

THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE AMERICAN INDIANS
AND THE EFFECT THEY HAVE ON THE EDUCATION OF MONTANA'S INDIANS

by

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CARROLL COLLEGE

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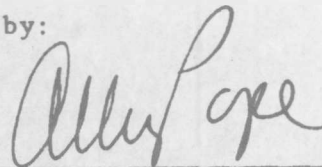
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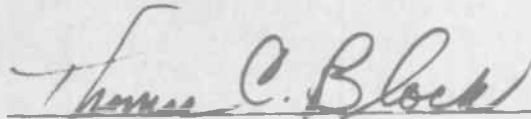
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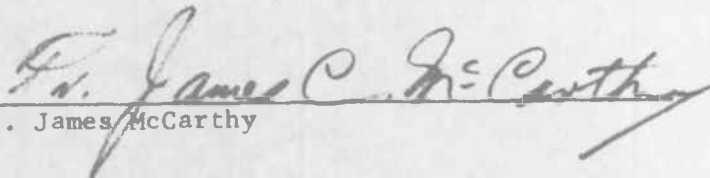
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to examine contributions of the American Indians in the areas of culture, economics, government, medicine and religion as they affect the education of the American Indians in today's educational system.

II. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SURVEY

In a July 8, 1970, statement to the Congress of the United States, President Nixon said:

The first Americans--the Indians--are the most deprived and most isolated minority group in our nation. On virtually every scale of measurement--employment, income, education, health--the condition of the Indian people ranks at the bottom.

This condition is the heritage of centuries of injustice. From the time of their first contact with European settlers, the American Indians have been oppressed and brutalized, deprived of their ancestral lands and denied the opportunity to control their own destiny. Even the Federal programs which are intended to meet their needs have frequently proven to be ineffective and demeaning.

But the story of the Indian in America is something more than the record of the white man's frequent aggression, broken agreements, intermittent remorse and prolonged failure. It is a record also of endurance, of survival, of adaptation and creativity in the face of overwhelming obstacles. It is a record of enormous contributions to this country--to its art and culture, to its strength and spirit, to its sense of history and its sense of purpose.

It is long past time that the Indian policies of the Federal government began to recognize and build upon the capacities and insights of the Indian people. Both as a matter of justice and as a matter of enlightened social policy, we must begin to act on the basis of what the Indians themselves have long been telling us. The time has come to

break decisively with the past and to create the conditions for a new era in which the Indian future is determined by Indian acts and Indian decisions.¹

The American Indians of today are a minority race who are often stereotyped as silent, withdrawn and unAmerican in white man's sense of American. Because it is the right of all people to be treated equal regardless of race, color, creed or sex, it is felt desirable to study the contributions of the American Indian to America, to study the Indian student's reaction to his present education and what he feels should be done to better his education.

In the same statement to the Congress of the United States, President Nixon had the following to say about the American Indians' education.

One of the saddest aspects of Indian life in the United States is the low quality of Indian education. Drop-out rates for Indians are twice the national average and the average educational level for all Indians under Federal supervision is less than six school years. Again, at least a part of the problem stems from the fact that the Federal government is trying to do for Indians what many Indians could do better for themselves.²

III. ASSUMPTIONS, DELIMITATIONS, AND LIMITATIONS

Assumptions

1. Education is only one area where Indian-white cultural differences are important, but it is a crucial area.
2. Students are products of the school they attend. If they are taught to be proud of their cultural background and of their self-worth they act accordingly.
3. The interest survey used in this report measures what it is purported to measure.
4. The students questioned in this survey participated honestly and sincerely.

¹ U.S., President, (Nixon), Message to Congress on the Status of the American Indian, July 8, 1970, (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1970), p. 1.

² Ibid., p. 7.

Delimitations

3

The sample of Indian students used in this study is limited to Indian sophomores in six Montana school systems.

Limitations

This study was limited by lack of direct contact with Indian students who participated in this survey.

The validity of the instrument (interest survey) used to measure school interest has not been fully established because of the inability of any instrument to measure such items as friendship and what is needed in an educational system to enable students to gain what is needed to be a happy and successful adult.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

I. CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS

"What can we do to Americanize the Indian?" The question was earnestly put by a man who was about to assume control over the country's Indian affairs. He was appalled by the fact that over a hundred native tribes within the United States still speak their own languages and make their own laws on the little fragments of land that Indians reserved for their own use when they sold the rest of the country to the white man. The Commissioner-elect was a kind and generous soul, but his Anglo-Saxon pride was ruffled by the fact that so many Indians preferred their own way of life, poor as it is, to the benefits of civilization that Congress longed to confer on them. Perhaps, if Indians did not realize that they needed more Indian Bureau supervisors and bigger and better appropriations to make real Americans out of them, it might be necessary to use a little force.

A bronze-skinned figure in the audience arose. "You will forgive me," said a voice of quiet dignity, "if I tell you that my people were Americans for thousands of years before your people were. The question is not how you can Americanize us but how we can Americanize you. We have been working at that for a long time. Sometimes we are discouraged at the results. But we will keep trying. And the first thing we want to teach you is that, in the American way of life, each man has respect for his brother's vision. Because each of us respected his brother's dream, we enjoyed freedom here in America while your people were busy killing and enslaving each other across the water. The relatives you left behind are still trying to kill each other and enslave each other because they have not learned there that freedom is built on my respect for my brother's vision and his respect for mine. We have a hard trail ahead of us in trying to Americanize you and your white brothers. But we are not afraid of hard trails."¹

The American way of life has stood for 400 years and more as a deadly challenge to European ideals of authority and submissive obedience in family life, in love, in school, in work, and in government. For four and a half centuries Government officials have been trying to stop Indians from behaving in un-European ways. Once the battle was to stop Indians from bathing, smoking,

1

Vine Deloria, Jr., We Talk, You Listen: New Tribes, New Turf (New York: Macmillian Company, 1970), p. 4.

and eating potatoes, all of which were supposed to be bad for their bodies and souls. In more recent years, our bureaucrats have issued countless orders prohibiting Indians from dancing (except after reaching the age of fifty), feasting, wearing Indian costumes, hunting for sport, traveling for pleasure, or otherwise engaging in the pursuit of happiness.² Above all, they have tried to eradicate the Indian habit of sharing food and land with needy neighbors.

