Unfortunately, small numbers make indigenous people easy to forget -- unless we own a casino -- because we represent only 1 percent of the U.S. population. Those numbers make it difficult to wield control, money and clout in the political arena where our lives are often subject to the whimsy of state and federal courts, politicians and lawmakers.

Covering tribes requires inquisitive thinkers, people willing to look at the bigger picture. That's because a complex body of law derived from the U.S. Constitution, treaties, statutes and court decisions help dictate the unique status of tribes, the only racial group in America who has a distinct political relationship with the government.

It's a relationship that allows Native nations the right to operate tribal governments, to have court systems and constitutions, to create jurisdictions and taxes -- to name just a few rights. These are not special rights. These are sovereign rights that have arisen through scores of landmark treaties with the U.S. government.

While the news media needs to revamp their breadth of reporting on Native issues, it needs to make equal adjustments in bringing more Native perspectives into the newsroom. That's because reporters write about who and what they know.

Although Native Americans comprise 1 percent of the U.S. population, the American Society of Newspaper Editors found that Native Americans made up only .56 percent of daily newspaper newsroom staffs this year, and .44 percent in 2001. A similar study by the Radio Television News Directors Foundation found that Native Americans make up .6 percent of broadcast newsrooms in 2001, and less than 1 percent in 2000.

If newsrooms across the country had been staffed by Native reporters this past century, they would have known about the tribal elder who received oil and gas royalty payments one month but not the next. They would have known about the widow who had thousands of dollars in her trust fund one day, only to have it disappear the next.

Instead, the news wasn't reported.

No one was held accountable and the government abuses continued. If the media had been paying attention, the trust fund problem likely would have been solved decades ago.

It seems clear: If you aren't reported on, your world doesn't exist.

Jodi Rave Lee is a 2002 Columbia University honoree for "excellent reporting on race and ethnicity." She reports on Native issues for Lee Newspapers and is also a member of the News Watch Advisory Council. She can be reached at (402) 473-7240 or jrave@journalstar.com.

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It shouldn't be a crime to have a successful casino

By **Jodi Rave**

For as much as I feel it's important the mainstream press report on Native issues, plenty of bad stories exist to make me wish they didn't.

Case in point: A good many editors and reporters have been slow to understand tribal sovereignty, allowing warped perspectives to often color the stories they write. It's a reality seen in a number of papers, one that recently hit home the last time I was in Albuquerque, N.M.

When traveling I always buy the local paper. It was under these circumstances I came across a front-page story in the March 3 Sunday Journal. It was an investigative piece that turned out to be a 100-inch story about nothing, but one disturbing all the same.

It was a story laced with double standards, a story that said what works for "us" shouldn't be allowed to work for "them." It all began with an innocuous headline: "City Legislator Nurtures Pueblo Ties."

Upon first glance, it seemed reassuring to see a newspaper examine a positive relationship between a state leader and a local tribal government.

Yet Journal editor Kent Walz insisted this "was not a Native American story."

By the reporter's account, however, they were what made the story significant.

"I think Indian gaming has been a hot topic in recent years since we have so many pueblos opening casinos," said Colleen Heild. "This pueblo also contributed heavily in the past to elected officials."

And that was the real issue behind a story that ended up being a condemnation about a state representative's ties to the Santa Ana Pueblo.

"I felt the story was fair and accurate," said Walz. "I think it's a newspaper's job to look at conduct of elected officials. Sometimes they're upset when people hold them accountable for what they do."

I don't know Rep. Joe Mohorovic "the legislator in question," nor do I know anyone from the Santa Ana Pueblo or anyone from the Journal. But the story left me upset for all of them.

The legislator's crime seems to lie in the fact that he requested money for a road that led to a soccer field on the Santa Ana Pueblo Reservation. The state tournament field is 20 miles from his district and used by soccer players who live in his county.

Mohorovic's other crime? Five years ago he accepted a $4,000 campaign contribution from the Santa Ana Pueblo. The second biggest donor, the National Republican Congressional Committee handed over three times as much with $12,500.

Through the haze of this misguided story, one image emerges.

The Santa Ana Pueblo's crime seems to lie in its success -- its casino success.

Even though Walz said this wasn't a story about Native people, their presence dominated the story paragraph after paragraph, beginning with the headline.

And every photo alluded to Natives. The front-page picture showed the Santa Ana Casino, conspicuously snapped while the casino billboard flashed "Call on gamblers anonymous."

Inside the paper, a graphic and photo brought further attention to the tribe's business success, including mention of Santa Ana Star Casino's $60 million expansion and the recent unveiling of

an $80 million Hyatt Regency resort, spa and golf course.

The message the paper seems to be sending is that any legislator who makes an effort to help a casino-successful tribe doesn't deserve to be in office.

The diatribe against Mohorovic began in the third paragraph of its story: "The Albuquerque Republican also has sided with Indian positions on gaming compacts and a proposal last year to return millions in gaming revenue-sharing payments to the tribes."

Apparently this was anathema to the Journal.

According to the reporter -- described by Mohorovic as "the Geraldo Rivera of New Mexico" -- the pueblo received little money from the state for capital improvement this past decade. By the end of 2000, however, the pueblo had been granted $1 million to help build an educational complex.

So what? Is this really such a bad thing? By the Journal's account, they don't deserve anything.

While the Santa Ana Pueblo has been the recipient of scant capital improvement money this past decade, it is among the 11 pueblos whose casino profits require them to give much more than they receive.

In 1998, reservation casinos allowed the New Mexico state economy to benefit by adding 11,265 jobs, $226 million in wage and salary income, and $64.7 million in state tax revenue for goods and services. In addition, the pueblos also hand over 8 percent in a forced revenue-sharing agreement with the state.

The Journal story isn't a stand-alone example of bad reporting on Native issues, it's an ongoing one. The paper's staunch anti-gambling editorial position seems to bleed into its news coverage.

Consequently, they've alienated many Native people who make up 9.5 percent of the state's population.

"I don't read their newspaper anymore," said Gil Vigil, secretary-treasurer of the All Indian Pueblo Council. "Their coverage of stories isn't fair. They never write positive about Indian issues.

They always write negative."

Said Roy Montoya, Santa Ana Pueblo tribal administration officer: "I've lived here all my life. That story is typical. I usually disregard them as stories typical of the Journal."

Those types of complaints from Native readers are common particularly when it comes to tribal casinos in New Mexico.

Journal managers defend their work.

"We've written stories about what Native communities say it (gambling) has brought to them," said Walz. "We cover a lot more things than gaming."

Managing Editor Karen Moses said the paper has provided more coverage to Native issues than in years past, and admits the paper has had "bad news stories lately involving Native Americans," but she said the paper tries to represent both sides.

Montoya of the Santa Ana Pueblo concedes that the Journal has tried to understand tribal issues and they're not the only ones struggling to learn.

"It's not just the media," said Montoya. "We have big companies and small that don't understand Indian tribal governments."

A lot of education needs to occur, he said.

Perhaps the Journal, an independent newspaper, is experiencing some growing pains when it comes to reporting on tribal casinos -- a new phenomenon that arose in New Mexico in the early 1990s.

Since then, the tribes are certainly exercising an unprecedented clout never seen before, not only in New Mexico but across the country.

Meanwhile, the paper needs to realize that tribes are now playing the white man's game when it comes to taking advantage of state money for capital improvements and contributing to political campaigns.

"That's the stuff we didn't know before," said Montoya. "The whole gaming element has forced the tribes and states to start interacting with one another. We've learned a lot about how the whole New Mexico government works.

"It's their system," he said. "We learned their system. We are operating within their system."

Jodi Rave Lee is a 2002 Columbia University honoree for "excellent reporting on race and ethnicity." She reports on Native issues for Lee Newspapers and is also a member of the News Watch Advisory Council. She can be reached at (402) 473-7240 or jrave@journalstar.com.

To reach the Albuquerque Journal, www.abqjournal.com/archives. May require registration.

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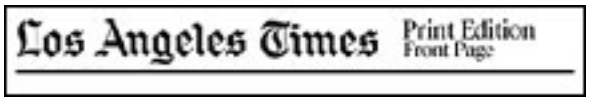
Taking A Closer Look

News Watch chose two stories about Native Americans that were published last year in different newspapers. The stories were picked for their subject matter only and were written by staff writers. The stories were chosen irrespective of length and in which publication they appeared. One story examines an on-going mascot controversy and another is about water rights. The critique was conducted by Paula Peters, a member of Mashpee Wampanoag who is also the Native American Journalists Association's representative on the News Watch Advisory Council. Peters is a features writer for the *Cape Cod Times.* Her comments have been inserted into the text of the stories.



Chicago Sun-Times

Published: Feb. 28, 2001, in the late Sports final edition
Headline: Faculty targets 'Chief'; Illiniwek foes might discourage recruits
Byline: Herb Gould

Los Angeles Times

Published: July 8, 2001, Sunday Home Edition
Headline: Indian Claims to Water Divide Tribal Groups; Owens Valley: A 1939 land swap at three sites gave control to the DWP. Efforts to negotiate a new agreement have fallen apart amid feuding.
Byline: Bettina Boxall

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NewsWatch
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Chicago Sun Times Critique

Overall: *This story by Herb Gould appears to treat the issue fairly within the context of the school. However, it fails to state, from a native perspective, what is offensive about the use of native symbols and team names.*
-- Paula Peters

Chicago Sun-Times
Published: Feb. 28, 2001, in the late Sports final edition
Headline: Faculty targets 'Chief'; Illiniwek foes might discourage recruits
Byline: Herb Gould
The fight over Chief Illiniwek could get uglier next week.

A University of Illinois faculty group is considering a campaign that would target athletes and discourage them from attending the school unless the controversial symbol is removed.

The lede does a good job of validating the issue by calling Chief Illiniwek a "controversial symbol"

"That's part of what's under discussion now," professor Stephen Kaufman said Tuesday.

