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## INTRODUCTION: THE MANDATE

On July 25, 1989, Senate Report 101-85 directed:

*... the National Park Service to determine and report to the Committee [Committee on Appropriations] on the funding needs for the management, research, interpretation, protection and development of sites of historical significance on Indian lands throughout the Nation. The Committee is particularly interested in the Chaco protection sites on the Navajo Reservation. The Committee directs the National Park Service in consultation with the Bureau of Indian Affairs to investigate and report to the Committee on funding needs for historic preservation on Indian lands. The report shall be based on direct discussions with Indian tribes, and shall be provided to the Committee by March 1990. (Senate Report No. 101-85)*

To carry out this request the National Park Service hosted meetings with tribal representatives, and requested information from many more.<sup>1</sup> The results and findings are presented here.

To American Indian people historic preservation is no less than the perpetuation of living cultural traditions: beliefs, lifeways, languages, oral traditions, arts, crafts, and ceremonies, as well as the places and properties associated with them. Tribal perspectives on preservation are presented in **PART I** of this report.

The issues surrounding the perpetuation of American Indian cultures are not expressed only on reservations, those areas remaining in the control of Indian people. The ancestral homelands of the Indian tribes cover the entire nation. Sacred and historic places critical to the continuation of cultural traditions are often not under tribal control, but rather are owned or managed by Federal, State, local governments, and other non-Indians. The cultural commitments and concerns of Indian people with ancestral places on non-Indian lands bring them, sometimes unwillingly and unprepared, into the national historic preservation program, particularly in connection with the review of proposed actions by Federal

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<sup>1</sup>The persons quoted in this section attended one or both meetings held by the National Park Service in January 1990 to gather information for this report. All spoke as official tribal representatives. The following individuals are employed by tribes and spoke as tribal representatives, but are not themselves tribal members: Roger Anyon, Director, Zuni Archeological Program, Zuni Pueblo; Greg Cleveland, Archeologist, Yakima Nation; Alan Downer, Historic Preservation Officer, Navajo Nation; Duane King, Executive Director, Middle Oregon Indian Historical Society, Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs; Rick Knecht, Cultural & Heritage Program Coordinator, Kodiak Area Native Association; Pam Nowak, Project Coordinator, Quechan Tribe; Ann Renker, Director, Makah Cultural Resource Center; Kurt Russo, Treaty Task Force, Lummi Tribe; C.M. Simon, S.J., Director, The Heritage Center, Inc., Oglala Lakota Tribe. Dean Suagee attended the meeting in Washington, D.C., as counsel to the Miccosukee Tribe; Mr. Suagee is a member of the Cherokee Nation.

agencies under Sections 106 and 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Tribal perspectives and the perspectives of Federal agencies and State Historic Preservation Offices concerning the role of tribes in the national historic preservation program are described in **PART II** of this report.

The National Park Service has unique and complex relationships with many Indian tribes who have interests in lands within National Parks. These relationships and the particular funding needs of the Chaco protection sites on the Navajo reservation are also described in **PART II**.

Indian tribes were asked to describe their funding needs for preservation by answering questions on a worksheet. The results of that written survey are reported in **PART III**.

As this report was prepared, 171 tribes applied for Historic Preservation Fund grants proposing 270 projects to preserve their cultural heritage, pursuant to the Fiscal Year 1990 appropriations act for the Department of the Interior (P.L. 101-121). These grant proposals are another important source of information concerning funding needs for preservation on Indian lands, and are also described in **PART III** of this report.

"Keepers of the Treasures" concludes with general findings and recommendations.

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## **PART I: TRIBAL PERSPECTIVES ON PRESERVATION**

Two meetings were held by the National Park Service in order to learn directly from Indian tribes what their concerns and needs were for preserving their cultural heritage. In both meetings, participants were concerned that this report reflect the perspectives of the tribes. Many asked to review the draft and the report has benefited from their comments. It was suggested that:

*When this report is presented to Congress, a few of the members who spoke today should speak, not the [National] Park Service, so that Congress can hear from the people themselves. (Cecil Antone, Gila River)*

Every effort has been made in this report to present Congress with the opportunity to "hear from the people themselves." **PART I: TRIBAL PERSPECTIVES ON PRESERVATION** uses the testimony of the meeting participants to describe the preservation issues Indian tribes face. Funding needs for preservation, based on the written responses of Indian tribes to a worksheet, are presented in **PART III**.

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### **Section 1: Defining the Topic and the Terms**

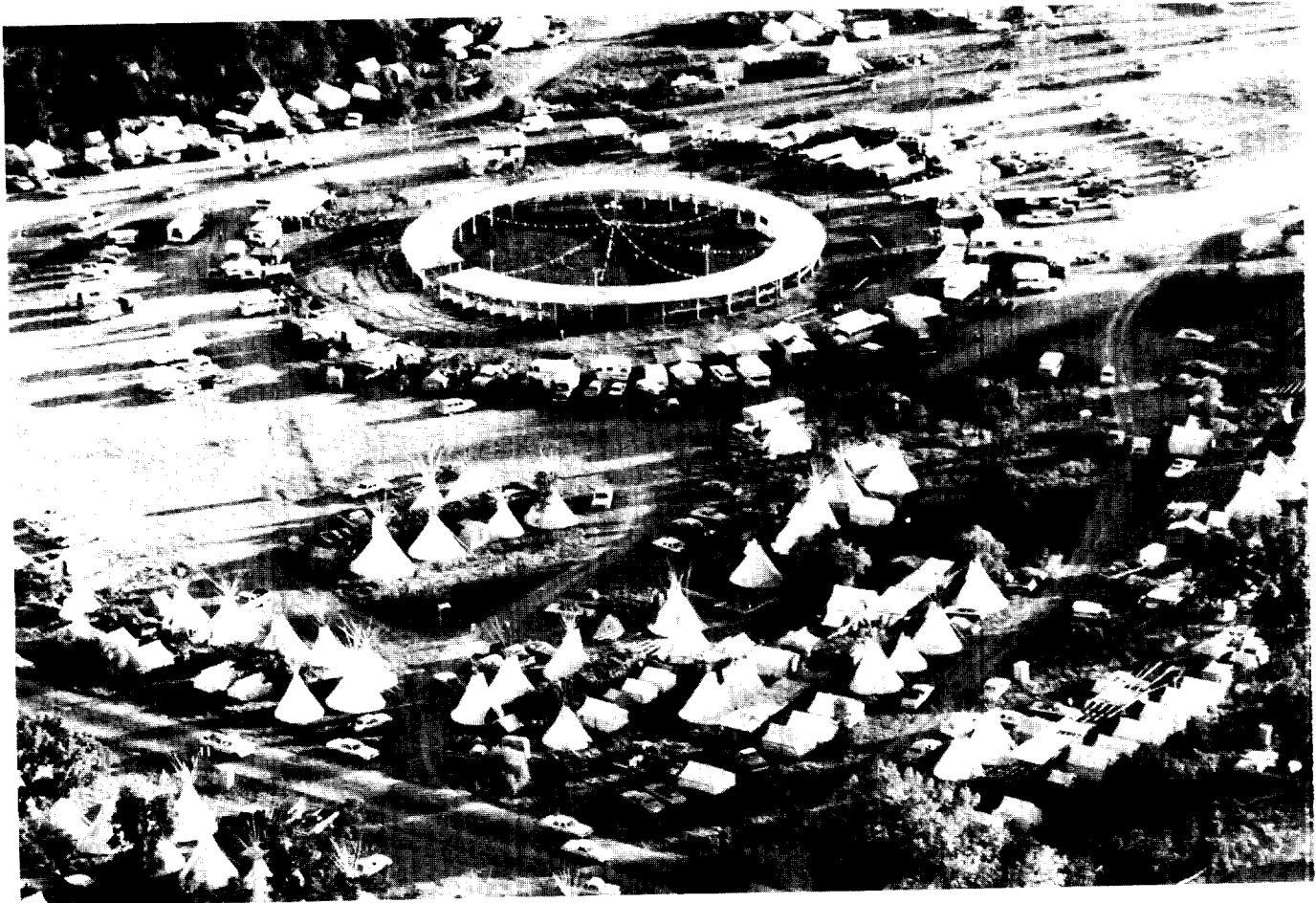
The national historic preservation program as carried out by Federal agencies, State Historic Preservation Offices, and Certified Local Governments incorporates several key concepts such as "historic properties," "historic preservation officer," and "historic preservation" itself. These are defined in law, regulations, and policy, and are generally understood among the participants. These terms are not widely understood among tribes; however, they are sources of concern.

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#### *"Historic Preservation"*

"Historic preservation" as understood by the tribes is different from "historic preservation" as ordinarily practiced by Federal agencies, State Historic Preservation Officers and Certified Local Governments. While the preservation programs of the latter groups are place-oriented, preservation from a tribal perspective is conceived more broadly. It addresses the traditional aspects of unique, living cultures, only some of which are related to places. As one representative put it:

*We all possess one common goal. It is the retention and the preservation of the American Indian way of life. (Michael Pratt, Osage)*



The circle is an important symbol for many Indian tribes representing the continuity of traditional life. In this photograph of the Crow Fair campgrounds taken in August 1979, the symbol manifests itself in the shape of the arena and in the dances that take place there. (American Folklife Center photograph by Michael S. Crummett)

Another representative applied the term "historic preservation" to tribal tradition in this way:

*When we think of historical preservation, I suppose that you think of something that is old, something that has happened in the past and that you want to put away on a shelf and bring it out and look at every now and then. . . . This is really a term that is completely contrary to the way that we need to look at our language for the sake of our people. . . . I was so puzzled by the whole thing that I looked up "historical" and it said "a significant past event." And I'm not really sure that that's the way we want to look at these things at all. In our way of thinking, everything is a significant event, and the past is as real as us being here right now. We are all connected to the things that happened at the beginning of our existence. And those things live on as they are handed down to us. (Parris Butler, Fort Mohave)*

Tradition is living. As Governor Calvin Tafoya, of the Santa Clara Pueblo put it, "It's not history as we see it; it's everyday life."

*These are living cultures with all the tradition and heritage and interdependence with the surrounding world and the dynamics of continuing culture. (Weldon Johnson, Colorado River Indian Tribes)*

Some tribes are designing their preservation programs to respond to their own community's view of the past and its relationship to the present and the future. For example, the Ak-Chin Indian Community is planning an "eco-museum," which will be discussed in greater detail later.

*An eco-museum promotes the sharing of the past, present, and future, and increases the awareness and perceptions of the community to their evolving environment. This evolution--or Circle of Life--encompasses respect for what has passed, the people as well as lifestyles, and also includes respect for the ways of today and the promise of tomorrow. Too much of the curation world has limited respect for artifacts, objects, and specimens in a way that presents Native American life as something only of the past. (Charles Carlyle, Ak-Chin)*

The idea of institutionalizing preservation in a historic preservation office or elsewhere within a tribal government is a non-traditional concept that may need to be adjusted by the tribes that choose to establish historic preservation programs.

*For centuries, cultural transmission was a family task, as were most activities concerning daily living. In this new era, tribal governments have become the service providers like their peers in cities and counties, and thus, as these meetings attest, have come to be seen as the body with responsibility for cultural preservation and transmission. But tribal governments, not having had this role before, need time to adjust to the changing demographics and lifestyles in order to perform those cultural transmission or historic preservation functions [they identify]. (Charles Carlyle, Ak-Chin)*

Some Indians do not want to use the term "historic preservation" or "cultural preservation" at all because, from their point of view, the terms imply to non-Indians that Indians have somehow lost their culture:

*I take personal umbrage at the idea that American Indians need to preserve their culture. I do not accept that. Regardless of where your tribe is or where your tribe has come from you do have a culture and no one can take that away from you. It may be at different stages, but it's still there. My people walked this land long before the Europeans came. We have survived countless wars, we have survived just about every human indignity that can be placed on a people, and we are still here. And we will still be here when I leave. (Bob Christjohn, Oneida)*

Some tribes have adopted the term "cultural resource management" to describe their broad definition of preservation. However, the same term is used by many archeologists and some Federal agencies to describe their archeological programs.

It should be noted that Indian tribes are not alone in regarding preservation as involving more than historic properties *per se*. The *Cultural Conservation* report recommended that:

*. . . folklife and related traditional lifeways [be included] among the cultural resources recognized by the National Historic Preservation Act and the National Environmental Policy Act.<sup>2</sup>*

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<sup>2</sup> "Executive Summary." *Cultural Conservation: The Protection of Cultural Heritage in the United States*. Coordinated by Ormond H. Loomis, Publications of the American Folklife Center, No. 10, Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1983, p. V. *The Cultural Conservation* report was prepared by the American Folklife Center, in cooperation with the National Park Service and in response to Section 502 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

Many State Historic Preservation Officers, too, carry out or would like to carry out programs that go beyond the identification, evaluation, protection, and use of historic properties. Some Federal agencies acknowledge a responsibility to consider more than historic properties. The Bureau of Land Management, for example, defines "cultural resources" to include not only historic properties but "traditional lifeways/values" as well.<sup>3</sup>

The fact remains, however, that the core of the national historic preservation program is oriented to properties, while tribal preservation concerns are much broader.