The Indian Bureau is even now earnestly trying to implement the commandment once enunciated by a distinguished Commissioner of Indian Affairs: "The Indian must be imbued with the exalting egotism of American civilization, so that he will say 'I' instead of 'we' and 'this is mine' instead of 'this is ours.'"³ Through four centuries the Spanish, English and American Indian Bureaus have tried to turn Indians into submissive peasants. So far they have failed. To that failure we owe much that is precious in our American way of life.

As yet, only a few scholars know that the changes wrought in white life by Indian teachers are far more impressive--even if we measure them by the white man's dollar yardstick--than any changes white teachers have yet brought to Indian life. How many farmers know that four-sevenths of our national farm produce is of plants domesticated or created by Indian botanists of pre-Columbian times? Take from the agriculture of the New World the great Indian gifts of corn, tobacco, white and sweet potatoes, beans, peanuts, tomatoes, pumpkins, chocolate, American cotton, and rubber,⁴ and American life would

²Jack D. Forbes, The Indian in America's Past (New York: Heritage Press, 1971), p. 34.

³Ibid., p. 62.

⁴Dale Van Everly, Disinherited: The Lost Birthright of the American Indian (West Cladwell, New Jersey: William Morrow & Company, 1968), p. 69.

lose more than half its agricultural income. Without these Indian gifts to American agriculture, we might still be back at the level of permanent semi-starvation that kept Europeans for thousands of years ever-ready to sell their freedom for crusts of bread and royal circuses. And if we lost not only the Indian's material gifts, but the gifts of the Indians' spirit as well, perhaps we should be just as willing as Europeans have been to accept crust of bread and royal circuses for the surrender of our freedom. For it is out of a rich democratic tradition that the distinctive political ideals of American life emerged. Universal suffrage for women as well as for men, the pattern of states within a state that we call federalism, the habit of treating chiefs as servants of the people instead of as their masters, the insistence that the community must respect the diversity of men and the diversity of their dreams--all these things were part of the American way of life before Columbus landed.

Even the sole American contribution to the vocabulary of democratic government turns out to be a word borrowed from an Indian language. Andrew Jackson popularized a word that his Choctaw neighbors always used in their councils to signify agreement with another speaker. He was accused of abbreviating and misspelling "All Correct." But O.K. (or okeh, in Choctaw) does not mean "all correct"; it means that we have reached a point where practical agreement is possible, however far from perfection it may lie.⁵ And that is an idea which is central in the American idea of government.

The author of the American Declaration of Independence and of our first bill of rights freely acknowledged his debt to Indian teachers. Comparing the freedom of Indian society with the oppression of European society, Thomas Jefferson struck the keynote of the great American experiment in democracy:

⁵Oliver LaFarge, The American Indian (Racine, Wisconsin: Western Publishing Company, Inc., 1960), p. 74.

Imperfect as this species of coercion may seem, crimes are very rare among them (the Indians of Virginia); so much that were it made a question, whether no law, as among the savage Americans, or too much law, as among the civilized Europeans, submits man to the greatest evil, one who has seen both conditions of existence would pronounce it to be the last; and that the sheep are happier of themselves, than under the care of the wolves. It will be said, that great societies cannot exist without government. The savages, therefore, break them into small ones.⁶

Significantly enough, the products of Indian agriculture were resisted as bitterly in the Old World as were the ideas of democracy, liberty and tolerance that floated back to Europe from the New World. The bitterness of this resistance is evidenced by the cut-off ears and noses of German peasants who for centuries refused, despite all punishments, to eat potatoes, and by the dire penalties inflicted from England to India upon smokers of tobacco. Down to recent decades the tomato, or love apple, was regarded by most Europeans as poisonous. Gradually a few of the agricultural achievements of Indian America have become accepted by the rest of the world. The rediscovery of an old Indian dish, toasted corn flakes, not many years ago, revolutionized the breakfast habits of the United States. We have increased America's corn crop by 40% by rediscovering the Indian preference for hybrid corn.⁷

In medicine, as in the production of food and textiles, the conventional picture of the Indian as an ignorant savage is very far from the truth. Until a few years ago most of America's contributions to medical science were of Indian origin. Quinine, cocaine, casxara sagrada, ipecac, witch hazel, oil of wintergreen, petroleum jelly, arnica--all these and many other native medicines were known and developed by the medical profession in America long before the first white physician landed on American shores. In fact, each of these pro-

⁶Roy Harvey Pearce, Savagism and Civilization (Baltimore, Maryland: John Hopkins University Press, 1966), p. 138.