Kaufman, a professor of cell and structural biology, said the group's plan to escalate the fight against the Chief will be revealed at a news conference Monday.

"How we will we go about trying to influence student-athletes is going to be multifaceted," said Kaufman, part of a faculty group that is working in cooperation with the National Coalition

Against Racism in Sports and Media.

Kaufman is a biology professor so linking him with the national group is good and lends him some credibility, but that could be strengthened here with a native voice explaining why it is important to restore native dignity on playing fields.

Illinois basketball coach Bill Self and football coach Ron Turner, who have tried to walk an increasingly thin line in the Chief debate, said they hoped faculty members wouldn't discourage recruits.

"Having only been here for six or eight months, I'm not as up on this situation as other people," Self said. "I haven't taken a stance on it. But I would be very disappointed if anybody that works at our university would try to discourage students from coming to school here, whether they are student-athletes or not.

This would be a good place for Gould to press the coach. Instead he allows Self to shift the focus to question Kaufman's loyalty to the school without offering an opinion on the issue at hand.

"We have a tremendous university here, with a great tradition. It would be especially disturbing to me if anybody would say negative things about our pro-gram that are unfounded because they have nothing to do with what's going on inside the basketball program."

Turner also was caught off guard by the possibility that faculty members might be working against him.

"Obviously, that's not something we would want," Turner said. "There are other ways to go about trying to get something done."

Does Turner have any suggestions of ways to get the issue fair treatment?

Turner said he hasn't noticed the apparently growing faculty unrest about the Chief while going about his job.

"It is a difficult issue," Turner said. "But the majority of the faculty and staff at this university have been very supportive of what we're doing with our student-athletes. I really appreciate the support they have given us."

> *I'm confused by the graph above, and its relationship to the one below. Turner seems to be claiming support that is contradicted by the faculty/ student senate vote in 98. The graph below would have been stronger if used higher in the story.*

The Faculty/Student Senate voted 97-29 on March 9, 1998, to recommend that Chief Illiniwek be retired. A petition signed by more than 800 faculty members urges that the university stop using a race-based symbol, Kaufman said.

The university recently rejected an offer by the U.S. Justice Department to mediate the dispute, saying there is nothing to mediate yet because its trustees are studying the issue.

> *This is good information to include in the story. I would like to know the status of the trustees study and if there is really any action being taken. This is a typical avoidance response by an administration and reporters often either run out of time, or make the mistake of buying it and stopping there.*

"The faculty are so much in favor of ending this," Kaufman said. "They go around the world and they're the subject of ridicule. They would all welcome (dropping the Chief), and so would the upper administration here. All this has been incredibly bad public relations for the University of Illinois.

"We will all move on ahead. We will have a new symbol and mascot for our sports teams that's appropriate for all people to rally around."

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Los Angeles Times Critique

Overall: *This piece by Bettina Boxall mocks the Indian claim from the lede and treats the tribes as if they have created the problem in a vacuum. Boxall fails to lend any credibility to the tribe's understanding of the land/water swap and regardless of how bad a deal it appears to be. She also fails to get to the heart of the matter for the Natives. How are the tribes affected by the restrictions on their water? Will they be able to support the projected growth and tribal economic development to support that growth? Are we talking about sovereign nations here?*

-- Paula Peters

Los Angeles Times
Published: July 8, 2001, Sunday Home Edition
Headline: Indian Claims to Water Divide Tribal Groups; Owens Valley: A 1939 land swap at three sites gave control to the DWP. Efforts to negotiate a new agreement have fallen apart amid feuding.
Byline: Bettina Boxall
BISHOP, Calif. -- Some things never seem to change in the Owens Valley. The wind, the giant leap of the Eastern Sierra peaks, the water feuds.

Boxall begins by showing her bias against the tribes. She is belittling the issue as a tired old one that does not deserve to be revisited.

More than half a century after Los Angeles locked up the rights to every trickle of water it could squeeze from the valley 250 miles away, a handful of Paiute tribal groups insist some of that

water belongs to them.

Here again the writer attempts to diminish the importance of the claim by using the term, "handful." This makes me wonder, are there a majority of tribal groups who are satisfied with the water distribution?

Years of off-and-on talks with the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power have yet to settle the matter, which has divided the Paiute community, prompted threats of litigation and given rise to appeals for more reservation land. It is all rooted in a 1930s deal intended to solve what government officials then termed "the Owens Valley Indian problem."

As a native person, I would question the fairness of any deal struck prior to the Civil Rights Movement intended to solve and "Indian problem." It was a period in American history when it was still very unpopular to be a native, many native people were uneducated and living in poverty and could be easily manipulated to give up land and rights that were not in their best interest.

As Los Angeles took over more and more of the valley in the early 1900s, roughly 2,000 Indians were left living on scattered federal tracts. As the DWP bought up ranches to control their water rights, Indian jobs disappeared. The answer, according to a 1937 report to the water and power board, was a plan "that would enable the Owens Valley Indians to be relocated upon good agricultural lands near or adjacent to the towns and main highways in order to provide them with a permanent method for success in the future." Three reservations were created at Bishop, Lone Pine and Big Pine with land the DWP gave the federal government in exchange for 2,913 federal acres on which the Indians had been living in outlying areas.

This sounds like a deal that was struck between the county and the federal government. I would be interested to know what role the tribes played in the negotiations.

But under the 1939 land swap, water rights were excluded, leaving the DWP with control over water rights on the new reservations and the federal government with rights on what became DWP property. More than 60 years later the reason is unclear. The tribes say it was understood that the water rights would later be exchanged, but that never happened because the city could not legally relinquish its rights without the approval of municipal voters.

> *Boxall details a plan for water rights distribution that leaves the tribes out completely, then calls the reasoning "unclear" as tribes challenge the raw deal 60 years later.*

Peter Kavounas, a legal and environmental manager for the DWP, says he is not aware of any plan to exchange the rights. Rather, based on some federal shares in a canal company the city had taken over, the DWP agreed to deliver a certain amount of water to the three reservations forever at no cost.

> *Government officials have been denying the validity of treaty agreements for centuries. A problem inherent in many of these agreements is tribal trust in verbal agreements. We are a people whose history is based in oral tradition with a great deal of honor placed on those who keep their word. This is a trait that made tribes vulnerable to deceit.*

The water, some of it pumped from beneath the reservations and some flowing from DWP lines, was delivered. The rights issue lay dormant for decades. Then in the early 1990s, tribal leaders say, an environmental document concluded that the Owens Valley Indians held no water rights. Some tribal members with long memories said "Oh yes, we do."

> *Who is responsible for the environmental document? What are the conclusions based on? Boxall is clearly giving the "document" more credibility than the long memories of native people.*

So started an effort to assert the water rights, not just by the Lone Pine, Big Pine and Bishop reservations, but also by tribal groups at Independence and Benton, a tiny community near the Nevada border. "We want a settlement that addresses the fact that Los Angeles has been using our water for decades," said Rachel Joseph, chairwoman of the Lone Pine reservation. "We have to have additional water." More than 2,000 people live on the Big Pine, Lone Pine and Bishop reservations, which together cover 1,391 acres. Tribal leaders say they need more water for development and in some cases to replenish the ground water table. They also want more acreage, saying the land swap was unfair because the DWP got more than twice the area from the federal government than it turned over to the reservations.

The Native issues and dispute is finally described in the above graphs, but this story needed a Native voice much higher in the story to give their grievance any credibility.

The acreage disparity was no secret when tribes approved the land exchange.

The explanation at the time was that the new reservation land was better situated and more suited to agriculture than the parcels the Indians were leaving.

Again, I wonder how the tribal approval was achieved and what the tribal leaders really understood they were giving up or gaining in 1939?

But the tribal groups, which are interested in expanding their reservations, have hired a consultant to evaluate the old tracts. "We have pretty solid evidence that a lot of those lands were capable of being farmed," said Albuquerque attorney Jim Cooney, who with colleague Susan Williams is representing the tribes. "We think L.A. got lands of much more value than the tribes got."

This is a nice graph supporting the tribal claims.

No lawsuits have been filed in the matter, but they have not

been ruled out. Four years ago negotiations yielded a proposed agreement calling for the DWP to give the Indians another 4,350 acre-feet of water a year -- enough to supply twice that many households. No land was included in the settlement, although the DWP appears willing to at least discuss land issues.

The tone set by this graph implies it is the DWP that is being reasonable because they are "at least" willing to discuss land issues.

The water agreement fell apart, however, when several of the tribes failed to ratify it and tribal feuding erupted.

It would not surprise me in the slightest to discover that negotiations pit tribe against tribe to compete for land and water. Divide and conquer is not a new concept for the government when dealing with Native issues.

The Benton and Ft. Independence bands, which have small reservations established early in the last century, have claimed a share in the disputed water rights because they say the 1939 land swap was made for the general benefit of Owens Valley Indians. Lone Pine and Bishop sharply disagree, insisting that the rights belong only to them and Big Pine. "It is our water," said Monty Bengochia, chair of the Bishop tribe. "If you can prove membership [in our groups], you have title to the water." The dispute has become personal. Joseph Saulque, vice chairman of the Benton tribe, says he and his sister Rose Marie Saulque have been officially banned from the Bishop reservation. When Ft. Independence and Benton representatives showed up for talks with the DWP more than a year ago, Saulque says, the other three tribes refused to sit down with them in the same meeting room. But Saulque is not giving up. He says he will go to federal court if necessary to fight for his group's share in any water deal.

This illustrates the dispute between the tribes' leadership, but what are they fighting for. How has the water rights issue effected the people? Are there water shortages? Limitations on growth that

might prevent tribal members from living and working on their own reservations?

The DWP, meanwhile, has thrown up its hands. "We're just kind of standing back and waiting for them to sort out their difficulties," said Gene Coufal, the DWP's aqueduct manager in Bishop. "We need to be dealing with them as a whole."