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### *Holistic Preservation*

From a tribal perspective, preservation is approached holistically; the past lives on in the present. Land, water, trees, animals, birds, rocks, human remains, and man-made objects are instilled with vital and sacred qualities. Historic properties important for the "retention and preservation of the American Indian way of life" include not only the places where significant events happen or have happened, but also whole classes of natural elements: plants, animals, fish, birds, rocks, mountains. These natural elements are incorporated into tribal tradition and help form the matrix of spiritual, ceremonial, political, social, and economic life.

*We do need help in all areas of preserving our culture, our heritage, our language, our burial grounds, and a multitude of things from trees, to birds and animals. And not only that, people. (Mary Proctor, Cherokee Band of Oklahoma)*

*These rocks are very sacred. They are people. They are nations. They are there to help us. Us Indian people. . . . I think that many people think that just plants exist along side of us as relatives and animals. But also the rocks. (Robert LaBatte, Cheyenne River Sioux)*

*The white man doesn't understand that there's an essence in all objects made for people that pass away for them to take with them. (Bonnie Teton, Shoshone-Bannock)*

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<sup>3</sup> Bureau of Land Management, *Cultural Resource Management: Manual 8100*, (Washington, D.C.: Bureau of Land Management), Release 8-38, 1988.



*The tortoise, to all Native American people, has a significance regardless of tribe. This animal represents longevity and long life and endurance. For an animal like that to survive in such a remote and hot and desolate area signifies strength and power. (Domingo Chance Esquerra, Chief Game Warden, Chemehuevi) (Photograph by Domingo Chance Esquerra)*



Tribal representatives at the meetings were concerned that these differences in perception be made clear.

*I think that it is important to let Congress know that cultural resources to tribes are a lot more than what the Anglo society usually regards as historic preservation needs. People in the East think of historic preservation as keeping nice buildings with beautiful facades in place. And that is often as far as people will think about historic preservation. I think it is absolutely critical [to] get the point across that in tribes, there is a much more holistic view of what cultural resources are. (Roger Anyon, Zuni)*

*If anything gets back to Washington, I believe that people there should be aware that the terms that are used to describe these areas of impact . . . are defined differently by the two cultures. (Parris Butler, Fort Mohave)*

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### *The Importance of Language*

At the very core of preservation from the perspective of American Indian tribes is the retention and use of languages. Native American cultures are living traditional cultures in which the past is transmitted orally from one generation to the next. Information about the past, about the spiritual, ceremonial, and natural worlds is passed through language. Without it, a culture can be irreparably damaged.

*The Mohave were told by the Creator not to have a written language. Schools were established, and a lot of children were told not to speak their native tongue. . . . If you can't talk your language, you can't relate to the land. You can't relate to your religion as such. . . . You can't relate to the land where you lived at. If you lose that language you lose that affinity, that tie with the land. It helps you define yourself, your purpose, your relationship to the land. It's very, very important to Indians, to their home base, their religion, and other [elements] that make up their life. (Weldon Johnson, Colorado River Indian Tribes)*

*I am bilingual, but not in an Indian language. I speak Spanish and English. My folks never did have the time to teach me about my own language. But language and culture are very closely related. So we need to intertwine all of these things: the language, the culture, the histories. (William Edmo, Shoshone-Bannock)*

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## Preservation and Contemporary Social Issues

A holistic world view also provides a mechanism for the integration of preservation with other aspects of daily life, particularly life in the modern world and the social problems associated with it for many tribes.

*Nationally, as a group of people, we all seek preservation. I feel that if Congress could understand the impact and importance of cultural preservation, we as American Indians can close the circles that are not complete. . . . Tribal preservation will be the key to enhanced social development and growth for all Indian people. To know what you are, and where you came from, may determine where you are going. (Arly Yanah, Yavapai-Prescott)*

*The problems the youth are having in most cases are related to a cultural vacuum. The high degree of alcoholism is a result of the cultural vacuum that we have. It seems to be perpetuating itself. We must see the significance of these issues as social issues. We need to deal with issues in a comprehensive way. (Parris Butler, Fort Mohave)*

*We focus a lot of energy on the young people because if culture is to survive intact, it is going to be through the young folks. They also need traditional culture in schools to deal with the social problems. It gives them strength. . . . We have tremendous social problems. (Rick Knecht, Kodiak Area Native Association)*

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## Unique Cultures, Unique Approaches

While Indian tribes might face many of the same issues in preserving their cultural heritage, the efforts of each tribe must respond to local tribal needs and should operate according to tribal standards.

*You [Indians] come from very proud backgrounds. You come from very rich traditions. You come from diversified backgrounds, and each of your heritages and cultures is unique in its own right. Each of you has specific methodology to use. Every program is not going to be the same. We need flexibility, spontaneity, and whatever program you build will have to address the needs of your community. (Michael Pratt, Osage)*



*We focus a lot of energy on the young people, because if culture is to survive in tact, it is going to be through the young people. Before our programs, our youngest basket-maker used to be in her sixties. This young lady is just sixteen. (Rick Knecht, Kodiak Area Native Association) (Kodiak Area Native Association Photograph)*



*Mary Jo Webb, a full blood Osage and Director of Indian Education at Fairfax public school in Pawhuska, Oklahoma, is shown working with Osage students in one of the school's Osage Language and Culture classes. Shown in the background to the far left is Osage ribbon work design and traditional symbols of Osage clans. In the middle is a drawing of Chief Pawhuska and a drawing of an Osage woman. All were done in the Indian Education class. (Michael Pratt, Osage) (Photograph by Michael Pratt)*

*We have the right, as tribal facilities, to set our own standards, to set new standards according to your tribe's culture and history. According to what your elders tell you. . . . Don't let consultants or anthropologists or museum people tell you [that] you have to do things the way the profession does it. Because you don't. (Ann Renker, Makah)*

*What a tribal program is about is a tribe establishing standards and policies in controlling its own cultural resources rather than letting someone else do that. (Alan Downer, Navajo)*

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### *Learning From One Another*

Indian tribes want to share ideas and learn from each other about ways to preserve their cultural heritage.

*When we come together again another time as cultural resources people, we can share our charts together and see where the gaps are. . . . It will be our own report to ourselves, The Congress of American Indians. . . . We need to report to ourselves as Indian people, and get encouragement from one another about how similar things are, recognizing the noble differences between us, and not get hung up on those differences. (Ellen Hays, Tlingit/Haida)*

*A significant idea that may hatch from this meeting is the need for a national American Indian or national Native American historical preservation society that would have several purposes. . . . It would be a tribally funded and controlled organization. (Charles Blackwell, Chickasaw)*

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### *Participation As Equals*

Indian tribes are interested in joining the national preservation program as equal partners, in a manner mindful of their government-to-government relationship with the United States and responsive to their beliefs.

*If you are dealing with Indian tribes, you have to deal with Indian tribes on a government-to-government basis. You can't assume that it is okay to subordinate tribal sovereignty to state sovereignty. There has to be a meeting of equals in some real sense and, if there is, then you can go on to cooperation. (Dean Suagee, representing the Miccosukee)*

While tribes are dedicated to preserving their cultural heritage, their approach to joining the national historic preservation program is cautious. They are concerned that if they accept Federal money, they will be forced to abandon their own standards and policies, particularly regarding confidentiality of certain categories of information and their religious beliefs concerning the treatment of the dead.

*Whenever there is Federal money spent, there are taxpayers out there who are always pointing at you with their finger saying ". . . As taxpayers we have a right to know, and we have a right to know what your history is." They're talking about Kootenai history. No one has a right to know that but Kootenai. A lot of the things that come out of those sites in Western Montana are things that no white man should be touching to begin with. They are sacred objects that were put in the ground for a reason. (Pat Lefthand, Kootenai)*

*I hope everything goes all right. I know there is a lot of distrust when an Indian comes to sign an agreement with the government. We're offering our hand in trust: in trust that we can trust you. (George Wahquahboshkuk, Prairie Band of Potawatomi)*

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#### "Keepers of the Treasures"

The responsibility for preserving the cultural heritage of Indian tribes is a sacred trust with dimensions not usually associated with Federal or State Historic Preservation Programs.

*The term historic preservation officer is a real stiff term. It is almost inhumane to think of anyone having that title. And the non-Indian people call them "Ship-O's," even worse. We don't need to call our person that way. There must be a more wonderful word for the keeper of the treasures that we consider to be sacred forever. The Keepers of the Treasures... I can just see it myself in a visual way, and you can too. (Ellen Hays, Tlingit/Haida)*

Many Indian tribes have places of special significance that knit the threads of the past with the present and future. The Cheyenne River Sioux's Medicine Rock, described in the following testimony, is such a place.



*Preston Morrell, full blood Osage tribal elder with sister, Lenora Morrell Hamilton are acknowledged authorities on Osage language and culture. In this photograph they are explaining the importance of retaining Osage language and heritage to the Board of Directors of the Oklahoma Historical Society at the White Hair Memorial on the Osage Reservation. (Michael Pratt, Osage) (Photograph by Michael Pratt)*

## *Our Forgotten Relatives*

I'd like to talk about our forgotten relatives. In 1950, the Army Corps of Engineers was involved in building the Oahe Dam on the Missouri River, a proposed business to develop hydroelectric power for the State of South Dakota with all the profits to go to the non-Indian. But what really happened, and historical records do not show this, in reality, the building of this dam brought about the major destruction of our historic sites on the Cheyenne River Sioux reservation. The environment was destroyed. Our culture was destroyed. Our sacred cottonwood trees. The farmland. The homes for the wildlife. This was all taken away from us because they wanted to build a dam. It not only affected our reservation, but many other reservations along the Missouri River.

In the path of this oncoming destruction was a rock. A sacred rock. The name given to this rock by many is . . . "the Medicine Rock." The Medicine Rock, ten feet wide by twenty feet long, has long been a sacred object for the Lakota Sioux of the Cheyenne River Sioux reservation. It was said that this rock was placed here by the Great Spirit. And he placed his handprint upon the center of this rock. For in our times of need, we could pray, we could place our hand upon this rock and this handprint of the Great Spirit. Also upon this rock were five footprints of an Indian maiden, plus hoofprints of a buffalo and various other markings.

Many people, the archeologists, have tried to say that these were carved on there like petroglyphs. But we believe that rocks of this type are sacred, sacred to the Indian people. And just the message and the meaning of them has been lost to the people of this generation. Many Indian mothers came here and placed the clothes of their children upon this rock, with prayer ties, to help their children to become well. The bands of the Sioux Indian warriors stopped there to pray for victory before going to war. It was said that they prayed there before going to the Battle of the Little Big Horn.

In 1954, the Gettysburg fire department, a small non-Indian town east of us, got permission from a young non-Indian landowner, upon whose land the rock rested after [the] reservation was [created] by the Federal Government. They wanted to move this rock from its resting place before it was to be inundated by the rising flood caused by the dam. They wanted to move it to Gettysburg, the non-Indian town. They wanted to put it there for a tourist attraction. They did so. And they got the State Historical Society to place a marker there saying that the Indians were savage people who went there to pray at this rock.



They took this rock and they put it along the highway, next to an old rundown cafe to try to get tourists to come and buy their food. The town children took paint and they poured it on this rock. They went over and they scratched names on the sacred rock. They did everything to destroy this rock which was sacred to the Sioux people. It's been there for many years, and with the education of the White society, the Sioux people forgot about this rock.

And just last year, the Gettysburg city council decided to make a museum around this rock. They said to save it from further destruction from the elements. They built a museum around this rock, and it is to be owned by the Gettysburg city council. . . . They are going to use it to try to bring money to the non-Indian town again.

Well, our tribal chairman, Mr. Wayne Ducheneaux, has requested me to investigate how we can get this rock back to our people and bring it back to the reservation and the people where it belongs.

There are many sacred rocks in this country. They may be found on top of buttes in the Dakotas. The National Park Service and the archeological societies don't realize the importance of these sacred rocks. When some of the people of these societies came over there to investigate these rocks, they broke and chipped away these rocks and took them away to museums and universities.

These rocks are very sacred. They are people. They are nations. They are there to help us. Us Indian people. We have to go there to pray to them. We have to be very careful and stop four times in a sacred way before going to these rocks. I think that many people think that just plants exist along side of us as relatives and animals. But also the rocks. .

I'm glad that all of the people are trying to go back to our roots, to our cultural values and I hope that one day we will all gain this back because I believe that the creator has given us a spiritual power that no other people has on this planet, to become some of the greatest people in this universe.