⁷Forbes, op. cit., p. 79.

ducts was denounced by learned European doctors before it became accepted into the normal pharmacopocia. An it is interesting to note that in the 400 years that European physicians and botanists have been examining and analyzing the flora of America, they have not yet discovered a medicinal herb not known to the Indians.⁸

These are material things that can be counted and measured. They constitute tangible refutation of the slander that the Indian did not know how to make use of his land and its resources until the white conqueror taught him. But to limit one's gaze to these materials is not only to lose sight of the intangibles of American life but even to miss the human significance of these material things. For corn, as countless Indian generations have known, is not a simple thing. It is a way of life. Corn, reproducing itself three hundredfold, without benefit of horse or plow--where plowed fields of wheat or rye produce only twentyfold or thirtyfold--is a sturdy friend of freedom. The frontiersman who would not accept a burdensome government could take a sack of seed corn on his shoulder into the wilderness in the spring, and after three months he might be reasonably assured against hunger for the rest of his life. No such path to freedom, no such check upon the growth of tyranny, was ever open to growers of wheat or rye or rice.

Tobacco, too, carried with it a way of life. The pipe of peace is an enduring symbol of the invitation to relaxation and contentment that makes poor men rich.

If American agriculture today is predominantly Indian in its origin, may not the same be true of less tangible aspects of the life that our agriculture sustains? Consider, for example, the love of nature which is institutionalized in our athletics, in our boy scout movement, and in our vacation habits. In

⁸Virgil J. Vogel, American Indian Medicine (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1968), pp. 140-143.

the Europe of Columbus, bathing was a sinful indulgence. Less than 200⁹ years ago it was a misdemeanor in Boston to take a bath except when prescribed by a physician.⁹ In the Europe of Columbus' day, group athletic contests were practically unknown; and the color of white paste was an essential part of the European ideal of feminine beauty. The millions of dollars spent every year by American vacationists on resort beaches acquiring the golden tan of an Indian skin is the best tangible evidence of the way in which the Indians' love of sun and water, of bodily beauty, cleanliness and athletic prowess, in both sexes, has become part of the American soul.

Columbus was astonished to see the native Americans amusing themselves with a black, heavy ball made from a vegetable gum. Later explorers were equally impressed by these balls, and historian of the time remarked that they "rebounded so much that they appeared to be alive."¹⁰

What has happened to these balls? You will find them all across the face of America, on tennis courts and football fields, in basketball courts no different from the basketball courts uncovered in ancient Indian cities. You will find them in baseball parks and on sandlots. You will find them tied with rubber strings to little girls' fingers.

The Indian games out of which our national games have evolved are not always recognizable today, but the spirit of group sport and team play that was cultivated in pre-Columbian America still offers a peaceful outlet for combative instincts that in other lands find bloodier forms of expression. And millions of white tourists and vacationists--whether or not they use such Indian

⁹Vogel, op. cit., p. 146.

¹⁰Michael Coe, America's First Civilization (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1960), p. 98.

inventions as teepees, moccasins, canoes, rubber balls, hammocks, pack baskets, toboggans, whether or not they munch chocolate, peanuts or popcorn, chew gum or smoke tobacco--are learning what the Indian knew centuries ago: the peace and adventure of the trail and the campfire. The white man, having conquered America, is just beginning to learn how to enjoy it.

II. INTELLIGENCE CONSIDERATIONS

Studies of the intelligence of Indian children may be divided into two groups--those reported before and after 1935. The first group of studies tended to show that Indians were less intelligent than white children. The second group tended to show that there was no difference in average intelligence between Indian and white children, except for such differences as were explainable on the basis of cultural differences.

It is still not accepted by some people that Indians are not an inferior race and thus the need to awaken more people to the contributions and intelligence of the American Indian. Recent results of intelligence testing among Indians indicate that Indians have as much native ability as whites.¹¹ One of the UNESCO statements on race states that:

Whatever classification the anthropologist makes of man, he never includes mental characteristics as part of those classifications. It is now generally recognized that intelligence tests do not in themselves enable us to differentiate safely between what is due to innate capacity and what is the result of environmental influences, training and education. Wherever it has been possible to make allowances for differences in environmental opportunities, the tests have shown essential similarity in mental characters among all human groups. In short, given similar degrees of cultural opportunity to realize their potentialities, the average achievement of the members of each ethnic group is about the same.¹²

¹¹ Willard P. Bass, An Analysis of Academic Achievement of Indian High School Students in Federal and Public Schools (Albuquerque, New Mexico: Southwestern Cooperative Educational Laboratory, Inc., 1969), p. 21.

¹² Ashley Montagu, Race, Science and Humanity (Princeton, New Jersey: D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., 1963), p. 174.

The earliest reported study done on Indian children's intellect dates back to 1914 when Rowe administered the Stanford-Biner examination to 268 Indians and found 94 percent of them below the norm for whites on the basis of chronological age.¹³ Hunter and Sommermeier in 1921 gave the Otis Classification Test to 715 mixed and full-blood Indians and found correlation of .41 between degrees of white blood and the intelligence quotient.¹⁴ Garth administered the National Intelligence Test to Indians of various tribes and localities as well as to Mexicans and other ethnic groups. His findings substantiate largely those of Hunter and Sommermeier. Garth found Mexicans to do better than full-blood Indians, but not as well as mixed-blood Indians. Garth and his associates also found public-school Indian students to be slightly superior to United States government school Indians and that there is a rise in IQ with school grade. Garth concluded that "Indians make lower scores than whites because they are lower in native ability."¹⁵ The results heretofore described were obtained mainly with the use of paper-and-pencil tests of general intelligence in which the verbal component is quite prominent.¹⁶

These studies of Indians using verbal intelligence tests give results rather similar to the well-known studies of Sherman, Gordon, and others on white children living in isolated mountain hollows in Virginia, and in isolated

¹³T.R. Garth, Race Psychology: A Study of Racial Mental Differences (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1931) Chapters IV, V.

¹⁴W.S. Hunter, and E. Sommermier, "The Relation of Degree of Indian Blood to Score on Otis Intelligence Test," Journal of Comparative Psychology, Volume 2 (1922), pp. 257-256.