Demanding three separate tribes and reservations think as one is like asking the Palestinians and the Israelis to have a picnic on the West Bank and agree on the menu. They have divided the groups by offering different and competitive settlements and now have chosen to wait for the dust to settle.

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Getting the Nod

Indian nations receiving federal recognition is not just about casinos

By **Dara Williams**

Federal rules detailing what it takes for American Indians to become a federally recognized tribe say that, after the petition package is completed, the U.S. government will take about two years to make a decision.

It's part of the guidelines that many Indian nations say is laughable.

More than two decades after the Cowlitz nation in Washington first began the acknowledgment process, the U.S. government finally gave the tribe the nod in January.

"It's cumbersome, long and costly," said John Barnett, Cowlitz chairman for 21 years. "I'm glad that our people had enough gumption to stick through it the whole 23 years. Some didn't make it. It's sad they never got to see the day that the federal government acknowledged the Cowlitz tribe."

The experience of the Cowlitz nation is common.

Over the years, the federal recognition process rules have changed, forcing some tribes to, in essence, restart the process. Additionally, some criteria are vague, allowing for some tribes to present their case in a few pages while others have cases that are hundreds of pages long.

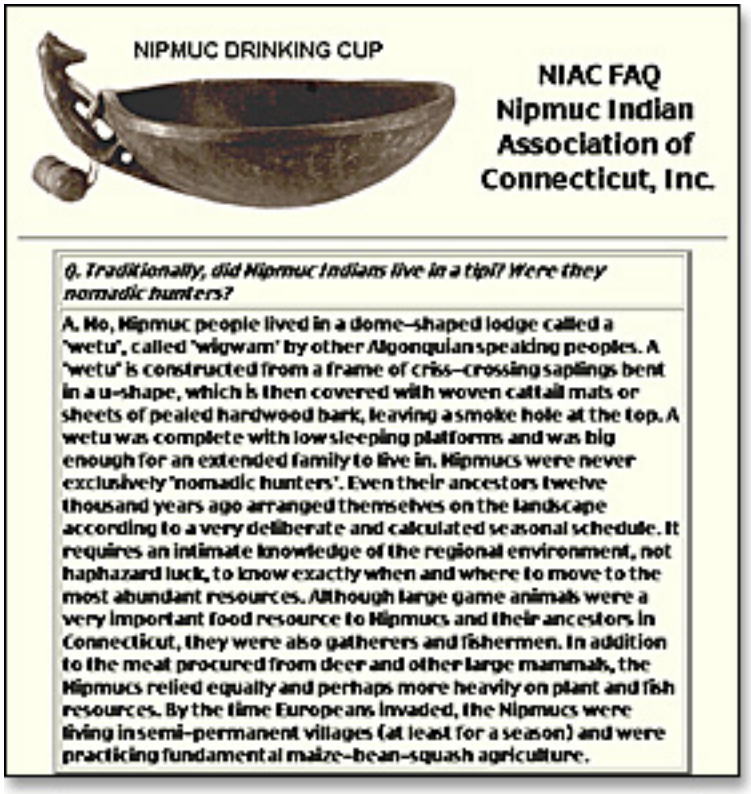
Gaining federal recognition is important because Indian nations become eligible for money from the Indian Trust Account and have a formal government-to-government relationship with the United States.

But the process is replete with such problems that, according to a General Accounting Office report (DOWNLOAD THE REPORT 14.1mb), "the end result could be that the resolution of tribal recognition cases will have less to do with the attributes and qualities of a group as an independent political entity deserving of a government-to-government relationship with the United States and more to do with the resources that petitioners and third parties can marshal to develop a successful political and legal strategy."

As of spring 2002, there are 559 federally recognized tribes. With nearly 200 more with petitions pending, it is an issue that will keep coming up in mainstream news, and an issue that journalists need to be better prepared to report on.

News Watch contacted some tribal leaders to get their views on mainstream coverage of federal recognition and problems they see with coverage. Read what they're saying and take heed when covering sovereignty issues.

Bert Heath, business manager of the Chaubunagungamaug Band of Nipmuc in Massachusetts. Chaubunagungamaug began seeking federal recognition in 1980.



"The material that the reporters put out there, they don't necessarily have the behind the scenes facts. It's almost like it's a one-sided type thing. But they don't have the complete, clear picture. They have only the one picture, in that federal recognition means one thing: a casino.

"And if you understood the process that anybody had to go through to accomplish this, they know they don't go hand in hand. You don't get federal recognition tomorrow and 40 days from now you walk into a casino. …

"I found that the local newspapers in this town, have gone on and befriended someone that is working within the tribe and got to know that person both on a personal level and business level. I can name three (reporters) who I work with. … If you really spend the time to get to know the indigenous people, and build your trust with them, it's going to be a mutual, two-way street for both parties.

"When I started working with reporters more closely on federal recognition, you got more than just a one-sided view. They included the whole criteria that was involved not just the outsider's view but the insider's view. …

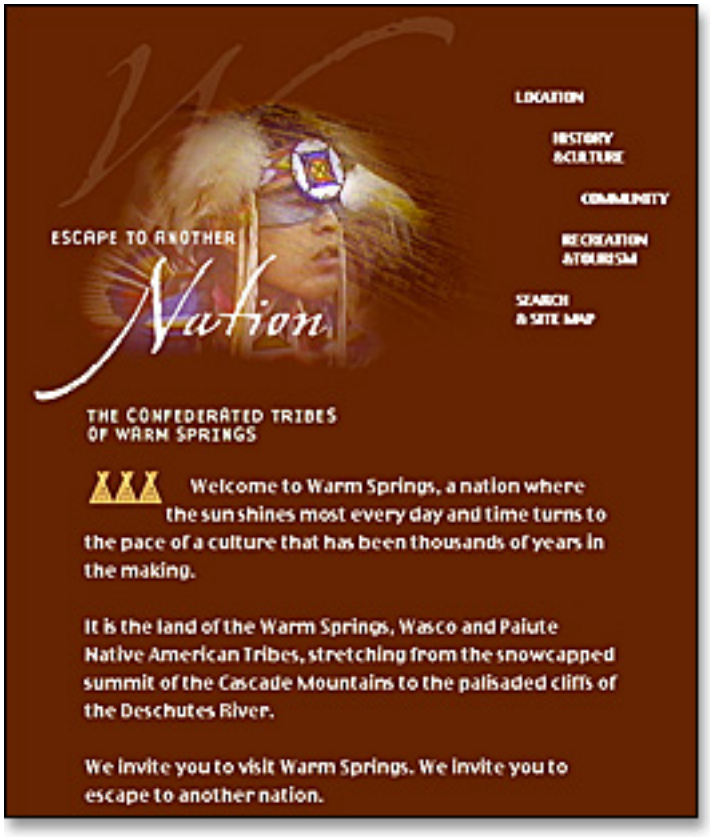
"One (reporter) was writing an article, he told me, `I want to do a small feature, I don't want the business end of it, I want it to be more on your ethnic background.' And he reported it very, very well and that trust and respect has built up from there. In the four or five articles that he's done … he doesn't put his own

twist on it. This is what he heard, this is what he reports.

"He also does his homework. On one story, he came down to the bar. I couldn't comment and he understood that. And that's how it was printed. Can't comment. And he respected that. …

"Again, once they know who they're dealing with and once they develop a rapport, I've found that it works out."

Rudy Clements, director of tribal relations, Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation in Oregon. All three nations are federally recognized.



"It seems like the newspapers want to write about Indians going to jail and being criminals, the sensationalism. … They don't like to write about good things.

"If we want our story told from the Indian perspective, we can't depend on the mainstream to do it for us.

"It seems like they don't do their homework when they write these kinds of features. They try to do it in a hurry. That's what it seems to me. They only come when their editors want them to do a story on something, they hustle down to the community. And they don't know whether it's true or not. I'm not saying everybody's that way but generally.

"Federal recognition? It seems to me … the (editorial) boards across the country tend to think more on the negative side of federal recognition than the positive side. When the positive side gets told, it's usually an editorial board that allows a

reporter to write a story from a tribal perspective. And then we get to tell our side of the story. When it's negative, they won't listen to us. They want to write what they want to write.

"I would like to see them write more positive things about tribes. There are some good things that occur in Indian country. …

"(The gaming issue) is, I think, very negative toward Indians. I think it's bad. They seem to support the state's concerns more than they do the tribal concerns. …

"Good stories? Let me see. Mainstream America? I guess the thing that I remember that I thought was a good story was water rights issue. They seem to be fairly objective in that area for some reason."

John Barnett, tribal chairman, Cowlitz Tribe in Washington.


1417 15th Ave #5 Longview, WA 98632
(360) 577-8140

WELCOME!

Please be patient while we build our site. Thank you.

Cowlitz Indian Tribe – Reconsidered Final Determination
Full text of the Federal Register notice of 4 January 2002. Also available here as a .pdf file.

Final Determination To Acknowledge the Cowlitz Indian Tribe
Full text of the Federal Register notice of 10 February 2000.

The Dispossessed: The Cowlitz Indians in Cowlitz Corridor
by Judith Irwin, honorary Cowlitz
This article gives a brief overview of the history and culture of the Cowlitz Tribe.

Events and Things
Classes and gatherings of interest to Cowlitz People.

Media Links:
Current articles and information about the Cowlitz Tribe

"As far as coverage goes, I think the basic problem is sometimes reporters have a habit of writing things their own way. I like to critique things. Often times there are mistakes that are made. I ask to see the story before (it is published). There are some reporters that work with me on that. I'll give them an interview, and they'll type it up and fax it to me so I can see how they quoted me. I know there are time constraints but whenever possible when it's a detailed story, it should be that way. …

"Most reporters don't take the time to research how the federal acknowledgement process works and the reason it was set up to begin with in order to understand the reason why things happen."

Principal Chief Lola Smith Scholl, Western Cherokee Nation of Arkansas and Missouri. The nation began the recognition process in 1998. Not associated with the Western Cherokee.

