

**CULTURAL GUIDE TO AMERICAN INDIAN TRIBES IN
MONTANA AND WYOMING**

Project EXPORT: American Indian Health Disparities Research

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American Indian Health Research Program
Black Hills State University, Spearfish, SD

Montana-Wyoming Tribal Leaders Council, Billings, MT
With the Tribes of Montana and Wyoming

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Chapter 1:

Introduction

This Cultural Guide for health providers and researchers who work with the Tribes in Montana and Wyoming was developed as a collaborative effort between the participating Tribes, the Montana-Wyoming Tribal Leaders Council, and Black Hills State University. The concept of a Cultural Guide came about as a result of a partnership between the Tribal Leaders Council and Black Hills State University to conduct health services research and interventional studies with Tribal involvement and participation, under an NIH/NCMHD Project EXPORT grant. The Guide is a unique document that offers the reader insights and a foundation of valuable information that each Tribe felt was important knowledge to share with people who want to work effectively and appropriately with Tribal organizations and community members. We have made a great effort to ensure the words of the Tribal people in this Guide are accurately presented as they were provided to us.

In 2002, Black Hills State University (BHSU) and the Montana-Wyoming Tribal Leaders Council (TLC) initiated a collaboration to investigate and address health disparities of American Indians residing on Reservations in Montana and Wyoming through research and innovative pilot interventions. In September 2002, BHSU and the TLC were awarded a three-year National Institutes of Health, National Center for Minority Health and Health Disparities grant (Project EXPORT) for the purpose of developing research infrastructure and programs to address health disparities of Tribes in Montana and Wyoming. Under this grant, nine separate pilot research projects were developed and implemented with six of the Reservations in Montana and Wyoming. For each study, the Tribal health director and staff and other Tribal organizations were involved and provided community liaison support, worked collaboratively with the BHSU-TLC project team, participated in training on implementation activities, and had responsibility for implementation of the project activities. This community-based approach has been effective in achieving study goals, provided an opportunity for Tribal staff to develop knowledge and skills that are valuable on an ongoing basis, and resulted in strong Tribal support for the BHSU-TLC research program.

In September 2003, the TLC was awarded a three-year Minority Research Infrastructure Support Program Grant by the NIH Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), with BHSU as a sub-grantee. This grant provided support for development of research infrastructure by the TLC and for the conduct of studies that focus on reducing breast and cervical cancer health disparities and on health systems performance improvement. In February 2003, TLC, with BHSU, was awarded a four-year Robert Wood Johnson Foundation grant for Building Community Support for People with Diabetes.

Each of these existing grants is based on principles that are the foundation of the working relationship between BHSU and the TLC and its member Tribes. Early in the development of the BHSU-TLC partnership, the Executive Director of the TLC was straightforward in stating that the experience of many tribes in collaborating with universities on research had been negative. Tribes supported and contributed to grant applications and proposals, but universities often failed to involve the tribe in the research after award. Similarly, non-Indian researchers who conducted projects on Reservations often were uninformed, failed to obtain counsel and support from Tribal leaders, and lacked the cultural awareness that is essential to produce valid and useful results. He also stressed that it would be critical, up front, to design an approach that included sharing information learned from the project's activities with Tribal leaders, Tribal health directors, and others who have responsibilities for health issues on Reservations and urban Indian health clinics. Tribal leaders are often skeptical of research initiatives because there has been little useful benefits to Tribes from the research, and because there has been little effort on the part of researchers to 'follow up' and share results with the community.

Given this background, the TLC and BHSU established a set of principles to guide the development and conduct of research projects with Tribes. These principles include:

- Involvement of Tribes in setting the priorities for seeking research funding;
- Tribal input in developing specific research proposals and grant applications;
- Tribal participation in research activities and data collection;
- Feedback and information on findings of research and on 'tools' and methods that could be used by Tribes.

In addition to these principles, conducting effective research with Tribes requires that the researchers understand the culture and traditions of Tribes with which they work and incorporate this understanding into their interactions with Tribal members. Recognizing the importance of cultural knowledge, the BHSU and TLC Project EXPORT staff initiated the development of this Cultural Guide for researchers conducting research with the Tribes in Montana and Wyoming, as a collaborative effort. The Cultural Guide includes a discussion and overview of general issues and background information for researchers working with American Indian Tribes. The Guide was prepared by BHSU faculty involved in Project EXPORT, and is a significant Project EXPORT Mentoring Core product. The TLC has also worked with each of the Tribes in Montana and Wyoming to provide support for the development of Tribal-specific Cultural Guides, four of which are included in this document.

The intent of the cultural guide is to provide a starting point for educational reference and to elicit dialogue and cross-cultural exchange between researchers and Tribal members who participate in research studies.

Cultural awareness training and guidance is encouraged. It is anticipated that the BHSU-TLC Project EXPORT team will be involved in providing training to researchers, in order to assist them in working with the Tribes in this region.

Intent and Area of Study

A research infrastructure is necessary to provide a foundation for developing databases, research skills, culturally appropriate pilot/feasibility studies and collaborations that will support long-term research.

Cultural factors regarding American Indians may affect the research process. The diversity of American Indian nations is also to be considered. It is not necessary for the researcher to know all of the cultural distinctions between and among Tribes. However, it is important that the researcher be aware of cultural differences. (Hodge, et al., 2000, p. 43)

Researchers are not expected to be experts on the more than 500 American Indian Tribes, but should learn as much as possible about the groups they plan to study and work with.

The researcher can become involved in the community through Tribal meetings and social gatherings. Learning about the history, culture, values, attitudes, local customs and beliefs about illness will help researchers conduct a more efficient study. Showing genuine concern and a willingness to learn and be a part of a community can foster trust.

Just as it is necessary to recognize the cultural values important to Tribal people, BHSU and the Project EXPORT researchers acknowledge the necessity of adhering to the highest ethical and moral standards and a core set of values including:

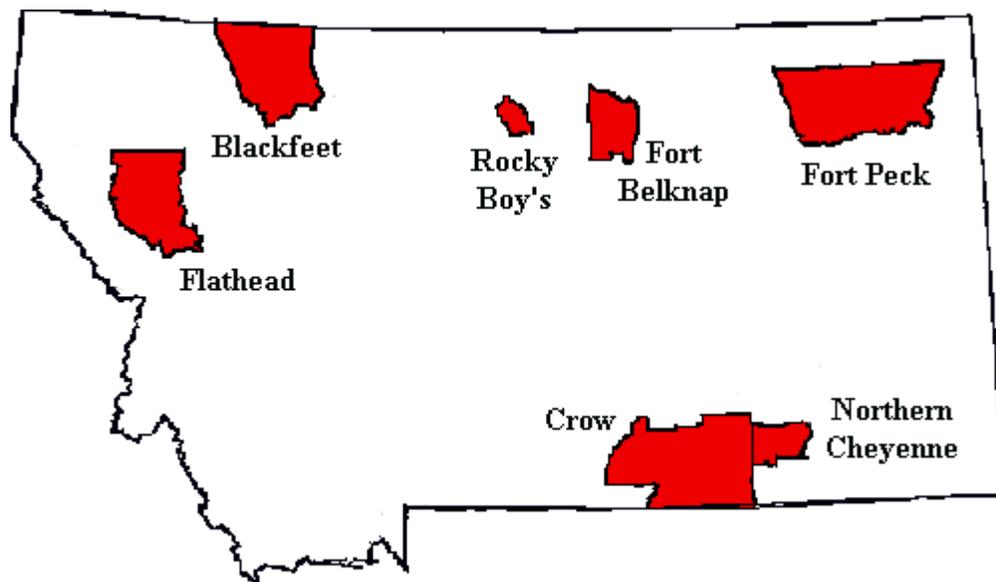
- Present health research results to indigenous people in a way that is accessible, appropriate and easily understood
- Maintain ethical standards by adhering consistently to prescribed values and principles
- Act in an honest, fair and just manner
- Aim to include indigenous people in all health research activities
- Share new knowledge with all research partners
- Conduct all activities in a business like manner

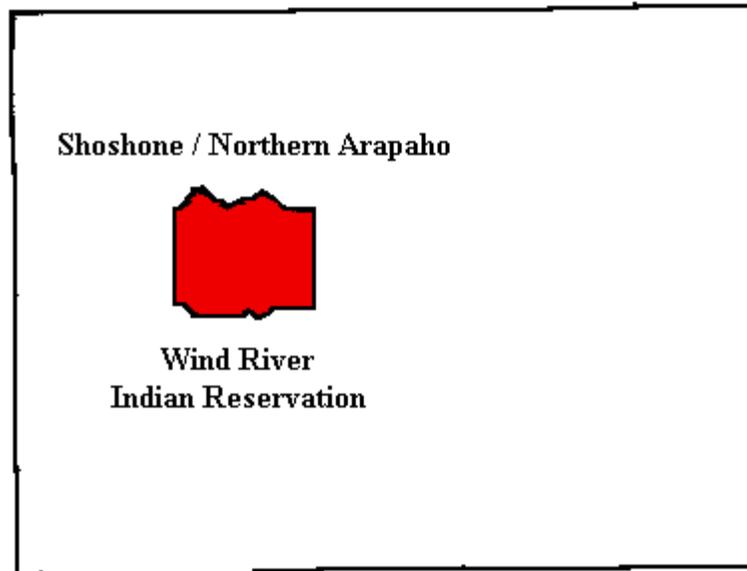
General Cultural History and Background of the Tribes of the Rocky Mountain Region

Background

A brief background of the Tribes with Reservations in Montana and Wyoming has been developed to better facilitate working with Indian communities within this region. Maps showing the geographical location of the Reservations in Montana and Wyoming are shown below.

Montana and Wyoming Reservations Maps





Source: <http://www.mtwytlc.com/>

General information about each Reservation is as follows:

- **Blackfeet**

The Blackfeet Tribe is made up of approximately 15,500 enrolled members with 8,000 living on a Reservation that is located in northwestern Montana on 1.5 million acres. The town of Browning, MT is the seat of the Blackfeet Tribal Business Council, the governing body within the Blackfeet Indian Reservation. The proximity to Glacier National Park provides a unique opportunity for the Blackfeet, as more than 2.3 million people drive through the Reservation each year. The Museum of the Plains Indian, at Browning, has excellent dioramas of Plains Indian life. Blackfeet Community College, founded in 1974, is also located in Browning.

- **Chippewa Cree Tribe**

The Chippewa Cree Tribe of the Rocky Boy's Reservation is located in north-central Montana consisting of 120,000 acres. The reservation, which lies 50 miles south of the Canadian border, was established in 1916. Because of Rocky Boy Reservation's ethnic diversity (Cree, Chippewa, Metis and Assiniboine), there remains a rich variety of cultural practices. The governing body is comprised of a nine-member Business Committee, elected by popular vote from the reservation's five districts. The Chippewa Cree Tribal Offices and Stone Child College (established in 1984) are located in Box Elder, MT.

- **Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (Flathead)**

The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes are comprised of the Bitterroot Salish, the Pend d'Oreille and the Kootenai Tribes. "Confederated Salish" refers to both the Salish and Pend d'Oreille Tribes. The territories of these Tribes once covered all of western Montana and extended into parts of Idaho, British Columbia and Wyoming. The subsistence patterns of the Tribal people developed over generations of observation, experimentation and spiritual interaction with the natural world, created a body of knowledge about the environment closely tied to seasons, locations and biology. The Tribal Headquarters and Salish Kootenai College (established in 1977) are located in Pablo, MT. The Hellgate Treaty of 1855 established the Flathead Reservation in northwest Montana, comprised of 1.317 million acres.

- **Crow**

The 2.5 million acre Crow Reservation is located in Big Horn and Yellowstone Counties of southeastern Montana, as established by the Treaty of 1851. There are approximately 10,000 enrolled members, with 6,500 living on the Reservation. The Crow Reservation's eastern boundary is adjacent to the Northern Cheyenne Reservation. The Crow/Northern Cheyenne Hospital, BIA and Crow Tribal Government offices are located in Crow Agency, MT. The annual Crow Fair, one of the largest pow wows held in the United States, takes place at Crow Agency every August. A popular tourist site on the Reservation is the Battle of the Little Big Horn National Monument. Little Big Horn College, established in 1980, is located in Crow Agency.

- **Northern Cheyenne**

Located in the southeastern part of Montana, the Northern Cheyenne Tribe was organized in 1936 and currently has a Tribal membership of approximately 6,700 enrolled members, with 4,400 living on the reservation. Bordered on the west by the Crow Indian Reservation, the 440,000-acre Northern Cheyenne Reservation is acclimated to farming and ranching. Tribal government, Indian Health Service and the Bureau of Indian Affairs all have their headquarters in Lame Deer, MT. The Franciscan Order established St. Labre Indian School in Ashland, MT in 1884 as an educational facility. Today it is also a visitor center, museum and art gallery, exhibiting Cheyenne culture and heritage. Dull Knife Memorial College, established in 1975, is located in Lame Deer.

- **Ft. Belknap**

The Fort Belknap Indian Reservation is located in north central Montana near the Canadian border on approximately 600,000 acres. The Reservation is the home of two Tribes, the Assiniboine and the Gros Ventre, which operate under one central government. There are approximately 2,800 members living on the Reservation. The Tribal headquarters, Ft. Belknap Community Council and Ft. Belknap College (established in 1984), are located in Harlem, MT.

- **Ft. Peck**

The Fort Peck Reservation is home to two separate Indian nations, each composed of numerous bands and divisions. The Sioux divisions of Sisseton/Wahpeton, the Yanktonais and the Teton Hunkpapa are represented, as well as the Assiniboine bands of Canoe Paddler and Red Bottom. The Reservation is located in the extreme northeast corner of Montana. There are an estimated 10,000 enrolled Tribal members living on or near the 110 mile long, 40-mile wide Reservation. The Fort Peck Tribes adopted their first written constitution in 1927, rejecting the I.R.A. Act of 1934. Their constitution remains one of the few modern Tribal constitutions that include provisions for general councils, the traditional Tribal type of government. The Ft. Peck Tribal Executive Board headquarters and Fort Peck Community College (established in 1978) are located in Poplar, MT.

- **Eastern Shoshone**

The Eastern Shoshone Tribe is located on the Wind River Reservation in central Wyoming. The Wind River Reservation, Wyoming's only Indian Reservation, is the home of two tribes, the Northern Arapaho and Eastern Shoshone. The Tribes operate as two separate Tribal governments. The Reservation covers 2.2 million acres and there are approximately 4,200 enrolled members of the Eastern Shoshone. The Eastern Shoshone Business Council Tribal headquarters are located in Fort Washakie, WY.

- **Northern Arapaho**

The Northern Arapaho Tribe is also located on the Wind River Reservation with 7,400 Northern Arapaho Tribal members. Towns on or near the reservation include Riverton, Lander, Ethete, Arapaho and Thermopolis. The Wind River flows through the Reservation, providing water for irrigation and recreation. Pride, respect, honor and tradition are the main values as shown on the Wind River Tribal College logo. The Arapaho Business Council is located in Fort Washakie, WY.

- **Little Shell**

After 109 years, the Little Shell Ojibwa/Chippewa are officially a Tribe again. Headquartered in Great Falls, MT, this band of the Chippewa Tribe is a State-recognized Tribe without a designated Reservation in Montana. There are over 4,000 enrolled members within the State, many of whom live in Great Falls and the surrounding area. The Tribe is currently petitioning for federal recognition. Only a handful of the Tribe's members still speak their native language, with almost none of the native speakers born after 1934, according to Little Shell anthropologists.