¹⁵T.R., Garth, "The Intelligence of Full-Blood Indians," Journal of Applied Psychology, Volume 9 (1925), pp. 382-386.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 388.

rural areas where there is little schooling. These children tend to fall below the average of white children and to suffer a decrease in IQ as they grow older. Such findings suggest that the observed differences of intelligence may not be due to racial differences.¹⁷

To determine the effect of language on test results, Jameson and Sandiford administered both language and nonlanguage tests of intelligence to 717 mixed-blood Indians and obtained a difference of 5 points in IQ in favor of the non-language test.¹⁸ The more significant attempts to appraise the intelligence of Indians within the past ten to fifteen years have been made with the use of performance or relatively "culture-free" tests.¹⁹

Klineberg administered the Pinter-Paterson series of six tests to Indian and white children on the Sioux Indian reservation and found (1) that Indian children took longer with form boards but made fewer errors, (2) that comparison of Indian and white groups in terms of total number of points obtained on the Pinter-Paterson Point Scale showed no differences between the two because the Indians made up in accuracy for their inferior speed, and (3) that correspondence of score with degree of white blood was lacking.²⁰ Whereas preceding investigations pointed to the superiority of the whites over the Indians on tests of intelligence, Klineberg's study is among the first to

¹⁷Robert J. Havighurst and Bernice L. Neugarten, American Indian and White Children (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1954).

¹⁸E. Jameson and F. Sandiford, "The Mental Capacity of Indian Children," Journal of Educational Psychology, Vol. 19 (1928), pp. 536-51.

¹⁹B.F. Haught, "Mental Growth of the American Indian," Journal of Applied Psychology, Vol. 18 (1934), pp. 137-42.

²⁰Otto Klineberg, "An Experimental Study of Speed and Other Factors in 'Racial' Differences," Archives of Psychology, Vol. 15, No. 93 (1928), p. 109.

offer contradictory evidence and to suggest that test performance may be affected by cultural factors.

A later study by Garth and Smith employing a nonlanguage and a language test with the same subjects, found (1) that Indian children consistently show a performance on the Pintner-Paterson test more nearly equal to white performance than they do on the verbal test, (2) that the IQ's on the performance test were 10 to 14 points higher than those on the verbal test.²¹

In more recent testings on Indian children the general contention has been that the verbal component in tests of general intelligence handicaps the Indian child. Tests that are relatively culture free, of a performance variety, are considerably more appropriate than tests requiring facility with the English language.²²

Unfortunately the equality in intelligence has not resulted in equal Indian-white educational advantages and achievement.

²¹T.R. Garth and O.D. Smith, "The Performance of Full-Blooded Indians on Language and Non-Language Intelligence Tests," Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, Vol. 32 (1968), pp. 376-381.

²²Ibid., p. 367.

CHAPTER III

EDUCATION AND MOTIVATION

I. EDUCATION AS A PROCESS

Education is as old as human society, and every human society has its own particular ways of making its children into full-fledged adult participants in its culture. The American Indian tribes, having different cultures, used different forms of education, but all were alike in giving education informally through parents, other relatives, the old people of the tribe, religious societies, hunting parties, war parties and work parties.

Education is always a process of teaching a culture, and the education provided by the whites for the Indians has always been aimed at teaching the white culture, or at least some elements of it, to people who have been reared in other cultures. In the period of Americanization of the Indians, the whites' education was more explicitly aimed at making white men out of the Indians than it has been since 1930. Since then, it has been designed as a supplement to the tribal education rather than a rival or a replacement for the tribal education. Nevertheless, white education has represented a new and different culture to the Indian, even when planned as supplementary to tribal education by teaching only certain white agricultural and home-making skills and the 3 R's and by leaving matters of religion, family life, and vocational choice to the traditional tribal processes. Therefore, the Indian who is subjected to white education becomes a man of two cultures. Sometimes the Indian culture predominates and sometimes the white culture wins. Generally the individual makes his own combination of the two by adopting such white

ways as are useful and pleasant to him including farming and home-making skills, artisan skills, and often a form of Christianity.

The white education is part of the white American culture. The Indian child comes to this conditioned by the culture his family and community have taught him. Some Indian groups are now quite thoroughly acculturated to the white way of life--notably in Oklahoma.¹ Their children learn little of the traditional Indian culture and take on the culture of the white school easily. Other Indian children get very little experience of white society and learn very little from the white school. Most Indians are between these two extremes. In general, we should expect the Indian child to do well in American schools by white standards only if he and his family are part of the white culture.

Thus the culture of the Indian child equips him well or poorly for education in American schools depending on how well his culture matches that of the American society which surrounds him. Where his Indian community has been largely absorbed into the white community and the adjustment has been successful, as is true of the Oklahoma Indians,² the Indian child may be expected to do as well as white children in the schools, unless he has some biological racial difference which gives him an advantage or a disadvantage over white children. There is no evidence that such a biological difference exists.

When his culture is quite different from that of the surrounding white

¹Grace S. Woodward, Cherokees (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963), p. 58.

²Henry T. Malone, Cherokees of the Old South: A People in Transition (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1966), p. 30.

community, as in the case of the Navaho Indians,³ or when his tribal culture has disintegrated and his group has not yet adjusted well to membership in the surrounding white culture, as was true in the 1940's of the Sioux,⁴ the Indian child may be expected to do rather poorly in the schools that are run according to white standards.