*- Robert LaBate, Cultural Center Director  
Cheyenne River Sioux*

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## Section 2: Preservation Issues and American Indian Policy

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### *Reservations, Removal, and Ancestral Lands Off Reservations*

Over the past centuries, non-Indians have acquired title to nearly two billion acres of land in the United States that was once controlled by American Indians. Today, Indian tribes and individuals own only around 52 million acres. This transfer of title occurred in a variety of ways: through military defeats, sales, cessions, and theft. Indian title to land on the Atlantic seaboard had been all but lost by the time of the American Revolution. By 1858, the United States had acquired title to over 580 million acres of Indian land. Lands not ceded or sold to the United States were "reserved" for the Indians, and became reservations.<sup>4</sup>

From the 1830s to the 1850s, thousands of American Indians were removed from their lands east of the Mississippi River into areas not yet settled by white people west of the river. The Indian Removal Act of 1830 was officially a voluntary "exchange of lands." Indian tribes were powerless to oppose the policy of Congress, however, and while some tribes or portions of tribes remained in the east, most were ultimately coerced into leaving.<sup>5</sup> During this time, the Five Civilized Tribes (the Cherokees, Chickasaws, Choctaws, Creeks, and Seminoles) were removed to the Oklahoma Territory where they established their own governmental, educational, and economic systems, only to have these powers stripped away by the turn of the century.<sup>6</sup> Many other tribes were removed, often like the Five Civilized Tribes, into environments very different from their ancestral homes.

Reservations are areas of land, usually within former Indian land holdings, set aside for the exclusive use and occupancy of individual tribes or groups of tribes. Although reservations have existed since colonial times, between 1850 and 1880 they became a key element in Federal Indian policy. Prior to that time, tribes were moved westward into areas not yet settled by whites. As those areas were settled or opened up to mining, farming, and other extractive activities, western

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<sup>4</sup> Stuart, *Nations Within A Nation: Historical Statistics of American Indians*, (New York: Greenwood Press), 1987: p. 9.

<sup>5</sup> Kickingbird et al., *Indian Sovereignty*, (Washington, D.C.: Indian Legal Curriculum and Training Program, Institute for the Development of Indian Law), 1977; reprint ed., 1983: p. 19.

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, *Indian Tribes: A Continuing Quest for Survival*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office), June 1981: p. 20.

tribes and tribes relocated from the east were pressed into treaties and contained on reservations.<sup>7</sup> The policies of removal of American Indians and their containment on reservations have created several important preservation issues.

**1. Many, if not most, historic properties significant to Indian tribes are not on Indian lands.** Reservations on ancestral lands represent only a small portion of the areas historically important to the Indian tribes that live on them. Many, if not most, places of historical significance lie outside the boundaries of reservations, perhaps thousands of miles away on lands now controlled by private parties, local and State governments, and Federal agencies. Despite great distances and long periods of separation, American Indians often retain deep emotional ties to the ancestral lands that were ceded by treaty or lost in war. In those ancestral places lie the graves of their ancestors and other significant sites that the tribes are seeking to protect.

*With the removal period we were separated from our historical and traditional home sites in Mississippi and Tennessee and other parts of the South. . . . The vast majority of Chickasaw history is in the South, and that's where the tribe is looking now to stop the pillaging of tribal graves. (Charles Blackwell, Chickasaw)*

**2. Removed tribes have special preservation issues to address.** The removal route itself represents a chain of places associated with a turning point in the history of many tribes.

*We have left a trail of historical places across half of the United States. We don't have any way to really go back and recognize those places and do anything about them. (Mary Proctor, Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma)*

*Since we have been removed from the Great Lakes area, we have some burial grounds between Kansas and the Great Lakes that are unmarked. We feel that in some way in the future we want to recover them. We call it the "Trail of Death" because of what happened to the tribe. (George L. Wahquahboshkuk, Prairie Band of Potawatomi)*

The Poarch Creek worked closely with the State Attorney General's Office to protect ancestral sites in Alabama before their reservation was officially established in 1983.

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<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19.



The sage plant is sacred to the Cheyenne River Sioux and has a variety of ceremonial and medicinal uses. These sage fields extend into lands managed by a Federal agency. Beyond the fence, missile silos have been dug into them. (Photograph by Robert LaBatte, Cheyenne River Sioux)

*One of the things most important to us was the removal of the Creeks from Alabama in 1832-36. Our problem is that the reservation for the Poarch Creek Band has just been re-established in 1983. Now prior to that, when all the tribes were there--the Creeks, Choctaws, Cherokees, Chickasaws and the Seminoles--the lands were all over the State of Alabama. What we plan to do is to re-establish the presence of the Creeks in Alabama, and one of the things we were fortunate to accomplish, back in 1978, working within the Attorney General's Office, was to prosecute people who went in and dug into grave interment places. One non-Indian landowner, of a site that no one had discovered, worked very closely with us through the support of the Attorney General's office. That site was excavated and we were fortunate enough to be the recipients of those artifacts. So many times, this doesn't happen. So, I know that it is important to us all that we . . . make our presence known within the States that we live in. (Buford Rollin, Poarch Creek)*

**3. Tribes retain cultural ties to ancestral lands.** Many tribes today want to take cultural and symbolic possession of their ancestral lands even if they cannot exercise title as such. For example, the Colorado River Indian Reservation is surrounded by ancestral tribal lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management. The Colorado River Indian Tribes view themselves as retaining symbolic possession of these off-reservation lands; as a result, their historic preservation program is active both on and off the reservation.

*Our starting point in our cultural resources program is that we never did give up ownership of cultural resources off the reservation. (Weldon Johnson, Colorado River Indian Tribes)*

The Chemehuevi take a similar perspective:

*A lot of the land is not on the reservation. We call it ALOR, "Ancestral Lands Off the Reservation," and we patrol [it] as a courtesy to BLM [Bureau of Land Management] and to the Fish and Wildlife Service, because of their limited staff. (Domingo Chance Esquerra, Chemehuevi)*

**4. Many tribes believe that they must reconnect their people with these lands by physically returning temporarily, if not permanently.** Once "returned" they believe they must work to make others aware of their presence and their connection to their ancestral places.

*My tribe has lived for 300 years away from land base where I now work (The Ganondagan State Historical Site). The Nation brings children to the site and I tell them, "from the time you left home, two and a half hours ago, you never left your original territory. . . You have to take possession of this." . . . Once we were sitting at a picnic table and an elder remembered a story he had learned as a kid that he didn't realize was related to this place until he was there. All of that helps to reconnect, to re-establish your oral tradition and roots there. (Pete Jemison, Seneca)*

*We have made seven trips out east, historical trips. This summer a group came to us and told us that they wanted to take a trip to Stockbridge, Massachusetts, to some of our original lands out there, and would we help them plan it, so we did. In August, 28 of us made a bus trip out there, and what I had them do is write a one-page summary of what impressed them. (Dorothy Davids, Stockbridge-Munsee Band of Mohicans)*

The summaries were presented to the tribal council in a booklet, "Our Trip to Stockbridge, Massachusetts, August 21-29, 1989." In that booklet, Dorothy Davids wrote:

*It seemed to me that those who were making the trip for the first time were discovering that we are a people with roots, people with a history. Though we have been uprooted and moved many times, we know who we are. We are the people-of-the-waters-that-are-never-still and the people of the Many Trails.*

*I wonder if we'll go again next summer.*

Steven James Davids wrote:

*While at Stockbridge, the two moments that I will never forget are the tobacco offering we did at our ancient burial grounds and climbing Monument Mountain. Wes Gardner and I left the beaten path and climbed the mountain straight up through boulders and rocks. When we finally reached the top, we were out of breath and my chest filled both with pride and sorrow. Pride because my ancestors chose a most beautiful place to call home and sorrow because they weren't able to keep it and we weren't able to keep all of the rich culture that was ours.*

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## Assimilation

An assimilationist movement developed during the early 19th century in conjunction with the policies of Removal. A Civilization Fund was established by Congress in 1819 to support missionaries and benevolent societies in their attempts to "civilize" American Indians. Starting in that year Congress regularly appropriated \$10,000 a year to support Christian missionaries whose purpose was to remake Indian culture.<sup>8</sup> Not only were mission stations established east of the Mississippi to serve the tribes that remained, but there was a "massive movement of missionary stations to [the] west of the Mississippi."<sup>9</sup>

Basic to the concept of assimilation was the eventual elimination of American Indian culture and its replacement with the religion, world view, values, and behavior of Western European-based white society. The assimilationist policy of forcing Indians to abandon their culture was strengthened immeasurably by the establishment of Indian boarding schools between the 1880s and 1930s. Three generations of Indian students were separated from their families and forbidden to use their native languages or practice their customs and beliefs.

The following testimony *Assimilation of Natives in Southwestern Alaska* describes the assimilation process, its effects, and its implications for preservation in southwestern Alaska.

The result of assimilation is widely perceived as a loss of cultural identity.

*In my tenure as a tribal council member, I have gone to different reservations across the country. There are some tribes, as I enter into the reservation, [in which] I can sense the cultureness of those people. There are others that I go to, I don't sense that at all. So, I guess that a lot is lacking today. (Billy Yallup, Yakima)*

The Great Sioux Nation was the center of much assimilation activity. In 1889, the Nation was physically divided into six generally noncontiguous reservations, and Federal authorities vigorously enforced prohibition of the Ghost Dance, a religion which promised cultural revival. The final suppression of the Ghost Dance at the Battle of Wounded Knee is still regarded by Indians as a violent symbol of the government's commitment to the destruction of Sioux culture. At the same time, however, Wounded Knee is seen by many as a symbolic low point from which rebuilding began.

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<sup>8</sup> American Indian Policy Review Commission, *American Indian Policy Review Commission: Final Report*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office), Volume 1, 1977: p. 53.

<sup>9</sup> U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, *Indian Tribes: A Continuing Quest for Survival*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office), June 1981: p. 19.

### ***Assimilation of Natives in Southwestern Alaska***

So about a hundred years ago, in about 1880, there had been several Christian boarding schools, very effective then. And the seminary of the Russian Orthodox church was also very effective in bringing about change in education, in language and belief. So those who were very interested in surviving and felt that they had to survive, knew that to do that they had to understand the new culture. And that is what they set about to do, a hundred years ago. . . .

They were committed people. Serious people. They believed that in order to survive, you had to understand the way of the white man, and you had to understand the language of the White man, and become educated that way. They were serious also in their belief in Russian orthodox and the protestant religion. So the [message of the] leadership in our state was survival in the white man's world. So by the time I came along as a child, I was the third generation of converted people, using the English language and living among other people.

For about 80 years, our effort was to survive in a new civilization. And the belief, though it was strong, was not very complete. In about the 1960s, after living this way as citizens of towns in Alaska, and sending our children to U.S. government schools and private church schools, there was a continuing loss of the values of what it meant to be a tribal member. Continuing loss.

All that was complicated by the fact that the contagious diseases, primarily tuberculosis, played a devastating role. 600% higher in Alaska than in the lower 48 which was also suffering through the loss of young people and old people. So our tradition bearers, or who might have become tradition bearers, . . . were sick and died, many of them. Not to mention smallpox. And the stories could be told region after region of the losses of human lives because of those diseases.

On top of that you add another ring of change: the second World War and the draft of all able bodied young men. We had a lot of people who were 4f. They had tuberculosis of the spine and all over. Lungs. . . . Our able-bodied nephews [were] very important to native tribes. . . [and] were going to be replacing their uncles. . . . [But] uncles were sick, grandfathers were sick and the able-bodied nephews went off to war and were gone all over

*I come from the land of Crazy Horse. . . . We feel that Wounded Knee, . . . the tragedy there, . . . was probably the last major conflict with the U.S. cavalry and the sacred hoop was broken then. And we feel that if we can work together and mend that sacred hoop that we will have a renaissance. And that's what we are talking about. Start in again and get the stone ages past us and get out to the modern world. (Frank Means, Oglala Lakota)*



the world for years. When they returned they went to boarding schools. . . .

So, to talk about what we were going to preserve was really against the social attitude of the time. All over. Even among the elders. They believed the church leadership and the educators were indeed the leaders.

All of this is to say that our cultural values are very weak. Very weak. We knew we were Native, but just what did it mean to me to be tribal? What values did that represent? Just to be Indian and to say your Indian name was a real accomplishment. To say what your Indian tribal name was, among us, a very important step.

So by the time the program of Community Action and the Anti-Poverty Program in the '60s, we were ready for it in Alaska. It was the means by which we could address our own social issues to know the political process and to get together on issues. At the same time, the old organization of leadership said "We think it's all right now to bring out our ceremonies at certain occasions." And with those ceremonies was the language, heretofore forbidden. That was 1964, 65, 66.

So, in the late 1960s, I'll use myself now as an example, if you will excuse me, I was working in a dormitory at Mt. Edgecumb a former military base. And we were all graduates of boarding schools, like the Bureau of Indian Affairs boarding schools. It is our cultural heritage. It has some good and it has some real negatives about it. But it is our history.

When the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act was signed we became tribal shareholders. It has taken a lot of our energy, a lot of our leadership, it has taken a lot of our nephews, a lot of our uncles, because it was a war and they were warriors there at the beginning.

We have a developing relationship [with the white man's world] and I think we understand the principles much better than we used to.