Tribal Culture and History

Cultural History, as provided by the Blackfeet, Crow, Fort Belknap, Little Shell Chippewa, Northern Arapaho and Northern Cheyenne Tribes, is included as Chapters 2 – 7. These Tribal documents are unique and will include individual Tribal histories, creation stories, tribal college histories, links and other visuals.

Cultural Approaches Relevant to Studies

When a focus group approach is being considered, one must consider carefully what type of questions to ask the focus group to be studied. Cultural questions draw attention to influences from ethnic and racial cultures, (in this case the American Indian Tribes of Montana and Wyoming), but also to influences from cultures associated with other socially-constructed groups such as those based on gender, social class, peer groups, health institutions and schools. Language is an important part of all cultures; consequently, language should be included within the scope of cultural questions. Cultural questions also examine the influences of historical events and of larger socio-economic and political structuring.

Talking circles have proven to be an excellent method for sharing and collecting data among American Indian Tribes. A “talking circle” is formed when a community or group wants to discuss a topic/issue or a number of issues at a public gathering. The participants form a circle and each person in the circle shares their perspective on an issue, while others listen respectfully. Before the talking circle begins, the moderator may review the protocol for this particular talking circle. Each circle develops its own rules during the first meeting and everyone in the circle agrees to abide by them. Oftentimes, the moderator will smudge/purify each participant with sage, sweet grass or cedar to ask the Creator for help and to give thanks for the people who are willing to share their ideas in this process. They may offer an opening prayer or defer to a respected elder in the circle to begin the talking circle with a prayer.

Some general guidelines for conducting a talking circle:

- One speaker (many listeners) at a time, respecting one another's space
- Speak honestly, truthfully from the heart, weighing one's words before speaking
- Be a respectful listener; listen with patience, without interrupting
- A person talks until finished, being respectful of time
- Focus on the topic/issue/question at hand
- Be supportive and encourage each other; "hard on issues, soft on people"
- After each person shares, the talking piece (something of significance, such as a talking stick, stone, feather, staff, prayer stick, etc.) is passed clockwise to the next person
- Only the person holding the piece is allowed to talk; a person may also pass, hold the piece without speaking and/or reinforce what has already been said
- For the circle to be complete, no one should be left out of the circle

When the last person has shared, the moderator may close the discussion with a prayer and may smudge the participants again. While sharing, many times we consider our ancestors, future relatives and those unable to join the circle. There is no right or wrong way, but if done with respect and patience, there will be an increasingly rich accumulation of thought and a building of consensus and awareness through use of the talking circle. Individuals may find common ground upon which to stand together in a more cooperative spirit, reaching toward a mutual goal.

Following is a sample of some eliciting questions as related to health areas and issues to be studied in a quantitative research approach.

- What do you hope will be the outcome from the research conducted on your Reservation?
- How might your beliefs or values be contributing to the overall health disparity situation on your Reservation?
- List at least five health disparities on your Reservation.
- What cultural values are important to you? Define those important to you.
- Do you see the area in which you live as hopeful or hopeless? If you find it hopeful, what do you find hopeful about the future for your community?
- Can you provide solutions to the current health situation on your Reservation?
- What is your vision for yourself, your family and your community?

Because cultural perspectives are viewed as a starting point for any research that is conducted with tribes, any new study that may be initiated with a specific Tribal community should begin with a discussion of culture and traditions and their potential impact of the design of the research and the structure of researcher-Tribal interactions around the study implementation. Community involvement and cultural imperatives, now pre-requisites, were not a part of early

research studies and protocol. Standard approaches for research in Indian Country have had limited success, however, those researchers who have engaged Indian community members as active participants in developing research models have experienced better results.

Community-Based Participatory Research: Objectives and Models

Community-based participatory research (CBPR) has been proposed and implemented as a strategy to increase the effectiveness of health promotion and prevention programs through involving target communities in designing, implementing, and evaluating the programs to be implemented. The CBPR approach requires local community involvement that will eventually lead to local ownership and control. Native people can achieve long-term health improvements when they become involved in their community and work together to effect change.

Involvement of communities in research requires more than obtaining approval from community leaders and/or a few individuals. Community members must be involved in all phases of the research process, from design through implementation and evaluation. In addition, the involved community leaders and participants in the program must perceive the program as providing both direct (e.g. improved health outcomes) and indirect benefits (e.g. training and skills-building for community members).

Some of the key principles of CBPR are summarized as follows:

- Researchers must be clear on the purposes or goals of the project.
- Researchers must become knowledgeable about the community, including history, population characteristics, political structure, economy, health and demographic trends, previous collaborative efforts, and past experiences with researchers.
- Researchers must establish relationships with community leadership – formal and informal – and build trust over time, as a foundation for obtaining commitment from organizations and leaders to engage in a CBPR project.
- The community has the power to develop and shape the interventions to reflect community priorities, culture and traditions, and that the researcher be responsive, recognize the community's perspectives, learn from the community, and be flexible and supportive of this process.
- Community involvement in all aspects and technical assistance to facilitate this involvement.
- The researchers must provide feedback on an on-going basis throughout the intervention program to permit adjustments of the CBPR approach to yield positive results.

- The community and the researchers will produce the most effective results through establishment of a long-term partnership to address health issues.

(CDC/ATSDR, 1997; Plumb et al., 2004; Holkup et al., 2004; Minkel, 1990; Minkel, 2003; Israel et al., 1998 and 2003)

In addition to the above principles, a number of researchers have addressed the unique issues associated with developing CBPR programs with Tribes. Fisher and Ball (2003) have detailed mechanisms for a collaborative model of Tribal Participatory Research that include:

- Obtaining formal Tribal Council approval prior to the initial planning stages of the program.
- Tribal Council appointment of oversight committees for the programs, that may include elected Tribal leaders, cultural and spiritual leaders, elders and individuals from Tribal programs that may be relevant to the planned TPR.
- Development and implementation, by the Tribal Council, of a research code that identifies ethical and political issues, reflects local culture, needs and interest, and maximizes close collaboration between the research and community partners (extract from Macaulay et al., 1999).
- Using a Tribal facilitator to participate in and facilitate meetings between Tribal oversight committees and researchers to encourage clear communication and to assist both committee members and researchers to understand and effectively communicate with each other.
- Training and employing community members as research staff, including providing training in research skills and methods.
- Ensuring that the research design and intervention methods are culturally appropriate for the specific community (e.g. the culture and traditions of many Tribes are inconsistent with randomized designs where some people are offered the intervention and others are not).
- Longer timelines may be required to permit building relations and trust between the community and researchers.
- Funds to support program activities and to compensate the Tribe may require a higher budget than other types of research projects.
- Researchers must relinquish “control” and be comfortable with a true partnership with the community, including the involvement of the Tribal Council and community members in interpreting research findings.

Manson et al. and Letiecq and Bailey also emphasize the importance of relationship building, particularly with Tribes, and stress that trust and relationships require extensive efforts by the researchers to travel to the community frequently, throughout the intervention project. In conducting research with Tribal communities, the most positive outcomes will be achieved

through the development of long-term on-going relationships between the Tribal community and researchers – over time and across multiple research projects.

Cultural Techniques to Gather Data and Analyze Information

Many Tribes and Tribal organizations are involved in all aspects of research in Indian Country, including planning, design, data collection, reporting of, and dissemination of research findings. This participatory action research includes guidelines for ethical research that encompass methods, techniques, values, ethics, attitudes, behavior, sharing and listening, to name several. Involvement in all phases of the research has led to Tribal empowerment and ownership. Tribes and Tribal organizations are requiring that researchers:

- Hire Tribal members to assist in data collection and other research activities.
- Demonstrate how the research findings will benefit the Tribe and Tribal members, including capacity building and increased knowledge of research (Hillabrant, 2002 and Fisher and Ball, 2003).
- Guarantee that the research protocol does no harm to the Tribe, Tribal members, and the environment.
- Guarantee confidentiality or anonymity of research participants, Tribal communities, and the Tribe.
- Publish results only after review and approval of the manuscript by Tribal representatives. (Hillabrant, AIRPEM, 2002)
- Attempt to give appropriate research information to local spiritual leaders (medicine and holy men/women and/or traditional medicine societies).

These requirements exercised by Tribes can benefit research in Indian Country.

General Research Protocol - Tips for Researchers—Dos and Don'ts

- ❑ Allow sufficient time to visit and collect data/information.
- ❑ Choose words carefully and provide examples often throughout any interview process. Words can be very powerful.
- ❑ Clearly state the reason for the protocol using non-jargon, non-scientific (common) language. If a survey is used, use common language.
- ❑ If there appears to be a language barrier, be prepared to bring a translator along for the interview process.
- ❑ If the spoken word is powerful, the unspoken words, the non-verbal behavior, including gestures, facial expressions and tone of voice are sometimes equally as important. Watch one's body language. Research & use appropriate community norms for appropriate behavior.
- ❑ Explain the benefits of the research and how outcomes will benefit American Indian communities.

- ❑ If appropriate to the research, bring hands-on or visual aides to facilitate understanding.
- ❑ Be flexible; communication is a circular process, instead of linear. If a respondent shares stories, jokes and personal humor, appreciate these words and behaviors as additional sharing of information. Listen carefully as to what is being shared, as this information may be the answers you seek.
- ❑ A respectful greeting using a “light” handshake versus a firm grip. The touching may be a sign of respect and “hand-pumping” is not appreciated.
- ❑ Bring a gift; staples such as coffee, tea, sugar and flour are acceptable.
- ❑ A gift/offering of loose-leaf tobacco (i.e., Bugler, Natural American Spirit) may be given to individuals for acknowledgement of the seriousness of the research or activity being conducted. A gift of sweet grass, sage or cedar may also be given depending on local/community tradition. This may be given before or after the interview/data collection. This is not payment for services/information, but given out of respect for knowledge obtained.
- ❑ In turn, traditional Tribal people are exceptionally generous and engage in the formal custom of a “give-away.” When such gifts are given, this is a sign of respect for the invited recipients, who in turn show respect by acceptance.
- ❑ Wait to be seated.
- ❑ Dress conservatively; be neat and clean. Traditional people may expect women researchers to wear a dress or long skirt. No shorts or immodest attire for either gender.
- ❑ Make sure that any concerns or issues are dealt with prior to any survey.
- ❑ Do not feel uncomfortable if respondents do not make direct eye contact. Traditional Tribal people view direct eye contact as impolite; therefore, lack of eye contact may be a sign of respect.
- ❑ Do not expect to be fed, but if offered, never refuse a meal or beverage, as this is considered disrespectful.
- ❑ Do not pass judgment on the respondent’s home (interior) or location (exterior); outward appearances may be deceiving. Clothes & belongings are considered less important.
- ❑ People are judged by personal character. The best way to develop a positive relationship is to be genuine, honest and humble. The best advice of those wanting to be accepted by Tribal people is to “be a good person.”
- ❑ Images in Tribal culture are sacred. Please ask permission prior to taking photographs of the people.
- ❑ Understand that in American Indian culture, the wants and needs of the family/group come before those of the individual.

- ❑ American Indians prefer to be referred to by the Nation (Tribe) they are from; refer to local Tribal name use. There is usually no preference for “American Indian” versus “Native American.” The concern over which is correct is viewed as a non-Tribal issue.
- ❑ Acknowledge the wisdom of Tribal elders, as the keepers of traditions. Actively seek their input and show them the utmost respect.
- ❑ Tribal people are part of modern America. They live in houses, drive cars, and pay taxes. Tribal people also keep their culture alive and close to their hearts.
- ❑ Developing rapport and trust through respectful dialogue is imperative. Guard your personal integrity, as once it is lost, it is very difficult to regain.

Implementing a Plan of Action: Focus on Cultural Beliefs, Values, Behavior, and Attitudes

Interventions should be informed by analyses of the information gathered. If the evidence indicates that cultural influences are relevant to the topic being examined, then the intervention(s) should include aspects related to those cultural influences. Also see Henze and Hauser (1999) for techniques of implementing a plan of action.

The American Indian community has entered the research realm in fragmented ways. It is the hope that Tribal/cultural influences will be considered valid contributions to the field of research and medicine. Mainstream medical research has largely ignored or under-valued native traditional healing ways. It is important that American Indian traditional medicinal practices, including healing ceremonies and herbal medicines, are considered valid and useful in the overall philosophy of “wellness.” Cross-cultural training sessions are emphasized to avoid cultural/Tribal shock for researchers and medical practitioners. The following are general suggestions in the development of cross-cultural training sessions:

- ❑ All tribes are not the same; there may be some similarities, but there are also differences that make each tribe unique.
- ❑ Use “cultural brokers” as resource guides to provide effective training; these may include Tribal Cultural Preservation Officer, traditional Tribal healers or Tribal Community College staff.
- ❑ Talking Circles may encourage interaction between group members. Gender or age specific groups should be taken into consideration as well.
- ❑ Establish contacts with American Indian spiritual leaders/practitioners in the region. Recognize that there are many types of traditional healers who may be sought out for specific problems. Acknowledge traditional healing ceremonies and practices. Encourage the participation of local spiritual leaders in training sessions, at their chosen level of commitment. It should be noted that traditional plant use and Tribal medicinal practices

vary among Tribal people and within Reservations. Among various Tribes these practices remain strong, in some they are returning and still others exhibit few traditional healing practices. Whatever the level of traditional usage, acknowledge and reaffirm specific Tribal norms.

- Oftentimes, a meeting or a group session will begin with a prayer and a song. Defer to traditional spiritual leaders in the geographic location for their active participation. If there is no spiritual leader present, it is appropriate to ask an elder to pray.
- Avoid disaster or real-life role play situations that encourage participants to “pretend” illness or accident (loss of sight, wheelchair bound, etc.). Some Northern Plains/Rocky Mountain Tribal members believe that if someone pretends to be ill or is incapacitated, this will happen. In other words, one has set the wish/want into motion and it will be only a matter of time when the intended thought/action occurs.
- There are no Native/Indigenous words for “handicapped” or “disabled.” Teachers and medical practitioners must be very careful about using such phrases as “will not ever be able to,” or “is not capable of,” or “will not live,” or “...has only 6 months to live.” Instead, use of words that make the best of a person’s potential should be used. Words are sacred...words are powerful.
- Develop good working relationships with local C.H.R.s (Community Health Representatives), for their medical knowledge, as well as their social, family and community insights.
- Recommend that the local medical facilities either allow purification rites, such as smudging with sage, sweet grass, or cedar in the rooms, or incorporate a cultural room/location where this practice is allowed and encouraged.
- Encourage input from the local community as to what they feel is culturally appropriate protocol. This may mean placing additional chairs in waiting, examination, or patient rooms to accommodate family members. Oftentimes Tribal family members expect to provide personal care for their relatives and they are a vital link to the patient’s healing. Depending on the length of stay, family members may take turns assisting their loved ones and may even ask to stay overnight.
- Generally, one or two family members are designated as spokespersons for the extended family group. This might include relatives outside the immediate family, including adopted relatives. Sometimes this will mean dissemination of information to family members, other times it will mean active decision-making for the patient.
- The “medicine wheel,” “sacred circle,” or “sacred hoop” refers to a belief that the circle is unending and all-encompassing. The medicine wheel implies wholeness and unity, as in this belief, the four quadrants, four directions, or four winds are important and equal. This symbol encourages all to seek balance in one’s life-- physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually.
- Respect the local elders and the knowledge that they bring.

- Respect Native communities, their strengths and hopes; oftentimes we focus on the weaknesses but we should also focus on how Native people are surviving.
- Promote resiliency; help activate the Tribal community; respect and promote Tribal sovereignty and Tribal empowerment.
- Tribal religious beliefs should be understood or taken into consideration, so that therapies of education can be appropriately tailored to each individual. Respect for traditional beliefs and practices will lead to mutually satisfying relationships among all who live and work together.