II. MOTIVATION IN THE CLASSROOM

A form of motivation which is important in American education is the individual's desire to compete with and do better than his fellows.⁵ This is a notable aspect of the white American culture, especially of the middle class.⁶ Consequently, school children are rewarded by parents and teachers for doing better than other children. Some Indian tribes are traditionally individualistic and competitive, but most of those that survive today are co-operative in their basic attitudes. They work and share together in large families and in neighborhood groups, and they believe in value sharing and co-operation more than individual differences and competition.⁷ Consequently, if a teacher in a government school, who has been accustomed to assume that children are competitive, tries to appeal to this kind of motivation by using

³Ruth Underhill, Here Come the Navaho (Lawrence, Kansas: Bureau of Indian Affairs, Publications Service, Haskell Institute, 1969), p.23.

⁴Robert M. Utley, The Last Days of the Sioux Nation (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1963), p. 276.

⁵William R. Hazard, Harry N. Rivlin, and Madelon D. Stent, Cultural Pluralism in Education (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1973), p. 27.

⁶Ibid., p. 31.

⁷Clark Wissler, Indians of the United States: Four Centuries of their History and Culture (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1961), p. 132.

spelling contests or by encouraging children to call attention to mistakes of other children, the teacher may be perplexed to find that such teaching methods do not work very well. The Indian children may not parade their knowledge before others nor try to appear better than their peers. In a situation like this, the teacher would do well to discover other forms of motivation for school work, including the use of group procedures and the provision of activities which the Indian children enjoy in themselves.

CHAPTER IV

PROCEDURES

I. THE MEASURING INSTRUMENT

The measuring instrument used in this study was the School Interest Survey. This survey purports to measure the individual's interest in his community, his school work, his family, and his friends. Testing time in this survey is about six minutes.

Validity. Validity for the School Interest Survey is established through the Montana Superintendent of Public Schools Director of Indian Affairs and is considered by this office to be sociologically valid and sound because only questions which are race free are included in the survey.

II. COLLECTION OF DATA

The process of data collection was carried on in the following manner:

The Sample

The sample used in this study of 25 sophomore students of some degree of Indian blood from the Browning Public High School, 20 sophomore students of some degree of Indian blood from the Hardin Public High School, 20 sophomore students of some degree of Indian blood from the Poplar High School, 15 sophomore students of some degree of Indian blood from the Havre Public High School, 10 sophomore students of some degree of Indian blood from the St. Ignatius High School and 10 sophomore students of some degree of Indian blood from the St. Labre Mission High School.

The survey was administered by the homeroom teacher to students who volunteered to complete the survey.

This sample is considered representative for two reasons. The first reason is that the sophomores fall under the minimum age of attendance for the schools in the study. Because the students in the sample are under the minimum age of attendance the loss of voluntary dropouts can be considered negligible.

The second reason for considering the sample representative of the students of some degree of Indian blood attending Montana schools is that it includes students from 6 different schools and Indian students of various cultural and tribal backgrounds.

III. PROCESSING THE DATA

After receiving the School Interest Survey which the homeroom teachers administered, the number of students answering true and the numbering of students answering false for each of the 30 questions were totaled and recorded on the master copy of the survey.

The information received from the various schools concerning total number of pupils, number of Indian pupils, total number of teachers, number of Indian teachers, number of school board members of Indian descent and total number of school board members was recorded. This information as recorded in Table I illustrates that in a number of Montana communities the Indian student is of a majority in the school system and yet does not have a majority of Indian teachers and/or Indian representatives on the school board. Table I thus supports the results of the School Interest Survey where 94% of the students indicated a need for more Indian representation on the school board, and only 34% indicated that they had at least 3 teachers of some degree of Indian blood. (See School Interest Survey page 26)

MONTANA INDIAN RESERVATION FISCAL YEAR 1972 STATISTICS
ON ENROLLMENTS, TEACHERS, AND SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

TABLE 1

Reservation	No. of Pupils of Indian Descent	Total No. of Pupils	No. of Teachers of Indian Descent	Total No. of Teachers	No. of School Board Members of Indian Descent	Total No. of School Board Members
Blackfeet	2451	4047	10	223	9	26
Brow	1473	2813	5	156	5	24
Flathead	1260	4424	8	247	4	38
Fort Belknap	783	957	1	58	5	10
Fort Peck	1406	2808	4	164	4	23
Northern Cheyenne	1407	1676	4	50	7	14
Rocky Boy's	863	4080	4	190	3	10
TOTAL	9643	20805	36	1088	37	145

One of the saddest aspects of Indian life in the United States is the high drop-out rate. Drop-out rates for Indians are twice the national average.¹ Table II illustrates the gradual decline in the number of Indian students enrolled in public and private schools on or adjacent to Montana Indian reservations. This table shows the gradual decline in the elementary grades when enrollment is still mandatory because of the students age and the sharp decline once the student is old enough to withdraw legally from school.

Table III shows the number of Indian student dropouts as reported by public school official in public and reservation schools in Montana. The drop-out rate as illustrated in Table III is attributed to eight major causes. This causes are: (1) employment, (2) withdrawn by parents, (3) expelled, (4) illness, (5) marriage, (6) detained by law agencies, (7) death, (8) other causes.² The Interest Survey indicated that 97% of the students felt that in order to succeed in a job today, a good education is required and yet this is the major reason for school drop-outs. The survey further indicated that only 41% of the sample felt that what they are learning in school will help them in earning a living.

IV. ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

In order to study the data on enrollment, drop-out rate and causes of drop-out it is necessary to understand the Office of Public Instruction and its services to the Montana Indians.

In Montana the Superintendent of Public Instruction contracts annually with the United States Department of Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, to

¹U.S., President, (Nixon), op. cit., p. 7.

²Hazard, op. cit., p. 48.