"You really don't get much coverage of the Indian affairs that go on here in Arkansas or Missouri. They don't care very much about the Indians in their newspaper.

"Now and then they go out there to a place where they're having a pow wow. I've had a few stories about the Western Cherokee but its not too often. Two or three in the last five years. …

"(Reporters) kind of more or less … think of (Cherokee) as the white people, as no different. The only difference would be the Hispanic and blacks. We're just in between. … We're just stuck in this hole like we're not counted as anything. …

"Really they don't do any write-ups about what Native Americans do. It's almost as if we don't exist. But we are a people and we do exist. … It's frustrating because the fact of it is, as a people we are ignored. …

"There's been nothing on the Indian trust money. Maybe once in a while, a column on the back page. But it so seldom, you get tired of looking for it."

posted May 8, 2002

NewsWatch
Covering Indian Country

Building Village America

Patty Talahongva becomes first Native American to host national news program

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BIOGRAPHY

Patty Talahongva is vice president of the Native American Journalists Association and the first Native American to host a national news program. Talahongva, Hopi, is from Polacca (First Mesa), Ariz. She is an independent, multimedia journalist based in Tempe with a background in broadcast journalism. She has produced TV newscasts, special projects for TV and documentaries and currently writes for several national magazines and newspapers. In addition, she is producing video documentaries on Native people and also contributes to the national radio talk show, "Native America Calling." She has served as vice president of NAJA for the past two years. She also serves on the board of the Radio and Television News Directors Association as an ex-officio representative for NAJA through the RTNDA/UNITY Covenant. Since 1994 she has been the lead mentor for NAJA students in the summer broadcast project, NAJA News 4. Her goal is to bring more Native and Aboriginal people into careers with mainstream TV news. She will co-anchor "Village America" with Sam Fullwood. Talahongva can be reached at Talahongva@naja.com.

Q: As the first Native American to host a national news program, Village America, how does this affect other

Native Americans in the profession?

A: I don't think it affects other Native people already in broadcast news. I do think, and hope, it will serve to motivate younger Native people to look into careers in journalism.

Q: With all the talk about a unified country and people standing together after Sept. 11, News Watch did a photo audit of coverage two weeks after the attacks. No Native Americans could be identified in any photo. What does this say to you about mainstream coverage of Native Americans and diverse communities?

A: They don't know where to look. I know of several Indian communities, organizations and people who did their part to help the victims of the terrorist attacks. Some tribes donated money to the Red Cross and of course a lot of people simply donated blood.

Q: In your opinion, which news story was under-reported in the past year?

A: The individual Indian money trusts accounts. Right now the secretary of interior, Gale Norton, is going through a contempt of court trial in DC. Basically in 1887 the federal government took into trust 90 million acres of land held by individual Indians. The government was supposed to manage the land leases and pay the individual families. They didn't. We're talking about more than 100 years here.

In 1996 Elouise Cobell, a Blackfeet woman, sued the Interior Department and won a judgement in 1999. If any other people were owed millions or billions of dollars, the story would be huge. We're talking about the secretary of the interior!

The lawsuit has carried over into the Bush administration. They were supposed to fix the computer system and figure out which families were owed money and how much. The feds knew from the start the computer system was inadequate. They spent $40 million on an accounting system that doesn't work. No one is hearing about it. Where is the money? How is the government going to pay it back?

Q: Describe some things that journalists should know

when covering Native Americans.

A: What always boggles my mind living in Arizona are the tourists who come here. People always say that they wanted to come here to see the Indians. I just want to laugh. You could have just stayed home and seen them at home. There are Native Americans in whatever state you live in.

There are tribes, organizations. Get to know them. Find out if they are indigenous to the area. If they are not native to the area, find out where they are from. There are 21 tribes in Arizona. Ask any local reporter: Can you name all those tribes? Unless they are associated with gaming, most of the time they don't know the other tribes. Get to know the area. Understand the whole issue of sovereignty.

Q: Why do you think Native Americans left the newsroom, according to the American Society of Newspaper Editors, last year?

A: Frustration. I'm thinking back to my experiences. I know when you are covering news; it's very frustrating when Native American news doesn't get covered. It's all about what the focus groups say, but if there are no Native Americans in those groups how can we trust their opinions? I've had my experiences with focus groups. It's pure frustration in trying to cover the news that Native Americans know is out there. If you read the paper or turn on the news on any given night, you'll be hard pressed to find any news about them. (Native American journalists) leave because of no advancement, no encouragement, no mentoring.

I was never encouraged at any of my stations to look into management, to get promoted.

Q: What did you do?

A: I left. When I made the decision to leave, I asked myself: Do you want to be here 10 years from now producing these newscasts that you don't even care about? I looked at the shows. I said to myself: I'm out of here. I have to go. I left and I feel really bad because as far as I knew I was the only Native American producer in the world. It's true. I've met Native American reporters but I don't know anyone else who is

producing. I know one woman was producing and reporting but she left the business as well. In fact right now she's attending law school. If there are people out there, get in touch with NAJA. That's what we are all about -- encouraging Native Americans to get into journalism and networking with one another.

Now I've gone back to print side. I write for several magazines and a few papers. I'm working on documentaries. That's my big love and what I do with most of my time. I'm also freelancing with "Native America Calling." It's the only program of its kind in the country. It's a one-hour live Native American news talk show. It tackles any issue of the day from a Native American perspective. We have our own prospective. We relate everything back to our history.

Q: What needs to happen first for more Native Americans to become journalists?

A: More mentoring. I think we need to reach down into the high schools. By the time students get into college, they've already made up their minds about what to do. I think mentoring is important. Exposing (young people) to journalism is important. It's a great career. I've been able to meet all kinds of people. I like being the first to know. But it's also a lot of responsibility.

Q: As a mentor for the NAJA summer broadcast project, what are some of the challenges that you help the students overcome?

A: NAJA News 4 is an intense student internship. What I try to stress to them is that it's a great career, but you have to be competitive. You have to be a good writer, fast and up on the news. We produce two newscasts during the week. The students are in different stages in their college education, and their level of knowledge is very different. We sit down and tell them how it's done, what it takes. All of our mentors are Native Americans who are working in television newsrooms around the country.

The students are really amazed. They say, "Wow we didn't know that there were so many of you working in the business!" That's my passion. I have three students who are working in newsrooms, and some who are looking for jobs. To me, that's

exciting. That's what it is all about.

Walt Swanston (former Unity president) shared with me these words of wisdom, "Each one teach one." That's exactly what I believed. If I know what I know, then I should teach and share that knowledge with other Native people.

Q: What pieces of advice do you give them to continue on the journalism path?

A: Be a good writer and keep up on news. Even if you aren't graduating tomorrow, the news that is happening today you will wind up following or revisiting in some fashion tomorrow. Turn on the news. Stay informed. Work on good writing. Networking is a big issue too.

Q: Why did you create White Spider Communications?

A: To focus only on news that pertained to and affected Indian people. We have so many stories and are making news on so many levels that I felt it was time that I start writing about Indian people, events, organizations and issues.

My Hopi name is Qotsakookyangw Mana, which means white spider girl. I named my business after myself. When I went independent, I just decided I wanted to create a business that I would go to work at. I wanted to be able to think of myself as a business. I've been on my own for three years.

Q: What led you to become a journalist?

A: I love to write. I used to write letters to relatives and friends in the armed services. I remember, back in the day, they would publish people's names in the back of the Archie comic books. You could write to other girls who only liked Betty or Veronica. I would write to Hollywood stars and popular musicians. I used to write to everyone in the world. My mom would laugh, "There goes Patty again!" I used to have a great collection of letters. It was just fun to go back and kind of look at them.

And I was interested in reading and also in to talking to people. I originally wanted to be lawyer. But my senior year in high school my dear friend Cameron Ferguson told me about an opening in the station. He said it was just an office position, but you can grow into another position.

I ended up getting it. I think I wrote one news story. After the office position, I started training in the productions department. It was Cameron who introduced me to broadcast journalism.

Q: As a Native American, did you feel encouraged to be a journalist? If so, by whom?

A: My mom always encouraged me to get an education. She certainly encouraged me to read. She bought us more books than toys. You can always travel when you read, she said.

As I started writing, I don't think she ever thought that it would be a career. I didn't have any Native American role models in the business. I think people encouraged me to go to school, to create some kind of career, but it's not journalism specific.

Q: Do you have a mentor? Why did you choose that person?

A: In my younger years Josiah Moore, who was a great Native American leader of the Tohono O'odham Nation, mentored me. (Moore) was a big leader in Indian education. He was a powerful leader and he was very humble. I met him when I was very young. I really liked his calm demeanor. He had a lot of power. But if you had lunch with him, he was so unassuming you would never know how much power he had.

Irvin Coin, another Hopi, who is the director of the Upward Bound program at Arizona State University also mentored me. UB is a college prep program for minority and underprivileged kids. Today I seek the advice of people like Mark Trahant, one of the founders of NAJA. I also rely on a close circle of friends whom I can bounce ideas and decisions off of when I need guidance.

Q: What do you think is the biggest problem in news coverage today?

A: Lack of diversity in our newsrooms. It's not just ethnic diversity. It's even looking at socio-economic diversity. I worked with a reporter once, who only wanted to do live shots in front of a very expensive store. On the biggest shopping day of the year, the day after Thanksgiving, she always wanted to go live from these high-end stores. That was her reality but certainly

not the reality for our viewers. Our average viewer shopped at Sears. How is our audience going to connect with us? Diversity counts even between people who own homes or don't, people with kids or without kids. We need people who aren't afraid to look at communities outside of their own little worlds.

Q: Would you encourage your child to become a journalist? If yes, what advice would give your child? If not, why not?

A: I have a very strong-willed child. His passion right now is music and drums. He's going to be a rock and roll drummer. I encourage him to do what he enjoys. That's what I'm doing. I love my job. I love my career. I have enjoyed my TV career, and I really enjoy the time that I've been on my own. If he wanted to follow in my footsteps I'd encourage him. But he's free to choose his own career.