In accordance with these recommendations, Project Export encouraged the Tribes to submit their specific Tribal documentation. The following Tribal Chapters are presented as received with only formatting changes that have been made for continuity of this document.

Chapter 2:

Cultural Guide Blackfeet Tribal Health Department Blackfeet Indian Reservation Browning, Montana 59417

Introduction

This Cultural Guide includes the history and background of the Blackfeet and Reservation with a discussion of culture, beliefs, traditional medicine, social support systems, and health behaviors, particularly as it related to issues that affect medical care and effective communications with non-Indian medical providers. This guide is also a resource for providing Blackfeet information to health and social service workers.

Blackfeet History

The Blackfeet People are complex in description. This complexity comes with the transformation of a people through familiar and unfamiliar life settings. The Blackfeet People had a familiar tribal structure prior to contact with immigrants from other continents. The tribal groups surrounding Blackfoot territory also had a familiar relationship existence prior to immigration. Early explorers to the North American continent and the present-day surrounding tribal groups have influenced the unfamiliar tribal structure of contemporary Blackfoot tribal people.

The familiarity of tribal structure has been an evolving process since the creation of Blackfoot people by significant heroes. The hero's teachings are consistent through traditions of story telling, sign language, transfer of knowledge and ceremony and a fully developed relationship with the spiritual world existence. The heroes are both male and female. They are of a universal relationship consisting of the Above Beings, Earth Beings and Water Beings.

The original territory of the Blackfoot people was extremely large and included all necessities and luxuries for living. The territory ranged from the North Saskatchewan River, which flows through present-day Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, south, to the headwaters of the Yellowstone River in present-day Wyoming, west, across the Rocky Mountains and east to the Great Sand Hills which is currently the Province of Saskatchewan and the present-day states of North and South Dakota.

The 49th parallel or the U.S.-Canadian border was established in the mid-1800s. This border created a distinct division in Blackfoot country. The people were separated from each other by English rule, Spanish rule, French rule, Canadian rule and American rule. This separation was further established by the Treaty of 1851; Isaac I. Stevens Railroad exploration of 1853; 1855 Lamebull Treaty;

unratified Treaty of 1865 and 1868; Executive Orders of July 5, 1873, August 19, 1874, April 1, 1875, and July 3, 1880, and the Agreements of May 1, 1888 and June 10, 1896.

The Blackfeet Tribal people's lifestyle changed significantly during this treaty era. Prior to the treaty era, they were self reliant, wealthy and independent people. They depended upon the buffalo for their existence and there were plenty of buffalo to perpetuate their lifestyle. However, when the fur traders moved into Blackfoot country and began to kill the herds of buffalo to ship down the Missouri River to St. Louis, MO the Blackfeet began to depend on the treaty provisions for their existence. The Blackfeet's dependence on government rations ended abruptly, and the Blackfeet were thrown on their own devices for subsistence.

The era of tribal agency establishment with a government agent to deal with the tribe still exists today. The Blackfeet agency headquarters have been in Fort Benton, MT, Four Persons in Chouteau, MT, Running Crane on the Big Badger River, Old Agency at Piegan, MT, Willow Creek agency and the current government agency in Browning, MT. The first two decades of the 20th century brought considerable change to the Blackfeet reservation.

In 1903, the last of the Piegan head chiefs, White Calf, died and prompted a new election of the Tribal Council. The traditional method of choosing tribal leaders by consensus and recognition of merit in battle was no longer available to the Blackfeet. After 1900, the Blackfeet were introduced to politics. Rival factions between mixed bloods, and between mixed bloods and full bloods, became evident. Rivalry and factionalism probably accounted for the aggressive nature of the Tribal Council after 1903. The Blackfeet were clearly moving in a direction where they demanded more control over their affairs.

In 1907, Congress passed the first allotment act for the Blackfeet Reservation, and the government continued the allotting process until 1919. The period began with great hope and optimism that the Blackfeet would reach a level of self-sufficiency within a few years, and ended with the Blackfeet in a state of psychological and economic depression.

In 1924, native people were given U.S. Citizen status. This voting privilege allowed participation in federal, state, and county government. Although previously the Blackfeet were not citizens of the U.S. government and agreed through treaty not to go to war, members of the Blackfeet Tribe served in the armed forces during World War I.

Since 1887, the basic law governing federal-Indian relations has been the Dawes, or General Severalty Act. The Dawes Act contemplated the eventual elimination of the jointly owned reservation, and the end of direct federal supervision of Indian people. The experience of the 20th century, however, demonstrated that neither the reservation nor the Indian Office was going to go

away. The Blackfeet Tribe's current political structure was created in 1934 under the Indian Reorganization Act. By the end of 1936, the Tribal Business Council had secured its charter from the Secretary of the Interior. The incorporation under the federal charter would allow the tribe to contract with the government and other institutions for loans, and participate in a number of government programs enumerated under the Indian Reorganization Act.

The Blackfeet Tribal Business Council currently has nine positions, elected by the eligible voters from five districts across the reservation. The Executive Officers of the Blackfeet Tribal Business Council are Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Secretary whom are elected by the nine council members. The council members serve a four-year term.

Today, the Blackfeet Tribe is primarily described as the AmskapiPiikani or South Piegan Tribe and its members reside on a 1.5 million acre Indian reservation in northwestern MT. The Blood or Kainah Tribe live on a reserve land 20 miles north of the U.S.-Canadian border. The North Piegan Tribe or Piikani live on reserve land approximately 25 miles northwest of the Blood Reserve in Alberta. The fourth tribe is referred to as the Blackfoot (proper) or referred to today as the Siksika Nation, who live on reserve land east of the present city of Calgary, Alberta.

Most recently, the Blackfeet Confederacy (membership from all four tribes) has organized in an annual conference as a forum to present common tribal-wide discussions. This is an effort to create an organized structure for the four tribes of Blackfeet people to work together strategically to improve the future of the entire tribe as a whole.

Today, the Blackfeet people live both on and off reservation lands. This is a result of assimilation and termination policies that created off-reservation boarding schools, relocation for training and employment in major cities, adoption and foster care, federal and state imprisonment, lack of employment and training on reservations, and loss of tribal identity teachings in the educational systems.

Blackfeet Culture

The Blackfeet people's traditions and values were given by the Creator and other Spirit Beings. The Blackfeet people struggle to maintain their values, principles and beliefs in the face of relentless change. The language describes the relationship with the universe. Ni-tsi-to-pi-ksi means Real People and includes all of the indigenous peoples of North America. Sao-kitapiiksi is the name for the people who lived on the Plains. Nitsi-poi-yiksi are the speakers of the Real Language-the Blackfoot language.

Ihtsi-pai-tapi-yopa is the name Blackfeet call the Essence of All Life. This is Creator. Creator made all living things equal; humans were not given the right to

rule over or exploit the rest of nature. Blackfeet recognize plants, animals, and rocks as other living beings, which are different from us but also our equals.

Blackfeet use the word Ni-tsi-ta-pi-ksi to refer to themselves and to all other First Nations people. This means “Real People” and distinguishes us as human beings from the rest of Creation. Blackfeet recognize other beings that inhabit different environments. These are called Earth Beings, such as the four-legged animals, plants, rocks and the earth itself. The Above Beings live in the sky. Among the above beings are the Sun, the Moon, and their son Morning Star. Other stars, thunder, the sky and many birds are also above beings. The Water Beings live in and near the water such as the water birds, beavers, otter and muskrat. The Earth, Above and Water beings have often helped the Blackfeet people by showing us how to use their powers.

The ancient stories tell how the traditions were given. They are the record of Blackfeet history since the beginning of time. Ancient stories are the root of Blackfoot practices.

Sacred bundles contain items that were given to the Blackfoot by the Spirit Beings. These are used in ceremonies to renew the connections with the Spirit Beings and Creator to ask for help. Today they are kept in quiet rooms in people’s homes and are accorded the care one would give to a child. During the appropriate season or time of need the sacred bundles are opened in ceremony to assist with the needs of the people.

The Painted Tipis of the Blackfoot are more than pretty images. They connect with the Spirit Beings who gave these images to people in their dreams so prosperity, harmony and long lives would come to those inside the tipi. The door of the Blackfoot tipi always faced the east so the occupants would greet the sun with prayer each day.

Leadership was determined by personality, experience, judgment, speaking skills and generosity. The advice and wisdom of the old people was especially important, and much value was placed on life experiences.

The role of men and women were different yet complementary to the welfare of the camp. The Blackfoot men and women knew how much they needed each other to survive. The birth of a child is a wonderful event. In the days when the people camped together in clans, newborns were cared for by all the women. Also, grandparents would adopt and raise a grandchild.

The teaching of values through practice was essential to survival. It reinforced the moral of the story being told. Nighttime was an important time for storytelling. The grandparents constantly promoted good behavior and provided advice through storytelling.

The Blackfeet had social events which included dances, hand games and horse racing, which created a gathering for laughing and joking with one another. Hand games and horse races often involved gambling. They also taught the young men the skills of good hunting and being a warrior. Hand games train people to concentrate and observe, while horse racing requires the development of superb horse skills. Today, the annual North American Indian Days and Heart Butte Society Celebration powwows have become a social gathering and are open to everyone.

The seasons of the year required an in-depth knowledge of ecology to utilize the resources at hand. The environment was the classroom. The Blackfeet acquired the knowledge of buffalo hunting and skills to kill the buffalo using land resources. The Blackfeet knew all the plants that grew in their territory and had uses for almost every one of them. Some were used for tools, some for food, and others for medicine. The camp was often set near a spot where an important plant had ripened and was ready to be collected.

The Blackfeet do not use as many native plants today. The environment has changed greatly; many plants are now more rare or have completely disappeared. The knowledge of medicine has been disappearing as the old people depart without teaching the younger people. The Tribal state of health is suffering as a result.

Methodology

The Cultural Guide has two main components: (1) Blackfeet History and (2) Blackfeet Culture. The historical overview provides the reader with a description of creation in a broad and vast natural territory. In comparison to the 1.5 million acre territory of the present day Blackfeet Indian Reservation in MT. The cultural overview gives the reader a broad view of the past and present relationship, which has created the modern day Blackfeet person.

In 1978 the Native American Religious Freedom Act was passed and made it legal for native people to openly practice their ancient ways of survival. Many of these ways were lost with the elderly departing. The knowledge, which survived, is being practiced through ceremony of spiritual, social, physical and mental well being.

The Blackfeet Tribe currently has the Indian Health Service Hospital located in Browning, Montana and the Heart Butte Clinic located in Heart Butte, MT. The people have emergency access to the hospitals in the nearest major cities of Great Falls and Kalispell, MT. The Blackfeet people's health care is managed by the Billings Area Indian Health Service Office, in Billings, MT. The Blackfeet Tribal Health Department coordinates and communicates the health needs to the Blackfeet Tribal Business Council, Service Unit Director and the Billings Area Office.

The wide range of services available to the Blackfeet people includes inpatient, ambulatory, emergency, dental, pharmacy, nutritional, environmental health, community health, and preventive health services. The Blackfoot cultural health services are continuously being developed which will contribute to the services available through Indian Health Service to make a healthier Blackfoot person in the future.

Chapter 3:

**Cultural Guide
Crow Nation
Crow Tribal Health Department
The Montana-Wyoming Tribal Leaders Council
And
Black Hills State University**

NARRATIVE

Geography

The Crow (Apsaalooke) Tribe is located in south-central MT on the Crow Indian Reservation, which is approximately the same geographic size as the state of Connecticut and encompasses 2.2 million acres or 3,500 square miles. The Crow Service Unit is comprised of Big Horn, Carbon, Treasure, and Yellowstone counties in MT and Big Horn and Sheridan counties in WY. The FY 1996 "User Population" for the Indian Health Service was 10,532 Indian people. The majority (96%) of the Indian people reside in Big Horn and Yellowstone counties in MT.

Mountains, residual uplands, and alluvial bottoms make up the topography of the Crow Reservation. The three principal mountain areas are the Wolf Mountains to the east and the Big Horn and Pryor Mountains to the south. "The Crow Country is exactly in the right place. Everything good is to be found there. There is no country like the Crow Country." So spoke Chief Arapooish in the 1830s to a fur trader.

Population & Demographics

Today, more than 11,261 enrolled tribal members call the Crow land home. Two-thirds of them live on, or are adjacent to, the present day reservation. During the nomadic era the tribe was divided in three subgroups...Mountain Crow, River Crow, and Kicked in The Bellies. As time passed the reservation was divided into six districts...Lodge Grass (called Valley of the Chiefs), Wyola (Mighty Few), Crow Agency (Reno or Center Lodge), St. Xavier (Big Horn), Pryor and Black Lodge.

Occupied Territory

Crow oral tradition links the origin of the tribe to a separation from a parent core. Tradition relates that this group traveled extensively across the upper Midwest of the U.S., and possibly into southern Canada. Eventually this alliance came under the leadership of two brothers known as No Intestines (No Vitals) and Red Scout. These leaders had their respective followers and, even though they camped as one, the two divisions were clearly defined within a single village. The people

following No Intestines called themselves Bi'iluuke, "Out Side," and they would become the notable Crow who eventually settled in Montana and Wyoming. Those under Red Scout would move to the Heart River area of North Dakota. Learning horticultural ways from the Mandan, they would become the historic Hidatsa tribe.

In addition, Crow oral tradition lends religious validity to this separation of the Crow and Hidatsa. Narratives relate that the two leaders fasted at Devil's Lake and each received a vision. No Intestine's vision told him to seek the seeds of Sacred Tobacco, Ihchichtae. After locating this tobacco, he and his followers would be in the center of the world... the best place for his people. Red Scout, on the other hand, was instructed to settle with his people on the bluffs above the rivers, and to plant corn on the floodplains below.

After the initial vision, No Intestines and his followers embarked on a long pilgrimage. Headed west, they eventually stopped near the Chief Mountains, in present-day Glacier National Park; here No Intestines fasted once again. On the fourth day he received a vision telling him he was not yet at his destination, the area was too cold. The Bi'iluuke moved south, passing by Salt Lake, Utah. After awhile, No Intestines and his group reached the Canadian River in OK. Once again he fasted and was told to move north. So the Bi'iluuke followed the Missouri to the Platte River, then trekked to the Powder River which they followed until they reached the Bighorn Mountains in northern WY. To the Crow the highest peak on the crest of the Bighorn Mountains is called Awaxaawaku'ssawishe, "Extended Mountains," (Cloud Peak) and it is considered the center of their world. On this peak No Intestines fasted for the fourth time and received a vision telling him that he was in the right place; that the tobacco seed could be found at the bottom of Clouds Peak. As he looked to the base of the mountain, he saw the seeds as "twinkling stars". The Crow then made their home in MT and WY, with the Bighorn Mountains as their heartland.

This initial locating and the subsequent planting of the tobacco seeds became the genesis of the Crow's Tobacco Society. Historically, the Tobacco Society was the central set of ceremonies and rituals of the Crow people. It is important to note that No Intestines saw the seeds of the Crow's Sacred Tobacco as stars and that those seeds were also perceived not only as a gift from the stars, but as stars themselves.

History

Oral records indicate the first meeting of white men (Canadian) and Crow took place somewhere near the present-day Hardin, MT in about 1743. In 1795 the Crow met a trapper named Menard. Francis Antoine Larocque made contact in June 1805 on the confluence of the Missouri. On July 25, 1806 the Crow met William Clark of the Corps of Discovery at Pompey's Pillar, near Billings, MT.

1825 Agreement

A Treaty of peace and unity was made with the Crow tribe who were recognized as friendly.