TABLE II

NUMBERS OF INDIAN STUDENTS HAVING ANY DEGREE INDIAN BLOOD ENROLLED IN
PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS OR OR ADJACENT TO KENTIANA INDIAN RESERVATIONS
1971-1972

Reservations	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Grade
Blackfeet	169	254	209	226	233	219	208	220	183	155	135	105	103	78
Crow	98	181	145	127	133	128	125	115	99	77	61	72	62	41
Flathead	56	124	98	101	98	130	103	104	93	101	93	66	64	60
Fort Belknap	57	80	75	61	94	81	53	74	61	52	28	33	23	25
Fort Peck	92	137	155	116	125	102	129	112	128	109	70	58	58	49
Northern Cheyenne	91	92	176	78	106	119	60	152	82	167	115	81	80	58
Rocky Boy's	69	80	86	80	61	83	85	65	72	72	41	29	35	36
Total	632	948	944	789	850	862	763	842	718	733	543	444	425	347

NUMBERS OF INDIAN STUDENT DROPOUTS BY PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND RESERVATIONS 1971-1972

<u>Reservations</u>	<u>One-fourth or more degree Indian blood</u>	<u>Having any degree of Indian blood</u>
Blackfeet	88	105
Bozeman	40	40
Butte	33	38
Capt. Belknap	21	22
Capt. Beck	59	64
Northern Cheyenne	0	0
Red Fox Boy's	37	57
TOTAL	278	326

provide educational services to Montana Indians. The authority for negotiation comes from the Federal Act of April 16, 1934, C. 147, 1, 48 Stat. 596, commonly known as the Johnson O'Malley Act, as amended June 4, 1936, C. 490, 49 Stat. 1458, and Section 79-1602, R.C.M. 1947, and the State Board of Education Minutes, Page 124, Volume 16. The administration of Johnson O'Malley Act funds is based on operation criteria as outlined in Volume VI, Part II, Chapter 3, Indian Affairs Manual, and the State Plan.

The purpose of the Indian Education Program is to assist public school districts with categorical grants-in-aid to meet extraordinary needs which cannot be financed by available revenue, to bring about a better understanding between school and community, to encourage new programs or approaches to learning for meeting the needs of the Indian, to provide in-service training for teachers of Indian children, and to counsel with Indian youth in both public and private schools relative to education and/or training beyond high school.³

Indian Education Funds (Johnson O'Malley Act) aided school districts educating Indian children in the following ways and amounts for the school year 1971-72: reimbursement at 25 cents a lunch for lunches served free to indigent Indian children, \$100,174.25; for special transportation projects, \$13,636.00; for school week boarding homes, \$6,900.00; for tutoring to cover evening high school study tables, \$2,100.00; for expenses of home-school coordinators, \$14,253.00; for salary of a part-time special teacher, \$2,200.00; for salary of a teacher aide, \$1,500.00; for summer enrichment and summer school programs, \$2,017.00; for summer on-campus workshops for teachers, \$2,481.15.⁴

³Delores Colburg, Indian Education Annual Report, 1971-72 (Helena: State Superintendent of Public Instruction Office, 1972), p. 4.

⁴Ibid., p. 73.

The importance of the information on the Johnson O'Malley Act is to show that funds are available and being utilized by the Office of Public Instruction but the drop-out rate does not diminish and the sample still sees changes that must take place.

V. REPORTING OF THE RESULTS

The following chapter is devoted to a report of the results which emerged from the treatment of the data described in this chapter. The recommendations arising from the study are presented in the final chapter.

TABLE IV

SCHOOL INTEREST SURVEY

	T	F
1. In order to succeed in a job today, you must have a good education.	97	3
2. I take part in at least one school activity.	71	28
3. No one in our family spends much time reading books.	32	68
4. I have many friends.	89	8
5. I would rather have a job than go to school.	18	81
6. I have never failed to move with my class to the next grade.	70	29
7. Most people do not understand me.	40	59
8. My father works with his hands.	78	18
9. My father wants me to complete high school.	94	5
10. My father did not complete high school.	76	21
11. I have more than 4 brothers and/or sisters.	77	23
12. My father likes to read.	37	61
13. What I learn in school will help very much in earning a living.	41	58
14. I seldom skip school.	39	57
15. I will have to help support younger members of my family while they go to school.	51	47
16. I have been sent out of class frequently for causing trouble.	19	79
17. Our family does very little together that is fun.	60	38
18. I would rather quit than fail in school.	30	69
19. Our family moves approximately once a year.	13	85
20. I do not like the subjects I have to take in school.	48	51
21. My father earned more than \$3000 last year.	24	74
22. I have taken at least one course in Indian literature and/or history.	14	85
23. I have a part-time job.	23	84
24. I would like to live in a larger city.	87	13
25. I have at least 3 teachers who are part Indian.	34	63
26. I would like to see more Indians on the school board.	94	5
27. My classes are interesting and well-presented.	30	68
28. I receive help with my school work outside the actual classroom.	52	43
29. There are community activities for teen-age students in my community.	30	68
30. I would like to have the opportunity to have more say about what classes and subjects are offered at my high school.	89	9

CHAPTER V

RESULTS

The results reported in this chapter are based on the findings taken from the School Interest Survey.

I. SOURCES OF PROBLEMS OF INDIAN EDUCATION

The Indian Tribal Culture

The Indian tribal culture as it is taught to the child by his tribe includes language, values, life-style, ways of cooperating or competing with others, attitudes toward male and female teachers, the definitions of rewards and punishment, etc. It is probable that the ways of teaching employed by teachers are not always effective with certain Indian students and could be very much improved on the basis of careful study of this factor. The survey showed that only 14% of the sample have taken at least one course in Indian literature and/or history. Only 34% of the sample have at least 3 Indian teachers, and 30% felt that their classes were interesting.