- Ellen Hays, *Tlingit/Haida*

*Wounded Knee is a place of sadness and regret but for all its consequences and implications the incident did not extinguish the hope of the Indian people. Today, with Wounded Knee almost a century past, they know that their pine ridge lands is home and pursue their lives in the belief that better days will come. (Wounded Knee National Historic Landmark pamphlet prepared by the South Dakota Historical Preservation Center, n.d.)*

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### *The Allotment System*

Assimilationist policies were greatly strengthened by the Dawes Act of 1887, which established an allotment system for Indian lands. Under this system, Indian families were to receive 160 acres each, and single individuals 80 acres, to be held in trust for 25 years. "Surplus lands" on reservations were sold to the government, then opened up for homesteading.<sup>10</sup> From 1887 to 1934, when allotment ceased, some 86 million acres were allotted, comprising more than half the Indian lands remaining at that time.<sup>11</sup>

Loss of a tribal held land base had tremendous effects on tribal cultural systems. Indian families were frequently forced to live checker-boarded within white society. The Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla of Palm Springs, California, are an example:

*We were thrown into the 20th century by the fact that every other section of our reservation was given away to a non-Indian. So we had to develop. (Mildred Morris, Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla)*

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### *The Indian Reorganization Act of 1934*

The process of allotment was halted and some governmental powers were restored to Indian tribes by the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934. In the Act, Indian tribes were allowed to "organize for the common welfare," to adopt a constitution and bylaws for doing so, and to establish business councils. The Act provided many institutional and political advantages, such as the establishment of tribal councils and political organizations that could represent the tribal interests to Federal and State Governments and in courts.<sup>12</sup>

Representative government and business corporations generally are non-Indian institutions, however, and some tribes have chosen not to use them when designing preservation programs. The Makah Nation, for example, has a Constitution established in 1936 under which official tribal activities take place. However, when the Makah established the Makah Cultural and Research Center it became clear that many of the decisions that needed to be made would be best made by the elders of the community, not by elected governmental officials or tribal business corporations. The Charter for the Center now requires that the Center's

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<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21.

<sup>11</sup> Cornell, Stephen, "The New Indian Politics," *Wilson Quarterly*, 1986: p. 115.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 117.

Board, its governing body, be made up of representatives from the twelve families that make up the traditional, pre-1936, governmental system. The Charter also provides for a system to pass seats on the Board to appropriate family members.

Similarly, the Makah Nation was advised by non-Indian consultants to capitalize on the fabulously rich and beautiful archeological collections excavated from the buried village at Ozette and turn the Center into a tourist attraction to bring money into the community. The tribe, however, took a different path:

*We were beginning to find out that the professional community did not have the same standards as our village did and our elders did for culture and preservation. We were told, "Advertise, get tourists in here. You need to make lots of money, so advertise." But our elders and other tribal members said, "We're not ready for that. Our community has not adjusted to the idea of a museum yet. We would rather forego money for awhile and let our people bond to the idea." (Ann Renker, Makah)*

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### Termination

During the 1950s, tribes experienced the final major expression of assimilation policies. Some tribes were removed from Federal supervision and Federal responsibility, and some jurisdiction over tribes was transferred to the State governments. In 1953, under Public Law 280, California, Minnesota, Nebraska, Oregon, and Wisconsin were granted jurisdiction over most criminal and civil matters on Indian reservations within their borders.<sup>13</sup> The scope of jurisdiction the States obtained pursuant to Public Law 280 has been narrowly defined by the courts.<sup>14</sup> By 1962, however more than 100 tribes, bands, and rancherias had been terminated. Over 12,000 Indians lost not only formal tribal affiliation, but also their physical and social ties to their tribes. Some Indian people were physically relocated from reservations into urban areas where many became residents of ghettos.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Strickland, et al., eds., *Felix Cohen's Handbook of Federal Indian Law*, (Charlottesville, Virginia: Michie, Bobbs-Merrill), 1982: p. 362-368.

<sup>14</sup> American Indian Policy Review Commission, *American Indian Policy Review Commission: Final Report*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office), Volume 1, 1977: p. 200-203.

<sup>15</sup> U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, *Indian Tribes: A Continuing Quest for Survival*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office), June 1981: p. 23.



Xwe'Lemi>/Chosen (Lummi Language) Instructor Bill James teaches oral and written language at the Lummi Community College. (Photograph by Lynn Dennis-Olsen reprinted with permission)

*We were terminated in 1956, and that termination not only terminated us as a federally recognized tribe, but terminated our culture and everything related to that. Survival for life became more important than survival of culture at that time. We were restored in 1977. We're really, for all practical purposes, culturally starting from scratch to put our tribe back together. We have 2000 tribal members scattered across the country. We have a lot to learn about ourselves and pass this on to our youth. . . . My brother Bob was one of the people who hung on to a dance group during the termination years and was instrumental in the restoration of the tribe. His family and a few other families have tried to hold the culture together, but it's dying off on us. . . . That is the vision: out of the white man's world back into the Indian world. (Phil Rilatos, Confederated Tribes of Siletz)*

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### American Indian Languages

The years of assimilation, during which the use of native languages was discouraged or forbidden, have threatened the survival of many American Indian languages. In many tribes only a few elders speak their language fluently and know the "higher" levels of language used in oral tradition and the conduct of ceremonies.

*At the end of the month we will be going into our mid-winter ceremonies. But the reality for us is that we see the people who can carry those on, the people who are traditional speakers, that they are diminishing in numbers. (Pete Jemison, Seneca)*

*This is not something to wait for until you have funding. Don't wait for funding for oral tradition in general. Go out there and grab it with both arms and stuff it into any file cabinet you can find, because the elders are not going to last forever. And every time one of them passes away there is knowledge that is lost forever from thousands and thousands of years ago. (Rick Knecht, Kodiak Area Native Association)*

Few tribal members in their 40s and 50s are fluent speakers and, for that reason, many tribes are not able to learn and pass on ceremonies and oral tradition. Many of today's tribal leaders, elected officials, and tribal council members do not speak their native languages.

*I am a very fortunate person in that I was able to get a college education, a degree in history, and a great experience in my adult lifetime. And it was all possible because my tribe set aside some money and some of its resources and insisted that some of its own men went to college. I was one of the lucky men to do that. However, my grandmother who just passed away last year, at 102 or 104, and my aunts and uncles consider me illiterate. They consider me illiterate because I cannot speak the language. (Bob Christjohn, Oneida)*

Many of the children of this age group who went to college in the 1950s and 1960s have been raised in homes where their native language was not spoken. The interests and values of many in this "TV generation" are closer to modern American popular culture than they are to tribal tradition.

*The first thing we had to do was turn to the elders. There is a whole generation that the traditional culture was not passed on to. They were raised on TV. That started about World War II and now people realize that they need this knowledge. There are not many elders left . . . maybe 30 to 40 with this knowledge. (Rick Knecht, Kodiak Area Native Association)*

Tribal leaders know that if their language and their religion, ceremonies, and unique world view as expressed in oral tradition are to survive, they must bring together elders and young people 18 years old and younger. These age groups are the targets of most tribal language programs described in detail in **Section 3** below.

Respect for the wisdom and knowledge of elders as primary culture bearers is a basic concept in American Indian cultures.

*I shake your hand from the bottom of my heart. Each and every one of you. And I learned a lot of things here. Number one, we are special people. Number one is respect. All our elderly people is who you respect. No matter where they come from. As I look around, not so many old people left. And that's where I get my information from. If it weren't for the old people, we wouldn't be here. (Paul Little, Devils Lake Sioux)*



Alice Pratt teaches Hupa language at the Hupa Day Care Center, a department of the Hoopa Valley Business Council. (American Folklife Center photograph by Lee Davis, 1982)

At the same time, the need to interest the young in learning language and traditions is clear.

*. . . [We need] some of the younger people [to] come forward now and be interested in our culture, and our heritage and our language and be our warriors as such. Because that's the only kind of warriors we have today that we can use to keep our culture and heritage alive. (Mary Proctor, Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma)*

The passing of tradition from elders to the young is in itself traditional in American Indian culture. The language and cultural programs of the Osage Nation were modelled on the work of a traditional Osage Society, the No-hnon-sheen.

*Our programs grew from a society of old men, who before they knew it were gone, and are only a handful today. In that time, there were no neophytes, only a few. There were no people to ask, "What are the stories? What are the legends? What are the responsibilities that we have?" They weren't there, except a handful. And it fell on certain people's shoulders to try to retain that. I was initiated into the Ponca clan when I was 10 years old. . . . The responsibilities of the No-hnon-sheen was the elders and the children, and that is what our program is based on. (Michael Pratt, Osage)*

Even with tribal commitment, planning, and funding, it is still very difficult to maintain and use Indian languages.

*One of my main concerns is language. The eastern Cherokees have words that the western Cherokee don't have. The western Cherokees don't have as many words as the eastern Cherokees do. Not only that, a real controversial subject is that there are things going on today because of white society that Indian tribes have no words for. They have to use a descriptive term, and then they have to continue with their descriptive terms until it gets much too complicated. This causes language problems and difficulty for people like me who understand the language but who don't speak the language. It makes it real hard to learn. (Mary Proctor, Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma)*





*"Spike" shows off his drawing lesson in an Osage language class at White Hair Memorial on the Osage Reservation. He began learning the Osage language when he was 3 years old and now speaks some Osage and sings his native songs. (Michael Pratt, Osage) (Photograph by Michael Pratt)*

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### Section 3: American Indians as Objects of Study

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#### *Buying, Selling, Collecting, and Exhibiting Tribal Objects*

At this time, more historic tribal objects produced by tribal members for tribal use are held in private and public collections owned or managed by non-Indians than are held by Indians themselves. Some tribes have been left with little or no physical evidence of their traditional culture.

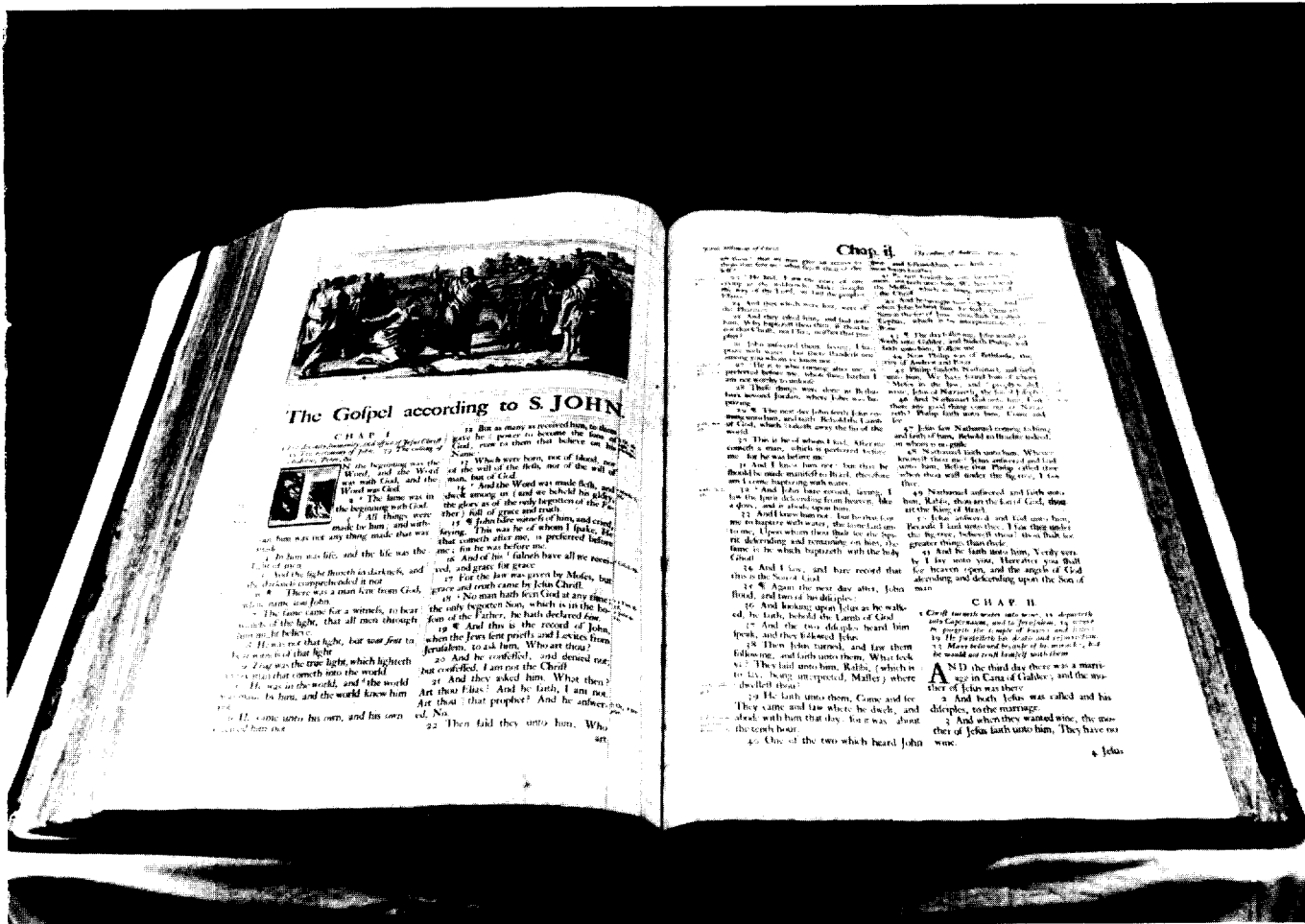
*There are very few traditional artifacts left on Kodiak Island. Nearly everything is in museums thousands of miles away in the Smithsonian. There are objects all over Europe in Finland, Germany, and Russia that nobody in the Native community has ever seen. (Rick Knecht, Kodiak Area Native Association)*

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#### *American Indians in United States History*

In general, the contributions of Indian people to the history of the United States and the rest of the world is not widely understood.