Fort Laramie Treaty of 1851

This treaty marked out the tribal land on the basis of their nomadic occupation of these lands at the time. Encompassed 3.8 million acres, part of Northern Wyoming and Southeastern Montana territory. Later, the Crows were told that their treaty provisions had run out and that it was necessary to negotiate another one.

Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868

This treaty was the result of the tremendously rapid increase in migration and settlement in the West, which came at the close of the Civil War. The U.S. War Department had no protection for the new white settlements in the West. The Crow country was in a strategic geographical location. The Crow were among the first of the plains Indians to sense of what the coming of the white man was to mean. They aligned themselves with the whites for security reasons and with an understanding that the white man's ways were so powerful that cooperation was a more intelligent approach than that of steady forceful opposition. This treaty reduced the land base to its present size.

Smallpox Epidemic

The steamship Saint Peter, coming up the Missouri River in June of 1837, brought the smallpox virus with it. When it stopped to unload at Fort Union, in an area that would become the Montana/North Dakota border, the disease spread to those Indians who were camped in and around the trading post. Infecting many tribes, some, such as the Mandan, were almost completely eliminated. Numbers vary according to the records, but by the mid-1840s, the Crow population is estimated to have been between 6,000 to 8,000 strong; however, various ailments soon dropped that count to less than 1,000 survivors. Other outbreaks, including scarlet fever, influenza, and another smallpox epidemic decimated the Crow.

Culture

Clan system

Proud of their history, traditions, and language, the Crow are striving to keep them a part of everyday life. One of the best examples is the strong, time honored clan system, a complex, matriarchal based, extended family. There are seven different clans on the reservation, each one is supportive of the other, shares family responsibilities and provides for the needs of their less fortunate members.

At birth, a child becomes a member of and takes the name of the mother's clan. Here they are never without a mother or a father; there are no cousins, only brothers and sisters. The father's clan members become the newborn's uncles and aunties. Also some unrelated members are considered kin. It takes a bit of time and practice to understand this system.

The beginnings of the clans can be traced back to the time when a person known to the Crows as "He Who First Did Everything" resided on earth. At that time, he told of how driftwood clings together in a particular spot on a river, on the same basis that kinfolk lodge together. From this idea, he is said to have given the general name of all clans, "Lodge Where There Is Driftwood." "He Who First Did Everything" explained to the other residents why each lodge should be named as it was. The following explains in detail how each clan obtained its name.

CROW CLAN NAMES:

WHISTLING WATER- This clan was once known as the "Good Prairie Dog Clan." Some members of the clan intermarried. Although not related by blood, they were ridiculed for this marriage, as it was not the normal practice of the tribe to marry a clan brother or sister. The one marrying his clan sister was said to have stood by the river and whistled. Gradually, the name of "Good Prairie Dog Clan" was changed to "Whistling Water."

SORE LIP- This name was given to people living in one lodge who had burned lips. From that point on they were known as the "Sore Lip Clan."

GREASY MOUTH- One lodge had members who ate the fatty parts of the meat, and thus had greasy mouths. For this reason, they were called the Greasy Mouth.

PIEGAN-This clan group was known for their acts of turning against the Crows in time of war. They were at first known as the "Traacherous Clan" as a result of their misdeeds. It is thought that they were Piegans of the Blackfeet Tribe at one time.

BAD WAR DEEDS- In time of war one group brought back fake war trophies. They are the ones now know as the "Bad War Deed Clan."

WITHOUT SHOOTING THEY BRING GAME- During the time of buffalo hunts, one group was known to have herded the animals over cliffs. This made it unnecessary to do any shooting. Because of this practice, the name of the clan was adopted.

FILTH EATING- Although no one is certain as to how this name was obtained, Robert H. Lowie in "The Crow Indians" (1956) explains how the name was derived from one of the members whose wife eloped but was recaptured and made to eat dung.

TIED TOGETHER IN A BUNDLE- The Crows were a nomadic tribe and very often had to move to more desirable hunting grounds. One group was known to carry their possessions in a slovenly wrapped bundle. These people were given the name Tied Together in a Bundle Clan.

THICK LODGE- The members of one lodge were all husky and broad. From this description they came to be known as thick men, which is where the name Thick Lodge originated.

NEWLY MADE- Sometime after "He Who First Did Everything" gave names to all the lodges, one was discovered that was without a name. They were then named the Newly Made Clan.

Beliefs

The Crow had no system of divination, never worshipped their ancestors, and made no bloody sacrifices. When hard put to it, the Indian tried to meet divinity face-to-face. A direct revelation without priestly go-between was the obvious panacea for human ills, the one secure basis of earthly goods. It might come as an unsought blessing, but only by a lucky fluke; hence a Crow strove for it by courting the pity of the supernaturals in the traditional way. To any major catastrophe, to any overwhelming urge, there was automatic response: you sought a revelation. Every Crow, battered by fortune, writhing under humiliation, or consumed with ambition set forth on the quest of a vision. In most cases he would set out for a lonely mountain peak, fast, thirst, and wait there.

The Crow word for the enterprise is biliciísam, which means "not drinking water." Almost naked, the vision-seeker covered himself with a buffalo robe at night as he lay on his back facing the east, his resting place being framed by rocks. Also, dreams that were intrinsically stirring or proved harbingers of good fortune stood as more or less equivalent to visions. The Crow did not confuse an everyday dream with a revelation. Visions, then, were the basic means of controlling life, and virtually every man tried to secure one.

Sundance

Essentially, the Crow Sundance was a prayer for vengeance. A man overcome with sorrow at the killing of a kinsman resorted to this as the most effective, if most arduous, means of getting a vision by which he might revenge himself upon the offending tribe. The Sundance of the Crow involved cutting of the flesh especially placing skewers beneath the chest and sometimes under the muscle. Left for four days until the dancer tears himself away or a supernatural releases him, if this is the case, then the pledger's vow is fulfilled. This type of Sundance the Crow practiced was outlawed in the 1900s, the government considered it too extreme. Today, the Crow adopted a different type of Sundance from a neighboring tribe, the Shoshone. This type of Sundance is less extreme but requires three days of fasting and dancing and is performed in the summer months. Prayer for vengeance has turned to prayer of survival in this modern world of today.

Sweat Bath Ceremony

In the center of the dome-shaped structure there was a pit for the rocks, which were heated outside for hours and then put in with a fork. Their very presence was enough to produce a terrific heat. The celebrants stripped to their g-strings; then an attendant covered the willow frame with robes or blankets so that it was pitch-black inside. From a vessel with water the headman sprinkled four cupfuls on the rocks. Steam at once began to rise so that the atmosphere became almost unbearable. To take another example of ritualization, the Crow do not treat a vapor bath as a form of ablution, but as an offering to their Creator.

Sickness

Native theory often ascribes physical ailments to supernatural causes, such as the breach of a taboo or the malevolence of a ghost. Because a woman, contrary to a rule imposed by the chief, killed a bird that annoyed her, harm was bound to befall her brother in the impending battle. Another example is: In 1931, Yellow Mule was taken to a restaurant. Before eating the cake he inquired whether it contained any eggs, for the eagle medicine he had once obtained from Yellow Crane prohibited his ever partaking of them. Sorcery was sometimes used to afflict a personal enemy, but did not play the overshadowing part as in some cultures.

Death

A corpse was never taken out of the regular entrance, possibly the back door or beneath the back of a tipi as the back was folded up. Painted and arrayed in the dead man's best clothes, it was wrapped up in the yellow part of the tipi cover known as "acde'cire." Those who wrapped up the body spoke to the spirit as follows: "You are gone, do not turn back, we wish you farewell". The name of deceased person was never spoken again, unless referred to "the one who passed on". When friends wanted to cry, they got together and distributed pointed arrows. Then they acted as their hearts prompted them. Some pierced their knees; others in the same way pierced their arms. Some jabbed their foreheads. Later, this way of mourning was outlawed.

Traditional Medicine

Growing up with a firm belief in the all-sufficiency of personal revelation, youths sought them without any prompting by their elders. From the stories of renowned contemporaries and of mythical heroes they had learned that this was the way to make their mark. In later life it was usually some special reason, say, the desire for vengeance, or worry over a sick child, that drove a man to look for supernatural aid. But whether the visitant transmitted supernatural power or not, he commonly employs a transparent symbolism to indicate the nature of his gift. Bull-All-The-Time gained a doctor's powers while asleep in his tipi. He saw a

horse fastened to a rope, which was lengthened up to him, and simultaneously heard a person sing. He was told to treat the sick; an old man with a Pipestem was standing over a recumbent patient and blew over him through the Pipe; the sick man rose and saw the sickness come out of the patient's blood. The horse represented the horses he was to receive as payment for his services. Grey-bull's wife learned how to treat women in labor from a visionary, to whom she paid a horse, and she regarded this information as a secret. She used a combination of a root and a horned toad, which she would rub down the patient's back, in order to hasten delivery. A Crow lady named Muskrat claimed knowledge of two roots easing delivery, both having been revealed to her while mourning her husband and a brother. On the first occasion, a supernatural came up to her in her sleep and said, "Chew that weed (batse'kice; literally, man-imitation), and you will give birth without suffering." She boiled the leaves and drank the infusion, but she was not supposed to pull up the plant except for doctoring. The second time she was granted a plant called bice'-waru'ci-se (literally, buffalo-do-not-eat) and was told that it was even more effective than the first. There were physicians or medicine men that worked without higher sanctions; there were household remedies and techniques; and sometimes it is not easy to draw the line between the two kinds of doctoring, for an herbal or mechanical process may be ultimately traced to a vision. Again, a medicine man may combat a natural cause of illness by his revealed power of sucking out of an intrusive object.

Massage was practiced with the aid of a "stomach-kneader" a stick about 18 inches long and widening at the bottom into the shape of a hemisphere. Gray-bull, a medicine man, was seen pushing it up a young man's abdomen. He explained that the Indians were careful not to press too hard against the navel. The origin of this device is ascribed to the Seven Stars, who before ascending to the sky taught it to the woman. Subsequently she treated people troubled with a stomachache and acquired wealth from the fees paid her. A doctor may lance swollen parts of the body. In some cases, sores are washed and a poultice is applied with a special mixture.

The root of a plant belonging to the Carrot family is used extensively both for ceremonial incense and as a cure-all. Its native name is isé, and Indians speak of it as "bear-root" because in the summer bears are supposed to fatten on it. For a cold, isé is chewed and swallowed; for sores it is chewed and rubbed on as a liniment; it is placed on an aching tooth and kept in the mouth for headaches. Other ingredients may be added: a mixture with buffalo chips is rubbed over a swelling; and boiled with tallow, the root furnishes cough medicine. Pine needles served as medicine, when boiled tea-fashion. Certain riverweeds called cú cua were similarly prepared. The Crow also pull out another unidentified plant, ----a'txixu'xe, in order to chew the juice, which is good for teeth and for one's general health.

Social Support Systems

Health Behaviors

Buffalo culture: Pre-1900

A typical day would begin with a bath in the river to cleanse oneself whether it was summer or minus-twenty below zero; an ice hole would be dug and bathers would jump in and out into the frigid water. Infants would also be dipped in, to acclimate the child and to condition them for the hardships of the extreme. Water was credited with medicinal virtues. Early in the morning, winter or summer, the herald called out to the people to get out of bed, bathe, and drink all the water they could. "Make water come into contact with your body," the phrase ran, "water is your body." Or: "get up, drink your fill, make your blood thin." This "thinning of one's blood" was simply a prescription to drink plenty of water. "This will keep your blood thin and you will not get sick. You will be active, your blood will not clog; it will flow through your veins. Water is your body. Whatever else there be, water is above all; without water you cannot live and enjoy life." On the warpath young men were also advised to drink all they could so they would be in a condition to fight the enemy more effectively. Also if they were wounded their blood would flow freely and there would be no danger of blood poisoning.

A Crow Woman would most likely occupy herself with domestic chores. If not making a dress, mending moccasins, or cooking meat, she was possibly spreading a handful of chokecherries on a flat stone slab outdoors, pounding them with a stone, pits and all, and drawing out this mass into elongated confections to be dried in the sun. Anything connected with skins was the women's sphere, such as pegging and dressing the hides for clothing and shelter, which was very laborious. She also moved camp, which involved bringing down the tipi and packing belonging fashioning into a travois. Gathering wood was a never-ending job especially during winter months.

Crow Men were not without tasks of their own; above all, they manufactured their own implements of the chase and warfare. They made arrowhead of stone or bone, though details as their technique are not available. The shafts and bows were made with much precision and required certain woods that grew in different areas of the land. The bow was made of horn or bone back with sinew.

Protection of the camp from enemies was the utmost importance. Also supplying the camp with meat and the hunt for game was a continual process. One must be in top physical shape for both of these pursuits; unless one loses his life, the Crow man would continually condition his body to run afoot for miles in case he was pursued by his enemies if his horse gave out. Horse breaking, feeding, watering and tending to consume his days, for a family of five they would own approximately 25-50 horses. Engaging an enemy in combat and meeting four criterions to distinguish one as a chief required fleetness of movement, agility and a sound mind to defeat the enemy. These four criterions for chieftainship all involved risking one's life:

- 1) To touch or strike or strike the first enemy fallen, whether alive or dead.
- 2) To wrestle a weapon away from an enemy warrior.
- 3) To enter an enemy camp at night and steal a horse that is picketed to the lodge.
- 4) To command a war party successfully.

The Crow are not in the habit of punishing children by beating them. In general children had a free and easy life. Children first learned survival and sharing by hunting rabbits. Archery was the typical boys game, also arrow throwing unlike today's javelin but consisted of shooting at a target arrow at so many yards. In order to score you had to hit the arrow or come nearest to it. Shiny is associated with the female sex; unlike soccer it uses the same principles. Female children would mimic the older female in regards to putting up a play tipi and moving camp, they would also ride older horses to move their miniature camp. There were other strenuous amusements for girls called "ball kicking" which is like today's hacky sack in which the player kicked the ball about two feet from the ground and then kicked it up, continuing so long as she did not miss it. For the boys there are several winter sports. "Aw-o'xarua", which consisted of eight or ten buffalo ribs, usually those of a cow, fastened together and covered with rawhide, and on this toboggan a boy would coast downhill. A young boy was constantly shaped and molded for combat or to defend the tribe at any given moment, which required the Crow boy to be in top physical shape. An older man or mentor was assigned to the young men to train them and to condition their bodies through foot races, horse races, swimming and wrestling.

Chapter 4:

**Tribal Health Cultural Guide
Fort Belknap Tribal Health Department
Fort Belknap Reservation
Created by Lodge Pole Senior Citizens Advisory Board
Harlem, MT – Summer 2006**

Location

The Fort Belknap Indian Reservation is homeland to the Gros Ventre and the Assiniboine Tribes. The Fort Belknap Indian Reservation is located in north central Montana, forty miles south of the Milk River on the Canadian border and twenty miles north of the Missouri River. Fort Belknap Indian Reservation, within Phillips and Blaine Counties, is the fourth largest reservation in Montana. Nearly 92 percent of the reservation is found in Blaine County with the remainder located along the western edge of Phillips County. The reservation has approximately 675,336 acres and there are 29,731 acres of tribal land outside the reservation boundary. The north to south boundary extends 40 miles in length and the width is approximately 26 miles.

Most of the northern portion of the reservation consists of glacial plains and alluvial bottomlands. The southern portion of the reservation drains into the Missouri River and consists of rolling grasslands, river breaks, and two principal mountain ranges, the Bearpaws and the Little Rocky Mountains. These mountains reach an elevation of approximately 6,000 feet.