Poverty

The low income of many Indian families prevents them from feeding their children adequately, 24% of the sample had parent(s) that earned more than \$3000.00 last year while 74% had parent(s) that earned less than \$3000.00 last year. There is some evidence that malnutrition in the early years of infancy reduces the ability of a child to learn. However, the evidence is not clear on this matter, and it is doubtful that malnutrition is a major factor in the learning difficulties of Indian children.¹

¹Hazard, op. cit., p. 97.

Extreme poverty may have a serious effect on a minority of Indian children as it apparently does on a minority of poor families everywhere. Uncertainty of income, uncertain employment, lack of contact with the institutions of the larger society, and disorganized family life, all of which are more prevalent among poor families than among other families, produce a life-style which severely handicaps the children of such a family for orderly school attendance and school achievement. These conditions are to be found among some of the Indian families in Montana.

The sample indicates that 51% of the survey plans on supporting younger brothers and sisters while they go to school. This and the 78% that indicated that their fathers work with their hands indicates that poverty is a definite factor in the sample's life style.

The Local Community

Most Indian communities are isolated geographically, do not provide access to money-producing jobs, or to such educational institutions as libraries, and do not offer to the Indian youth many models of success through education. This affects adolescents particularly. With few jobs available that are related to schooling, and little contact with Indian young people who have profited from education, the adolescent peer culture is likely to favor activities which produce excitement, pleasure, or escape from boredom, and these activities seldom have much intellectual content. However, the youth who grows up in a traditional Indian community, with respect for the traditional religious and ceremonial life, is likely to be well-adjusted to tribal life, but he may need very special help from his elders or from teachers to combine this kind of favorable adjustment with the skills and attitudes that make for economic success outside the local community.

Knowledge of Indian Cultures

Although most teachers and school principals are well-disposed toward Indian students and parents, they often make mistakes in their teaching due to ignorance of the local Indian culture. Limited contact between school staffs and Indian communities, and the persistence of prejudice and negative stereotypes among some school personnel require attention.

In the true American context of public school traditions, the proposition that Indians should control the schools which their children attend presents no issues at all. The situation, of course, is not that simple. Leaving aside mission and private schools--attendance at which is a matter of personal choice--three kinds of schools for Indian children are involved: Federal, public and tribal. Each type presents constraints on Indian control.

Federal schools operated by the BIA are authorized by Federal law and funded by congressional appropriations. Employees of the BIA are Federal civil servants, and, as such, are possessed of certain rights guaranteed to them by law. Under these conditions, while Indian communities can, and in many cases do, exercise some influence through advisory school boards, they do not and probably cannot, exercise "control" in the ultimate decision-making and hiring and firing sense.

Public schools, organized under the laws of the states in which they are located, enroll at least two-thirds of the Indian children in the country. These schools operate under control of elected boards of education which, presumably, represent all residents of the school district.

Tribal schools are former BIA schools operated by tribal groups, school boards, or corporations under a contract with the BIA. One of the major problems of tribal schools is that even by a concentration of extraordinary funding, staff recruiting, and publicity, a viable organization can be developed but

small schools still need the support of a larger organization such as a state department of education, for curriculum development, material preparation, teacher procurement, and so forth. While it is possible for tribal schools to receive such help from either the BIA or state department, the image of local control is then somewhat eroded.

Few persons would contend that it would not be preferable for teachers of Indian children to be sensitive to the cultural differences, to know something about their history, and, ideally, to have some familiarity with their native language. Under present conditions of teacher procurement, it is not likely that many such teachers will become available in either public or Federal schools.

Each year, the BIA must replace about one-fourth of its teaching force of 2,4000 members.² The BIA recruits teachers from all over the country within the framework of the Civil Service system, which involves a twelve-month work year and an indefinite continuing appointment. Public schools also must recruit widely, although they place their teachers under contract, usually one year at a time.

Growth of Urban Indian Population

As 87% of the sample indicated they plan on moving to the city as soon as possible. This has been a trend of young Indian people for the past several decades. Since 1950 there has been a substantial migration of Indian families to urban centers. Like other urban migrants, many Indians who come to the city leave their home communities because of limited employment opportunities. And like many other recent migrants, especially those of minority

²U.S., President (Nixon), op. cit., p. 13.

racial and ethnic backgrounds, Indians find urban communities to be alien environments. The cultural background of Indians with their strong emphasis on close personal interrelationships and strong traditional family and tribal values do not prepare them for the depersonalized and sometimes hostile encounters with other urban residents. Their educational and vocational skills are for the most part inadequate or inappropriate for the available job opportunities. When they seek those few jobs for which they are prepared, they often face bigotry and discrimination. However, with increasing numbers of Indians already in the city and the improved job training and housing and with personal advisory services being provided by the BIA and private agencies, many Indians are beginning to make easier and better adjustments.

CHAPTER VI

RECOMMENDATIONS

Throughout the recommendations which follow will be seen the theme of Indian authority and responsibility for the education of Indian children and youth. The time has come to make this a major goal in the policies and practices of the federal government, and of the state government. Indian parents and leaders of Indian communities want this for their own communities and their own tribes. My study shows that they generally desire authority, power and participation in decision-making.

This cannot be a rapid process. Most Indians are caught in the predicament of rural poverty with lack of modern economic skills, on the one hand, or in the urban poverty predicament on the other hand. However, modern technology, particularly transportation and communication, has reduced their geographic isolation, and given them more acquaintance with schools and other institutions of the surrounding society.