*We have to build the bridge to non-Indians so that they recognize that the Indian people in this country participated and played a very important role in the formation of this country. With the exception of beef, and a few other products like wheat, every vegetable and everything that you eat is ultimately from Native American people. Potatoes, tomatoes, I mean if you are of Italian descent, you didn't have it until the Chinese brought you the noodles, and you didn't have it until the Indians brought you the tomatoes. . . . We have definitely been part of this culture. We have had a major influence on other cultures in the process. Indian people on the whole have been ignored [by historians], but what is worse than that, Indian people have been identified historically as being in the way. Not only have we been ignored, but when we have been studied we have been seen as being in the way of progress. It's a two way street and it's only been going one way for too long. (Bob Christjohn, Oneida)*



The Stockbridge-Munsee consider this Bible, now at the Mission House in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, to be theirs. In August, 1989, members of the Stockbridge-Munsee went to see this Bible on a trip from their reservation in Wisconsin to their ancestral lands in New England. (*The Berkshire Eagle*, Pittsfield, Massachusetts photograph reprinted with permission)

The Kodiak Area Native Association launched an aggressive set of cultural programs to re-introduce traditional skills and arts. They are described in **Section 4**.

Objects that have moved out of Indian control include not only those produced by tribal members, but also those given to the tribe by non-Indians that are valued by non-Indians for their historical or financial value.

*It's been fair game and a common practice that started even before people were out of their homes during Removal, taking of things that were Indian. Sotheby's auctioned off -- for \$45,000 -- a Washington Peace Medal to Chief Piomingo, who was the chief of the Chickasaw during the Revolutionary Period. The tribe began the effort to recover the medal a year ago. The white people who had it put it underground, and it surfaced at Sotheby's. So it looks like we are going to have to go into litigation with Sotheby's. The State of New York has very good statutes on the books to help. It will probably cost the tribe as much to recover the medal as the people [at the auction] paid for it. . . . A railroad crew deliberately plowed into Chief Piomingo's grave site and took the Revolutionary War buttons and things that George Washington had given him in addition to the medal. (Charles Blackwell, Chickasaw)*

*We have been trying to recover two Bibles that were given to our tribe by the chaplain to the Prince of Wales in 1734-45 or something like that. We have been working on that for a good 20 years. What we did was the research for that, and we have had the trustees [who presently own the Bibles] come out to see us. And we are going to get our Bibles back. We don't have them. We'll get them. (Dorothy Davids, Stockbridge-Munsee)*

Tribal objects may have meaning that is often not apparent to non-Indians, who might value them for aesthetic, anthropological, financial, or other reasons. While American Indians had elaborate trade networks, many other objects were not intended to move out of the tribe as barter, exchange, or purchase. Tribal objects created for ceremonial and social uses have meaning and significance to tribes that cannot be measured in dollars and cents. They have meanings that can only be understood by appropriate tribal members.

*The Seneca-Iroquois National Museum was given a large collection. They had a policy from the beginning that they weren't going to have sacred objects. But they have baskets that come from California Indian tribes. The people who come from California and still make baskets are the ones who know what their significance is. Those are the people who should be brought to the*

*museum to talk to somebody who is in charge of restoration and who will be handling those baskets. . . . [They should] share their knowledge with them [the curators] so that they understand the material that they have. Maybe the people from California need to see some of these baskets so they can remember how to make them. (Pete Jemison, Seneca)*

Some tribal members think that tribal objects, sacred or not, can only be appropriately cared for by those responsible for such duties within the tribe. Sacred objects should not be in collections where they are handled by people other than the appropriate spiritual authority.

*When you get to the level of sacred objects, they shouldn't even be in collections with a curator. They should be back among the people who handle and care for them. They were given to us, each one of them was given to us by our Creator and they are for us. They are not for the general public. (Pete Jemison, Seneca)*

The very concept of a collection of tribal objects seen, studied, and cared for by outsiders can be viewed as being inconsistent with tribal tradition. Some tribal objects were never intended for all tribal members to see, handle, or use. Some could only be seen and touched by men, others only by women. Some objects were only seen and touched by members of particular tribal societies, organizations, or families. The fact that public collections exist is a source of social problems in Indian communities.

*The concept in the white world is that "everyone's culture is everyone else's." That's not really our concept. Our concept is there were certain things given to us that we have to take care of and that you are either part of it or you are not a part of it. If you are not a part of it, then you don't have to worry about it. But if you are a part of it, then you have got to be actively taking care of it on a yearly basis, or on whatever basis it is taken care of. We think that it's the ones out there that are uncared for by us [that] are causing problems with our own communities internally. (Pete Jemison, Seneca)*

Curation is not only a problem of outsiders caring for objects that they have no right to touch; curation also changes the character of an object by artificially prolonging its life.

*There are some things that deteriorate through use, and that is the way they were made. Nobody ever thought that these things would last forever because of the nature of the materials they were made from. If you are using it actively, it will wear out. Some of the parts you can replace, take care of it and put it back together again. There are some things, like wampum belts though, that are made of material that we consider to be very permanent. Wampum Quahog clam shell is really very permanent; if you step on it and break it, then you can restring it. That does require some care. It does require that you replace the leather that holds it together. It does require that you store it in a place that is safe, that nobody is going to go and steal it if they have the opportunity and someone is unscrupulous. Right now, if we had the opportunity, we would have a facility on the reservation to store these things and take them out when needed. That does involve controls: like climate, humidity and things like that. (Pete Jemison, Seneca)*

### **Indians as Museum Professionals**

I am a museum person, and recently I was interning at a museum that has several articles in there that, as a woman, I shouldn't even be looking at. But then, there were three of us Indian people there, and we decided we thought that we were kind of crazy being in that vault, touching those things and feeling everything coming at you. Spirits. Sad ones. Happy Ones. Confused ones. So we came to the bare fact that it takes a lot of guts for a museum person to be trained, especially an Indian person.

We hope one day that all Indian tribes will try to train at least one Indian person in how to take care of objects such as that. Because . . . the only way we're ever going to get them back is to train our own young people. Train them in the ways of your medicine. Train them in the ways of respect, in touching articles, protecting themselves.

It was very hard for me to work in this vault that had articles that I have seen from almost all of your tribes. Things that belong to you. And here I was carefully and cautiously handling them, putting them away and coding them and doing condition reports, but feeling sad that they were not where they belonged. But I know that it is sad to say "try to get back these articles," because I am a museum person too, and feel that having artifacts is another way of teaching and educating.

Here we are as tribes saying "We want our articles back. We want our people back. We want the dead back. We want to reinter them. We want to take care of them in the right way. We're being desecrated even today." The only way you are going to be able to do that is by training special people. You don't have to look at people who are traditional because right here in the heart we are all Indians and we all have that feeling. So train your young people. Send them to those big museums. Let them be the ones to take care of those articles until those facilities are going to return them to you. And that way you'll feel good in your hearts that they are being taken care of in a good way before they come back home to you.

*- Bonnie C. Wutunee-Wadsworth, Shoshone-Bannock*

Despite the fact that curation changes the character of tribal objects, many tribes want to establish tribal museums staffed by tribal members trained in curatorial methods. These tribal curators, however, also need training from appropriate tribal experts in order to learn the appropriate traditional methods used to care for and handle various kinds of objects.

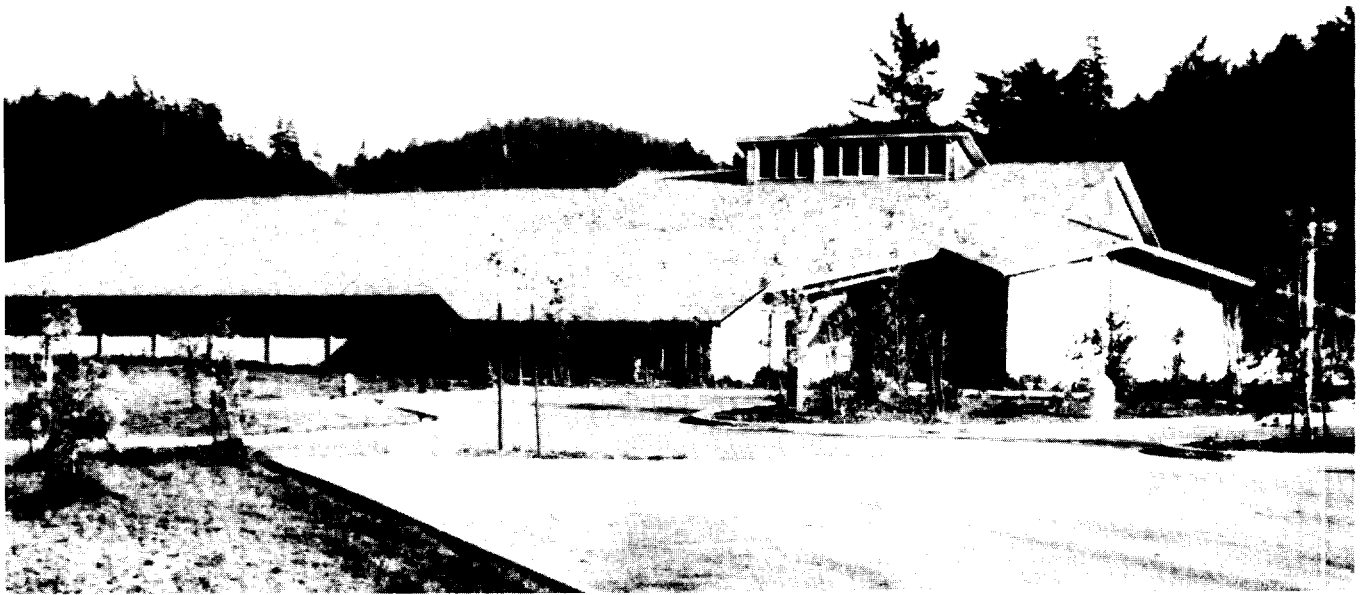
Curatorial and conservation training programs for Indians need to be sensitive to the belief that particular kinds of objects, especially those made for the dead, are infused with spiritual qualities and that there must be special precautions for, if not prohibition on, handling human remains.

*What must be considered is not only will they [Indian students] get a degree, but that they will have the sensitivity to the material that they are handling. They should not be forced to handle human remains to get a graduate degree. If that is against our belief, then they should not have to go through a program that requires them to handle human remains. That shouldn't be a requirement. (Pete Jemison, Seneca)*

More and more Indians are requesting the return of tribal objects, and more and more institutions are, if not initiating the repatriation of objects, at least responsive to requests.

*The Chicago City Council recently informed us that they have some artifacts of the Potawatomi that they want to return. And I think this is all recently started, and I think the Smithsonian has some things they would like to return as well. They will be sending those artifacts back to the tribe within a couple of years . . . and we want to prepare for that time. (George Wahquahboshkuk, Prairie Band of Potawatomi)*

When institutions and agencies are willing to return tribal objects or human remains, they often establish conditions that are difficult, if not impossible, for tribes to meet.



The Makah Research and Culture Center houses some of the extensive collections from the ancient Makah village of Ozette. The Center is also the largest employer of elders on the reservation. Elders participate in all stages of the Center's programs. At the same time, the Center actively trains young tribal members in curation, conservation, museum management and administration, and other preservation related disciplines. (Makah Culture and Research Center photograph)



*In order to effect the removal of Ak-Chin artifacts, the Federal agencies require of any tribal group that they have not only appropriate storage space, but professional staff to inventory, accession, curate, and exhibit their collections. A well known fact of life within Tribal America is that Indian individuals may possess all the cultural knowledge, historical knowledge, administrative and artistic ability to do this, but for socio-economic reasons lack a formal education and thus lack certification. Certification makes it easy for the rest of the world to deny a tribe access and ultimately possession of their artifacts for lack of "qualified staff." (Charles Carlyle, Ak-Chin)*

The critical issue from a tribal perspective in all of this is the control and management by native peoples of their cultural patrimony. Once that is established, tribes may be willing to share exhibits or displays of tribal objects on their own terms.

*Much of the acrimony perpetrated between Tribal people and historical societies, anthropologists, legislators, etc., is rooted in the collection, analysis, interpretation, and display of artifacts, objects, and specimens. Much of the negative discussion becomes moot when a community, through ownership, determines the ultimate placement, interpretation, and exhibition of its artifacts. When a community is comfortable with placement, analysis, and interpretation, it wants to share. From sharing, the whole society benefits. (Charles Carlyle, Ak-Chin)*

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#### *The Human Remains Issue*

It has been reported in the previous section that objects prepared for and disposed with the dead have a spiritual essence; they are sacred objects. Human remains themselves are sacred objects, and can only be handled by those with the proper spiritual authority.