Population

Enrolled members living on or near the Fort Belknap Reservation	5,771
Enrolled members living off the Fort Belknap Reservation	<u>1,532</u>
Total number of enrolled tribal members	7,303

There are also Indians from other tribes, mostly Chippewa and Cree, living on the reservation, although they have no interest in tribal assets. Over the years, the reservation's resident Indian population has been decreasing. Some of the decline is due to the rural-urban shift, but a large proportion is the result of young people seeking off-reservation employment and educational pursuits.

Land Status

Total acres within the reservation's boundaries	675,336 acres
Individually allotted lands	406,533 acres
Tribally owned lands	210,954 acres
Fee title of state lands	19,000 acres
Government lands	592 acres
Non-Indian owned	9,000 acres
Sub marginal lands	29,731 acres

Historical Background

Today, the descendants of two distinct tribes, the Assiniboine and Gros Ventre Indians, make their home on the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation. Both the Gros Ventre and Assiniboine were originally plains tribes; the Gros Ventre is of Algonquian stock, closely related to the Arapaho, whereas the Assiniboine were part of the Sioux Nation.

The Gros Ventre call themselves “AH-AH-NE-NIN” meaning the White Clay People. They believed that they were made from the white clay that is found along the river bottoms in Gros Ventre country. Early French fur trappers and traders named this tribe “Gros Ventre” because other tribes in the area referred to them as “The Water Falls People.” The sign for waterfall is the passing of the hands over the stomach and the French misinterpreted this as big belly, thus naming them “Gros Ventre” or “big belly” in French. There are two separate tribes, the Atsina (Gros Ventre of the Prairie) and the Hidatsa (Gros Ventre of the Missouri). It seemed necessary, when taking the 1930 census, to separate the two Gros Ventre groups geographically; those living in Montana were designated Atsina and those living in the Dakotas were called the Hidatsa.

The Assiniboine refer to themselves as “Nakota” (allies or generous ones). This tribe split with the Yanktonais Sioux in the early 17th century and migrated westward onto the northern plains with their allies, the Plains Cree. “Assiniboine” is a Chippewa word meaning “one who cooks with stones.” The Assiniboine traveled with the Cree northward from the headwaters of the Mississippi between Lake Superior and Hudson Bay. It is believed they settled first in the vicinity of the Lake of the Woods, and then moved northwest to the region around Lake Winnipeg. They lived in Canada along the Milk River. Until 1838, they were estimated to be a large tribe, from 1,000 to 1,200 lodges. Subsequently, smallpox reduced them to less than 400 lodges. The Assiniboine are located on both the Ft. Belknap and Ft. Peck Indian Reservations in Montana and on several reserves in Saskatchewan and Alberta.

Both the Gros Ventre and the Assiniboine Indians shared the Blackfeet hunting territory, according to the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1855. This treaty granted hunting grounds, with defined boundaries, for the Blackfeet, Blood, Crow, and Piegan tribes. The boundaries roughly extended from the Yellowstone River north to the United States-Canadian border and from the Rocky Mountains of western Montana to the junction of the Yellowstone and Missouri Rivers. This area was to be used in common by Indians receiving rations from Fort Browning, Milk River, and Fort Belknap for a period of 99 years. These lands were reduced in size in 1873. Eventually, an Act of Congress established three separate reservations of the Blackfeet, Fort Belknap, and Fort Peck on May 1, 1888.

One of the first trading posts was established near the present town of Dodson in 1868. A year later the new post, Fort Belknap, was established on the south side

of the Milk River, about one mile southwest from the present town site of Chinook, Montana. The fort, named for William W. Belknap, who was the Secretary of War at the time, was a substantial fort, combined with a trading post. It became the government agency for the Gros Ventre and Assiniboine Indians living in the area.

In the early 1880s, the Fort Belknap Agency was moved from Chinook to the present site, five miles east of Harlem, on the northwest corner of the reservation. In 1921, the United States government allotted 539,065 acres to 1,171 Indians, who were then enrolled on the Fort Belknap Reservation. Thereafter, settlement of non-Indians took place much more rapidly and did so partly in response to the availability of land for cattle and sheep ranching.

In 1888, completion of the Great Northern Railroad helped the expansion of the livestock industry. Malta became a major shipping yard for cattle and sheep. It was about the same time that gold was discovered in the Little Rocky Mountains, bringing people to Montana. Because of the variety of people attracted to the area by gold discovery, the towns of Landusky and Zortman became famous as the two toughest towns in the territory.

The discovery of gold brought with it another problem for the Fort Belknap Indians. Mining claims appeared throughout the area of the Little Rocky Mountains, apparently in disregard of the fact it was Indian reservation land. After the United States government appointed a commission to negotiate with the Fort Belknap Indians for a surrender of the Little Rockies, an agreement was signed in 1896 that ceded a portion of the Fort Belknap Reservation back to the United States.

In 1969, the Fort Belknap Community Council began proceedings to recover that portion of the Little Rocky Mountains ceded by the Act of June 10, 1896, and thus restore the reservation boundaries described in the Act of May 1, 1888. As of the year 2004, this proceeding is still not settled and the land is in the process of being recovered.

Organizational Structure

Today, the two tribes are united as one government called the Fort Belknap Indian Community, organized in 1935 under the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934. Their constitution and bylaws were approved on December 13 of that year. A corporate charter was ratified August 25, 1937. In 1974, the Fort Belknap Community Council modified the constitution to elect a membership of six councilmen to the tribal council on a staggered basis every two years. The constitution states the Fort Belknap Indian Community Council shall elect two Assiniboine and two Gros Ventre members every two years. The people elect the Tribal Council Officers at large for a term of four years. A Secretarial election conducted in 1994 set the number of council members to ten.

New Constitution

The new constitution and bylaws of the Fort Belknap Community was ratified in 1994 by popular referendum. The duties and structure, objectives, territory, membership, powers of the community council, initiative referendum, land and adoption remain as organized in 1935.

Section 1 Composition: The Community Council shall be composed of eight -members of all whom shall be chosen every second year by popular vote and a secretary-treasurer who shall be appointed in accordance with Section 4 of this Article. Every candidate for elected office shall pay a filing fee of \$250.00.

Section 2 Creation of District Apportionment: Members of the Community Council include two Gros Ventre and two Assiniboine, one Gros Ventre At Large and one Assiniboine At Large. The president and vice-president shall be a team of one Gros Ventre and one Assiniboine.

Section 3 Tenure: The Gros Ventre and Assiniboine candidates for each district shall be elected for a two-year term; they succeed themselves at will. The president and vice-president shall be elected for a four-year term and may succeed themselves at will.

Section 4 Officers: The officers of the Community Council shall consist of a president, vice-president and secretary-treasurer. The secretary – treasurer is appointed by the president. All officers shall be enrolled members of Gros Ventre and Assiniboine Tribes. The secretary-treasurer of the Community Council, as a non-elected officer, shall not be entitled to vote on matters before the Community Council.

Article VII Elections

Section 1 Right to Vote: All tribally enrolled members of the Fort Belknap Community, of either sex, 18 years of age or over, shall be entitled to one vote.

Section 2 Time of Elections: A primary election shall be held in each district. The two candidates for each office in each district receiving the most votes shall progress to a general election in which the candidates receiving the majority of the votes shall be elected and seated. Primary election for membership on the Community Council shall be held on the first Tuesday in December of the same year. Duly elected Council Members shall take office immediately upon certification of election results.

Section 3 Manner and Place of Elections: Elections by ballot and polling places in each district. Absentee ballots, including those of non-residents, shall be counted in their district. The council appointed three (3) election judges to serve at each polling place.

Section 4 Nomination: Candidates for election to membership on the Community Council shall give public notice of such intention at least 30 days prior to the primary election date, and file the secretary-treasurer of the Council, their statement of residence in the district, endorsed by five duly qualified electors from the same district, other than immediate relatives. President and vice-president shall give public notice of such intention, same as the other candidates. Each must submit verification of their tribal affiliation, as one member must be Gros Ventre and the other member must be Assiniboine.

Medical Facilities: The Fort Belknap Community Council created a Tribal Health Department in 1976 in response to P.L. 93-638, Self Determination. The Tribal Health Department is responsible for the administration of the following programs:

- Chemical Dependency Treatment Program
- Community Health Representatives Program CHRs
- Family Planning Program
- FAS/FAE Program
- Health Education Program
- Public Health Nursing Program PHN
- Women, Infant and Children Nutrition Program WIC
- Tribal Health Diabetes Program
- Sanitation/Environmental Program

All the programs presently under the Tribal Health Department control are contracted via P.L. 93-638. By gaining more experience and expertise, the Fort Belknap Tribal Government is furthering self-sufficiency and self-determination by maximum participation in the contract process.

The majority of health care is provided by the Fort Belknap Health Center, under the direction of the Indian Health Service. There is a six-bed clinic located at Fort Belknap and a satellite health station located in Hays, an approximate distance of 35 miles from Ft. Belknap. A new clinic facility, Eagle Child Health Center, located at Hays, can adequately serve 1,300 people. The new Health Center that was built in Fort Belknap replaced the old hospital and provides the bulk of health care for all people in the surrounding areas. Services include:

- Contract Health Services
- Dental
- Dermatology

- ENT
- Emergency Medical Services
- Hospice Team
- Lab/X-ray
- Men's Health
- Mental Health Services
- OB/GYN
- Optometry
- Orthopedics
- Outreach/Referrals
- Pharmacy
- Physical Therapy
- Podiatry
- Transportation Services
- Urology
- Well Child
- Women's Health

The basic eligibility requirements are:

1. Indian descent
2. Resident within the area
3. Meet all requirements
4. Contract Health
 - a. Prior approval for non-emergent
 - b. 72-hour notification after initiation of emergency services

Education

Fort Belknap Indian children on the reservation attend elementary public schools at Harlem, Lodge Pole, Hays and Dodson. There is a public junior high/high school and elementary and Mission school at Hays. Those students living near the reservation's southern border mainly attend these schools. There are also public high schools at Harlem and Dodson (grades K-12). Some of the high school students elect to attend off-reservation federal boarding schools.

The Fort Belknap Head Start Program, in operation since 1965, serves approximately 1900 children, ages three to five, at Fort Belknap, Hays and Lodge Pole. As of 2000, a Child/Family Bilingual Program provides the teaching of the Assiniboine and Gros Ventre language for two hours a day. A Foster Grandparents Program hires elders to work with children in Head Start and has been in operation since 1975. This was the first Foster Grandparent Program in the State of Montana.

The Fort Belknap Community College offers a two-year Associate degree in arts and science, one-year certificate programs and other specialized program areas.

The College, with a student built library, tribal archives and public radio station (KGVA), has an enrollment of 254 students on campus. The College Board of Directors consists of five members. The College established a water laboratory in 2003, as funded through a CUP grant from the EPA.

Academic Programs:
Degree and certifications

Degree: Associate of Arts General Studies

Emphasis Areas:

- Business
- Business Entrepreneurship
- Criminal Justice
- Elementary Education
- Human Services
- Human Services Chemical
- Dependency Counseling
- Liberal Arts
- Liberal Arts Native American Studies
- Microcomputer Operation
- Pre-professional Biological Science
- Pre-professional medical
- Pre-professional Nursing

For information: Fort Belknap College, P.O. Box 159, Harlem, MT 59526
(406) 353-2607 Fax: (406) 353-2898 or visit website at <http://www.fbcc.edu>.

The Fort Belknap Small Business Development Center is operated within the Fort Belknap Community College. It offers individual consultation with business advisors and business workshops and courses appropriate for small business owners. Services are available for individuals interested in starting a new business or expanding an existing business. Fort Belknap Community College offers a two-year degree in Business Entrepreneurship.

Employment and Income

Today, as in the past, employment for the reservation's residents is scarce. This scarcity forces many people to move away from the reservation to take up temporary or permanent employment elsewhere.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs, Indian Health Service, and the Tribe itself are the major employers on the reservation. Some residents are successful in obtaining jobs in the nearby communities of Harlem, Havre, Chinook and Malta. Some of the Indian people support themselves by farming, ranching and other jobs in agriculture.

The Fort Belknap Indian Reservation has the highest rate of unemployment among the seven reservations in the State of Montana and is virtually undeveloped in every aspect. Fort Belknap is heavily dependent on federally subsidized programs to alleviate this problem. Seasonal monies are received for fighting forest fires. Unemployment fluctuates between a low of 40 percent and a high of 75 percent, depending upon the season of the year. As of January 1, 1999, the unemployment level is over 70 percent (Employment Assistance Statistics, January 1, 1999, Fort Belknap Agency).

Public Assistance Programs

The Fort Belknap Tribes on the reservation operate some of the public assistance programs that serve its low-income families. The tribal government of the Assiniboine and Gros Ventre Indians has opened an assistance office to needy families (TANF), located in the former IHS Hospital building. The TANF offices are open with four case managers employed by the Tribes. The program administers federal cash assistance to more than 200 families on the reservation.

The Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services at Fort Belknap still carries out food stamps and Medicaid functions.

Contemporary Issues

Tribal Sovereignty

Sovereignty has been a critical issue with Indian Nations. Since the independence of the United States, policies affecting Tribal Sovereignty have been a great concern. From the Indian Removal Act of 1830, Federal policy has impacted the tribal right of self-governance. As Indian people repeatedly ceded lands in exchange for the United States guarantee of their sovereignty over the lands they reserved, they continue to find themselves in a struggle to retain that guarantee.

The United States continued to assume authority over and to involve itself in tribal affairs. Federal policies have continued to chip away at tribal sovereignty. The Assiniboine and Gros Ventre of the Fort Belknap Reservation hope that in the future the concept of Indian sovereignty will remain a determining issue in future policies. This can only be possible if Indian people protect and promote tribal sovereignty, from those who would seek to undermine it.

Water Rights Claims and the Winters Doctrine

The Winters Doctrine gave Tribes a special type of reserved water rights. In a court case dealing with Indian Rights, *Winters v. U.S.*, the Supreme Court, in effect, held that rights to use water for irrigation of Fort Belknap Indian Reservation lands have been reserved. Moreover, the water rights reserved are

not limited to that necessary for irrigation at the time the reservation was established. The International Boundary Treaty and agreement between the United States and Canada is an agreement to share the water supply of the Milk River.

The Madison limestone aquifer is considered the greatest economic potential on the reservation. In the past ten years, the Gros Ventre and Assiniboine Tribes of the Fort Belknap Reservation and the United States of America have entered into negotiations for the purpose of settling all existing water rights claims. These negotiations will be ongoing until settled or the Tribe will revert back to the Winters Doctrine. The Fort Belknap Montana Compact (85-20-1001), entered with the state of Montana, is filed with the Secretary of State of Montana under provision 85-2-702 and duly ratified on April 5, 2002.

Zortman/Landusky Mining Issues

In the early 1980s the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Department of State Lands (DSL) allowed Pegasus Gold to start a leach gold mine in the Little Rocky Mountains on BLM management and private lands. Two mines were developed, one at Landusky and the other at Zortman. Pegasus requested BLM/DSL to allow construction of Sullivan leach pad at the top of the watershed. The Environmental Protection Agency and Red Thunder, Island Mountain Protectors, opposed the request. They told BLM/DSL that the mined oxide ore and heavy metals would allow acid mine drainage to flow from the mine into the ground and surface waters. In August 1991, contaminated water and sediments were collected in Alder Gulch and cyanide contamination of ground water was verified. The Island Mountain Protectors shut down the mines. The mines were designed and permitted only for mining oxide ore and waste rock. The more dangerous sulfide ores and waste rock generated acid mine drainage. Heavy metals, when exposed to water and weather, contaminated the Peoples Creek in Mission Canyon. Acid rock drainage continues to appear at numerous locations in the mined area. The Canadian subsidiary went bankrupt and returned to Canada with controversy. Clean up is now being done, so that the groundwater will not be contaminated.

