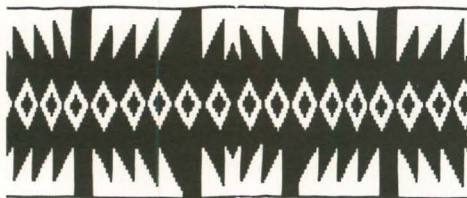


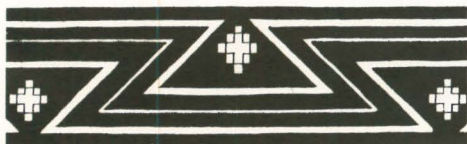
Native Americans

The continuing traditions of the original inhabitants of this nation are presented in the Native Americans area. The people whom you will meet here are representatives of the more than 200 Native American communities throughout the United States. Working with the Smithsonian, they have examined their traditions and created the programs you will see, speaking to their way of life today and their hopes for the future.

When you enter the Native American area, you will find it has been designed with Native traditions in mind. The entire area lies within a circle which represents the wholeness of life, that everything, in Native philosophy, is inter-related. A corn field forms the outlying circle; corn, the contribution of Native Americans to the peoples of the world, is regarded as the gift of Mother Earth. With squash and beans sharing the field, the entire area is thus surrounded by the three staple foods of the southwest, the "three sisters" of the Iroquois. The Learning Center, designed by architect Dennis Sun Rhodes, Arapahoe, faces east, the direction of sunrise and of life, and inside you will find yourself travelling sunwise, in a circle. In design and in presentations of music, crafts, dance and discussion, the Native Americans area honors the first Americans.



Designs from American Indian Design and Decoration by Leroy Appleton.



Indian Education

by Helen Attaquin, Wampanoag

In June, 1744, the Governor of the colony of Pennsylvania arranged a council of delegates from Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Maryland to meet with sachems of the Five Nations of the Iroquois Indians in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. The meeting opened with the colonial representatives offering to send eight or ten young Indians, selected by the Five Nations, to Williamsburg, in order to give them a good education. Canassatego, the principal Iroquois chief, rose to speak for the Indians. He said that Indians had already had experience with the white man's schools and that their young men had returned to their tribes neither white men nor Indians. He said that if the whites would choose one or two dozen of their boys, the Indians would send them to Onondaga, where the great council of the Iroquois would take care of their education and would rear them in the best manner to make men of them.

Therefore, it is obvious that even in colonial times Indians have felt that there was something lacking in the white man's idea of education. This quality that is missing is the Indian's intuitive feeling, as contrasted with the white man's intellectual curiosity, about nature and life. The white man approaches life through his head, developing a materialistic outlook; whereas, the Indian approaches life through his heart. For example, white men would never say that the animals are their brothers, that the beans, the corn and the squash are the three sisters, or that the earth is their mother. Yet, the Indian says it and means it.

In becoming civilized, intellectual and

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Mą'ii dóó Dilt'óshii

Shizhé'é shił nahasne':

Łah Mą'ii tséyaagi ałhosh nít'ée'. T'áadoo hooyání ch'ínádzid dóó "Háajį'go lá deesháál lá," nízingo sídą jíní. Kojįgo háaghal jíní ha'a'aahjį'go, nááná t'ęę' nigháí e'e'aahjį'go, aadóó náhookqsjį'go náádeét'íí' jíní. Ákonidi kojį'go shádi'áahjį'go t'éf bíł ná'ííghá*, áko áajį'go dah diiyá jíní. Áájí deestsiin bijeesáá* t'óó ahayóigo bíł bééhoozingo áádóó áajį'go dah diiyá. Yigáál dóó yigáál dóó yigáalįgo i'íí'ę jíní.