*I have to prepare myself to handle those things. I am a medicine man. I am able to do that; not just anyone can be able to do that. I see a lot of things that are just sitting on tables, being tossed around, that to my people are sacred. The very people who are scientists haven't the foggiest idea what they are handling and yet they won't go back to the tribes to find out what it is, how those things should be handled. Whether they should be given back to the tribes or if they should be placed in a box in some university, in the basement. And when the tribes ask for those things back, they*



*When the Grand Coulee Dam was built they removed hundreds of graves. When I was first elected to the Tribal Council in 1970, I requested the bodies of our ancestors be sent back for re-burial. We buried them in cemeteries near where they were found in about 5 different locations. We placed everybody in separate boxes. It is sad, but we continue to have to do this in the name of progress for dams, roads, buildings, bridges, pipelines and whatever. (Andrew Joseph, Colville Confederated Tribes) (Colville Confederated Tribes Museum photograph)*

*say "no, you don't have the proper facilities to take care of them."  
We live this. We work with these people day in and day out, and  
this is how they are treating our sacred objects. (Pat Lefthand,  
Kootenai)*

Human remains in public and private collections and the disturbance of graves by grave robbing, vandalism, development projects and archeological research is a subject of intense concern to American Indian tribes. It is only recently that Indian grave sites in some States have been afforded the same respect as white cemeteries. In others they are still not considered to be in the same category.

*Some of us like to refer to them as cemetery mounds rather than effigy mounds, because in the modern times, the 1990s, it seems to carry a little more weight to the non-Indians when you put the word "cemetery" rather than saying the words "burial" or "burial site."  
(Charles Kingswan, Winnebago)*

*I've been involved in archeology and relocation of Indian graves ever since 1968. [It] used to be my father's duty as a medicine man. He was 67 when I was born and 97 when he passed away; I was 30 at the time, but he used to take care of the burials and things of that sort. When I was a young man, there was a lot of grave robberies. . . . A lot of our skeletal remains--skulls--were put on fenceposts and shot with 22s and different things like this. A lot of pot hunters were out there in our graves to take our moccasins, our beadwork, our elk teeth, whatever we had buried with us. This happens, has been happening for many, many years, and is pretty much still going on in a lot of cases. (Andrew Joseph, Colville)*

In an attempt to halt this practice in the State of Washington, Indian tribes have worked together to increase the penalty for disturbing Indian burials to a felony.

While Indian tribes may want the benefits of development in communities and ancestral lands, they do not want development at the expense of destroying their cemeteries.

*We want to be in the way of development if they are going to disturb our grandmothers. We must be in the way if they are going to disturb our grandmothers. (Bob Christjohn, Oneida)*

The spiritual journey of the dead is interrupted when ancestral graves are disturbed and bones removed from their resting places. Spirits of the ancestors thus disturbed can harm tribal communities.

*It is the things that are out in private collections and museums in public collections that are not being cared for that are the concerns of our elders. When they think about those things and they think about the things that are out, and in non-Indian hands, they say that those things bring problems into our own communities. Some internal problems we have in our communities are a result of the fact that we may not have been aggressive enough in going and getting those sacred things and bringing them home, or going and getting those remains and bringing them home. (Pete Jemison, Seneca)*

The return of human remains from collections to tribes is fraught with difficulties. Frequently, human remains are returned to tribes only after prolonged and antagonistic negotiations. Institutions are suspected of withholding remains and objects that they fear will be reburied.

*When we go to get those remains back in the proper place from where they came from there's always some pieces of paper missing. There's always some burial artifact missing that should have been with the human remains that some archeologist is trying to hold on to. I don't know what sort of meaning it has for them. It shouldn't have any. (Pat Lefthand, Kootenai)*

Tribes are usually asked to demonstrate their physical and cultural affiliation with human remains as a condition of repatriation. Because this is often impossible, tribes see the condition as an artificial and deliberately placed obstacle to repatriation.

*All the issues about, "Well, you can't identify them as yours, specifically," those issues are not [as] important to us as [the issue] that the remains are reburied. (Pete Jemison, Seneca)*

The very nature of some tribal burial practices presents another obstacle to the repatriation of human remains. Sometimes very little physical evidence is left that indicates where burial sites are.



Lummi tree burial site showing plank markings in trees.  
(Photograph by Al S. Johnnie reprinted with permission)

*We are in the process right now of trying to preserve our grave sites on our usual and accustomed grounds. We have a great problem with them because we have a hard time establishing that these are grave sites. We have a hard time proving to the outside that these are our grave sites because many times there is nothing material there. There is nothing in the ground because sometimes our people were buried in the trees in canoes. This has deteriorated, but we know through oral history passed down to us that these are our grave sites. We are having a hard time up in our San Juans because we have a lot of development companies coming in there and wanting to put development over our grave sites. . . . (Florence Kinley, Lummi)*

The return of human remains often raises agonizing questions for the elders who are responsible for caring for them.

*Now here's the thing that the elders were really concerned about. When somebody comes to you with something that has been out of the ground for a long time, how much information do you have about where it came from? How much of the remains that you have now are there? Are there still remains over there where they really came from? Are we taking this individual and dividing him in half and putting half over here and half over there? Are you sure that these are even Indian remains or are you just giving us someone who died 10 years ago and getting us to take care of him? These are questions that people ask, questions that the chiefs ask. (Pete Jemison, Seneca)*

Repatriation and reburial of ancestral remains is a complex process within the tribe itself that may well tax tribal energies and strain tribal resources.

*What happens is that you get into a much more complicated process than you might imagine. It is complicated from the elders' side because the elders take the lead once the human remains are coming back. And they tell you how they are going to take care of them. That may involve you with more people than you would have thought would be involved. It will involve more time than you think will be involved, and it will involve someone to actually be the coordinator for all that. All this is going to happen.*

*Then it has to be that one of the communities opens up and says, "This is where we will put these people. They will rest here." But lots of other questions have to be answered along the way. It might involve the physical anthropologists, the archeologists, the record of a museum that is near you. It could involve the SHPO. It might involve a private individual; it might involve a museum. (Pete Jemison, Seneca)*

*So those were all the steps, and then the elders asked that I notify the local paper, The Buffalo Evening News, and tell them what we had done. They said, don't give them the details of where we put it, don't give them the details of who did it, but tell them enough so that they know that we care enough that if the remains were available we would take them back and take care of them. (Pete Jemison, Seneca)*

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### *Archeological and Physical Anthropological Research*

Most of the human remains and tribal objects in museum and university collections have been collected by non-Indian scientists in the course of conducting archeological or physical anthropological research. Tribes view this research from a variety of perspectives. Some tribes reject the very practice of archeology as a legitimate way to learn about the history of their tribe. History is to be passed on through traditional means, not "destroyed" through archeological research that is of value to archeologists but not to Indians.

*We don't care to have archeologists on our reservation. We think our own people are our experts. And when you go onto Kootenai territory and you start digging, and I don't care if you are a scientist or not, if you start digging in a Kootenai site, you are taking a page out of the history the way we know it. And that is what we are saying. Any disturbance of these sites, to me, is destruction, whether you are a scientist or not. Archeologists are always trying to dig into sites. There is one site of special significance to the tribe. But because we're saying that, the Corps of Engineers is getting more and more insistent, insisting every day that they must dig that site up for what is there. They don't know what the hell they're looking for. Only that we showed interest there, so they want to dig there. (Pat Lefthand, Kootenai)*

### *Zuni Archeological Program*

In the mid-1970s, the tribal council noticed that with every project on the reservation, archeologists came in from the outside and did projects, took the materials away and studied them, and that was the last that was heard of the project. So the tribal council decided that they would initiate an archeology program at Zuni. The archeology program has now been in existence for about 15 years.

The archeology program works on contracts both on and off the reservation to support its activities. We are completely self-funded, and have been for the last 15 years. Besides working on archeological contracts, the archeology program has worked for the tribe on its land claims cases. The Zuni Tribe filed its land claim cases in the late 1970s, and the archeology program worked with tribal elders to find shrine locations and to identify the lands that were used by the Zuni Tribe from the time the United States appropriated the area. The archeology program has also been working on a land damages case that the tribe has against the U.S. Government for damages to the land through erosion, cutting, logging, and mining where no royalties were paid to the tribe. In that case, the damages to archeological sites alone through government inability to mitigate impacts to archeological sites, the value of those damages is five million dollars. The archeology program also worked with the tribe on a recent case that was on trial in Phoenix on the Bare Foot Trail from Zuni to Zuni Heaven, to identify where the trail goes. [We used] archeological means to demonstrate the longevity of the trail. [This] was another angle that was used in the court case, as well as tribal elders speaking about how many generations of Zuni have used this trail. We've also worked in the tribal water cases in water suits against the State of New Mexico, demonstrating through archeological surveys the longevity of Zuni water use around the Zuni reservation and on the Zuni reservation. And this work is still underway. We have mapped farm fields that were used by the Zuni during this century, for example, demonstrating that Zuni agricultural use is much greater than government irrigation projects would lead one to believe.

The tribe has had a reburial policy now for the last ten years. When burials were found on the reservation, the archeology program went to the tribal elders and to the tribal council and asked them for guidance about what should be done about burials in the Zuni area. The tribal council directed the archeology program that the burials should go back in the ground with all of the grave goods, and this has been the policy of the program ever since that time. We are also the archives for the tribe, and we have been working with Andrew Wigget from New Mexico State University on a grant. . . . Andrew has taped stories from the elders that are played on the radio now in Zuni, and that is part of the cultural resources program in Zuni.

*Roger Anyon, Zuni*

The Zuni Archaeology Program (ZAP) conducts archeological research on and off the Pueblo. Here, Jeffery Waseta and another Zuni member of ZAP excavate a prehistoric pit structure in the path of road construction on Navajo land. (Zuni Archaeology Program photograph)





Some tribes see the need to protect archeological resources themselves. They have established archeological programs of their own, recognizing that there are some productive results of archeological research and that the research itself presents fulfilling job opportunities for tribal members.

*Back in the 1950s when they built Chief Joseph's Dam, we ran the anthropologists and archeologists off our reservation. I can remember that pretty well. I was a young man at the time. I really didn't want them to have anything to do with us, myself. Unfortunately, what happened is that many of our graves became exposed. Many of our skeletal remains rolled down the river. Many of our archeological places became pothunters' paradises with people collecting arrowheads, spear points. We continue to chase out the anthropologists, but some of our tribal members are becoming anthropologists. We give lectures in anthropology. We have archeology students, museology students, and hopefully, one of them will be replacing me. (Andrew Joseph, Colville Confederated Tribes)*

*We have a small program . . . all we do is just issue permits for various programs. But we want to establish and develop our own programs in cultural resource management, have our own archeologist to do our own surveys and get some of the money that off-reservation consulting firms are receiving, and bring the economy back to the tribe and provide job opportunities for our people. (Cecil Antone, Gila River Pima)*

*People are beginning to realize that the testimony of the tribal archeologist can be very helpful in land claim cases and that archeological data about past land use complements testimony by tribal elders in a way that has benefited Native Americans in land claims court. A lot of Yakima people who were very skeptical at first about what I was doing, have become very interested [as they see that] there is a lot to contribute from the archeological community in reconstructing past land use that is helpful, not only in court. (Greg Cleveland, Yakima)*

Because archeologists who work for tribal programs must conduct their work in a manner consistent with tribal values, they are sometimes at odds with the non-Indian archeological community.