Recreation

Along the Little Rockies, the reservation offers some scenic locations. One of the best-known sites is Mission Canyon, south of Hays. Visitors will find tribal campground sites throughout the reservation. Non-tribal members must purchase a permit for overnight or extended camping. The Buffalo Chasers Society and White Clay Society work with the religious aspects. They also help to protect these sacred sites to forbid the digging and destruction of these native grounds.

Annual Festivities

During the 1920s, caravans of Indians from surrounding areas traveled to the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation to participate in the Indian Fair. Today, the Fair and Pow Wow is held every year in late July. This celebration, called the Fort Belknap Indian Days, features Indian dancing, singing, feasts, and give-aways. The New Year's Pow Wow/Celebration is December 31 and has been held for 110+ years in Lodge Pole. During the summer, there are two Sundances: the second week in June the Gros Ventre have their Sundance in the Mission Canyon, and on the 4th of July, the Assiniboine have their Sundance (Big Lodge) at Mouse Canyon Flats, near Lodge Pole.

Points of Interest and For Further Information

Fort Belknap Community College
Fort Belknap Agency, Montana
(406) 353-2607
<http://fbcc.edu>

Indian Health Service
Fort Belknap and Hays Health Centers
Fort Belknap, Montana
(406) 353-3100, Fort Belknap
(406) 673-3777, Hays

Fort Belknap Tourism Office and Information Center
Harlem, Montana
(406) 353-2205

The Fort Belknap Gift Shop, featuring handcrafted Native American arts and crafts, is located in the information center. Staff members provide tours of the Mission, Snake Butte, ancient tipi rings, and the tribal buffalo pasture. A public rest area and campground is also located at Fort Belknap Agency. The Catholic Pink Church on Highway 2 is a Montana Historical Landmark and the log building, the old round hall at Lodge Pole, is also a Montana Historical Landmark site.

For further information on the Fort Belknap Indian Community Council, refer to the Fort Belknap Indian Community Official Web Site:
www.fortbelknapnations-nsn.gov

Summary

The Gros Ventre and Assiniboine were nomadic hunters and warriors. They followed the buffalo that provided them with all the necessities of life. Their food, tipi and clothing all came from the buffalo. The buffalo was the Indian staff of life and the Assiniboine and GrosVentre and other plains tribes lived a good life with the buffalo. One of the last herds of buffalo in the continental United States in the 19th century existed between the Bear Paw Mountains and the Little Rocky Mountains in the lush Milk River valley. The Assiniboine and GrosVentres have maintained these Tribal traditions by establishing a Tribal buffalo herd. The buffalo continues to be a strong symbol of life for the Tribal people of today and for generations to come.

Today, two Tribes, the Assiniboine and Gros Ventres, are united as one government, the Fort Belknap Indian Community. Together, these Tribes maintain a community that has deep respect for it's land, it's culture and it's heritage.

CHAPTER 5:

Information for Medical Service Providers For Little Shell Chippewa

**P.O. Box 1384
Great Falls, MT 59403
406-452-2892
406-452-2982 (fax)**

By respecting cultural beliefs of the Native Americans you serve, you will be able to provide a mutually satisfying relationship among patients, families, and communities.

The Chippewa (Ojibwa)

A large tribe, with numerous bands, and related to the Ottawa and Potawatomi tribes, the Chippewa migrated west from the woodlands of the Great Lakes area in what is now Canada, Michigan and Wisconsin. Many Chippewa bands settled in Minnesota, some continued westward into North Dakota, where they adopted the Northern Plains Indian culture and lifestyle.

Among the Chippewa were the “Metis”: “half-breed” offspring of French, Irish, and Scot traders and Chippewa women.

In 1892, Chief Little Shell refused to sell more reservation land to the United States Government for white homesteaders. As a result of his opposition, Little Shell and his followers are taken off the reservation membership list and lose federal recognition. The fight to regain status begins. Many of the people who were removed from the rolls moved to Montana, where they hunted buffalo. As time went by, the followers of Chief Little Shell became a group of Chippewa without a home. They were known eventually as the “Landless Indians”.

They moved from reservation to reservation, even suffering a deportation effort to Canada by the U.S. Government. The Landless Little Shell settled around communities along the Hi-Line of Northern Montana and the east slope of the Rocky Mountains. By the early 1900s, “Shanty-towns” were established on the outskirts of Great Falls, Havre, Helena, Butte, and Lewistown. Because of marriage, many families were residing on reservations around Montana, particularly the Blackfeet, Rocky Boy and Fort Peck.

To date, there are nearly 4,500 enrolled tribal members, according to the tribal enrollment office.

Points to consider for medical service providers

- When making an appointment, the patient does not give specifics, and may only ask for a check up.
- Direct eye contact is not common.
- A female handshake is a touching of the hands, as opposed to a firm handshake. Males quite often shake hands with one hard, downward motion and release.
- The perception of time is different in that problems may have started “awhile ago” and menses may be marked in their relationship to lunar cycles.
- The history of present illness may result in a story, which related to events in the patient’s personal life as far back as 50 or more years.
- Many Little Shell are practicing Catholics; others follow Native Traditional ceremonies, while some do both.
- Medical decisions are quite often a (large) family group decision. This is particularly true of surgery and delays in surgery may be misunderstood by those not appreciative of the fact that families require time to gather and weigh the options with the patients.
- “Family” is not limited to immediate family members. Extended family and even “adopted” Indian way members are considered close relatives.
- Ask direct questions for a yes or no answer.
- Many natives still point with their lips and not their fingers or arms.
- Compiling a patient medical history while doing a physical examination can yield better results than the “traditional” history taking.
- The patient may delay therapies so that a traditional healer can be consulted and on occasion a ceremony performed in their home.
- Do not use the phrase, “there is nothing wrong with you.” It is better to advise the patient that you cannot determine the nature of the problem at this time.
- Over time, appreciation is felt and expressed by patients, particularly after they get to know their provider.
- A common belief is that talking about future illnesses will cause the event to happen.
- “Indian humor” and banter is not avoidance of the serious business at hand.
- Getting down to business without first “visiting” is considered rude. A comfort level needs to be established.

CHAPTER 6:

Cultural Guide Northern Arapahoe Tribal Diabetes Program Northern Arapahoe Tribal Health Program Wind River Indian Reservation Ethete, Wyoming 82510

Introduction

The Cultural Guide, which is being presented, is a format that will be further refined when the Tribal Advisory Group is selected and the Talking Circles are established in order to have this instrument become a relevant working document for diabetics, elderly, Tribal Health personnel, I.H.S. personnel, and all other interested parties dedicated to the wellness of its clients.

The Northern Arapahoe Tribe, quite traditional and of an oral culture, must have written materials such as this Guide approved by our Four Old Men who govern all spiritual, cultural, and ceremonial aspects of this Tribe. This procedure will be done when the input from the community is given and Tribal Elders are consulted for its content. Some materials in this Guide have been gathered and will be put in the appendices for informational purposes. These materials have already been approved by the Elders and have been published for the public.

Northern Arapahoe History

The Northern Arapahoe Tribe of WY is one of four groups of Arapahoe who originally occupied the headwaters of the Arkansas and Platte Rivers. They speak a variation of the Algonquin language, and are that people's most southwest extension. Culturally, they are Plains Indians, but socially and historically distinct. After signing the Treaty of 1851, the Arapahoe and Cheyenne then shared land encompassing one-sixth of WY, one-quarter of CO and parts of western KS and NE. Later, when the Treaty of 1968 left the Northern Arapahoe without a land base, they were placed with the Shoshone in west central Wyoming on the Wind River Reservation. The Northern Arapahoe are a federally recognized tribe.

It was not until the 1860s that the Arapahoe bands began to experience the direct effects of permanent non-Indian settlement of their territory. In what became known as the Sand Creek Massacre, 150 Arapahoe and Cheyenne people were killed, their horses taken, and all their belongings destroyed. During the ensuing conflict on the Plains, the military tended to define unsettled Arapahoe bands as "hostile" allies of the Cheyenne and Lakota warrior groups. After Sand Creek, the Northern Arapahoe bands moved northward into WY. In 1878, Chief Black Coal's camp, along with many other Arapahoes, settled in the Wind River Reservation.

The reservation was originally established by the Fort Bridger Treaty of July 2, 1863, and included 44,672,000 acres in CO, UT, ID, and WY. This area was reduced to 3,054,182 by the second Fort Bridget Treaty of July 3, 1868. With the Brunot Agreement and the McLaughlin Agreement, the land base was gradually reduced to its present size of approximately 2.3 million acres.

The reservation is now the home of two tribes, the Eastern band of the Shoshones and the Northern band of the Arapahoe. The Shoshones were the original inhabitants of this reservation. The Shoshones sought monetary compensation for having the Northern Arapahoe placed on the reservation in what is known as the Tunnison Act. Although the Shoshones were to share the reservation with another tribe, they filed the Tunnison (named after the lawyer they employ) lawsuit and were monetarily compensated by the U.S. Government. When the Arapahoe received their land claim from the Fort Laramie Treaty for land taken from them in CO, they had to pay the U.S. Government back for the Tunnison land claim, in addition to commodities, rations, and smallpox infested blankets issued to them. The Arapahoe believe they are the only tribe that had to pay for their reservation when the U.S. Government promised them a land base without fee. The Shoshones principally occupy the western areas of the reservation while the Arapahoe occupy the eastern segments of the reservation. Both tribes jointly own the Reservation.

A joint tribal council to look after the business of the tribe governs the Shoshone and Arapahoe Tribes. Each tribe has a separate tribal council, which takes care of the business of each individual tribe. The two tribes are both non-IRA tribes and operate under tribal resolutions rather than constitution and bylaws. Each tribe has a general council, which is the supreme governing body of the tribes.

Northern Arapahoe Culture

The traditional life direction of the Northern Arapahoe nation and its culture, from past to present has, as its life core, the belief system which is grounded in its religion. It is understood by scholars who study culture and mankind that at the core of a society is a people's belief system which is acted out by religion and its demonstration of the religious beliefs is the key to understanding its culture and therefore, its peoples.

The Northern Arapahoe ('Inuna-ina' - our people), have a basic belief system that stems from the Sacred Pipe. The Pipe has been with Arapahoe since the beginning of time. The Pipe is the tribe's leader and its keeper is always a member of the Northern band of the Arapahoe. The supernatural power of the Pipe is sought and applied by the tribesmen not only for the purpose of healing the sick but also to obtain control of life forces, success in hunting, good luck, strength, long life, and safety and victory in life's battles. The Sacred Pipe in Arapahoe way is really the Creator. They call him father and/or grandfather. The

Tribe holds him in high veneration. The Arapahoe also have another sacred bundle – the Sacred Wheel. These two sacred bundles are the governing supernatural forces of the tribe. The Pipe represents the Creator in all his goodness and the Wheel represents the sacred circle of life that the Creator made for the Arapahoe people.

The Northern Arapahoe Tribe is spiritually and culturally governed by the Four Old Men. These men represent the four directions of Mother Earth, north, east, south, and west, with the fifth direction going up to the Creator. The sacred circle represents the tracks that man makes upon Mother Earth. From the East, it represents the beginning of life. The South represents childhood. West represents adulthood. North represents old age. We return to the East where the Creator takes us back home. The Arapahoe Circle of knowledge is a teaching guide on how to live life here on Mother Earth. The Four Old Men have been appointed to stand guard at the Four Directions and to protect the people from harm. The Fifth direction is taken care of by the Creator.

The men who sponsor the Sun Dance are elevated to Rabbit Men and they are the ones who make the spiritual and cultural decisions for the tribe. The Four Old Men sanction their decisions and decisions to become tribal and cultural law.

The basic values of the Arapahoe people are: Acknowledgment of our existence which depends upon the Creator (Sacred Pipe), love for one another, sharing our lives with each other, forgiving one another for transgressions, respecting one another for our unique existence, and practicing charity for one another. Humility is an essential requisite for being in good standing with the Creator.

The ethics and principles that govern the existence of the tribe are grounded in oral legends, teachings, taboos, and traditional laws that have been handed down from generation to generation.

The Northern Arapahoe Sun Dance is an annual ritual, which has its strong traditions that keep the Lodge intact. The Sacred Wheel, which represents our sacred circle of life, is brought to this Lodge to bestow the powers and blessings upon the people. Prayer, fasting, vows to the Creator, and a coming together of the people to end the cycle of the year and petition for blessings for the next year is the basic purpose of the Sun Dance. The Arapahoes call the lodge the “Throw Away” lodge – a time to throw away past sufferings, illnesses, and misfortune that may be bestowed upon the people and to start the new cycle fresh and new. It is through the Sun Dance ceremony that the life of the Arapahoe people and the life of creation, the Arapahoe universe are renewed. Arapahoe ceremonies are held to honor our sacred bundles, the Pipe and the Sacred Wheel. During this time, the people fast and sweat the sacred articles. These ceremonies are age-old. Non-Indians are not allowed during this time. The people make vows to fast and pray to the sacred bundles for misfortunes that befall them. Or, others

ask for blessings for themselves, their kin for a long life, health, happiness, and a way to survive in this world.

The people for healing seek sweat lodge, peyote meetings, Indian doctoring, cedarling, and supplications to the Creator through Indian ways. It is not uncommon to pass an Indian home and see a sweat lodge or teepee where people use their Indian ways to pray.

Socially, pow wows are common year round for the people. Song and dance is an important part of the Arapahoe tradition. The Arapahoe have an Eagle drum group located in both communities of Ethete and lower Arapahoe district. The elders of the tribe select this drum group. Before any social and/or religious activity starts, the drum group is called to start the ceremony. They are called for burials where they are petitioned to paint the people for their bereavement. There are other responsibilities they have in keeping the Eagle drum. They sing social songs and age-old ceremonial songs for the people.

The Arapahoe have an age-graded society, practice the clan system, kinship system, and extended family ties. Elders, both age-graded and ceremonial, play a prominent role in the tribe and are looked to for advice, guidance, and consultation in times of need. The Tribe is matriarchal in practice and patriarchal in authority. It is the female who is the “backbone” of the Tribe. She holds a venerated place in that she represents the Mother Earth-the ground we walk upon, the one who is the keeper, and gives physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual sustenance. The Arapahoe believe that the Creator so loved her that He gave her the highest place in human existence because she is so pitiful. Her work is never done. She is the first to get up and greet Father Sun, and the last to go to bed insuring that all her loved ones are tucked safely to sleep. She eats after everyone else gets his or her fill, then, she eats. She is the nurturer as is her Mother – Mother Earth. Her people respect her. She holds the highest position in the Tribe. That is what the old people say. But, they also say that if she falls from grace by not doing her job, then she has a hard time regaining her position. Strong moral sanctions are levied against her.

The Indian male of the Arapahoe holds authority to be the head of all gatherings, conduct ceremonials, and to be a spokesman for the Tribe. He is accorded status of being in the leadership role, with the women and children as his support system. The Indian male is held responsible for present and future governance of the tribe. The Arapahoe has changed over the years. Acculturation has taken place. Exposure to outside society has impacted upon its values, mores, customs and belief. The language is not spoken by all. This worries the Arapahoe, as the language is the crux of their culture. With no language, culture could become extinct. Some of the Arapahoe have become modern on one hand, traditional on the other. It is the traditionalists who are holding the tribe together. The Traditional Arapahoe, the tribal government, schools, and others that are concerned about the changing times, are undertaking this effort.

Language and culture classes have been introduced into the school systems to save the language and culture. People who speak Arapahoe are being sought to talk with the community about the language and its culture. It appears as if the tribe, through the concern of the traditionalists and elders, is utilizing culture as a means to assist the tribe with their everyday living.