It is felt that the effectiveness of the Office of Indian Education could be increased by: (1) providing for additional in-service training for teachers, (2) providing more funds for summer workshops for teachers of Indian children, (3) providing additional funds with which school districts could carry out special programs designed for Indian children, (4) developing teaching materials effective for Indian children in Montana, (5) visiting schools educating Indian children, not necessarily just those receiving Johnson O'Malley assistance, to ascertain possible needs, (6) promoting local Indian and community involvement in matters effecting education of Indian

children, and (7) conducting more frequent personal interviews with Indian college students.

Curriculum. With occasional, notable exceptions, curriculum for Indian children in BIA and the public schools at present parallels the curriculum provided others in the public schools of America. This is due to the influence of accrediting agencies, state guidelines, availability of texts, the influence of teacher education institutions, and to the prevailing educational trends of the day.

Often, however, this curriculum appears to reject, attempts to eliminate, or simply ignores the Indian heritage of the child. A successful education need not be incompatible with the retention of Indian identity, pride, and self-respect. There are special needs among Indian youth populations that the ordinary school is insufficient to meet. Recognition of these needs and programs to meet them are essential. It is felt that teaching methods and the content of the school curriculum can be made more effective than they are now, if we make use of our present knowledge and experience.

Language Instruction. One of the areas requiring attention is that of language instruction. It is a recognized fact that Indian pupils accept the need to learn English, regarding skills in English as more important than knowledge of their native language. There are also strong positive attitudes toward the tribal languages and many parents and pupils support learning the tribal language. In relation to language and language instruction it is recommended that special language and reading programs be developed and used, appropriate to the particular Indian community. In areas where the native language is generally spoken at home, there should be a bi-lingual program in grades K-3 with teachers who are bi-lingual, or skilled in teaching English to speakers of other languages and with teacher aides who are familiar with the local language. Bi-lingual education programs, i.e., with instruction in

both the native language and English, through grades K-12 should be supported on an experimental basis in localities where sufficient interest and resources are available for such experiments.

In the absence of bi-lingual programs, provisions should be made by the school to offer a course in the Indian language. This is valuable not only for its general cultural and cognitive aspects, and the recognition it accords the Indian community, but also in providing interested students with the necessary linguistic skills to function more effectively as potential teachers, administrators, in reservation development, and in other areas where an understanding of the native language would be a valuable asset.

Indian History and Culture. It is recommended that where it is a concentration of Indian children from one tribe, units on tribal and regional Indian history be included in the social studies at the middle grades and high school levels. In all Indian schools at their secondary level, and where there is a broad mixture of Indian pupils, courses in anthropology and/or Indian history and culture should be offered.

In every Indian school there should also be attention to the contemporary economic, social and political issues of relevance to the Indian community. Where there is a tribal government, study of its system and operation should be included in civic and social studies as should be relationships with state and federal government structures.

The ignoring of Indian history and culture, or the presentation of distorted versions affects not only Indian pupils but others as well. Non-Indians are handicapped by lack of information and distortions which support negative stereotypes and hinder good relations with Indian populations.

Units of Indian history and culture should be taught in all schools at the intermediate and high school levels. These units should include a study

of the contemporary social, economic and political issues affecting relations with the Indian populations of the country. Such units should be taught in all schools, regardless of the presence or absence of Indian students.

Because many well-intentioned teachers are handicapped by their lack of knowledge and the dearth of appropriate materials, it is necessary for there to be strong support for research and writing and the preparation of curriculum materials in this area. The best Indian scholarship should be supported in an effort to upgrade materials for use in the humanities, social studies, and art programs in schools.

Career Development. It is a broad consensus among parents, students, teachers, and influential persons that the most important function of the school is to prepare the Indian students for employment in the dominant economy. Although schools play a small role in providing employment, they can maximize preparation for careers at all levels--manual worker, technician, business, or professional. Career development programs should include more than the actual instruction in skills of a job. They should give students a chance to explore different types of work, to see the various possibilities in the local area and the neighboring cities, and to become aware of their own personal abilities and interests as these are closely related to choice of occupation.

It is therefore recommended that the core academic subjects--English, mathematics, science, and social studies--in the elementary grades include attention to these factors.

At present, a serious problem in Indian education is the high dropout rate after the 8th grade. This is declining in some areas, but it is recommended that special attention be given to career development programs. The Vocational Education Act, as amended in 1968, provides funds for work-study

programs for students over the age 16. In addition, the Department of Labor, through its Manpower Training Program, finances innovative programs. Public institutions, including schools, may employ students under these programs. Students can be employed as tutors, secretarial aides, food and cafeteria workers; and for child-care, school-home liaison, and building maintenance. For some pupils these are temporary positions to provide money and meaningful roles while attending schools; for others these may become long-term careers. Financial support for such programs should be extended.

The Context of Education. Curriculum in the broader sense includes more than the content of course offerings. It may be thought of as including all the services provided children as well as the total social atmosphere of the school. Because of the many factors which influence the learning environment, it is recommended that:

1. The decor of the school building attended by Indian children should include attention to the values of Indian life and arts.
2. Special counseling should be provided Indian pupils with particular attention to their needs for vocational and educational information, scholarship and financial help, and assistance with problems encountered in school. States with substantial numbers of Indian children attending public school systems should establish an office which will be responsible for collecting and distributing information to counselors with regard to educational, vocational, scholarship and other financial assistance available to Indians.
3. The school should provide advisory services to Indian families to increase communication and understanding between them and the school.
4. In boarding schools, speakers of the native language(s) used by the children should be included in the teaching staff and in the dormitory programs.

5. All schools should be flexible in adapting their programs to the particular needs of the communities they serve.

The above recommendations can not occur over night nor will they be able to occur without the help of people aware of the Indian predicament. Indian people are gaining experience with education and are becoming able to use it and to direct it toward their own goals. How far and how fast they go should be decided by them.

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