Q: In your opinion, which news story was overplayed in the past year?

A: We didn't have an Elián case this year, did we?

Q: What is your favorite source of news and why?

A: I love NPR. I love listening to it in the morning. I like CNN, both Headline News and CNN. Of course, I read my local Arizona Republic. And I read The New York Times because of Charlie LeDuff, who is a Native American reporter at the Times and a good friend.

The interview was conducted by News Watch staff researcher Christine Yee. Yee can be reached at nw4@mindspring.com.

posted May 8, 2002

NewsWatch
Covering Indian Country

The outsider looking in

Photographer talks about being a non-Native covering Alaska's Native communities

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BIOGRAPHY

Stephen Nowers is a freelance photographer in Alaska, where he has covered Native communities extensively. Nowers also teaches photojournalism at the University of Alaska, Anchorage, and helps run the university's Summer Youth Media Camp. He has also worked as a photographer at Alaska's largest newspaper, the Anchorage Daily News, and as managing editor at The Anchorage Press, an alternative weekly. He is also a volunteer firefighter. Nowers can be reached at stephen@alaskaphoto.net.




Q: In your opinion, how important is diversity to a photographer, specifically, on a news publication?

A: As news photographers we have assignments we must do each day, but as journalists we should be covering those stories that interest us personally. People with different backgrounds see different things in a community. A diverse newsroom produces a broader range of coverage. There's a much greater chance of readers seeing a bit of themselves in the paper, or, perhaps more importantly, learning something about their community they didn't know before.

Q: How is this manifested in your daily assignments or in-depth stories in Alaska?

A: When I'm on assignment in a village I try to capture images that explain to our readers that the story is set in a very different place. I feel like I need to make two points: 1) these communities live without things we take for granted -- there are no grocery stores, no roads to another town, in some cases no sewer system; 2) because they live without these things it doesn't mean they are any less sophisticated than people living on the road system. I think for a lot of urban Alaskans, at least those who have never lived in rural Alaska, these ideas seem to be in conflict. I hope to show they're not: it's simply a different way of doing things.

Q: What do you think is the biggest problem/challenge in photo coverage today?

A: There's a constant battle between the photographer as illustrator and the photographer as journalist. I think reporters sometimes forget that the images aren't just there to enhance their story -- good photographers tell a story as well. We don't do ourselves any favors sitting around the office waiting for a photo assignment. We should cultivate sources, follow-up interesting stories, ask questions. Newspaper photographers should be handing out story assignments to reporters nearly as often as they fill out photo requests.

Q: Why do you feel it is important to cover the issues/events of the Alaska Native community, especially in regards to your urban readers of the Daily News?

A: Because it's a newspaper, the Daily News should strive to cover all the communities in Alaska but I think the Alaska Native community has a huge stake in some critical statewide issues. For instance, there's a huge schism in Alaska between the rural and urban populations about the state's money and natural resources. The Anchorage Daily News -- and it's really a statewide paper despite the name -- is both a source of information about these issues and a forum.

Q: Do you find it a challenge to photographically cover the Alaska Native community, being that you are not an Alaska Native yourself?

A: I think there's a lot of distrust in the smaller communities. Journalists usually don't make the trip out to rural Alaska unless there's some sort of disaster. I think many communities don't feel like they should bend over backwards when reporters and photographers -- almost always people with no investment in the area -- start badgering them about a school shooting (i.e. Bethel) or fishery disaster (i.e. the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta). They don't appreciate that kind of attention and I don't blame them. There's no 9-5 schedule in these communities and journalists calling on deadline need to understand that their urgency really doesn't translate.

Q: How do you overcome those challenges?

A: I find that it really helps to spend a little time with introductions before jumping into the story. If I can keep my cameras in my bag for an extra hour I might put myself in a better position for a great picture later on.

A couple of years ago I was in Chevak, a small village on the Bering Sea coast, working on a Native dance story and ended up doing a story on the crash of the salmon runs with a reporter from a big outside paper. The reporter ended up spending a few hours in Chevak

interviewing people before hopping the next plane out. I'm sure he got what he needed -- a few quotes and a good dateline -- but there was a been-there-done-that feeling in the village after he left. For them it's just another story that misses the point. Not only was the fishing season long over, the real news that weekend in Chevak was the dance festival. They didn't really see how the story was about them.

Q: What obstacles do you come across when covering Native issues, such as not being able to photograph a dance, ceremony or ritual?

A: It's rare that I'm told I can't do something. What usually happens is that the journalists just don't get invited. This can be avoided by setting aside some time while on assignment to get to know people. Put away the cameras and the notebooks for a while and behave like a real person. This works not only in Bethel but also in Anchorage or Seattle.

Q: How do you balance the need to tell a story as a journalist versus the need to respect the cultural and social norms of the Alaska Native community that you are covering?

A: I don't think the rules of good journalism are any different when covering Alaska Native stories. We always have to respect the communities we cover. There's no story at all without the cooperation of the subject. I can think of examples where I might take a picture anyway, even if someone asked me not to, but to this point I haven't found myself in that sort of position.

Q: What advice do you have for other photographers and journalists covering a Native community?

A: I'd suggest investing some time in the community. Obviously, this isn't always possible, but if you're parachuting into a place try to add a little extra time to get your bearings. Spending a couple of hours meeting people at the beginning of an assignment can make the rest of the shoot much more productive.

Q: What drew you toward mentoring/teaching Alaska Native youth in journalism? Why do you think it is important to get Native youth into journalism?

A: We're missing out on an important voice in the state, and the country for that matter. Alaska Native issues are also Alaska issues. And the media dialogue, print and broadcast, would benefit from a louder Alaska Native voice. That said, I think Anchorage has the best radio station in the country in KNBA (www.KNBA.org). In addition to a great playlist, KNBA also airs diverse Native programming, from news to traditional storytelling, and each summer sponsors a weeklong radio workshop for Native youth.

Q: What challenges are there in trying to draw Native youth into the field?

A: For the most part, kids in rural Alaska aren't exposed to newspapers at all so the high school media camps become a very basic introduction to the field. They just don't know about this incredibly powerful visual language. What's a picture story when you're only

images you've ever seen are snapshots? Rural Alaska also tends to be economically depressed, which makes it difficult for some kids to leave for college.

Q:In the past year, what photo, or series of, particularly stands out in your mind as excellent, in terms of content, coverage and quality?

A: Erik Hill, one of the photographers at the Daily News, did a story on the residents of an Anchorage trailer park forced to move after a developer bought the land. The pictures described a disappearing community in an unexpected place.

Q: What photo or series stands out as particularly poor or lacking in terms of content, quality or coverage?

A: It's more a type of image that drives me crazy: the picture of something not happening. We shouldn't settle for shooting a boring situation. Talking over a story with a reporter almost always results in a more interesting, more relevant image. When photographers resign themselves to simply illustrating what the reporter describes, our coverage suffers.

Q: What is your favorite source of news and why?

A: The Anchorage Daily News is definitely my favorite newspaper. Alaska can produce some really wild stories -- stories that are fun to read as well as cover. I also visit washingtonpost.com daily to keep up with events outside.

Q: Would you encourage your child to become a photojournalist? Why or why not?

A: Certainly, if they showed an interest. Journalism may not pay very well but it's a career that encourages curiosity and community engagement.

Q: What photo or photo story of yours (published or not) are you most proud of?

A: I was pretty happy with the images I produced while at a fish camp in the summer of 2000. It was a friend's camp and I spent most of the time fishing -- setting the drift net, hauling it in and picking salmon -- and made images only when I had a free moment. The pictures from that week are OK -- they certainly didn't win any awards -- but the experience has changed the way I cover rural issues. I have a tiny bit of experience to work from now and I hope I was able to get that across to our urban readers in the paper.

Q: Do you carry your equipment with you 24 hours a day? When would you not have your camera by your side?

A: Usually I have a camera with me all the time. Sometimes I need a break from all my gear, so I only carry a body and a lens or two. My one exception: I'm a volunteer firefighter and I will occasionally leave the cameras at home if I'm going on a call. I've learned from experience that I have to completely commit to doing one thing or the other at emergency scenes.

Q: How did you become interested in photojournalism?

A: My career as a photojournalist is an accident. My degrees are in history and English. In college I started working at the University of Washington Daily because I figured they'd pay me to write. After a year or two hanging out with the paper's photographers they had sold me on the power of the camera and I renounced my pencil and paper ways.

Q: What advice can you give to photojournalists just starting out in the business?

A: The best thing you can do is to keep putting film through your camera. If you're making pictures that matter to you something will eventually turn up. Find a photographer or even a staff member you respect and get feedback on your work.

The interview was conducted by News Watch staff researcher Connie Murray. Murray can be reached at cvmurray13@yahoo.com.

posted May 8, 2002

NewsWatch
Covering Indian Country

Some quick tips for covering Indian Country

D O:

Get past the casino and alcohol stories.

Get to know the Native community, become a familiar face.

Subscribe to at least one national Native newspaper.

Develop a source list that includes tribal college presidents, professors and community elders.

Make Native issues a regular news beat.

Consider your reporting role important to Native communities.

Find out the political and legal status of the Indian nation before starting the interview.

R E M E M B E R:

Ceremonies and cultural objects are rarely photographed. Talk to the person in charge for proper protocols.

One Native person doesn't speak for all community members.

Native people belong to sovereign nations, meaning they have their own distinct governments (laws, political structure, law enforcement procedures, etc.).

Tribal politics permeate many reservations, but it shouldn't prevent an accurate story from being told.

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posted May 8, 2002

NewsWatch
Covering Indian Country

Resource Guide

Here are some resources for covering American Indians

*Some of the U.S. government Web sites have limited access due to the mismanagement of the Indian Trust fund. In December, a court ordered the U.S. Department of the Interior to limit access to or take down many of its American Indian-related sites. It is unclear when the sites will be available.