There are many cultural and healing ways still intact that can be utilized to assist the tribe, especially when it comes to health needs. It is through this effort that the Northern Arapahoe Tribal Health and Diabetes Program have submitted their grant for funding to utilize culture and it's healing as a tool to assist diabetics in a wholistic approach to wellness.

Methodology

The Cultural Guide being presented has two main components: (1) Arapahoe History and (2) Arapahoe Culture. Information presented provides the reader with the Arapahoe and his historical movement to what is now his home on the Wind River Reservation. The Cultural portion tells of the Arapahoe and his basic belief system and how it implements his beliefs into his everyday life. It tells of the cultural and spiritual governing system and how he enlists its aid in the struggles he deals with in everyday life.

Today, there is an increasing movement to utilize cultural and spiritual aids to combat alcohol, drugs, cancer, diabetes and the many ills that afflict the Arapahoe people. For instance, the Northern Arapahoe Tribal Health and Diabetes Program have been utilizing cultural and spiritual aids to help the Tribe. Already, they have a sweat lodge at the Diabetes Program where the program clientele come to seek help for their afflictions. They have enlisted the help of Tribal elders to consult with, particularly diabetics and Indian veterans. An Indian Veteran's Outreach worker was recently employed to assist in promoting cultural identity and cultural aid. The Diabetes are seen at most Indian gatherings and have a strong communication link with the Indian communities on the Wind River Reservation. The CHRs are at community gatherings assisting with health needs and the Diabetes do constant glucose tolerance tests.

The recently funded Diabetes Grant already has as its objectives a leadership council on building community support for diabetes management utilizing Indian culture as an aid. In addition, they also have listed the development of "Talking Circles" from within the community to talk about the issues diabetics face and how culture can play an integral part in their wellness.

An Indian community garden is being planned for the tribal members to offset the high cost of obtaining fresh foods for the diabetics. Most reservation residents rely on commodities and food stamps as the poverty rate of the Indian is at an all-time high. Food source is being seriously considered by Tribal Health personnel in aiding the diabetic in his road toward wellness. Traditional foods

such as elk, buffalo, wild fowl, berries, corn, wild vegetables are being presented as an alternative to the store-bought foods from Wal-Mart or Safeway. Food storage, such as canning, drying meat, berries, vegetables, etc. will be an activity for tribal members. In the past, the Arapahoe had a cannery where they processed their own foods and kept them in earthen storage centers. A concept of food storage facilities for the tribe could again become a reality. The Eagles With Winds Program, which also utilizes culture to assist their clients with mental health needs, started a meats slicing program for its youth. Elderly people came and instructed the youth how to slice meat and dry it. Dried meat is still used quite extensively within our everyday life and is a must for ceremonial usage. It is envisioned that along with the community garden concept, exercise will be given since it does require manual activity to raise a garden.

A sample population of approximately 30 to 40 Indian diabetics will be recruited to participate in Indian healing by offering the sweat lodge as a health aid. A pre and post of testing glucose tolerance levels before they start an approximately two to three month program will be done. Tracking of blood sugars during the interim period will also be conducted to see how well the Indian diabetic does in a holistic approach to wellness that the sweat lodge provides. They will set measurements to gauge the spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical wellness of the diabetic. Tribal and ceremonial elders will be approached to help with this activity. By providing a healthy, well-balanced sweat meal, the diabetic client will be given the opportunity to learn to prepare fried bread using flour not high in carbohydrates, cooking with canola oil, preparing the berry gravy and utilizing Equal and/or Sweet and Low, and using lean meat for the stew with fresh vegetables from the community garden.

Food preparation skills are essential for the diabetic and his family. Food preparation classes can be given at the community level and done individually within the diabetic household. The importance of exercise will be advocated by utilizing cultural games, hunting, fishing, and fun walks and spiritual runs. This, too, is already being done by the Diabetes Program. A Fitness Center exists at the Blue Sky Hall at the Ethete community. Another within the Arapahoe community is being developed. For the elderly and handicapped diabetic, plans are underway to assist them with their exercise program from a cultural point of view.

The Arapahoe have Indian doctors who use Indian medicine such as heart, lung, kidney, blood, and an all-purpose tea to help with people who are ill. Some of the Arapahoe lean on the Indian doctor for wellness – both spiritual and physical. There are others who are not aware of the help they can receive from their tribe. It will be the duties of staff who utilize this cultural guide, along with Tribal Health personnel to advocate for Indian healing. Explanation of the particular medicines that the Indian doctor utilizes cannot be given until the ceremonial and spiritual leaders give approval. This may be coming in the near future. In addition, the Arapahoe use the peyote ceremonial for healing by utilizing the peyote medicine.

Indian families who seek help in this direction often hold weekly meetings through the year. Peyote is known to be a great healer in all health areas.

Knowledge of the Arapahoe culture and its healing powers is essential for IHS personnel who are predominantly non-Indian and mostly come from the Eastern portion of the United States. Cultural sensitivity training courses were done in the past for all incoming IHS and BIA personnel hoping to bridge the gap of understanding that happens with service providers who do not know the cultural ways of the people they serve. Misunderstanding, paranoia, lack of trust, and many other miscommunication gaps abound on both sides – the Indian and the non-Indian. It should be a given especially in the health area, that people should be sensitized to accommodate the people they purport to serve towards a holistic approach to wellness. Oftentimes, many diabetics do not utilize IHS services because of the cultural disparities. Outreach also is essential in treating the diabetic. Many times, because of the isolated geographic locale and lack of communication services such as the telephone, bus service, etc., people cannot come to the IHS clinic. It is essential that outreach services be provided to the Indian diabetic. Already, Tribal Health personnel and Diabetes staff are overburdened with duties. It is important to remember when Arapahoe spiritual and healing ceremonies are used for healing, food offering to the spirits who govern the medicines and the ceremonies must be honored by giving the four basic foods – meat, bread, fruit, and coffee. Oftentimes, Indians do not seek their help because they cannot monetarily afford the offering. Aid from programs would be an ideal gesture. Funding sources do not realize that food is one of the tools we use as Indians to seek wellness. There are many avenues of cultural aid that can be given to the Indian diabetic, and all who suffer from illnesses of one sort or another. But, it will be left up to the Tribal Advisory group and the “talking circles” to further develop these avenues in the upcoming year(s).

Listed in the attachments are statistics from the Tribal Diabetes program, telling of the amount of clients they service, age gender, type of diabetes, etc. This information is provided along with other material that will be utilized for conducting workshops for service providers who provide health care. Also, these materials can be used for the “Talking Circles”. The Diabetes Liaison Coordinator, diabetes staff, CHRs, Arapahoe community, and IHS service providers will give development of workshop protocol and content.

Time Communication: From a cultural perspective

Definition: The textbook describes time communication as the use of time; how you organize it, react to it, and the messages it communicates. It further states that cultural and psychological time is the two aspects that differentiate how we humanistically perceive the areas of communication. As stated, cultural time is the area in which I will dwell upon for my subject area. Cultural time, again, is divided into two separate components (according to the textbook, formal time, i.e., seconds, minutes, hours, days, weeks, months, years; Culturally, it can be

differentiated through seasons, phases of the moon, etc.); informal time, which is differentiated in general terms, forever, immediately, right away, etc.).

The Arapahoe culture utilizes as its time base, "Indian time". By this, we mean that we use a time element that is based through Mother Earth and her operations. We judge time by the Seasons (four seasons-winter, spring, summer, and fall), by the cycles of the moon, and by the cycles of the sun. In each season, there is a set time that gives homage to the four directions of the Earth-North, South, East, and West. In the Northerly direction, winter lives there; in the East, where the Sun Rises, that is where life begins with the new days, and the Season of Spring, when Mother Earth, gives bloom to her dress, and life happens; in the South, that is where life matures and is in operation, families grow, the plants and animals of mother earth grow, and the southerly direction, in essence, is the happening where life represents security and where the stages of life are at their fullest development process; in the West, that is where the Sun sets, and where the Old people make their journey to the Spirit World and realize their fullest potential of their existence when the Great Spirit ends the day here on Mother Earth. We do not think in terms of getting things done in a precise fashion. Rather, the Arapahoe patterns his movements to the Turtle, who helped Old Man Pipe, found the Mother Earth, with the help of the Great Spirit. Arapahoes are slow in their time element. They do things in such a way that they allow their actions to happen to their fullest potential. But they say, if you hurry something up, you lose its essence and do not receive its fullest message. Whenever we do things in today's society, in regard to our ceremonial and cultural display of Arapahoe activities, we operate on "Indian Time." We begin our activity when whoever is chosen to "get there, gets there," then the show begins! It is maddening to the non-Arapahoe, because our life is based on the 24-hour-a-day time clock. Generally, the Arapahoe abides by this time clock because he has to live in today's modern world, but the "Indian time" always happens and you hear non-Indians say, "Those Indians are always late when they do things." Cultural assimilation is a key ingredient in today's modern world because we have to teach our kids to still abide by our "cultural time, i.e. Indian time" but we have to be realistic and communicate with the world around us, so we have to respect their time frame and use it as our parameter for operations.

Grandparent Development and Influence

The authors, Robert Strom and Shirley Strom, state that grandparents have been overlooked in the educational needs in today's society. They deserve attention to their status as part of the overall family makeup. Strong families are identified by mutually satisfying relationships and the capacity of family members to meet each other's needs. Grandparents are seen as playing an integral role in the balancing of family lifestyle by becoming more active in the childrearing process. But, there are parameters that need to be defined to make smooth input for their participation into the nuclear family.

Education could play a key role, they state in making this transition for grandparents to assist their families in such areas as decision-making, being a strong support base, and upholding traditional family traits, lifestyle, and continuity of intergenerational existence which identifies a family as being the “Browns”, or “Smiths”, et. al.

There are three areas of learning that can be helpful to grandparents: (1) learning in a past-oriented society-experience in living life is useful to pass on to offspring to assist them keeping intergenerational continuity and to provide a sound identity base; (2) learning in a present-oriented society-taking today’s experiences and making lifestyles relevant to the here and now. Technology has dramatically changed the way our children look at life. With the abundance of information flow and access to the media, society has more opportunities to view life from a global point of view, taking into account many cultures, lifestyles, etc.; (3) learning in a future-oriented society-society is bound to view the world from a different vantage and they should look upon their young as an important source of learning.

Traditionally, the Authors state, we impart wisdom, experience, and knowledge to the older generation. This, they say, still holds true. But, the older generation needs to be in tune with the world around them and to define how they are to be looked at.

Chapter 7:

**Cultural Guide
Northern Cheyenne Tribal Health
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**The Mission Of The Northern Cheyenne Board Of Health Is To Ensure
Quality In Community-Based Health And Wellness For The Northern
Cheyenne People And To Empower The Community In The Development
And Maintenance Of Health Care Related Programs And Services That Best
Represent The Northern Cheyenne Way Of Life Today, Tomorrow, &
Forever**

**This pamphlet prepared by: Tony Prairiebear
 Tribal Health Planner**

**In agreement with: The MT-WY Tribal Leaders
 Council, Billings, MT**

Description of the guide

The cultural guide will include the history and background of the Northern Cheyenne people and the Northern Cheyenne Reservation. It will include brief discussions on culture, beliefs, traditional medicine, social support systems, and health behaviors; particularly relating to issues that affect medical care and effective communication with western medical providers.

History

The history of the Cheyenne is a story of a people's ability to adapt and survive through changing environments and hardships. In past eras, historically, they have been hunters, fishermen, planters and the mounted buffalo hunter. The early history of the Cheyenne People is divided into four eras: The Ancient Time, The Time of the Dogs, The Time of the Buffalo, and The Time of the Horse. The time after that is referred to as the Modern Era, which began with the tribe's adoption of the Indian Reorganization Act type of government. The leaders are elected at-large, and the military societies and the chiefs are no longer recognized as the governing body.

The Ancient Time

The earliest recollection that the Northern Cheyenne people have of their history is that they were inhabitants of the area that is north of the Great Lakes region. They are of the Algonquin language group. During this era, the Cheyenne people lived on a diet of small animals and used their furs for clothing and shelter.

The Time of the Dog

They then migrated down to the Great Lakes area and became fishermen and rice gatherers for a short period of time. The Cheyenne were pushed westward during this time and when they reached the Yellow Medicine River area, which is now Minnesota, they became corn planters. About this time, scores of white men had arrived on the eastern shores of the continent and they pushed the original inhabitants westward and so the domino effect took place where tribe pushed tribe westward. During this time, the Cheyenne domesticated the dog and trained them to be pack dogs; these animals also performed other useful chores.

The Time of the Buffalo

The Cheyenne were again pushed westward, this time to the area of the Sheyenne River, in North Dakota. Their livelihood consisted of being corn planters and an occasional buffalo, elk or deer, and they lived in earth lodges. During this time, the neighboring tribes east and north of them had acquired the 'thunderstick' and with their newfound firepower, the neighboring tribes raised

havoc with the Cheyenne. In this era the Cheyenne first came in contact with the fur traders and tried to trade for flintlock rifles, but were unsuccessful.

The Time of the Horse

The acquisition of the horse came about in 1750, most likely through trade with a friendly tribe. The acquisition of the horse prepared the Cheyenne for the eventual move to the plains. With the horse they were able to roam further and be more efficient as buffalo hunters. Their domiciles also changed to the teepee, a buffalo hide covered lodge, which has a lodge pole frame. With the horse, the people could also pack more goods than with the dug. It was during this time the Cheyenne encountered another tribe, the Suthai. Their meeting happened to be in a confrontation. The men of both tribes lined up and began shouting insults at each other and one of the warriors realized that they spoke a similar language. As a result, they became allies. However, one winter when the tribes were moving south, the two tribes had to cross the Missouri River. The Cheyenne had already crossed and some of the Suthai had crossed, but the majority of the Suthai stayed on the other side because it was getting too late in the day. During the night, the river broke and huge pieces of ice were sent up the sides of the river. The Suthai who were on the other side of the river were never seen again.

During the time of the horse, the Cheyenne fought and defended their homeland from encroaching enemies, both native and settlers. Now that the Cheyennes were more mobile, their homeland extended further west encompassing a large land base that included Western South Dakota, Kansas and Nebraska, Eastern Montana, Wyoming and Colorado. At this time the Cheyennes split into two groups, which are now known as the Southern and Northern Cheyenne. In order to defend this large land base, the Cheyenne allied themselves with the Sioux and the Arapaho. Tribes made many treaties with the federal government; with each new treaty the land base of the tribes grew smaller and smaller.

There are many significant historical and cultural events that happened during this time, too numerous to mention at this time. However, the most famous engagement the Cheyenne were involved in was the Battle of the Little Bighorn, where General George Armstrong Custer lost his detachment, the 7th Cavalry, to the Sioux and Cheyenne who were defending their dwindling homeland, way of life, and their women and children. This battle was to be the beginning of the end of the free-roaming Cheyenne. After the battle, they were hunted down and sent into exile, the Oklahoma Indian Territory, a wasteland that was infected with disease, insects and hot weather, which was inhospitable for people of the Northern Plains.

On September 9, 1878, two hundred ninety-seven Northern Cheyenne led by Chiefs Morning Star and Little Wolf, left Oklahoma for their beloved homeland in the north. They were pursued by as many as 10,000 troops. Along the way the people split into two groups, each led by one of the two chiefs. Dull Knife's band

was eventually captured and housed for a while at Ft. Robinson, Nebraska. Dull Knife's band was informed that they would be transferred back to Oklahoma Indian Territory. Upon hearing this news, the band decided they didn't want to return to where escaped from, they felt that, instead of dying a long slow death from disease and starvation, they would rather die trying to reach their beloved northern homeland.