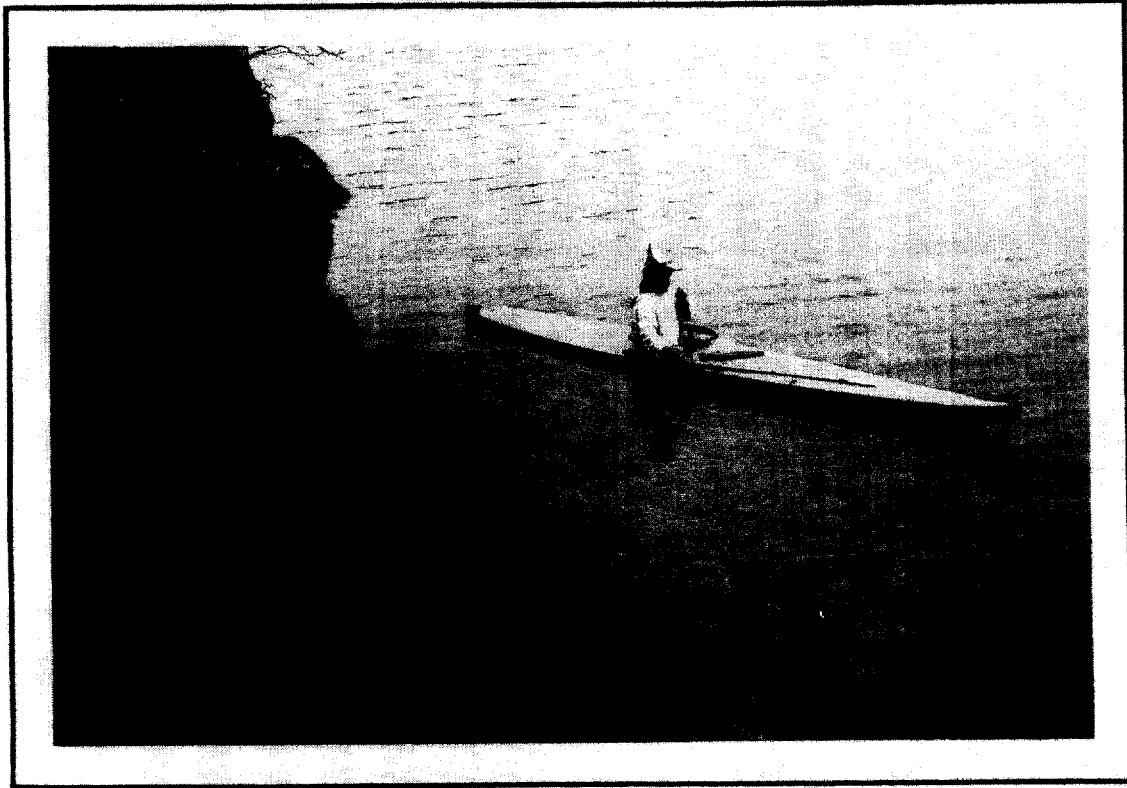
*Representing the tribe at meetings like this and representing the tribe as a professional archeologist myself within the professional community is difficult. [The relationship between the two is] strained; there are no two ways about it. There are some archeologists who quite simply disagree with a lot of the policies of the Zuni Archeology Program. I see it as my job, first of all. While I'm in Zuni I feel I have to learn as much as I can about the Zuni attitude and ways of thinking about archeology and cultural resources in general. [I must learn] what are cultural resources from the perspective of the Zuni Tribe. And secondly, I feel like I must try to transmit these ideas and values as well as I can, not being a tribal member, . . . to archeologists, so they can gain a greater understanding of what tribal needs are. And it's really difficult, but I just keep plugging away at it and slowly but surely chip away at the wall. (Roger Anyon, Zuni)*

*Not all the time do you end up as a tribal archeologist having a firm relationship with your colleagues in academe or in the Federal agencies. But for the most part, I think, over the years the barriers are being broken down. I think there are a lot of archeologists in the State of Washington that have a lot of respect for the tribal programs that they did not have before. (Greg Cleveland, Yakima)*

The Kodiak Area Native Association sees the importance of bringing scientists and the Native community together as colleagues to establish research goals and priorities and to find ways to combine the knowledge of each.

*We have also had conferences every year funded through the National Endowment for the Humanities where the Native peoples and the scientific community can come together and discuss issues and work on team building. This way we can begin to work on turning these guns around. For years, scientific research has been used to make decisions about people's lives. I think if the Native community has more control over the research design, more input into it, we are going to get better information, better research. And the goals can be turned to better serve the Native community. In this way we are trying to build some teamwork. You've got to have it between the Native community and the academic community. There are two whole worlds of knowledge there that need to be synthesized before we really will be able to understand Native culture. (Rick Knecht, Kodiak Area Native Association)*

NUAAN AUGUST 18-MEK20-MEN 1989 KATURCIIQUKUT  
LITNAU'ITEKLLUKI CUUMILLALLRET QAYAIT CASTUN CANATAAQAIT



Organized by the Kodiak Area Native Association with support from the Alaska Humanities Forum and the National Endowment for the Humanities, a federal agency.

SKIN BOATS OF ANTIQUITY CONFERENCE  
AUGUST 18-20, 1989, KODIAK, ALASKA

As this poster shows, in August 1989, the Kodiak Area Native Association sponsored the "Skin Boats of Antiquity Conference" with support from the Alaska Humanities Forum and the National Endowment for the Humanities. Local kayakers were joined by kayakers from the Soviet Union and Greenland and from the lower 48 States. The conference provided the opportunity for outstanding displays of traditional skill and for academicians, kayak designers, kayakers and Native elders to meet and talk at the same level. (Kodiak Area Native Association photograph)

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## Section 4: Tribal Preservation Program Elements

Participants at the meetings identified a number of elements that they felt must be part of tribal preservation programs. Many of these are not generally addressed today in the historic preservation programs of States and Federal agencies.

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### *Preserving and Maintaining Oral Tradition*

As tribes face the crisis of losing elders, and with them, tribal tradition, they must learn how best to document and pass on the traditional knowledge which elders have always held. This almost always involves nontraditional methods of documentation, and raises issues about how this information will be used in the future.

*We have to preserve the addresses, thanksgiving speeches, those things that are part of the ceremonies, now. And we have to come to terms with how we are going to do that. Are we going to put it on videotape and make it available to our youth? Are we going to train people in oral tradition? How are we going to do it? We've been talking about it and talking about it, but our steps in that direction have been a little too slow. (Pete Jemison, Seneca)*

Tribes want to design their cultural preservation programs in ways that permit the continued operation of traditional ways of managing information. In some tribes this means creating systems that reflect traditional hierarchical social structures. For example, in the Makah Nation, the Makah Cultural and Research Center works to record oral tradition on audio tapes as part of the creation of a tribal archives. Unlike most non-Indian archives, however, the audio tapes will not be available to the general public, researchers, or even other tribal members unless permission is expressly given by the contributing elder. This is because in the traditional information management system of the Makah Nation, different kinds of knowledge are the property of particular age, sex, and kin groups. The Center reasons that if they are truly to preserve Makah oral tradition, they must also preserve the cultural traditions by which it is transmitted. The Executive Director of the Center described this as a decision by the elders on the Center's board to "move ahead and go back."



Nora Barber, a Makah elder, teaches traditional Makah songs and dances to children preparing for the annual Makah Days celebration. (Makah Culture and Research Center photograph)

*As a cultural institution, we would make a big mistake if we start to institutionalize and make decisions for the families who are the traditional units of government in the Makah community. We make sure, when it comes to this kind of information, that the rights of dissemination and access remain with the families and remain with the elders. Our elders are not afraid of death. What they are afraid of is having their words and their things used wrong later on.*

*In our case, in Makah country, knowledge was not available to [just] anyone. And it was not available to everyone. And that's the way it has been since the beginning of time. Men were only allowed to know some things. Women were only allowed to know some things. And then even within a family there might be only one person at a time who could have access to information. We feel that it is not our responsibility to change that system. As a cultural facility it is our job to make sure that system stays in place.*

*Tribes also must make very firm decisions about how they record their oral histories and the access within their own archives. Consequently, in our archives, regardless of what the Society of American Archivists says, regardless of what the American Association of Museums says, we have the responsibility to protect the ancestral information management system and we do that in our facility today. When an elder agrees to do an oral history for us [he or she must specify] if the information is ever to be committed to writing and if this information is ever to be published. And I know it might sound morbid to some people, but we make an arrangement for that elder for a beneficiary in their family, . . . who, when [the elder] passes on, will then have the responsibility to tell us what to do with that information.*

*I think in the Indo-European community that, as regards to information, things have been switched around some. In the Indo-European community many people believe that the person that writes the information down owns the information. In our case that is not correct. It's the person who speaks the information that has control over that information. (Ann Renker, Makah Nation)*

The representative from the Seneca Nation faces similar issues with regard to the return of a collection of sacred songs, traditionally the property of specific societies within the Nation.

*We're looking at music. We had a lot of people come to us, even before the '20s up through the '30s and '40s, and tape record our music on our reservations. The recordings have since disappeared*

*into the Library of Congress, Smithsonian Institution, Folklife Museum, Folklife Library at the University of Indiana. We know where they came from, so we wanted copies to be sent to the Ganondagan State Historical Site to be put in an archival setting. These are sacred songs. So I began to get tapes, and I went to the Societies and asked, "Is this a song you still have or is it one you lost? If it's one you have, is it important that you have a copy?" They might answer, "We don't need it, but you need to keep a copy of it so that we have access to it." (Pete Jemison, Seneca)*

Some elders and knowledgeable people want or need to be compensated for their contribution to an archive or a cultural program. In some tribes, it is itself a tradition to pay for knowledge passed on to a tribal member not in a traditional position to receive it. In others it is not, and when demanded, is unseemly.

*. . . It was my niece who said this, "If you want my skill, you're going to have to buy it." I didn't think much of that, and I still don't. Here we are trying to restore our culture and they want us to buy it back. That's what termination does for you. When I said it terminated our culture, it literally did that. We got into a buy and sell things mentality rather than "here I am, this is what I have to offer and whatever I have is yours." (Phil Rilatos Confederated Tribes of Siletz)*

Others see the necessity and appropriateness in a modern economy to compensate those who contribute to a tribal archives or preservation program, as long as it is done respectfully.

*If you have a sound tribal economy, which not all tribes do, you have some financial flexibility to give people incentives. You can assist the elders in a respectful kind of way, when they come in to share. . . . If you approach it in a tribal way, and mold it to your own tribal concepts of sharing, it can generally be done. (Charles Blackwell, Chickasaw)*

*I think the reality is that you do have to compensate your members for what they know, because they have to make a living. If they have a living off the reservation, or even if they work at the tribe, you have to compensate them. And then you almost have to compensate the people to give them free time to learn. [If] you've got young men who are pursuing that direction, but are doing it only*





*Martin E. Red Bear*

# Northern Plains Tribal Arts '88

September 23, 24, 25 Sloux Falls, South Dakota

The winner of the Northern Plains Tribal Arts competition receives a \$500 prize from the Governor of South Dakota. This poster by Lakota artist Martin E. Red Bear advertized and commemorates the 1988 competition.

*when the ceremony is going to happen, maybe you need to give them compensation so they can learn on a full time basis. We are desperately holding on to what we have, and if we are going to see it survive for all of us Seneca people, we might have to use things we haven't used before. (Pete Jemison, Seneca)*

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### *Developing and Preserving Tribal Arts*

The preservation and enhancement of traditional arts and crafts is very important to Indian tribes. They approach this in a variety of ways, for example through competitions and school programs.

*The third annual competition of Northern Plains Tribal Arts will be held this fall. [It includes] fine arts and tribal arts. Tribal arts is working with leather, working with bones, making dolls, anything that was a tribal art. And please don't come up and say "Oh, don't you mean craft?" No! We mean tribal art, as it really is an art form. The Governor of South Dakota offers a \$500 cash prize for best tribal artist at the show.*

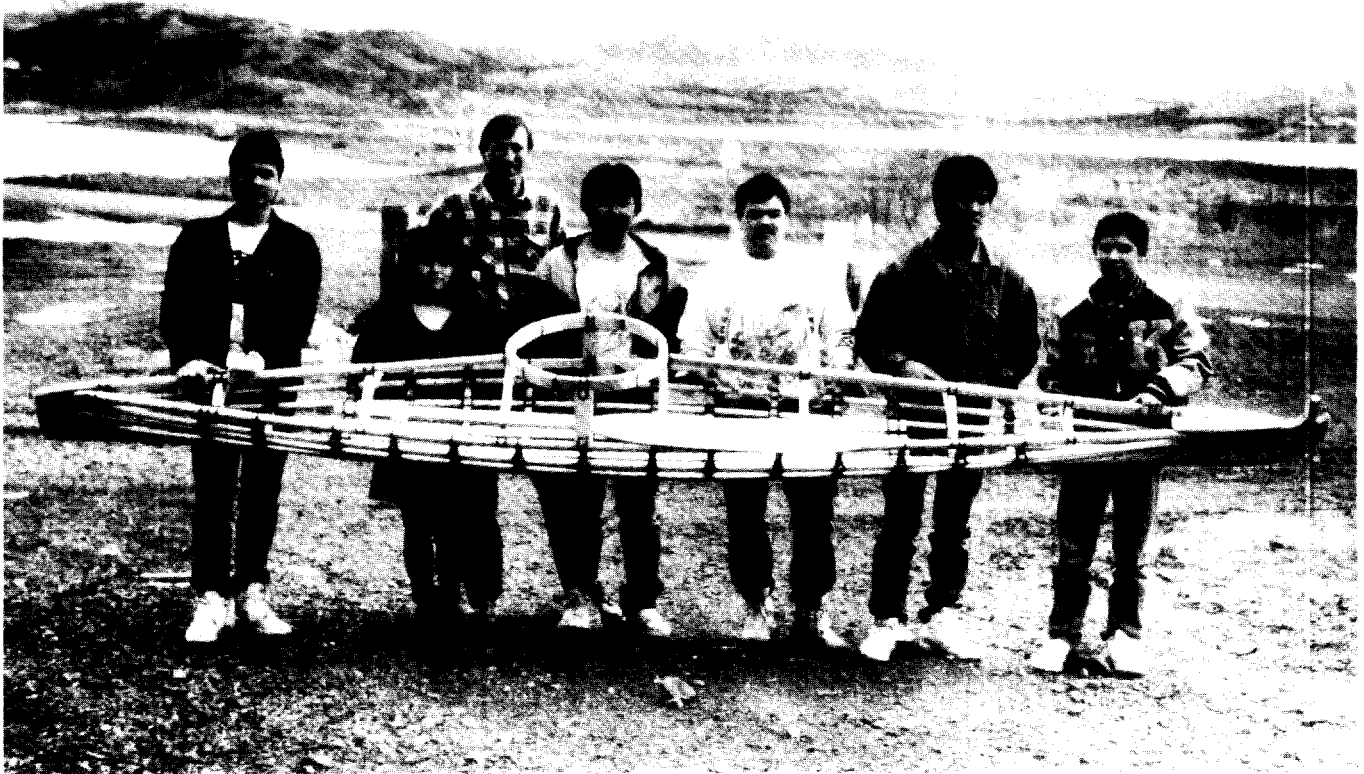
*In South Dakota we want to have an "Indian Living Treasure," which is some artist either in fine arts, the tribal arts, or in the cultural and language arts to be declared as an "Indian Living Treasure" for the entire state. [The recipient] receives a plaque and support for continuation of his or her art form; but no funding for the latter is available yet. (Brother Simon, Oglala Lakota)*

Tribal arts have a distinctive character that comes from tradition that is held within and reinterpreted by the artist.