ACTIVISTS [TOP]

Alaska Federation of Natives
Works to enhance and promote the cultural, economic and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community.
907- 274-3611
www.nativefederation.org

American Indian Law Center
Provides legal aid to Indian head start and Indian child welfare agencies and administers the Southwest Inter-tribal Court of Appeals. Includes the Indian Law Resource Center, which provides legal and technical support to indigenous communities working on issues of land protection, environment and right to self-determination. Works to reform national and international laws to recognize indigenous human rights.
406-449-2006 or 202-547-2800
mt@indianlaw.org
dc@indianlaw.org
www.indianlaw.org

American Indian Movement
Grand Governing Council is an activist organization that encourages sovereignty and self-determination among American Indians.
612-721-3914
info@advocatesforyouth.org
www.aimovement.org

American Indian Ritual Object Repatriation Foundation
Intercultural partnership committed to assisting in the return of sacred ceremonial material to the appropriate American Indian Nation, clan, or family, and to educating the public about the importance of repatriation.
212-980-9441
circle@repatriationfoundation.org
www.repatriationfoundation.org

Association on American Indian Affairs
An organization formed to promote the welfare of the American Indians, Aleuts and Eskimos of the United States. The AAIA aims to assist and protect the constitutional rights of these groups; improve health, economic and educational conditions; and support the perpetuation of their cultures.
605-698-3998

aaia@sbtc.net
www.indian-affairs.org

Cultural Survival
Defends the human rights and cultural autonomy of indigenous peoples and oppressed ethnic minorities.
617-441-5400
csinc@cs.org
www.cs.org

First Nations Development Institute
Founded in 1980 with the mission to help American Indian tribes and Native communities rebuild their economies through asset-based community economic development. Our programs and strategies focus on assisting tribes and Native communities to control, create, leverage, utilize and retain their assets.
540-371-5615
Info@firstnations.org
www.firstnations.org

Honor The Earth
Works to provide funding and public support for Native environmental initiatives. Honor the Earth focuses its grantmaking and political advocacy work around the broad areas of Environmental Justice and Indigenous Knowledge.
800-327-8407
www.honorearth.com

International Indian Treaty Council
An organization of indigenous peoples from North, Central, South America and the Pacific working for the sovereignty and self-determination of indigenous peoples and the recognition and protection of indigenous rights, traditional cultures and sacred lands.
415-641-4482
iitc@igc.apc.org
www.treatycouncil.org

National Congress of American Indians
Works to inform the public and the federal government on tribal self-government, treaty rights, and a broad range of federal policy issues affecting tribal governments. Also has a

Digital Divide Task Force, which provides a forum for tribal leaders to discuss the critical issues surrounding technology in Indian Country with leading policy experts, federal officials, and technology industry leaders.
202-466-7767
www.ncai.org

Native American Rights Fund
A non-profit organization that provides legal representation and technical assistance to Indian tribes, organizations and individuals nationwide.
303-447-8760
Pereira@narf.com
www.narf.org

Project Underground
Supports the environmental, human rights and indigenous rights movements and carry out focused campaigns against abusive extractive resource activity. The program seeks to expose environmental and human rights abuses by oil and mining corporations.
510-705-8981
project_underground@moles.org
www.moles.org

Seventh Generation Fund
Founded in 1977, the Seventh Generation Fund is the only Native American intermediary foundation and advocacy organization dedicated to promoting and maintaining the uniqueness of Native Peoples and our nations.
707-825-7640
of7gen@pacbell.net
www.7genfund.org

Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization
Offers an international forum for occupied nations, indigenous peoples, minorities, and even oppressed majorities who currently struggle to regain their lost countries, preserve their cultural identities, protect their basic human and economic rights and safeguard the natural environment.
202-637-0475
unposf@igc.apc.org
www.unpo.org

BOOKS [TOP]

100 Questions, 500 Nations: A Reporter's Guide to Native America
by Native American Journalists Association
612-729-9244
info@naja.com
www.naja.com

The American Indian And The Media,
edited by Mark Anthony Rolo
Offers essays by Native journalists that explain many of the struggles facing Native people. A list of all federally recognized tribes as well as a resource list is included.
The National Conference for Community and Justice
800-352-6225
Native American Journalists Association
612-729-9244
info@naja.com
www.naja.com

***From the Front Lines: Free Press Struggles in Native America,* c. 1998**
Essays by Native Journalists
Native American Journalists Association
612-729-9244
info@naja.com
www.naja.com

Indian Country Address Book
by John Crow, Martha Crow and Jack Sharp
This book's table of contents lists 64 Native categories ranging from Bureau of Indian Affairs offices, businesses and galleries to federal tribes, youth groups and veteran associations.
www.amazon.com

Pictures of Our Nobler Selves: A history of Native American contributions to news media
by Mark N. Trahant
A Native American study ranging from the first newspaper to the first person to report news on national television.
The Freedom Forum First Amendment Center

www.fac.org

Native American Journalists Association
612-729-9244
info@naja.com
www.naja.com

Tiller's Guide to Indian Country
by Veronica Tiller
Supplies profiles and phone numbers for the country's American Indian reservations. 698-page book The cost is $59.95 plus $6.50 ship/hand.
907- 274-3611
To order: BowArrow Publishing
6727 Academy Road Northeast
Albuquerque, NM 87109

EDUCATION [TOP]

American Indian College Fund
Purpose is to raise awareness of tribal colleges in the United States and to generate private support.
303-426-8900
info@collegefund.org
www.collegefund.org

American Indian Higher Education Consortium
Assists tribal colleges in improving teaching of culture, language and tradition.
703-838-0400
info@advocatesforyouth.org
www.aihec.org

National Indian Education Association
Evaluates and works to improve education at state and local levels.
703-838-2870
niea@niea.org
www.niea.org

National Indian School Board Association
Represents Indian controlled schools (kindergarten to grade 12).

406-883-3603 or 406-675-4801
www.skc.edu/NISBA

Tribal Colleges

Bay Mills Community College
12214 West Lakeshore Drive
Brimley, MI 49715
906-248-3354

Blackfeet Community College
P.O. Box 819
Browning, MT 59417
406-338-7755

Candeska Cikana Community College
P.O. Box 269
Fort Totten, ND 58335
701-766-4415

College of Menominee Nation
P.O. Box 1179
Keshena, WI 54135
715-799-4921

Crownpoint Institute of Technology
P.O. Box 849
Crownpoint, NM 87313
505-786-5851

Dine' College
P.O. Box 126
Tsaile, AZ 86556
928-724-6669

D-Q University
P.O. Box 409
Davis, CA 95617

Dull Knife Memorial College
P.O. Box 98
Lame Deer, MT 59043
406-477-6215

Fond du Lac Tribal Community College
2101 14th Street
Cloquet, MN 55720
218-879-0800

Fort Belknap College
P.O. Box 159
Harlem, MT 59526
406-353-2607

Fort Peck Community College
P.O. Box 398
Poplar, MT 59255
406-768-5551

Haskell Indian Nations University
155 Indian Ave.
Lawrence, KS 66046
785-749-8404

Institute of American Indian Arts
83 Avan Nu Po Road
Santa Fe, NM 87505
800-804-6423

Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College
13466 W. Trepania Rd.
Hayward, WI 54843
715-643-4790

Leech Lake Tribal College
Route 3, Box 100
Cass Lake, MN 56633
218-335-2828

Little Big Horn College
P.O. Box 370
Crow Agency, MT 59022
406-638-2228

Little Priest Tribal College
P.O. Box 270
Winnebago, NE 68071
402-878-2380

Nebraska Indian Community College
P.O. Box 428
Macy, NE 68039
402-837-5078

Northwest Indian
2522 Kwina Road
Bellingham, WA 98226
360-676-2772

Oglala Lakota College
490 Piya Wiconi Rd.
Kyle, SD 57752
605-455-2321

Salish Kootenai College
P.O. Box 117
Pablo, MT 59855
406-675-4800

Sinte Gleska University
P.O. Box 490
Rosebud, SD 57570
605-747-2263

Sisseton Wahpeton Community College
P.O. Box 689, Agency Village
Sisseton, SD 57262

Si Tanka College
P.O. Box 220
Eagle Butte, SD 57625
605-964-8635

Sitting Bull College
1341 - 92nd St.
Fort Yates, ND 58538
701-854-3861

Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute
P.O. Box 10146
Albuquerque, NM 87184
505-346-2347

Stone Child College
Rocky Boy Route, Box 1082
Box Elder, MT 59521
406-395-4313

Turtle Mountain Community College
P.O. Box 340
Belcourt, ND 58316
701-477-5605

United Tribes Technical College
3315 University Drive
Bismark, ND 58504
701-255-3285

White Earth Tribal and Community College
210 Main Street South
P.O. Box 478
Mahnomen, MN 56557
218-935-0417

ENVIRONMENT [TOP]

Indigenous Environmental Network
Alliance of community-based organizations and tribes that help native Americans protect the environment on tribal lands.
218-751-4967
ien@igc.org
www.ienearth.org

National Tribal Environmental Council
Helps protect, preserve and promote Indian lands.
509-865-5121, ext 329
Mose@Yakama.com

The Trust for Public Land-conserving land for people
Works exclusively to protect land for human enjoyment and well-being.
webmaster@tpl.org
www.tpl.org

FEDERAL AGENCY INDIAN PROGRAMS

[TOP]

Department of Agriculture
Guide to USDA Programs for American Indians and Alaska Natives
202-720-2791
www.usda.gov/news/pubs/indians/open.htm

Department of Commerce
Census Bureau American Indian Data
www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/race/indian.html

Department of Defense
American Indian, Alaska Natives and Native Hawaiians
http://128.174.5.51/denix/Public/Native/native.html

Department of Education
Office of Indian Education
OESE@ed.gov
www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/oie/index.html