On a cold winter night, January 9, 1879 the band broke out of Ft. Robinson. They tried to go home to their Tongue River country in Eastern Montana. Many were killed, but a few made it to their friendly Sioux allies who were already on their own reservations. Little Wolf's band finally gave themselves up the following spring and they were housed in Ft. Keogh, which is now Miles City, Montana. Public sentiment finally persuaded the government to grant the Cheyennes a small reservation in Eastern Montana. President Chester A. Arthur did this on November 16, 1884 through an Executive Order.

The Modern Era

The Cheyenne now had a small portion of their original homeland, a place they could call their own. The Cheyenne started building homes, planting crops, generally trying to make a livelihood for themselves. But there were two things that were hard to overcome: the Cheyennes' diet had consisted of red meat and they were used to roaming freely to find sustenance. It was hard for them to live the sedentary agrarian lifestyle that was forced upon them. In the early reservation period, the military still maintained a detachment of troops on the reservation to police the Indians. The Cheyenne were prohibited from conducting their ceremonies and rituals. As a result, some ceremonies have been lost. Social activities had to be approved by the Indian Agent. Also, two boarding schools emerged: a Catholic school and a Government school. These were the St. Labre Mission School and the Tongue River Boarding School. This time proved to be the beginning of forced acculturation and assimilation. As a result, the Tribe has become disconnected in the following areas of their culture: spirituality, socially, physically, emotionally and intellectually. In 1935, the Tribe was also coerced into adopting a 1934 Indian Reorganization Act type of government, where the leaders were elected by popular vote. The council of 44 Chiefs and the Military Societies were no longer the governing bodies of the Tribe. Tribal members were not allowed the right to vote until the enactment of the Snyder Act of June 2, 1924.

Allotments of land were issued in 1930, 160 acres were allotted individually and 1,457 allotments were made. In 1929, tuberculosis affected 30% to 60% of the population and tuberculosis remained the number one health problem for the Tribe for many years. In 1950, 50 children and elders died from German measles. In 1926, trachoma was found in every one of the students at one of the schools, so a hospital was built in Lame Deer during that year. Previous years had also indicated there were more deaths than births.

The Tribe also began ranching operations. The herds were purchased from Texas and since the buffalo were now extinct as free roaming, the remaining few were placed in protected areas such as parks. The open rangeland was perfect for beef production. Shortly after the establishment of the reservation, the people's horse herds began to grow in numbers. The problem of not having enough grass for a large number of horses soon became apparent. The government came up with a plan to reduce the horse herds by killing one hundred horses per month. The owners were reimbursed for their hides and their meat was rationed out to the Cheyennes instead of beef. All of these actions were done for the cause of assimilating the Cheyennes into mainstream society. This disrespectful way of assimilation caused more problems for the Cheyenne people in more ways than one. The boarding schools caused damage to the family unit by children being forcefully taken from their parents. If the children were hidden, then the parents did not receive their monthly rations; hunger was used as a behavior modification methodology. The forceful taking of children also caused the break-up of the family unit; children who had been raised in the boarding schools did not learn how to parent appropriately. The traditional method of learning how to parent was by helping to take care of their younger siblings. Instead they learned corporal punishment; today that method has blossomed into child abuse and neglect for the Northern Cheyenne people. From the old Cheyenne perspective the prevalence of tuberculosis is attributed to living in crude log homes, with sod roofs and chinking. Their diet had also been drastically changed. It went from fresh red meat to a diet that consisted of foods enhanced with chemical preservatives.

The people did not understand the concept of owning a piece of land; it was akin to owning a piece of the sky. One does not own what the Creator has given to the Cheyenne, it is given to the whole, for all to benefit from, to be shared and cared for those who are yet to be born. Those who immediately learned the value of individual ownership also learned how to cheat, lie and steal from others for their own benefit. So, the Cheyenne people being imprisoned, impoverished, diseased ridden and spiritually dead became despondent, depressed, dysfunctional, and distrustful. They also learned how to prey on each other. The victims are those who were less acculturated in western society's law ways of private ownership. Even after all of this, the Cheyenne had always been more than willing to serve in this Great Country's armed services during war times due to their former culture as the 'mounted warrior' of the plains. But when the modern warriors returned home from war, they brought it home with them. They brought home alcoholism and drug abuse, many have become either homeless or they have found a new home serving time in a penal institution. In the 1960s things began to get better for the Northern Cheyenne; Congress appropriated special funding to Indian Country for housing, healthcare, employment and government infrastructure through enactment of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, Community Action Program, and the Head Start program. The tribe also settled a claim in 1963, after 15 years of litigation. The settlement was

compensation for the Northern Cheyenne Tribe's loss of lands taken from them by violations of the 1851 and 1868 Ft. Laramie Treaties, the amount of 4.2 million dollars. Many individuals used this money to purchase homes for their families.

In 1975 the tribal government also took advantage of the enactment of the Indian Self-Determination Act. This act allowed tribes to contract for federally funded programs, functions and services available at the local level. Federal programs were now tribally administered. With the advent of more freedom to allocate funds for tribal priorities such as education, more people began attending college and receiving their education and then returning home to help their people. Gradually, more governmental, institutional and municipal infrastructure began to evolve on the reservation. The tribe now has a complete education system under its authority; a Head Start program, a complete school system from K-12 and a two-year college, plus additional funding for continuing education at four-year colleges. There are now numerous departments under the authority of the tribe; Natural Resources, Tribal Health, Housing, etc. The tribal enrollment is now close to 10,000 members with about 40% living off the reservation or on other Indian reservations. Modern day reservation existence is still stricken with numerous social problems, mostly derived from poverty, multi-generational trauma and an exponential growth in our young population. The majority of the population is young people, 60% of the population are 24 years and younger. There is now more than ever a pressing need for housing, healthcare, education, and especially employment.

Tribal Government Structure

Currently, the Northern Cheyenne Tribal governmental structure is comprised of three branches of government; the executive, legislative, and judicial branches. The President is elected at-large, as is the Vice-President, while the Tribal Council appoints the Treasurer and the Secretary. The Tribal Council is comprised of 10 council members and they represent the five districts of the reservation-Lame Deer, Ashland, Birney, Busby, and Muddy Creek Districts. Four council members represent Lame Deer, the largest district, Busby and Ashland are each represented by two members, and Muddy Creek and Birney districts are represented by one member each. The Vice-President also votes in the tribal council meetings, which makes eleven representatives eligible to vote on all tribal council actions.

Culture and Beliefs

The culture and belief systems of the Northern Cheyenne Tribe are now based on two religions, the Traditional Cheyenne and Christianity. The two bases have some commonalities such as a prophet who was sent by the Creator to spread his word, laws and teachings about living together as People of the Creator. The Traditional Cheyenne religion is actually based upon two covenants, the Sacred Buffalo Hat and the Sacred Arrows. The Sacred Buffalo Hat was given to the

Suthai People and the Sacred Arrows were given to the Tsistsistas People. The Cheyenne still worship the traditional ways through the arrow ceremony, Sundance, piercing and fasting. The Cheyenne people also practice the Native American Church or the peyote way, which was introduced to the Northern Cheyenne by our Southern Cheyenne relatives.

Traditional Ceremonial Ways

The Northern Cheyenne still practice traditional medicine ways but many medicine ways have been lost. Nevertheless, the people still rely heavily upon their faith to carry them through their most troubled and difficult times. Tribal members heavily rely upon faith and prayer when a relative or family member is ill or injured. There are certain individuals in the tribe who have earned the right to lead or conduct certain ceremonies. These individuals are very respected by the community for they serve as ministers of our faith, counselors, healers, psychologists and psychiatrists. More commonly, family groups rely upon the sweat lodge for prayer, counseling and family cohesiveness. The arrow worship ceremony is conducted in the State of Oklahoma where the Sacred Arrow covenant is kept with our Southern Cheyenne relatives. The Sundance ritual is usually performed after the arrow ceremony has been completed; it can happen anywhere on the reservation wherever the traditional military societies decide. Piercing is a solitary affair, it is performed at a few discreet locations on the reservation. Fasting is primarily done at Bear Butte, South Dakota. Fasting can be performed or vowed by both sexes, it is also done at a few sites here on the reservation. Offering of one's self through fasting or piercing is done to appease the Creator and our guardian spirits so that they may spare a loved one from further suffering or to give the Creator thanks for seeing one through a difficult time. In years past when our soldiers came home from the wars they offered themselves to give thanks for their safe return home, they had been through war and death and they were spared.

Social Support Systems

Social support systems consist of self-help, Christian denominational, institutional, traditional and familial. In almost all of the reservation communities there is a regular Alcoholics Anonymous group that meets at least once a week. There are other 12-step self help groups operating within or near to the reservation.

Health Behaviors

Current health data indicates that the Northern Cheyenne Reservation has a diabetes rate of 6.9%. Recently there has been a high incidence rate of cancer, especially with the older populations. Cardiovascular disease is also a major illness for the elders. The community has a high incidence rate of drugs and alcohol abuse; many vehicle accident injuries and deaths are directly attributed to

alcohol abuse. The aftermath of drug and alcohol abuse is very apparent within our population; many children are being diagnosed with fetal alcohol syndrome and affect disorders. The veterans also have a high incidence rate of post-traumatic stress disorder due to wartime service.

The Northern Cheyenne Tribe has been engaging itself in cultural re-emergence for the past fifty years. Tribal institutions and individuals have undertaken many projects. Tribal people feel that in order to move ahead at their own pace they must first build from a solid foundation. That foundation is the history, religion and cultural beliefs of the past before and after the treaty-making and early reservation eras.

Much damage has been done to the tribe and discussions and healing modalities from multi-generational trauma are still being developed. Some time in the near future the people, first as individuals, then as communities, will begin the healing journey. There are a few individuals and institutions that have taken it upon themselves to champion the cause of 'healing' and they come from the traditional and non-traditional sector. In the past 30 years, the reservation has sponsored AA Campouts, healing runs and a myriad number of health conferences and workshops.

Northern Cheyenne Tribal Health Department – Indian Health Service

The Northern Cheyenne Tribal Health Department, through utilization of P.L. 93-638, the Indian Self Determination Act, primarily contracts for community outreach health care services that are available at the local service unit level, while the Indian Health Service Clinic administers all of the clinical services that are available at the local level. The Northern Cheyenne Tribe was also very instrumental in building the nearest hospital, which is located on the Crow Indian Reservation, just west of us on Highway 212 about 42 miles away.

In the year 1997, the local Indian Health Service clinic burned to the ground due to faulty wiring in one of the light ballasts. In the history of the Indian Health Service, a clinic or hospital has never been destroyed by fire or any other natural disaster. In the following year, a tribal delegation comprised of the Northern Cheyenne Board of Health and its Tribal Health Department Administration put together a plan, complete with cost estimates and time frames, to rebuild a clinic. They then approached Congress for a special appropriation. In the following year, 1998, Congress appropriated 13.5 million dollars to build a replacement facility. The Northern Cheyenne Board of Health and the Tribal Health Administration contracted to build the clinic and they were successful in constructing a quality facility that is state-of-the-art. However, due to the soil being very loamy, shifting does occur. The foundation is built on steel pilings that were driven into the ground until they hit bedrock, so the foundation is very stable even if the soil should shift.

'Hope' for a better society hasn't been forgotten by our people. The local population has a lot of work cut out for them before they reach that destination. It won't happen overnight, it'll take generations; in the meantime during the rebuilding period we'll need the best medical providers that can help us achieve that goal. It is not a daunting task, it is more of a labor of memorial; the task serves to us a reminder of our roots and more importantly where and how we reach our destiny.

Health Status Data

In the past year, 2004, the ten leading causes of direct outpatient visits were:

1.	Upper respiratory infection	1,803 episodes or visits
2.	Diabetes mellitus	1,737 episodes or visits
3.	Generalized symptoms	1,337 episodes
4.	Musculoskeletal disorder	1,183 episodes
5.	Bone and joint disorder	1,021 episodes
6.	Spinal disorder	953 episodes
7.	Skin infection	891 episodes
8.	Respiratory allergy	845 episodes
9.	Acute otitis media	819 episodes
10.	Hypertensive disease	786 episodes

Leading Causes of Indian Deaths by Specific Cause-Northern Cheyenne SU, '99-'01

1.	Diseases of the Heart	21.1%
2.	Accidents and Adverse Effects	18.4%
3.	Malignant Neoplasms	13.2%
4.	Pneumonia and Influenza	3.9%
5.	Chronic Lower Respiratory Diseases	3.9%

Our ancestors have lived many different lifestyles and endured genocide and atrocities. However, as a testament that we were put here by the Creator and that we have a place in this world, we must survive and hopefully prosper for our grandchildren's sake. This task will be chronicled by our institutions and in the generations to come; it will serve as a learning tool for our educational institutions and for personal development.

Chapter 8:

Summary and Conclusions

The Project EXPORT Black Hills State University faculty and staff, the Montana-Wyoming Tribal Leaders Council staff, and its member Tribes, are working closely to ensure that research conducted with the Tribes in Montana and Wyoming is culturally appropriate and incorporates Tribal members' perspectives and issues. Frequent meetings have been scheduled between BHSU researchers and the Tribal Leaders Council and representatives from each of the participating Tribes to discuss research topics, research design, and the cultural issues and traditions that are critical to conducting effective research studies. In addition, researchers travel frequently to Reservations where research is conducted to meet with Tribal health and other staff in order to obtain input and feedback and to discuss and arrange Tribal staff participation in aspects of the studies. This Cultural Guide to research with the Tribes in Montana and Wyoming represents one component of the process through which non-Indian researchers may gain understanding and guidance to support their work with the Tribes. Equally important, however, are the ongoing relationships that are being developed through outreach, involvement, and reporting of findings to Tribes on all aspects of the research that is being conducted.

This document is initially being published in report form and an updated version with supportive photographs and pertinent information will be forthcoming. As other Tribes submit their specific Tribal documentation, it will be included in subsequent publications. As with any project of this magnitude, these documents are a work in progress and will be continually updated and expanded.

Addendum: Related Web Sites

American Indian Higher Education Association at aihec.org

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR), for Health Disparities, Injury & Cancer Mortality among Native Americans, August 1, 2003 at <http://www.mmwrq@cdc.gov>

http://www.Cihr-irsc.gc.ca/institutes/iaph/about_iaph/aiph_fs_goals_e.shtml

<http://www.ihs.gov>

<http://www.ihs.gov/FacilitiesServices/AreaOffices/Navajo/naihs-cross-culture-medicine.asp>

www.ihs.gov/GeneralWeb/SiteMap/index.asp

<http://tlc.wtp.net/>

Jacobs, Evelyn. "Cultural Inquiry Process: Guidebook" (1999) CIP Website

<http://travelsd.com/history/sioux/etiquette.asp>

Northern Plains Tribal Epidemiology Center at <http://www.aatchb.org/epi>

For more detailed Tribal information, please see the following web sites:

http://www.bigskytribes.com/rocky_boys.htm

<http://www.blackfeetnation.com/>

<http://www.cskt.org>

<http://www.mnisose.org/profiles/crow.htm>

<http://www.mnisose.org/profiles/ncheyne.htm>

<http://www.ncheyenne.net/tribalgovmt.htm>

<http://tlc.wtp.net/fort.htm>

<http://tlc.wtp.net/fortpeck.htm>

<http://www.easternshoshone.net/>

<http://tlc.wtp.net/shoshone.htm>

<http://www.northernarapaho.com/>

<http://www.kstrom.net/isk/maps/mt/montmap.html>

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Mitakuye Oyasin – We are all Related
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