*In today's world the American Indian still retains a lot of the ways of doing hide articles, like teaching our people how to do the carved masks and such. They're not replicas. They are made by the actual Indians themselves. So that's the way you are going to have to go. If you want to fill your museum, you teach your people that craft or that art again, because they are American Indian. They're not making something that is a hundred years old, it is within them. It's all education. Like one lady said, "Knowing the past is important." So, by knowing your past you see your future, because it's replicated all the time. It's just done differently. (Bonnie Teton, Shoshone-Bannock)*



The Lummi elder's program provides classes in Lummi traditional cedar bark basketry. (Photograph by Al S. Johnnie reprinted with permission)



Kayak making and use had almost died in Kodiak Island by the 1980s. However, these young men and women from Kodiak learned to build this kayak frame in the summer of 1988. The following summer, each built their own kayak. Despite lucrative offers from museums, they were so proud of their new skill that they refused to part with their kayaks. (Kodiak Area Native Association photograph)

In Kodiak, Alaska, the Kodiak Area Native Association (KANA) has worked within the school system to re-introduce traditional arts and crafts. They see benefits that extend beyond preservation of material culture. These programs help build self-esteem among the youth, and help to preserve traditional values as well as the native arts.

*Elders help in our schools by doing presentations. It had been years since kids and elders really had a chance to interact, especially on traditional culture. You can talk about traditional crafts and so on. Those are just the trappings of culture. The real restoration goes on when you have elders and youth together re-learning some of these traditional skills. (Rick Knecht, Kodiak Area Native Association)*

KANA visited museums around the world to locate articles from Kodiak and had color slides made to use in their school programs.

*It really paid off to get photographs, color slides of these items and use those in our educational efforts. A lot of young people on Kodiak had never ever seen a piece of their own traditional artwork, and we had to remedy that as fast as we could. We used these slides as models in school programs. We had the school shop classes, instead of making furniture like they [normally] do, start to recreate some of these old crafts. Some of these things, like this bent-wood hat, hadn't been made in more than a century. Traditional games were a nice way to involve the younger children who couldn't use the shop tools. Traditional games also brought the elders and other members of the community together, because they are a social event as well as a cultural event. We bought traditional tools, crooked knives and adzes, for the schools for their use in carving. And some of the first masks carved in at least a century are being produced now.*

*Kodiak has a long tradition of using the Kayak. Kayak manufacture and use was a real art and was the basis of the sea mammal hunting economy of the island. Today, in the high school classes, we are rebuilding kayaks and working with people from around the Arctic to relearn some of these traditional skills. The first year one frame was built; the year after that, every kid in the class built his own. There was a museum in Europe that offered to buy this for a huge amount of money, I think it was ten thousand dollars, and the kids were so proud of their creation that they refused to sell it. (Rick Knecht, Kodiak Area Native Association)*

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### *Use of American Indian Concepts in Cultural Resource Management*

Tribes believe that tribal concepts should be integrated not only into their own preservation efforts, but also into those of States and Federal agencies and the non-Indian professional community.

As we have seen, the Makah Nation sets its own standards for preserving traditional information.

*Even though we have had lots of anthropologists and lawyers and other people tell us that the policies we use to protect and safeguard tribal information aren't what standard museums do, we respond by saying that, "We are not a standard museum. We're a tribal facility, and we establish our own standards." The Makah nation is a separate nation. And if people do not like our policies, that is not our problem. If they do not like the way we do things, they do not have to come and see us. And if researchers do not like the way we handle information, then [they can] go somewhere else to get their information. I think it is very, very important that tribes think ahead when it comes to oral history information to make sure that tribal values are protected and [that] elders know there is a place where their information will be treated as sacred and important as it is in their own family. (Ann Renker, Makah)*

The Lummi have worked for years to communicate their values to State officials responsible for managing Lummi ancestral lands off their reservation.

*The Lummi Tribe has developed a management concept for managing cultural resources based on Lummi tribal values. About seven years ago, the Lummi initiated a program called "Values Project Northwest." Its aim and objective is to enculturate State land managers who are responsible for clear-cutting forests that are used by traditional tribal people so that they have a better understanding of where the tribe is coming from in their world view and their reality. It has worked to the extent that old growth forests will be managed according to tribal values and an understanding of those values. The Lummi Tribe has stopped the government from clear-cutting on 12,000 acres of old growth forests. The project has changed the way of thinking, the world view, of 25 key managers. When people from institutions put aside their institutional roles and personalize their experience, organizations change. (Kurt Russo, Lummi Tribe)*

Institutionalizing preservation in tribal governments means that each tribe needs to establish its own criteria and processes for selecting people to work in its program. These criteria and processes must themselves be consistent with tradition.

*So the Yakima Tribe, realizing that [this] is something to be preserved, asked the tribal council to initiate a program for the tribe known as the cultural resources program. In 1982, this began. The tribal council was urged by the elders of the tribe that it is very important to retain the culture. In 1985, it came down to a point of knowing what type of people you have to have within that type of program. So they set up criteria for the selection process for that person to hold that office. In 1988, February, I was put through the mill of being selected for this position that I hold today.*

*On the Yakima reservation we have five major longhouses. At these longhouses are the chiefs, or religious leaders, that are selected by their own longhouse groups that have that same background. So 23 people applied for this job. And you sit before these five chiefs and you answer questions related to your culture. . . . So what I am saying is that the program of the Yakima Tribes is something that should be shared by everyone here. . . . It is the number one item of what has to happen. (Billy Yallup, Yakima)*

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### *Paying for Preservation and Generating Revenue*

The ways in which tribes obtain funding for preservation are detailed in **PART III**. Tribes approach the problem in a variety of ways. Most use funds appropriated by their tribal council. Others charge entry fees and hold fundraisers. Some tribes, like the Zuni and Navajo, charge permit fees for researchers and agencies and run their own contracting operations for archeological survey and excavation. Many tribes compete for Federal and other grants.

In general, tribes perceive that they are under-represented in State, Federal, and private programs for preservation and the arts.

*The reality is that in the State of New York, Indian programs are the least funded programs, the lowest funded programs of any programs for the Arts statewide. We rank below Hispanics, we rank below Asians, we rank below Blacks, and obviously we rank below white Americans. We rank below others in the National Endowment of the Arts. (Pete Jemison, Seneca)*





### *Tribes and Cultural Tourism*

One of the projects I'm working on not only with my own tribe, but with five tribes across the country, is a concept called "nature-based cultural resorts." In almost all tribes that are still in their original historical environment, and even those that got removed, there is a deep cultural appreciation of the natural environment. The concept of having cultural resorts [is to] give people from outside the tribe an exposure not only to the culture of the tribe but to the tribe's appreciation, as an extension of its culture, for the balance of nature. When tribes create tribal wildlife preserves and parks, they can set a new standard for environmental protection in the United States. . . . A lot of tribes have land that has not been disturbed as much as other lands, so the concept of nature-based cultural resorts fits.

If they [tourists] came to Florida, to the Seminole Tribal Resort, where they could have cooking classes in traditional Seminole food, lectures in Seminole history, play golf, swim, . . . have fine dining, that's how you make your money. That's why you call it a resort. That resort concept, it seems to me, is a way to capitalize on this, to make money out of it, without sacrificing the cultural integrity of the people. So if you have language classes, and you may only teach them once or twice a year, but if you advertise them in the right places, people will come and want to learn your language. You can also use this as refresher courses for tribal members who want to develop their language skills. Good sound planning from a cultural perspective and a business perspective can make this happen.

There will be people who will be purists about this, who will say, "you can't market your people," but we do already. I remember when I was a kid in New Mexico, and I saw those ladies from San Ildefonso Pueblo selling their pottery by the side of the road. But they weren't selling it, they were trading it . . . for cookies and fruit. I would . . . rather see the tribe and the members of the tribe get into [a business perspective] and learn how to handle their own arts and crafts co-ops. That could be part of your resort. Beadwork . . . you could offer classes in beadwork, quill design. Those are arts, and people will want to come and learn. That's what happens here [in Washington, DC]. People come to the Smithsonian, and what they are studying is a particular form of art from a particular historical period. But we have living cultures, and there is nothing to say that we can't have Olympic-sized swimming pools in our resorts. It provides jobs; it provides income.

- Charles Blackwell, Chickasaw

Hope Wilcox demonstrates a traditional Seminole method of cooking turtle. (Bureau of Florida Folklife Programs photograph)

On the other hand, tribes see potential for deriving economic benefit from preservation.

*Tourists come to the United States and what is high on their priority to see is the Statue of Liberty, the White House, and an Indian. But they don't know where they are and they don't know how to get there. And we can give them Indians. Each tribe needs to do a market analysis of its cultural strengths, whether it's arts, crafts, language, or culinary traditions, things that would lend themselves to being tied into tourism without being offensive to the cultural sensitivities of the people. That way, tourists could have a cultural experience. (Charles Blackwell, Chickasaw)*

Tourists may want more than a "cultural experience." They might want sports activities and restaurants. Some Indian tribes are thinking about these additional aspects of tourism.

The Quechan Tribe of the Fort Yuma Indian reservation wants to develop a historic park on its ancestral lands that it hopes will attract tourists.

*The traditional homelands of Quechan people include historic Fort Yuma and the Fort Yuma Indian School. We want to develop these areas into a historic park that will tell the story of the Quechan Indians from their own perspective and will also attract tourists to the area for economic development. This project will complement activities in the city of Yuma. We are also working with the National Historic Landmark, Yuma Crossing, and with a private foundation, the Yuma Crossing Foundation. We have an ANA [Administration for Native Americans] grant, and are completing a master plan and an archeological study. We will develop economic benefit studies and will go into tourism and training for people to be employed at the site. (Pam Nowak, Quechan)*

The Standing Rock Sioux are considering promoting tourism by providing tours of their reservation.

*One of the things that we discuss is a traditional tour to draw international tourists. We have the Missouri River on our eastern border and that will be some sort of attraction. We might be able to use the centennial of Sitting Bull as an asset to draw tourists. (Teddy Wallace, Standing Rock Sioux)*

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**Section 5: Tribal Perspectives in Summary**

The views quoted above are representative of the perspectives expressed in over 22 hours of taped testimony offered by tribal representatives at the informational meetings held in Washington, D.C., and Las Vegas, Nevada. Several conclusions can be derived from this testimony and from the history of tribal relations with Federal, State, and local governments outlined above.

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*What Tribes Want to Preserve*

What tribes seek to preserve through management, research, interpretation, protection and development are not only historic sites and structures, but the integrity of their cultures in general. Thus "historic preservation," or more accurately "cultural resource management," to Indian tribes involves integrated efforts to do all of the following things: to preserve and transmit language and oral tradition, arts and crafts, and traditional uses of plants and land; to maintain and practice traditional religion and culture; to preserve sacred places; to record and retain oral history; to communicate aspects of tribal culture to others; and to use cultural resources to maintain the integrity of communities and advance social and economic development.

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*Indian and Non-Indian Lands*

While tribes are certainly concerned about preserving historic properties and other cultural resources on reservation lands, they are often equally or even more concerned about preserving ancestral sites and traditional use areas on lands that they no longer control, whether these lands are now under Federal, State, or local control or in private ownership. This concern indicates a need for tribes to be more involved in the management and planning activities of Federal agencies and State and local governments. These activities include, but are not limited to, those carried out by Federal agencies and State Historic Preservation Officers under Sections 106 and 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act as well as those by State and local governments under State and local environmental policy and historic preservation statutes.



The Harmon School was originally built in the 1880s to serve the Nanticoke Indian Community of Delaware. When Black teachers and students came to the school in the 1920s, many Indian families withdrew to a separate school in an effort to maintain a recognizable Indian identity. The school is listed on the National Register of Historic Places for the role it played in the Indian separatist movement. (Photographed by Frank W. Porter, III)