Coyote and the Birds

My Father to me told his story:

Once Coyote face down sleeping he was Suddenly he awoke and "which way is it shall I go" he said to himself

they say. This way he turned his eyes eastward, again westward, also northward

they say. But yet, this way southward only it looked bigger.

and then that way he set out. There pinyon dry pitch

there was a lot of he found out about. and from then he set out that way.

he walked and he walked and he walked until sunset they say.

Excerpt from: "Our Grandmothers and Grandfathers, Their Stories." *Literal Translation by Tom Kavanagh*

scientific, the white man has become increasingly aware of himself. However, in order to see the world as it really is, one must sometimes be able to forget oneself, one's wants, one's biases, even one's intellectual pretensions. Only then can the world of intuition and inspiration speak directly to one, as it did, and does, to the Indian.

The Indian way of life (his method of observing the world and thinking) is different from the white man's way. It is vitally important that white men, especially teachers and educators of young people, understand this. If our youth could realize this difference, and if they could learn to develop intellectually (like the white man), and still develop intuitively (like the Indian), they would be enabled to balance and har-

monize their own lives as well as the lives of others. In this manner, they would become complete people.

Although Native Americans number less than 900,000 (less than one-half of one per cent of the entire population of the United States), their problems are legion. Outstanding among these problems is that of Indian education.

One report on the status of Indians states:

- In 1966, more than 16,000 Indian children of school age were not attending any school at all.

- The average educational level for all Indians under federal supervision is five school years.

- Dropout rates are twice the national average.

- Indian children score consistently lower than white children at every grade

level, in both verbal and non-verbal skills according to national tests, administered in 1965. The longer the Indian child stays in school, the further behind he gets.

These alarming results are caused by many factors, admittedly. Some of these are: language barriers, lack of Indian teachers and counselors, the use of culturally biased tests, the generally poor quality of teachers, and the lack of bilingual and bicultural programs. At present these factors are in the process of changing, especially in the bilingual and bicultural areas. The Navajo language is an excellent example.

Since it is a very subtle, very beautiful language. There are more than 20 ways to say "honor" and as many ways to say respect. But until recently the language has only been spoken. The ancient stories and ceremonies were passed from generation to generation for 1,500 years by word of mouth. But a culture, to continue to survive, must be more than written in the minds of people. It must be written on paper. It must have its own writers, its own literature.

Regardless of the central focus that a people's language and literature have, for more than a century, schools serving Navajo children imposed on them a different language, a different set of values—physically removing children from parents on reservation schools, stressing the value judgment that the old ways had to die if assimilation could take place. Because of these influences, no doubt, the lustre of the oral tradition suffered. To preserve their heritage it would be necessary to compete with written texts in English.

Ironically enough it was World War II that served to develop a pride among the Navajo for their linguistic mastery and subtleties. The most successful code used was the Navajo language; used in the Pacific theater, the Navajo code was never broken.

Ninety five percent of the children on the Rough Rock reservation were monolingual Navajo speakers at the first grade level.

At all other reservations education programs started with English as the only language of instruction. At Rough Rock, the first Indian-controlled school, parents fought for the right to have a bi-lingual program where content material could be taught in Navajo. Weavers and silversmiths and moccasin-makers from the community served as models for the children. A model program of apprentice medicine men, singers, chanters, shamans was initiated as a joint effort between the U.S. Public Health Service and Navajos. The old ways and the new were taught together.

In January 1975, the new IBM Navajo typing element went on the market. In the last year the increase in the number of typewriters with a capability of typing in Navajo had gone from 12 to 150. A little ball with 88 characters on it. So simple, but now Navajo children are reading and writing about their land and their country in Navajo.

Because of this type of advancement, I believe that there exists much hope for the future education of Indians. Herein, exists a unique opportunity for the Indian to revive religious awareness in their culture and education, and to emerge the victor, at last.

Edgar S. Cahn, ed., *Our Brother's Keeper: The Indian in White America* (New York: New Community Press, 1969), p. 28.

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Walter Denny, Gourd Dancer at the 1973 Festival of American Folklife.