Department of Energy
Indian Nations Program
www.hanford.gov/doe/inp/index.htm

Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Native Americans
www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/ana

Department of Housing and Urban Development
Native American Programs
202-708-1112; TTY: 202-708-1455
www.hud.gov/native.html

Department of Justice
Office of Tribal Justice
202-514-8812
www.usdoj.gov/otj/index.html

Department of Labor
Indian and Native American Programs
http://wdr.doleta.gov/contacts/

Environmental Protection Agency

American Indian Environmental Office
202-564-0303
www.epa.gov/owindian

National Park Service
Aims to improve relationships between American Indian Tribes, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians and the NPS through consultation, outreach, technical assistance, education, and advisory services.
202-208-5475 or 5476
www.cr.nps.gov/ailo/ailohome.htm

FEDERAL INDIAN AGENCIES

[TOP]

Bureau of Indian Affairs
Department of the Interior is the primary government agency working in government-to-government relationship with 554 tribes. The BIA provides funds and/or services for law enforcement, social services, education and other services.
202-219-4150
www.doi.gov/bureau-indian-affairs.html

Committee on Indian Affairs
Senate group that works on policymaking including but not limited to land management, trust responsibilities, education, gaming, health, special services, loans, American Indian land claims.
202-224-2251
http://indian.senate.gov

Committee on Resources
House of Representatives group works on policymaking relating to American Indian lands, water rights and federal funding, including the budget for the bureau of Indian Affairs.
202-225-2761
www.house.gov/resources

Indian Arts and Crafts Board
Department of Interior group that publishes information and directories on contemporary Native American arts and crafts, and enforces federal laws to stop sales of imitation crafts and artifacts that are marketed as Indian-made.

202-208-3773
http://www.doi.gov/iacb/enter.html

Indian Health Service
Department of Health and Human Services group that provides health services to American Indians and Alaska Natives through hospitals, Centers and clinics.
301-443-0750
www.ihs.gov

National Indian Gaming
Commission regulates tribal gaming operations.
202-632-7003
www.nigc.gov

Office of American Indian Trust
Part of Department of Interior that oversees the implementation of policies that affect American Indian trust assets and resources, including land and water rights.
202-208-3338
www.doi.gov/oait

Office of Indian Gaming Management
Part of Bureau of Indian Affairs that approves gaming compacts between states and tribes.
202-219-4066

HEALTH [TOP]

Association of American Indian Physicians
Encourages and recruits American Indians in health professions, and advises on health policymaking for American Indians.
405-946-7072
www.aaip.com

National Indian Health Board
Works to improve health conditions on reservations and among tribes.
303-759-3075 or 303-759-3674
www.nihb.org

HOUSING [TOP]

National American Indian Housing Council
Private nonprofit representing Indian housing authorities on reservations and trust lands.
202-789-1754 or 800-284-9165
housing@naihc.net
http://naihc.indian.com

INDIAN ORGANIZATIONS (national in scope) [TOP]

Arts and Culture

Atlatl Inc.
Promotes Native arts and artists.
602-277-3711
atlatl@artswire.org

American Indian Heritage Foundation
Informs non-Indians on the heritage and culture of the American Indian.
703-237-9490
www.indians.org

First Americans in the Arts
Membership organization of Native American professionals in television, theater, film and music that provides scholarships to students in filmmaking.
818-623-9520
www.firstamericans.org

Institute of American Indian Arts
Federally chartered private college devoted exclusively to the study and practice of American Indian and Alaska Native arts and culture.
505-983-1777
www.iaiancad.org

National Association of Tribal Historic Preservation

Officers
Members of federally recognized Indian tribes in charge of preserving significant historic properties on tribal lands.
202-628-8476

www.achp.gov/thpo.html#info

National Museum of American Indian (Smithsonian Institution)
Holds the nation's most comprehensive collection of American Indian arts and cultural objects.
Cultural Resources Center: 301-238-6624
George Gustav Heye Center: 212-514-3700
NMAI on the National Mall (facility is under construction): 202-287-2020
www.si.edu/nmai

Economics and Gaming

National Indian Business Association
Membership funded trade organization representing 24,000 Native Americans who are small business owners.
202-547-0580

National Indian Gaming Association
Non-profit lobbying group for more than 150 American Indian nations working to craft policies affecting gaming operations and advocates at the national level.
202-546-7711
www.indiangaming.org

INTER-TRIBAL COUNCILS [TOP]

Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians
222 NW Davis, Suite 403
Portland, OR 97209
503-241-0070

Alaska Federation of Natives Inc.
1577 C St., Suite 201
Anchorage, AK 99501
907-274-3611

All Indian Pueblo Council
P.O. Box 3256
Albuquerque, NM 87190
505-881-1992

Inter-Tribal Council of Arizona
4205 North 7th Ave., Suite 200
Phoenix, AZ 85013
602-248-0071

Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada Inc.
680 Green Brae Dr., Suite 265
Sparks, NV 89431
702-355-0600

Midwest Alliance of Sovereign Nations
HCR 67, Box 194
Onamia, MN 56359
320-532-4181

Montana/Wyoming Tribal Leaders Council
207 North Broadway, Suite BR-2
Billings, MT 59101
406-252-2550

Tribal Alliance of Sovereign
Indian Nations
P.O. Box 266
Patton, CA 92369
909-864-8933

Unites South and Eastern Tribes Inc.
711 Stewarts Ferry Pike, Suite 100
Nashville, TN 37214

615-872-7900

MEDIA AND RESEARCH

[TOP]

American Native Press Archives
Maintains American Indian, Alaska Native and Canadian Native newspapers and periodicals at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock.
501-569-8336
www.anpa.ualr.edu

Native American Journalists Association
Membership organization serving Native American professionals in both tribal and mainstream media.
612-729-9244
info@naja.com
www.naja.com

Native American Public Telecommunications
Works to inform, educate and encourage the awareness of tribal histories, cultures, languages, opportunities and aspirations through the fullest participation of American Indians and Alaska Natives in creating and employing all forms of educational and public telecommunications programs and services, thereby supporting tribal sovereignty.
Also includes:
AIROS-American Indian Radio On Satellite.
Native American Calling
Native American Public Telecommunications
native@unl.edu
www.nativetelecom.org

PERIODICALS

[TOP]

American Indian Culture and Research Journal
American Indian Studies Center at the University of California, Los Angeles
310-206-7060
aiscpubs@ucla.edu
www.sscnet.ucla.edu/esp/aisc/

American Indian Law Review
University of Oklahoma
405-325-2840
www.law.ou.edu/lawrevs/ailr/

American Indian Library Association
University of Minnesota
www.nativeculture.com/lisamitten/aila.html

Journal of American Indian Education
Arizona State University Center for Indian Education
480-965-6292
http://coe.asu.edu/cie/

Northeast Indian Quarterly
American Indian Program at Cornell University
607-255-5991
aipoffice@cornell.edu
http://www.aip.cornell.edu/

PRESS [TOP]

Indian Country Today
Weekly newspaper that publishes national Indian news, arts and culture.
www.indiancountry.com

News from Indian Country
A twice-monthly newspaper that publishes national Indian news, arts and culture.
For subscriptions and product orders call: 715-634-5226 ext. 26
www.indiancountrynews.com

National Native News

Daily radio news program that reports on Indian news, culture and the arts.
Koahnic Broadcast Corporation.
907-258-8880
nnn@alaska.net
www.nativenews.net/nnn_main.shtml

Native Peoples magazine
Published six times a year.
602-265-4855 or 888-262-8483
info@nativepeoples.com
www.nativepeoples.com

The Circle, Native American News and Arts
Monthly newspaper that publishes local, regional and national Indian news.
612-722-3686
info@thecirclenews.org
www.thecirclenews.org

The Resource Guide was compiled by the News Watch staff. If you have any additions, or feedback regarding the guide, contact News Watch at newsproj@mindspring.com

Sources:
www.sacredland.org/activists.html and *The American Indian and The Media*
100 Questions, 500 Nations: A Reporter's Guide to Native America

NewsWatch
Covering Indian Country

Moments in Native American journalism

This historical timeline celebrates American Indian journalism and the journalists who have made tracks, and some who continue making tracks. Some of these figures have started radio stations, newspapers, and magazines. They are national news reporters and have founded the Native American Journalists Association. Their contributions to U.S. journalism and their work toward improving the coverage of American Indians is immense. The entries are abbreviated, with more details available in the Milestones section of the News Watch Web site.

"We will be known forever by the tracks we leave."
– Dakota Indian proverb.

1820s 1830s 1850s 1890s 1900s 1910s 1920s 1930s 1940s 1960s 1970s 1980s 1990s 2000s

1820s
Cherokee nation learns to read and write their language. Sequoyah is credited for creating the syllabary, a new system of writing.

1827
Elias Boudinot becomes founding editor of *Cherokee Phoenix.*

1828
First edition of *Cherokee Phoenix* appears in February.

1832
Elias Boudinot retires as editor of *Cherokee Phoenix* because of conflicts with the tribal government.

1856
John Rollin Ridge and Charles Watie (Cherokee) are hired in 1856 as editors of the *California American,* political journal.

1857
John Rollin Ridge and Sacramento business leaders start the *Sacramento Daily Bee.* First issue in February.

1897
Myrta Eddleman becomes first Native American woman to own a mainstream newspaper, *Muskogee Daily Times.*

1898
Myrta Eddleman and husband Walter Sams start *The Twin Territories.*

1902
Alexander Posey starts *The Eufala Indian Journal,* which is the first Indian published daily newspaper.

1916

Gertrude Simmons Bonnin publishes "The Indian's Awakening" in *American Indian magazine.*

[TOP]

1916

Arthur Caswell Parker becomes founding editor of the *American Indian* magazine, which was part of the Society of American Indians.

1916

Carlos Montezuma publishes *Wassaja,* a monthly magazine.

1924

Ora Eddleman Reed, Cherokee, becomes the first Native American radio talk show host.

1926

American Indian magazine is founded by the Society for the American Indians.

1935

John Milton Oskison publishes "Vision Victorious."

1935

Will Rogers, entertainer, columnist, political writer and politician, dies in a plane crash.

1937

John Collier, commissioner of Indian Affairs, budgets federal money for radio communications in remote Alaskan villages and sponsors a national program to educate the nation about tribal history, culture and current affairs. The show starts with 170 stations from Alaska to Florida.

1943

The Association on American Indian Affairs publishes the first issue of *American Indian* magazine.

1962

Howard Rock founds the *Tundra Times.*

1973

Nunatisiq News is first published in English and Inktitut, of the Nunavut and Nunavik region of Arctic Quebec.

[TOP]

1977

The Lac Courte Oreilles Journal America is founded.

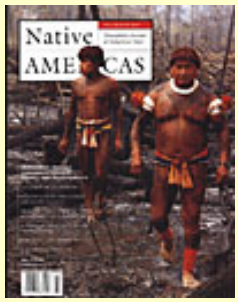
1981

Indian Country Today is created. Today it has more original journalistic content on American Indian issues than any other source.

1984

Students at Pennsylvania State University form the Native American Press Association to "reinvigorate the Native media, address the widespread barriers and challenges facing Native journalists, and build on the strengths of Native communications."

1984



Native Americas magazine is first published. The magazine is still published after 18 years.

1987

"National Native News" becomes first daily Native news service. Thirty stations sign up to broadcast the 5-minute program.

1989

Hattie Kauffman, Nez Perce, became the first Native Americans to report a news story on national television (ABC news).

1990

Native American Press Association was changed to the Native American Journalists Association. The name reflects the broader goals of the organization and the inclusion of radio and television professionals.

1992

First Alaska Native Youth Media Institute takes place in Anchorage.

1993

USA Today coins the Hantavirus as "the Navajo flu." No Native Americans worked at the newspaper at that time.

1994

Karen Lincoln Michel writes front-page story in the *Dallas Morning News* about spiritual struggle for Native Americans following the peyote way. Later this year, American Indian Religious Freedom Act passes. President

Bill Clinton recognizes a native religion as deserving of First Amendment protection.

[TOP]

1994
National Native News staff develops first national Native call-in program, "Native America Calling."

1995
Elizabeth Gaines-Gray, Cherokee/Shawnee, creates *The Native American Times* monthly newspaper.

1997
Navajo Nation Council votes to privatize *Navajo Times* and KTNN.

1997
Seattle Times wins a Pulitzer Prize for investigation of federal funds meant for Native American housing.

1998
National Native News staff and consultants conducted the first comprehensive survey of mainstream media and their perceptions of Native issues reporting. National Native News adds a Washington, D.C., correspondent.

1999
Native American radio show "Earthsongs" broadcasts to a national audience

2000
Independent Native News is founded as part of Native Voice Communications.

2002
Patty Talahongva is the first Native American to host a national news program.

2002 The number of Native Americans working in U.S. daily newspaper newsrooms increases from 249 in 2001 to 307 in 2002, according to the American Society of Newspaper Editors.

[TOP]

Compiled by News Watch staff researcher Christine Yee, and students enrolled in the History of Journalism course, fall 2001, at San Francisco State University.

Sources:

The American Indian and The Media edited by Mark Anthony Rolo

Pictures of Our Nobler Selves: A history of Native American contributions to the media, by Mark Trahant.

www.naaog.de/englisch/Native_American_Media

www.newswatch.sfsu.edu/milestones/milestones_references.html

News Watch
Covering Indian Country

INDIAN COUNTRY DEMOGRAPHICS

According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2000 population survey, American Indians make up about 1 percent of the country's population.

News Watch has compiled a list of Web sites providing demographic information and links about Indian nations and reservations.

There are a few key things to remember about demographics when covering Indian Country:
- Not all Indian nations have reservations.
- Some Indian nations are recognized by their state but not recognized by the U.S. government.
- Each Indian nation determines who is eligible to be a tribal member, not the U.S. government.

NOTE: The Bureau of Indian Affairs Web site has limited access due to the mismanagement of the Indian Trust fund. In December, a court ordered the U.S. Department of the Interior to take down much of the BIA Web site. It is unclear when the site will be available.

PERCENTAGE OF AMERICAN INDIANS BY STATE

U.S. Census Bureau

FEDERALLY RECOGNIZED AMERICAN INDIAN NATIONS

The American Indian Heritage Foundation

AMERICAN INDIAN NATIONS BY STATE

Tribes listed by state.
Note: This site was last updated in April 1997.

Geographical Index to Tribes in the United States and Canada

The Department of the Interior, Office of American Indian Trust

AMERICAN INDIAN RESERVATIONS BY STATE

U.S. Department of Commerce

OTHER DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

U.S. Census Bureau

University of Louisville, Ekstrom Library, links to specific Census documents

posted May 8, 2002

NewsWatch
Covering Indian Country

S T Y L E G U I D E

The following is a list of terms or phrases you may come across when covering Indian Country. Refer to this style guide to ensure that your coverage is accurate and fair. Sources: Native American Journalists Association; The American Indian and the Media, edited by Mark Anthony Rolo; Pictures of Our Nobler Selves: A history of Native American contributions to the media, by Mark Trahant. For the complete News Watch Diversity Style guide, go to http://www.ciij.org/newswatch?id=162.

American Indian	Synonymous with "Native American." Some indigenous people in the United States prefer "American Indian" over "Native American." Best to ask individual preference. When possible, use national affiliation such as Navajo, Hopi, Cherokee. Use "native-born" to describe someone who is born in the United States, but isn't American Indian.
American Indian Movement	Activist organization known as AIM. Founded in 1968 to promote civil rights for Native Americans. AIM has sought recognition of treaty rights through sit-ins and highly visible protests. In 1972, AIM organized the "Trail of Broken Treaties," converging on Washington, D.C., before the presidential election. AIM has branches across the United States.
brave	Avoid. Offensive term when used as a noun to describe American Indian males.
buck	Avoid. Racial slur for a young black or American Indian man.

circle the wagons	Avoid. Offensive phrase when used to describe people who are protecting themselves from trouble. It conjures up stereotypical images of "savage" American Indians.
Eskimos	When referring to Americans Indians in Alaska, acceptable to use for Inupiat Eskimos or Yupik Eskimos. Do not use for Aleuts or Inuits.
half-blood, half-breed	Avoid. Derogatory term for an American Indian of mixed heritage.
Hawaiian, Native Hawaiian	Refers to a person having origins in any of the peoples of the Hawaiian Islands. Also acceptable: "Native Hawaiian." Does not refer to everybody living in Hawaii. When referring to non-native Hawaiians living in Hawaii, use "those in Hawaii," "resident of Hawaii" or "state residents."

hyphenated American	When describing a U.S. permanent resident or citizen and his or her race, use the noun without the hyphen to denote current group membership, such as "Japanese American, African American, Mexican American." In compound phrases, where the term is used as an adjective (e.g., French-Canadian folklore), use a hyphen. Some people see a pejorative connotation to using a hyphen in part because of Theodore Roosevelt's denunciation in 1915 of "hyphenated Americans" who did not join the American mainstream. More from Roosevelt's speech.
Indian, Indian-American	Use "Indian" or "person from India" to refer to a person with ancestral ties to India. Use "Indian American" to refer to a U.S. permanent resident or citizen with ancestral ties to India. Do not confuse with "American Indian." Do not use to refer to indigenous peoples of the United States. See also "American Indian," "hyphenated American," and "Native American."
Indian country	A legal term used in Title 18 of the U.S. Code. It broadly defines federal and tribal jurisdiction in crimes affecting American Indians on reservations. But it also has popular usage, describing reservations and areas with American Indian populations.

injun	Avoid. Racial slur referring to American Indians.
Native Alaskan	Person born in Alaska, who may be of non-Native origins. See also "Eskimo."
Native American	Synonymous with "American Indian." Sometimes preferred term for indigenous peoples of the western hemisphere. When possible, use national affiliation, such as Navajo, Hopi, Cherokee. To specify someone who was born in the United States, but isn't Native American, use native-born. See also "Indian and Indian American."
pow wow	Use only when referring to the title of a specific American Indian event. Avoid if referring to a general gathering because the term evokes stereotypical image of American Indians. Comes from the Narragansett word for shaman. It is a celebration and social gathering, honoring sacred American Indian traditions through dancing, drumming, singing and the gathering of people. Pow wows may be held to honor an individual or for a special occasion. Most commonly, it is a social event.

reservation

Indian reservations are areas of land reserved by the U.S. government as permanent tribal homelands. The United States established its reservation policy for American Indians in 1787. Today there are 314 reservations, among the last large tracts of private lands. More than 60 percent of American Indians live away from reservations.

sovereignty

Independence from external control. The question of status in relationship to the United States for current and former U.S. territorial possessions, such as Hawaii, Guam and Puerto Rico, and also Native American nations continues to be debated. Takes the form of plebiscites, political discussions and independence movements. In the case of American Indian nations, many assert their sovereignty based on having entered into treaties (international agreements) with the United States that Native American nations still recognize.

squaw

Avoid. Derogatory term that evokes stereotypical image of Native American women.

tribe	Avoid. Use nation or ethnic group except for specific entities like a "tribal council" on a reservation. Within the United States, many Native Americans prefer "nation" because their people have signed treaties with the United States that recognize them as nations. Some Native Americans prefer their national affiliation instead of using generic term Native American, e.g., Navajo, Hopi, Cherokee. In Africa, avoid referring to different ethnic groups as tribes. Hutu and Tutsi are ethnic groups, just like Serbs, Croats and Muslims in the former Yugoslavia. See also "American Indian" and "reservation."
wampum	Avoid. Evokes stereotypical image of Native Americans.
warpath	Avoid. Evokes stereotypical image of Native Americans.

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